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SKOWHEGAN SCHOOL OF PAINTING & SCULPTURE

Skowhegan, Maine

Lecture by SUNG HWAN KIM
June 17, 2019

Transcriber: Jess Pinkham

Introductory remarks by Sondra Perry: Put your legs together. Weight on your heels, not on your toes. Stand straight. Put your toes to the ground. Straighten your back, hold your head up high. Put your shoulders back a little, look more comfortable. Walk. {laughter} Don't walk like you're scared of your surroundings, walk comfortably. Hold your head up high like you're proud. Hold your head up high like you're proud to be whoever you are. Lift your feet when you walk. Stop looking like a target, stop walking like you don't have a place to be. Walk like you have somewhere to go. Walk like you have a purpose. Walk like you're meant for something more than just to walk. As I began my research for this introduction, I did what many folks do, which is a deep dive Google search. And what I found were essays from fellow artists, curators, and critics, about Sung's work. There are many praises of his complex assemblages, rendered into a phrase similar to this. Sung's works move through improvisation, fairy tales, chaos and confuse, and reverse perspectives of viewing, and quake our understandings of identity. What I found from Sung's own hand, over a series of diary entries, on his website, many images with titles that includes *New Koreans*, *Korean House of San Quentin Valley*, *Aerial View*, or *Governor General of Korea*, or *Frank Lloyd Wright Sketch*, *Perspective on Photograph for the AM*, *Johnson Desert Compound*. And this weaved into poetry, weaving into quotations from James Baldwin and William Shakespeare. And Paul, is it Virilio? This text from Warren Cinema that Sung edited

states, ‘From the commanding heights of the earliest natural fortifications, to the architectonic innovations of the watch tower, the development of observation balloon satellite surveillance, there has been no end to the enlargement of the field of perception. Whether I know you, or not, matters less than how you appear to the objective eye. Paranoia.’ The categories available to me under Sung’s Wikipedia page were South Korean contemporary artist, South Korean ex-patriates in the Netherlands, South Korean patriots in the United States, living people, 1975 births, people from the south, people from Seoul, and artists living in New York City. As an undergrad, my friend Jenny Urfer [?] began a project that inserted tiny fictions into Wikipedia pages of random subjects, corporations, or visual arts faculty. The Mexican-American War. For instance, Lindsey Whitfield grew up, grew her fiddling practice in Cincinnati, Ohio, at a bar named The Case Case Bonnaroo on the East Side. ATM is an acronym for alienation typified mesothelioma. [ding] My aunt just texted. {laughter} Wikipedia caught on quickly, and progressively got the entire campus, all of our campus computer labs banned from the editing functions of Wikipedia. (00:05:16) Under the ocean of, ah, shits and yaases of Saturday night’s disorientation party, Sung and I talked about capacity. Higher capacity as an artist, or, excuse me – how your capacity, your knowing and ignorance, how your capacity, via your bank account and education, can overflow. And specifically, how they can overflow when you walk, like you have a purpose, like you’re meant for something more than just to walk. Please help me welcome Sung Hwan Kim. {applause, cheering}

Sung Hwan Kim: Thank you, Sondra. First, I want to – I, I, I wanted to see the people’s faces, at least the first row, and that’s why we did all these – could we lower it just a bit more? And see what, or, I don’t know – oh, could we turn the light on the people, I mean, this, what is that, this thing? The general light, is it possible? Oh, ok, this, oh, ok, this is more normal, yeah. {laughter} Because I’m not using the slides for now, and, or video. First, I would like to thank all who had a part in bringing me here. But that says all too quickly and too simply. Because, whatever the circumstances, it is here, in fact. Literally, to the preoccupations and company of this moment, that I have been headed, now, for years and years. This is not what I said, I said it, but, but what I was doing outside was I was memorizing this, because I’m very bad at memorizing. This is what Robert Creeley said in 2001, when I was a Skowhegan participant. He was a poet, and he impressed me with his lecture, because he wrote the lecture for us. It was about him being blind as a poet, as a writer, and his accessibility to visual art and art in general. And so forth. You can

