

GUGGENHEIM BILBAO

Press release



The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao presents on March 12, 2015

Kimsooja: *Thread Routes*

Kimsooja
Thread Routes

- **Dates:** March 12–July 5, 2015
- **Curator:** Álvaro Rodríguez Fominaya
- **Film & Video gallery (103)**

From March 12 through July 5, 2015, Kimsooja's *Thread Routes* will make its Spanish premiere at the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, becoming the fourth installation showcased in the Museum's Film & Video gallery. The gallery opened in 2014 and is dedicated to video art, video installation, and the moving image.

Thread Routes (2010–) is a 16-mm film series produced by multidisciplinary conceptual artist Kimsooja (b. 1957, Daegu, Korea). This six-chapter project explores textile work in different locations around the world. The films were shot on three different continents and reveal the artist's interest in the intimate link between each region's textile culture and its people, gender relations, architecture, nature and agriculture. These non-narrative films invite the viewer into a realm that explores the boundaries of poetry and visual anthropology.

A site-specific triangular installation was created by the artist for the Guggenheim Bilbao, and will feature the first three chapters of the six-chapter-long series, filmed in Peru, Europe, and India, respectively. The first film, shot in 2010, explores Peru's exuberant textile culture from the Sacred Valley of the Incas in the Peruvian Andes to the villages of Taquile Island. The second chapter, filmed in 2011, focuses on the handcrafting of bobbin lace in Bruges, Belgium; Lepoglava, Pag and Hvar, Croatia; Brano, Italy; as well as the industrial lace production in Calais, a town in northern France. These images of European lacemakers are paralleled to architectural structures such as the Sedlec Ossuary in Kutná Hora, Czech Republic; the Eiffel Tower in Paris; the Milan Cathedral; and the Alhambra in Granada, with its Islamic geometric motifs. The third chapter was filmed in India in 2012 and features traditional dyeing, knitting, embroidery, block printing, and tattooing, intercut with images of archeological sites and the temporary dwellings belonging to nomadic communities in the state of Gujarat; as well as two benchmarks in Indian architecture: the Queen's Stepwell and the Modhera Sun Temple, near the city of Ahmedabad.

Thread Routes reveals how the artist gazes at the world: unfolding visual patterns that intimately tie humans to their land. The series' remaining three chapters will feature the Miao, Tong, and Yi minorities in China and the native tribes of North America and Northern Africa.

Kimsooja investigates questions relating to the human condition such as nomadism, migration, interpersonal relationships, and women's role in society. She also engages her audience with a reflection on the relation of aesthetics and global politics through a system of beliefs that defies mobility and the act of *making*. All these themes are present in her multidisciplinary art practice, which includes

performance, video, photography, drawing, sculpture, and site-specific installations, that are all linked through their relational use of light and sound. These installations often include *bottari* (traditional Korean cloth bundles), as a metaphorical resource which, like the needle and the mirror, has become an identifying feature of the artist's work.

Artist Biography

An internationally-acclaimed conceptual and multidisciplinary artist, Kimsooja was born in 1957 in Daegu, Korea, a city known for its textile industry. She currently lives and works in New York. After studying painting in Seoul and lithography in Paris she was Artist-in-Residence at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center in New York, as well as at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-arts in Paris. In the early 1980s her artistic practice ran parallel to her sewn work, which later evolved into the performance *A Needle Woman* in 1999. As a continuation of her previous works, *Thread Routes* is an epic poem that weaves humanity, nature, and cosmogony into a performance of life.

Since her first solo exhibition in Seoul (1988), Kimsooja's work has been shown in numerous venues and museums around the world, including solo exhibitions at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia in Madrid; P.S.1/ MOMA in New York; the Hirshhorn Museum, Washington D.C; Kunsthalle Bern; Kunsthalle Wien; Kunstmuseum Lichtenstein; the Contemporary Art Museum, Lyon; Museum Kunstpalast Dusseldorf; PAC, Milan; The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens; the Plateau Museum of Art, Seoul; The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea; and most recently the Vancouver Art Gallery. Kimsooja represented Korea at the 24th Sao Paulo Biennale and the Korean Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale. She also participated in the 48th, 49th, 51st, and 52nd Venice Biennale and over thirty major international biennials and triennials. Acclaim and awards for her work include *Best Show of the Year 2000* for *Kimsooja-A Needle Woman Who Weaves the World*, Plateau Museum in Seoul; Artist of the American Art Award, granted by the Whitney Museum of American Art in 2002; Anonymous Was A Woman Foundation Award, in 2002; the Visual Arts Grant from New York's Foundation for Contemporary Art in 2007; and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship in 2014.

Film & Video (gallery 103)

The Film & Video gallery opened its doors in 2014 with the aim of displaying video art, video installations, and moving images, both from the Guggenheim Museums and from other international collections. Over the past year the gallery has housed audiovisual works by three internationally renowned artists. The gallery opened in March with Christian Marclay's installation *The Clock*. In June the Icelandic artist Ragnar Kjartansson's *The Visitors* was on display, and from October through March 2015 the space will host the video installation *The Crazyhouse (Megan, Simon, Nicky, Philip, Dee)*, *Liverpool, UK*, by Rineke Dijkstra.

Meet the Artist: Kimsooja

At the presentation of *Thread Routes*, Korean Artist Kimsooja will take part in a talk with the public. The talk will also feature Álvaro Rodríguez Fominaya, the exhibition's curator.

Place and time: Auditorium, 6:30 pm

Simultaneous English-Spanish translation

Admission is free. Tickets available from the ticket office and online

Cover image:

Kimsooja

Thread Routes - Chapter II, 2011

16 mm film transferred to HD video, with sound, 23 min., 40 sec.

Courtesy La Fábrica, Madrid, Galerie Kewenig, Majorca and Berlin, Galerie Tschudi, Zuoz, Galleria Raffaella Cortese, Milan, and Kukje Gallery, Seoul

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For more information:

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Complete information about the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao is available at www.guggenheim-bilbao.es (press room).

Press Images for
Kimsooja. Thread Routes
Guggenheim Museum Bilbao

Online Photo Service for Press Images

At the press area (prensa.guggenheim-bilbao.es/en) you can register and download high resolution images and videos featuring the exhibitions and the building. Sign in to get access. If you are already a user, log in here (you need your username and password).

For further information, please contact the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Press Department: tel. +34 944 35 90 08 and email: media@guggenheim-bilbao.es

Kimsooja

Thread Routes - Chapter I, 2010

16 mm film transferred to HD video, with sound, 29 min., 31 sec.

Courtesy La Fábrica, Madrid, Galerie Kewenig, Majorca and Berlin, Galerie Tschudi, Zuoz, Galleria Raffaella Cortese, Milan, and Kukje Gallery, Seoul

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Kimsooja

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Kimsooja

Thread Routes - Chapter III, 2012

16 mm film transferred to HD video, with sound, 17 min., 35 sec.

Courtesy La Fábrica, Madrid, Galerie Kewenig, Majorca and Berlin, Galerie Tschudi, Zuoz, Galleria Raffaella Cortese, Milan, and Kukje Gallery, Seoul

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Kimsooja, 2010

Portrait image during Tate Modern Artist Discussion,
Photograph by Simon Patterson

