



New candle, 1993
Candle, candle holder, 1 video camera, 4 video projectors, 500×310cm

Nam June Paik

The 20th anniversary of his passing

July 19 (Sun.) - November 23 (Mon.), 2026

Closed on Mondays (Open on Sep. 21, Oct. 12, and Nov. 23)

Open hours: 11AM-7PM

Admission fee: Adults 1,500 yen / Pair discount 2,600 yen / Student (high school to 25 years), Seniors (70 years and over), Visitors with disabilities, their caregiver (up to 1) with ID 1,300 yen / Children (elementary to junior high) 500 yen

Organizer: Executive Committee of Nam June Paik Exhibition

Planting design and construction : GREEN WISE Co.,Ltd.

Exhibition support: Japan Pet Fish Service

Equipment support: EXOTICA.inc / Yosuke Nakagawa / Kazuhiko Hachiya / SEHWAN YANG

Venue: WATARI-UM, The Watari Museum of Contemporary Art

3-7-6, Jingumae, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-0001

Tel : 03-3402-3001 Fax : 03-3405-7714

Email : official@watarium.co.jp Website : <http://www.watarium.co.jp>





Hand and Faces, 1961 black and white 1:44

It has been nearly half a century since Nam June Paik created his works here at Galerie Watari, and later at WATARI-UM, The Watari Museum of Contemporary Art. The era has evolved from cathode ray tubes to LCDs, 4K, and LED displays. Yet, Paik's works have not lost their luster. In fact, the boldness of his vision stands out even more as time marches on. The sounds emanating from the images, and works that appear humorous at first glance yet sharply address contemporary issues. Video is not merely a form of visual expression but also an innovative medium in and of itself. It always feels as though Paik is right there, smiling. No matter how times change or values and social issues shift, Paik continues to offer a fresh perspective.

Creation, whether physical or spiritual, is mediated by a certain mystical transcendence.

- Nam June Paik, "Feed back and Feed Forth", 1993.

Artworks do not remain frozen in time from the moment they are created. Rather, they transcend eras and exist in a state of constant flux. We hope that Paik's works will also live on for a very long time. We believe that the role of the museum is to pass these works on to future generations.

Main exhibits

The entire exhibition space on the second through fourth floors will be filled with Paik's works.

The installation "Forest of Cage / Revelation of the Forest", created specifically for the WATARI-UM exhibition space, will cover the entire second floor with a forest. This installation consists of real trees and monitors, creating a living space with ever-changing qualities and scents that cannot be experienced with artificial plants. Within this forest, Paik's three-dimensional works will be interwoven, including masterpieces "Time in Triangular" and "Robot K-567", representing the coexistence of nature and civilization, two seemingly opposing forces.

The third floor will feature more than 20 of Paik's two-dimensional pieces, including never-before-seen collages, and three-dimensional works using cathode ray tubes, such as TV Plants. There will also be drawings that served as the source of Paik's creative ideas.

The fourth floor will feature the installation "New Candle", a large-scale projection of a candle in primary colors, installed throughout the entire space. Additionally, approximately five works related to the theme of heart, will be exhibited. In the atrium space spanning the second to fourth floors, LED panels will show Paik's poetic work "for Mr. I & Mr. I", conveying Paik's heart throughout the entire exhibition.

Second floor : Forest

— Feed back and Feed forth Present→Infinite —

— Nam June Paik, "Feed back and Feed Forth", 1993.

When you wander into the forest, you may be struck by how time seems to move differently there.

If you enter early in the morning, you'll see that many creatures are already active. But as the sun sets, everything falls silent all at once. Standing in the forest at night, it feels as though time has stopped.

There is a vast disparity in the flow of time between the rapid changes of civilization and the gentle shifts of nature. In the natural world, events we consider the past are equivalent to the present, and events we consider the distant future may well be the past.

There is neither past nor future. The present just continues infinitely. Rather than simply flowing, time is layered and intertwined with the past and future.