read his transcript, which he gave to me, and I brought it here, cause I wanted to read it again, and you can also listen to his lecture, which is a beautiful lecture. And he also wrote a poem at the end, after the lecture. After the lecture, like, what's gonna happen tonight, we go to the reception, and that's when I talked to Robert Creeley for a while, and I remember Alan Ruppersberg, who was a resident artist, who asked me, 'What were you talking about?' Because people were wondering, what is this young participant talking with this poet for such a long time – cause I think I talked to him for a while. And I, I also wonder what I was talking to him about, because I really don't remember what I talked about, at all. Except one thing, which is I said something, I don't know what I said, but I think I was insecure about the things I was gonna say, cause, and I had, I was trying to explain very well what I was trying to say, and then he said, 'Don't worry; when I see the river, I see the flow, I don't see the pebbles.' Is what he might have said, or he might have said, 'When I see the river, I see the pebbles, not the flow of the water.'

(00:10:05) {laughter} So, I know that, about, until ten years ago, I did remember what he said, because I thought about it, and I told people about this thing, and, and I knew the meaning of what he said, and it really impressed me, but I realize that after years of not talking about it, really forgot what he said, and I can interpret the meaning in both ways. It could have significant meaning to me both ways. One reason why I'm talking about this is because there's a motif of water that's gonna come into play, by showing various films tonight. Another thing is, about the architecture. Because when, sometimes when, I think poets deal with this, too, when – and poets always deal with this, actually, because some of the things that they're saying is not only about whatever so-called message, but it has to do with the rhythm and texture, and how they use the words that they have heard before. So it's musical. And when I recall this memory of having been here, and Robert Creeley, and the fact that I almost remember nothing about what happened here, I just have glimpses, little memories, very, almost insignificant moments of what happened here. But when I returned here, something that I think I had felt then was here again, in different forms. Because you're all different people, I have never met you guys, most of you. But there's some kind of energy that is revived, and energy, I use it because I can't think of other words right now at the moment. I'm sure there are better words for it. And you wonder why that is being revived. I think there's a path, and there are these architectures that used to exist, and there are the cows, not the cows that I played with, different cows, but something that is, resembles the cows that I've seen before. And the routines. The dinners, the lake, the temperature. And the

climates are changing. The climate is not changing, I mean, the weather is changing, the temperature's changing, and the way that the lake moves, all these things. I do, it's not in the same order as it happened, but it recalls something that has happened back. Ok, so, this, I'm now talking in terms of, although I do feel nostalgic and sentimental, partly, about the things that happened in 2001, and now it's 2019, another thing is about the relation between architecture and what architecture and moving inside the architecture brings about. So, that's one thing that will happen, a few times, several times in the films that I'm gonna show. And strangely, as I'm talking about this, I'm realizing, there are pebbles and flow, have that relationship as well, right? Some kind of architecture, that architecture of pebbles, above which is a full trajectory of things, a thing that is called water, that is moving through it, or splashing above it, and so forth. I think there are a few, I mean, there are a few things I could talk about. But I think this a good moment to, what I'm gonna do is, I'm gonna show films. Two films. One – two videos, yeah. One, I think I used to call it a film. I was thinking about a film. The second, that's the second one. And the first one is *Menahatasis* [?], I made it in 2009, and the second one I'll show is called *Temper Clay*, which was made in 2013. And I, I can talk a little bit more about why I chose these two videos to show here. It has to do with age. I was thirty-three when I made *Mehnahatasis*, the first video that you'll see. I thought it was also closer to, um, some of your age group. (00:15:02) Another thing is there are clear differences in the budget, and a number of people that I work with, and how much time that I had with these people. Also, where I made these films are different, one is in New York and the other one is in Seoul, and the knowledge and the depth – no, I'm not gonna say the depth, I think it has more to do with the detail of the knowledge, that I have of these places are very different. Seoul, where I grew up since 1975 until I left in 1996, has a very different, I experienced the city and the architecture that I show in this film, in the second film, without knowing about the historical background of this architecture. I just experienced it. I grew up there. I started to learn words there, I made friends there, I broke up with friends there, and went through everything that you can imagine between age zero to twenty-one. New York City, this film that I made, in 2009, I moved to New York in 2007. So it's two years of time. I was getting to know the city. I knew the city as a visitor, but since I moved to New York City I wanted to know more about what the city was about, and also the country, what the US, the country that comprises New York City was about. So, a lot of the knowledge that I have of that city was coming from reading about it. And also meeting people who live there. And being

friends with people who are living there. And so forth – you can imagine. So, in that way, these films are very different. Ok. So we can watch a film, and then after that we can talk a little bit more about it. The first one is about fifteen minutes, the second one is about twenty minutes. [videos were not recorded] Ok! I think how I want to lead the, this talk is through Q&A, so you can ask questions, and I can answer. Ok.

Audience: Hello. Oh! Ok. I really love the two pieces, thank you so much for showing. And, I wonder what is your process. In both of them, for example, do digital images come to you first, or you have an idea of, oh, this piece, this is around the idea I want to make, and then the images come, and the sound come, and then how do you go about collecting them, piecing them together?

SHK: Every, every time you do things, I think it's – ah, maybe I should start like this. When I was watching it, and I was watching it here, with you, I think I was thinking about how I framed this talk, because I was thinking of many different ways. You, I can do what Robert Creeley did, which is to not show images, and talk about images. Or I can talk a little bit more about why I made these films, or how I got to make these films, or even the process that you are asking about. And I was realizing, it's because, I think these two films are a little bit further away from what I'm doing right now, and when you move from, like, let's say that there's a subject that we are working with, and the, sometimes the distance between the subject and you are far away, like, in camera, it's very easy, telephoto, long distance shot, it could be microscopic, or the opposite way. (00:19:58) Sometimes, when you start to realize, sometimes you're inside the information. You're no longer outside. And then sometimes you are so far away that you don't even notice the subject, there's things that you don't see. So, there are these things happening also with every topic that I'm dealing with. And a lot of the way that I deal with, like, the project that I'm dealing with right now is so data-oriented that I am sort of further away from this kind of process, where I was a little bit closer to the topics that I'm working in. So I was, so I just wanna, that is sort of like the premise of what I'm gonna say now, which is, for the first one, it was a collaboration between Danai Anesiadou, who is a Greek artist, who, no, she's from Belgium, but she's, her mom is from Greece, so she goes back and forth. And she was, she's a dear friend, and she was living in New York for a year, and New York is very expensive, and I just moved to New York without having, nobody invited me to come to New York, and I just went there. No

galleries, I don't have school connections, I don't have Chitra, pretty much my only friend. {laughs} And I went there, and I realized, telling, this is one of the reasons I was interested in real estate, and when I talking to Steve, about, like, I live very close by him, when I moved to, I lived very close by him, and I got this, sort of like a big prize in the Netherlands, so I had some money, to begin with. And, but the rents was so expensive that when I was reading a book, as I turned the pages, I heard, like, the, like as if it's a taxi meter, the clock ticking, the money going up and up. I could hear the money moving – I mean, literally, because if you divide that into days and by hours, you can, it's not a small amount of money that is being spent by not producing anything. And everything that doesn't come into, like, this, let's say this is a production, but let's say, like, what I did here is not a production, but I could spend the whole day doing this. Yeah? Then, you start to think about the relationships between these things. So, Danai also knew, she was a little bit further away, because she had a better grant, and also, she was gonna go back to Europe. So we decided to work for a month, using each other. And using each other as an assistant. So, one day, we just divided the week into half and half, and then I worked for her, without asking questions, whatever she asked me to do, I would do it, and then she would do the same for me. So, I'm also in her piece, in a piece that she made around this time, doing other things. And we also sort of, like, we both had a very small amount of budget, because we had very small exhibitions, in different places. And, like, we bought that wig, she got a wig, and I got a wig – oh, no, she didn't have a wig, I guess she had hair. And {laughter} and, yeah, that was a process, right? But when you're doing it, when I write, a lot of times there are, sometimes there are poetry, there are imageries, sometimes I collect images, and also read, I was reading this amazing book called *Gotham*, which is a history of New York from the nineteenth century, it's early, no, nineteenth century, I think it's from eighteenth century to nineteenth century, maybe? It's a very detailed history of New York, that happened throughout years. Things like that. That's not the only book, I don't want to just reference that, but those are the things that I do, in the beginning. But this, like let's say that these are data or information that you work with. Or imagery, I usually talk about imagery, sometimes it's sound. And then there's, like, an economics of labor relationship, and the rent, all these things – these are, like, surrounding me, as I'm making it. So, in the beginning, when you say, like, did you start with the image or a text, I don't know. I'm doing all these things at the same time. And then you start to edit. So you start to shoot, like you start to, you go on a day, like let's try this, and I go there, and I did, you know,