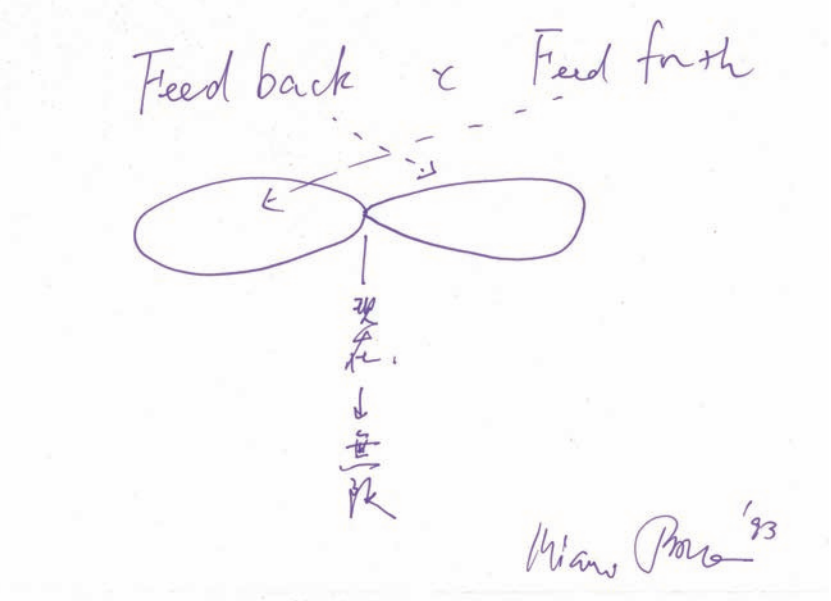
The piece "Forest of Cage / Revelation of the Forest" was created specifically for the WATARI-UM exhibition space. Among the trees, videos play and different times blend together. There is only an infinitely expanding present. In the forest, Paik may be alive—or perhaps it has not yet been born.



Forest of Cage / Revelation of the Forest, 1993
live plants, 23 monitors,
3-channel audio visual image,
3 players, a set of stereos
554×465×800cm



French Clock, 1993
 French antique clock, 1 video camera, 1 three-legged stool, 3 monitors, 160×280 (from the floor)×30 cm



Cover of the text " Feed back and Feed forth" 1993
 Ink on paper, 29.7×21cm



Time in Triangular, 1993
 live plants, 23 monitors, 3-channel audio visual image, 3 players,
 a set of stereos
 262(right and left side)×240(back)×269(H)cm

Third floor : Connection

– Communication in the future will be about forging diverse connections.–

– Nam June Paik From: Fukuoka Art Museum and Jin Matsuura, Nam June Paik exhibition, 1994.

In 1984, Paik unveiled "Good Morning Mr. Orwell," a satellite art project that was broadcast simultaneously around the world. It was broadcast live across four countries on three continents and attracted an audience of over 25 million people, further expanding the possibilities of video art.

The saying goes, "Even a chance encounter is a karmic connection from a past life," but thanks to satellite TV and interactive television, the connections we have in this life have expanded thousands of times over.

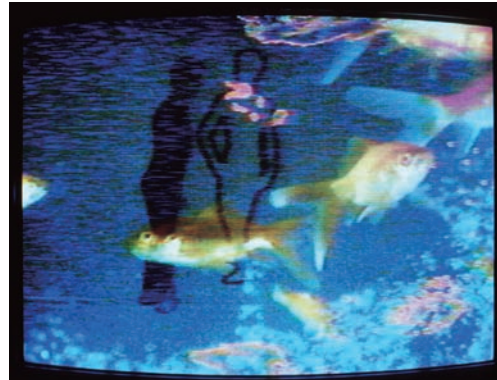
– Nam June Paik, "Time Collage", 1984.

Thanks to the widespread use of smartphones, the connections has expanded ten thousandfold today. The connection isn't limited to human relationships. Memories evoked by a landscape, nostalgia felt when interacting with animals, and new emotions and inspiration born from past works or footage are all connections.