I shot that in Coney Island, for example. And then, I come back, and then see if these words that I retrieved or constructed make sense in the structure that I'm building. You know, so it's very similar to any kind of making process, it could be painting, sculpture, where you're making something, but you also throw it out. But you don't know which clay is the first one you touched. I don't know if I touched different – I mean, there are several things happening at the same time. I draw the imagery, because I know that my hands can make this kind of curvature. You, a lot of architects, in the old days, before digital media, drew lines straight, because the material was straight. Nowadays, people can have curvature, people have sculptural, like Frank Gehry, like, was one of the first people to do these things. (00:25:14) You could do, like, things change because of the, like when you say, like, I drew it, but I also knew what my hands can do, right? So, those things all happen at the same time. Second one, for example, was *Temper Clay*. I can just talk about the relation between music and me. Sometimes music comes as, as I'm editing, yeah. I know that that music is needed. But we also know that lyrics is needed. But we also talk about how the music, it will be com – I sort of work as a producer of the music, so we talked about, like, what kind of music, what kind of instrument, what kind of rhythm, what kind of voice arrangement. We work very closely together, and you will meet him tomorrow, David Michael DiGregorio, he'll come. Yeah. I can talk more about it. Good? Yeah.

Audience: Oh, hi. What is the text's role in your work?

SHK: What is what?

Audience: Text. The role of text in your work. Because there sometimes is English, and Korean, some is through the written text and some is through song, or vocal, and, yeah, I just wonder how you treat text as part of the elements in your works.

SHK: Ah, ok. So, I think, I think also, like, because of my intro to my intro, my intro to my work {laughs} I, Robert Creeley, I was thinking about how what I said, talk about this kind of texture in the poetry, texture of the text, and the meaning, I think that was there, all the time. I don't know if it became because of the Robert, I'm sure it was not because of Robert Creeley, but that what I said is very relevant to the way that I deal with text and subtitles. A lot of my work, work, a lot of my films and videos have different languages. And I try to work from both directions. I often know the language that I work with. At least provincially, like locally. I, sometimes when I

work with German text I learn German, as I work on it. And I, I think I was resistant to the idea of the translation, where one thing is original and the other one is translation. Like, when, like I thought it was interesting that Sondra was talking about Wikipedia and all these things sort of uninteresting information that comes up, next to it. Where I'm – I mean, it is important information, but there are other ways to say those things. But that is not the way that language is used in our master narratives, right? So, when I use it, or when I make, create work, I try to show something that cannot be described with those descriptions. But then, it still does get described by using those descriptions. So, that's one thing. So, subtitle is not really a subtitle. A lot of times you will see subtitles that are not translated from one to another, and so forth. And also, I mean, that is not the way that people speak, a lot of the reading of Korean is sort of like a musical thing. When I also showed this, one thing that I should be doing, some time in my life, that I keep not doing, is to talk about my installations, {laughs} and other parts of my work that I never have done, actually, in the architecture, cause my work is very architectural, and it has a lot of objects in it, light, trajectory of the audience is very important, and the performances, and so forth, but, da-da-da-da, the reason that I'm talking about this is, oh, I forgot. I think I lost, it will come back, but. What was I talking about, just now? Just before this! Huh? Text. Which? That it's not a translation. Yes. And then I talked about architecture. Yes, ok, I will talk, it will come back to me, yeah. (00:30:02) Yeah?

Audience: Thanks, Sung. I have two questions.

SHK: Ok.