After a whale dies, a phenomenon known as whale falls occur, influencing many marine organisms on the seafloor for up to 100 years. "Fluxus Whale." When we stand before Paik's work, we are immersed in a new connection.



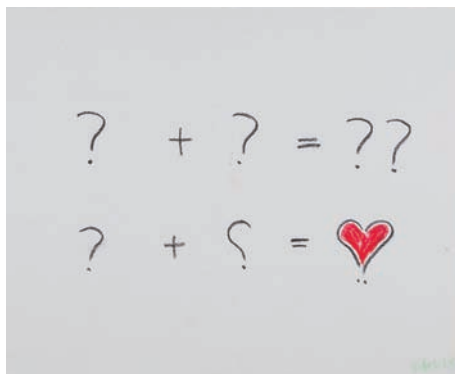
O.K. is K.O. Not (or "TV Bull"), 1982-84
Oil on canvas, collage, 56×71cm



TV Fish, 1975
Live fish, aquariums, monitors, 1-channel audio visual image, 1 player, Size variable

Fourth floor : Heart – The artist's job is to think about the future.–

– Nam June Paik, "Random Access Information", 1980.*



*Originally published in Artforum, no. 19 (September 1980), pp.46-49. Based on a lecture given as part of the "Video Viewpoints" series at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Barbara London, the museum's video curator, compiled the article.

Turning heart, 1988
Pastel on white paper, 58.5×77.5cm

Paik expressed the heart in a poem that begins with "Kokoro Korokoro" (Heart goes rolling), in his poetry work "for Mr. I & Mr. I". Expressions depicting heart — how it leaps, sinks, and shifts through joy, anger, sorrow, and pleasure — are a universal constant found throughout history and across cultures. Such a heart, wavering back and forth, is much like fire. It holds no fixed form, sometimes fading, sometimes blazing, and eventually passing on to the next generation.

Even the same artwork can appear quite different depending on one's state of heart at the time. Even a work you've seen before may appear differently as you grow older, and a piece viewed long ago can sometimes evoke memories of that time. Amidst the constant flux of eras, values, the world, and ourselves, there are indeed feelings that remain unchanged. By passing on the spirit that Paik left for WATARI-UM to the future, we ensure that it continues to live in the present, rather than being preserved merely as a relic of the past.

Nam June Paik (白南準, July 20, 1932–January 29, 2006)