Audience: Well, I'd like to hear you talk about your use of voice. Sometimes it's singular, sometimes it's kind of plural, both in the music and then when it's just kind of like spoken. I'd love to hear about that, and then also, I wonder if you dream in many languages.

SHK: No, I don't think I dream so much in many languages. I don't, I think it's mostly English. I think it has to do with what you experience, I think. The, and most of my daily life is spoken in English, these days, so, I write in English a lot of times, and I think it's mostly English. I think. But I want to say, most of the time, my dream is silent. Yeah. Maybe. I think that's closer, I think, remember, I don't know, I was walking with somebody the first day that I came to Skowhegan, and I was walking down the path, or up the path, from here to the lower part of the

site, and without light, and that looks like my dream. My dream is always that color, and that kind of atmosphere. And things happen there, whether it's a close-up or not. A lot of times, yeah. First, about music, sometimes, voice becoming choral?

Audience: Yeah, so --

SHK: Oh, ok, like are you talking about *Temper Clay*? Or the first film? Both films, yeah?

Audience: I'm talking about the music, but then also the kind of spoken words --

SHK: Yeah.

Audience: -- so sometimes it's a singular voice, and then sometimes it's a, like a, it sounds like a multitude of people.

SHK: Yeah, yeah.

Audience: Yeah. And also just thinking about, like, I want to hear if you're thinking about interdependence at all.

SHK: My what?

Audience: Interdependence?

SHK: Of, between?

Audience: Between voices, or, like, it's, I think of, like, harmonies as kind of like interdependent, like an interdependent relationship or something.

SHK: Ah, ok.

Audience: Between – but, that's what I think, I wanna know what you think.

SHK: I didn't hear the last part, what?

Audience: I just said, that's what I think, but --

SHK: Ok, so, yeah. This is better, right? Oh, I remember why, I'm sorry, Sondra – I remember why I was talking about architecture. I was talking about architecture because when *Temper Clay*

was shown, it was in a place where, it used to be an oil tank, the first time that it was shown, and I knew that it was gonna be shown there, so before, it's one of these occasions where I knew what the art, where I'm going to show before even starting to think about making it. So, from the very beginning I knew that that is a space I wanna make. And it was an oil tank, and when I visited the site, even, if the person is standing here, the person is here, and talking, I couldn't hear this person. Because of the echo, reverberation, you know, so, the, to show multiple films, I showed four different films there, it was very, very, I have to think about how to do it. And, in *Temper*, and another thing that I knew was that it was the first time the Korean language will be, Korean language, I mean, I didn't decide to film in Korean language, but it was just mentioned to me, that, Asian artists not being shown in this place. And I was the third person to ever have a solo show there. And I was very surprised, because so many people could have had, so I knew that I wanted to have, I was curious to introduce a language, sound of the language. This is something that I wanted to do. And I knew the complex institution of the architecture, so what I did was I made eight, I thought about the idea of unison, so, in church, even though when they sing together, when they speak together, it might not be the most beautiful, or recognizable sound, just because two other people, and two other people in front of you, in the back, and left and right, are speaking at the same time, the same text, you can hear what is going on. So there is the idea of a group speech and musical speech that is happening, because of that unison, yeah. So, so, I made eight sets of speakers that are in a very low volume, that you could hear perfectly well in very good speakers when you sit. (00:35:08) So I made these different chairs. So the audience who want to watch the whole film can sit and hear in a very low volume – low volume, but it was loud because it was right next to their ears, yeah? But when you stand up, once you stand up, it becomes eight sets of speakers, a unison of sound, it becomes a sound, as if it's like one sound, yeah. So, for example, that, when I just showed the film, I don't talk about it, and what those chairs look like, or how I designed it, what are the names, or how I orient, designed the space, kind of things are not really in this kind of, inside of them. But in answer your question, and I think it relates to your question, and I was, the, I can talk about, for example, that song that is being played in *Temper Clay*, what is the cause of thunder, for instance, in relation to what I talked about, when I talked about the distance between whatever you're dealing with, whatever you're seeing, let's say, simplified. Whatever you're seeing in yourself, when you see the thunder, usually, they're outside of you, they don't, unless they hit you, right? And so you