- 1932 On July 20th, born in Seoul to a wealthy family
- 1949 Moved to Hong Kong along with his father
- 1950 Outbreak of Korean War during his temporary return to South Korea
Paik family fled from Busan to Kobe by ship
- 1951 The family moved to Kamakura
- 1952 Entered the University of Tokyo
- 1954 Entered the Department of Aesthetics and Art History, Faculty of Literature, The University of Tokyo (Graduated in March 1956)
- 1956 Moved to Germany to learn the 20th-century art at the University of Munich
- 1957 Learned composition at the Freiburg Conservatory of Music and met with Karlheinz Stockhausen
- 1958 Entered University of Cologne
Encountered with John Cage at the Darmstadt International Summer Courses for New Music
Started working at the electronic music broadcasting studio WDR in Cologne, West Germany
- 1959 First performance "A Tribute to John Cage" at the Gallery 22, Düsseldorf
- 1961 Acquainted with George Maciunas, the founder of Fluxus movement
Became the core member of the Fluxus Movement
Acquainted with Joseph Beuys
- 1963 Unveiled the world's first video art at his first solo exhibition "Exposition of Music - Electronic Television" at Galerie Parnass in Wuppertal
Temporarily returned to Japan for the research of color TV
Acquainted with Shuya Abe and created the robot "K-456" together with Abe
- 1964 Participated in the High Red Center's event "Shelter Plan" at the Imperial Hotel as a spectator
Traveled to the U.S., met a cellist Charlotte Moorman and collaborated in the performance "Robot Opera"
- 1967 Moorman got arrested for public lewdness during the performance "Opera Sextronic" in New York, while she was playing cello with topless and just before she undressed the underwear
- 1971 Completion of Paik-Abe Video Synthesizer
- 1976 Large-scale solo exhibition "Nam June Paik – Werke 1946-1976 – Musik-Fluxus-Video" at Kölnischer Kunstverein
- 1977 Married with Shigeo Kubota
Participated in the documenta 6, Kassel
Acquainted with Shizuko Watari, the founder of WATARI-UM
- 1978 Started teaching at the Düsseldorf Academy of Fine Arts
Piano Duet with Joseph Beuys "In Memoriam George Maciunas"
Solo exhibition "A Tribute to John Cage" at Galerie Watari (current WATARI-UM)
- 1979 Became a professor of Düsseldorf Academy of Fine Arts (until 1996)
- 1980 Solo exhibition "VIDEA Iroiro (Various VIDEA)" at Galerie Watari
- 1981 Solo exhibition "Video Card" at Galerie Watari
- 1982 Large-scale retrospective at the Whitney Museum of American Art
- 1984 Satellite Art "Good Morning Mr. Orwell"
Solo Exhibition "Mostly Video" at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
Performance at Sogetsu Hall with Joseph Beuys while his visit to Japan
Exhibition "Joseph Beuys and Nam June Paik" at Galerie Watari
- 1986 Solo Exhibition "DUET PAIK & WATARI"
- 1988 Created TV tower "The More the Better" for the Seoul Olympics
- 1992 Large-scale retrospective "Paik Nam June · Video Time · Video Space" at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul
- 1993 Represented the German pavilion at the 45th Venice Biennale (first time after the reunification of East and West Germany) with Hans Haacke, and won the Golden Lion
Solo exhibition "Nam June Paik: Recent Works (Paik's Earth Theory)" at WATARI-UM
- 1996 Suffered a stroke which left him confined to a wheelchair
- 1998 Won Kyoto Prize (Arts and Philosophy)
- 2000 Large-scale retrospective at the Guggenheim Museum in New York
- 2006 On January 29, passed away at his home in Miami (73 years old)
- 2008 Founding of the Nam June Paik Art Center in the outskirts of Seoul, South Korea
- 2009 Founding of the Nam June Paik Archive at the Smithsonian American Art Museum
- 2010 Large-scale retrospective at the Tate Liverpool
- 2013 Large-scale retrospective "Global Visionary" at the Smithsonian American Art Museum
- 2019-2022 Large-scale international traveling exhibition "The Future is Now" (co-organized by Tate Modern and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art)
- 2024 Large-scale retrospective "Nam June Paik, Nam June Paik, and Nam June Paik" at MOCA Busan

Symposium

Paik's Various VIDEA 2026

July 20, 2026 1PM-4PM

Speakers (to be tentative):

Akira Asada (critic, philosopher)

Yoichi Ochiai (media artist)

Kazuhiko Hachiya (media artist)

Venue:

Zenko-ji Temple

3-5-17, Kita-Aoyama, Minato-ku, Tokyo

Organizer:

WATARI-UM, The Watari Museum of Contemporary Art

This year marks the 20th anniversary of Paik's passing in 2006.

This symposium, "Paik's Various VIDEA 2026," will explore the life and work of Paik, who left behind a lot of works and ideas that laid the foundation for 21st-century art.

Art has two roles.

One is to express joy and ecstasy.

The other is to contemplate the future. In other words, art is about freedom.

- Nam June Paik, 1992. From News 23, TBS.



Nam June Paik standing in front of Forest of Cage / Revelation of the Forest, 1993.
Photo: Eiichiro Sakata

We are currently working on a book project to coincide with the Nam June Paik exhibition. The book will be published in the autumn in 2026.

● Japanese and English

● Publisher: **twelvebooks**



Passage, 1986
8 vintage TV cabinets, 13 monitors, 2-channel audio
visual image, 2 players
300×330×61cm