see, you know the shape of it, and you know generally the sound of it, and you know that there is a separation between sound and the vision, normally, unless you're in a dangerous area. And there are, to imagine what is a cause of thunder, you can explain it scientifically. But you can also explain it musically. So imagine, a composer being able to compose thunder. So, because you are able to dissect, or make what you call harmony, or dissonance around different sound and rhythm, so when you play it, it sounds like thunder. So, you can create thunder, which means that you are inside thunder, and you are no longer outside it. And, this is what I mean by the distance between, like, the phenomena and outside, and that also happens a lot between architecture and you, and culture and you, or the history and you, or even in relationship between, intimate relationships, sometimes you're inside and sometimes you're outside of this person. And, so that. Yeah. One interesting fact, I think – there was a break between questions. The, in *Temper Clay*, that's the place that I grew up, Hyundai Apartments, and it explains a little bit about what the neighborhood unit is. And that place is considered to be very, very, at least now, Korea has developed economically, and drastically, since I left, 1996, between 1996 and now it's like a, like a totally different image of that peninsula, and even when I left, it was a very problematic and very famous area, cause it was talked about a lot as a place where a lot of rich people live. So in the neighborhood unit, as you can imagine, it happens in the United States in various area, with the racial segregation. If you divide the unit into neighborhood unit, what happens is that different kinds of people make friendships together. Like, innocent people like me {laughs} growing up in a place, without knowing where you're growing up, you realize that all your friends are from a same class, and they start to have a very, very similar political beliefs, and their ideas are limited by the education that that neighborhood gives. And, so what you're making is future generations' alliances to each other. And architecture is doing that, right? So, that's one thing. Another thing is that the woman whose hand that you see in the very beginning, who looks at the hand, and she keeps appearing, that is the nanny who raised me. So, she, when I was a baby. So I was very interested in this, in most of the people that you see, except for the young people, there's another hand, older man's hand, that's a person who keeps the house of my father's summer house. So, I was interested in re-hiring people, or having a new connection, with the people that I used to know, and what, one is that I was curious about them. I, because once you, like for instance, domestic workers, or any kind of family business, employees, you, because I'm not the owner of that business, or the house, I am there all the time, but I see it from

the outside. (00:40:20) I know my position, as you grow older, who I am, right? So, I was, I was interested in getting to know these people from the other side, and whatever that, the other side is. And the other side is not, is not, I'm not saying that there are two sides, and I was in one side, and there's the other side, and it becomes complete. Yeah? It was about changing, yeah? I'm gonna stop there. Yeah, yeah.

Audience: Hey, can you hear me? I just wanted to ask - thank you for that, by the way - what is it that you're looking for as an editor?

SHK: What is what?

Audience: You're looking for as an editor.

SHK: What am I looking for as an editor.

Audience: Yeah.

SHK: I feel like I should know, because editing is my favorite part of the process, a lot of times, actually. In terms of the video making. What is your, what is your goal? I want an example. Like, what is your goal?

Audience: Ok. {laughter} I was just wondering, because some of the images that you showed us, there's like a sort of duration between, you know, each action, or each performed action, and you kind of move through various forms of, like, text, and image, and things like that. So I was just wondering, in a very, it can be as abstract as you would like it to be, like --

SHK: Ah, ok.

Audience: -- what are you looking for as an editor?

SHK: Ok, ok, I understand. So, I think, for example, *Temper Clay*, I'm really curious, actually -- how many people know what *King Lear* is? If you don't know what, if you have never heard, you don't have to have read it; if you have never heard of *King Lear*, could you raise your hand? *King Lear*. You've never heard of *King Lear*. Ok, it's different. I was just wondering, like, I can talk about that later, but *King Lear* was an original text for *Temper Clay*. And it's a Shake, Shakespeare's play -- yeah. Shakespeare's play, and part of the story, there's a very complex,

amazing story and a script and turned into many different amazing plays, as well, but part of that story is about the father and three daughters' relationship. It starts with, it doesn't start with how that aging father became so powerful; the play is not about how one person becomes powerful. The play is about the powerful person in his old age decision to distribute the power to three daughters. That is a very, very first scene. So it's a, the whole play is about distribution. When I talked about neighborhood unit, and what that does to the posterity, and what, how the relationship, who grew up in that place, are confined by some kind of trajectories. Yeah? Are defined by the architecture. So, these three daughters are performing, the king says, in front of everybody, 'Tell me how much you love me. And based on that speech, I'll give you the amount of land that is, that you deserve.' So first daughter says, like, really good things, and then, ok, good. Happy. And the second daughter says a similar thing, and then he's also happy, and then you're gonna get something. And the third daughter, Cordelia, she is the king's favorite. And he's very excited to hear what she wants to say. This all happens in the very first scene. And she says, 'I love you,' I mean, I cannot really quote it, but she says something along the line of, I love you no more and no less. She talks about how she does not want to perform the love in front of all these people. So, there is one thing, is the love connection that the people have, and then there's a performance of love, that you have to show other people. (00:44:59) And she thinks that that's fake. I got distracted again. {laughter} So, that is – oh, ok, so that is the original text of *King Lear*. *King Lear*, in London, this was shown in London, it's very difficult to not know *King Lear*, because it's being made all the time by famous actors, it's, like, in the textbook, you know, they know *King Lear*. It's a cliché. If you work with, it's almost cliché, yeah. The only way that it defies the idea of cliché is because the text is so great. There's a beauty in it, yeah. So, when I base my film with *King Lear*, in a place where all those people, most of the audience, who are British, know the text, how, what do I, how, what can I bring, also, I'm not making a feature film. There, I was very interested in the, what people know already. In a, when you watch a film, or when you look at a painting, or even, like, people, when you look at a face, you are always looking for eyes and nose and lips, you know, this kind of, the way that, and I'm not doing, I'm not talking about in terms of the research, I'm talking in terms of, like, a very basic intuition to look for a story. So, I, I was, when I was editing, or when I was writing, my interest was how many stories or elements are the things that people know already. And what is a repetition of these stories, for example, like, a guy who is not married, or, looking for a wife. The suspension

of, like a mystery or a suspense that you can have, thinking that this is gonna be a murder story. And then, the connection between that and what comes next, is, was sort of like the driving force for my editing. I think that's sort of like what you're asking. So, that, yeah.

Audience: Hi. I wanted to ask, and I think this is related to Cameron's question about editing, and also Sondra's question about voices in your work. I wanted to ask how silence functions, and in particular, I wanted to ask about a few moments in both of the films. So, in the first film, you know, there's, I remember, like these two people who are performing actions in front of the camera, they're like jumping, and I can kind of, you know, without there being sound, I can kind of hear, there's like this, you know, there's stomping that's obviously happening as they're jumping. But there's no sound, and like later, they suddenly appear again, and they're speaking, and there's sound again. And then, I had, like another question, like the second film, there's this sound that, it sounds maybe like walking through the brush of the forest, or the, the nature that the scene is taking place in, but, you know, there's this, like, hammering, and you're expecting a noise, like you're creating an expectation, of the hammering sound, and then it doesn't happen. So I really like those moments, because, like, there's this kind of ebb and flow of, like, yeah, I mean, how you're deciding to use sound is really interesting to me, so I guess, I wanted to ask how you're using silence in those moments.

SHK: I think, like, I draw, also, I draw a lot, and when you draw, whatever you draw is the only thing that is left. Like, before you draw, nothing is there. Unless you're Steve. {laughter} So, when you, when I edit, to also answer Cameron's question, when I edit, or when I make something, I think about what I want in there. So, nothing that I don't want in there is there. I, I am drawn to that kind of process, and a lot of works, whether it's text or drawings, I'm interested in that world. Not always, but I think when I was making this especially. And also it still, I remember, like when I was talking to Steve, he talked about, he likes things to merge, what is next to, what is, like, one next to another. I was thinking, when I was shooting in black and white, how the difference between two pixels is not because of the color. (00:49:56) But because of something else. So I was interested in shapes and texture. And I didn't want things to be defined because of the colors, which is how a lot of people are used to, and watching videos these days, not always the case, right? So that is the world that I wanted to experiment in, and that's how it was there. And the sound, too, like, you get, there are some filmmakers who are

working this way, like people, some filmmakers I was really influenced by, for example, Pasolini works with dub sound all the time. It's not like he didn't have the facility to use synch sound. But you dub it. And I'm very interested in this process, where things are separated, and you add it, because it's needed. So, for example, foleys, I do the foleys, not, my microphone that records everything very well, but something, a texture, like a very ideal texture, or texture that, desirable texture, or desirable things that you want in your frame, are in there, because of that. And the way that you – anyway, yeah. Does it – yeah. Does it make sense? Or were you asking something – you have a sort of, you look unsatisfied face. Does it, is that what you were asking?

Audience: I think that was a good answer. {laughs}

SHK: Ok.

Audience: Hi, thank you for the presentation. Could you example more about the role of gender -
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SHK: What?

Audience: The role of gender, and how the gender functions, and the gender roles in the two films.

SHK: Second film, in *Temper Clay*, the, it's just, plays are very interesting, because it was made in a certain period. I mean, Shakespeare was a writer during Queen Elizabeth's time. Yeah? So one can say, oh, Queen Elizabeth, she was a ruler, and it was a woman, you know? But, you know, everybody else was men, so, I mean, so, you, like it's not, you cannot just simply say it that way, right? And that text, if you read the text, you can think of it as – a lot of people know *King Lear* as a text that is about aging, and, or, to children it is taught as, like, being disloyal to your father. You know, first two daughters happen to be very bad daughters, if you turn this into a kids' story. And the third daughter, even though she won't perform the love, later is the one who helps him. And who the king misses. I mean, that's a very silly, like a very simplistic way of describing this thing. But, the interpretation of the play is very different. Like, sometimes, a lot of the play said, when you see the place of the script, when the king, like, the last line, 'derogate body, never spring a babe.' You know, all this, this is a curse that the king is putting on his own daughters. And he makes all these very problematic curse, curses to the daughters. So,

you could, and, but the daughters are also very cruel to the father. But in the scene, sometimes the daughter turn around, and audience sees the face of the daughter as she hears what her fathers are saying to her. Then, this is a very different way than this daughter being very proud about her evilness, and then the aging king is saying something bad to the daughter because the daughter is not ungrateful for everything that he's given her, right? So, the play, it's not me who's doing this, but the play already has these layers, complex layers in it, and it was made hundreds of years ago. I, when I was making this thing, I was more interested in things like the '70's is when my mom was in her late twenties to, no, thirties, she was in her thirties, yeah? She was a working person, but if you want to work, somebody else has to raise the kid. Who is raising the kid? My nanny was raising the kid. Who's my nanny? She grew up in a farm, and because they have many kids, and they don't have the money to raise the kids, they send their kids, seventeen year old, fifteen year old, sometimes thirteen or ten, and sometimes it's like, seven or eight. This is what was happening after – and this still happens in many different countries, right? In the '50's, '60's, and the '70's, even when I was a kid. Right? So, the woman having jobs are interlinked directly with another woman coming in a problematic working area. I mean, this is like a very, it was a very huge problem and still is because these people are now being replaced by a lot of the Korean Chinese workers, different, you know, as the economy grows, different groups of people replace another group of people. (00:55:11) And those people who come out of that situation don't inherit the situation, they move on to another class. But that class still exists, it's not that that class disappears, as we know. And US has its own problem; other countries too. So, when I was working with this woman, or a house, my parents' house, but in Korea you can also say, a lot of people say 'My father's house.' Or, my father's ambition to live in this kind of real estate, investment, right? And then it becomes a very expensive place, after twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years, and also having another house, like a summer house, where he wants to retire in. This kind of dream, and this is not only my father's, it's many people's dreams, we know. This is, my father is not the only example, right? So that world structure is there, and I was interested in these substitution of the role of nurturing. Posterity. Being replaced by different people, constantly. Yeah. That's one example, gender, yeah. Is my voice too calm? {laughter} Should I talk like this? Ok. Good time to – what time is it? Oh yeah, good time to stop. Yeah. Yeah. Thank you. {applause, cheering}

END OF RECORDING