

Yona Lee:

이요나:

*An
Arrangement
for a Room*
in 공간
Seoul

배치 서울

2024. 5.24. - 8.4.

Hanok,
Staircase,
Rooftop Garden,
Art Sonje Center

Curated by
Sunjung Kim (Artistic Director, Art
Sonje Center), Heehyun Cho (Head
of Exhibitions, Art Sonje Center)

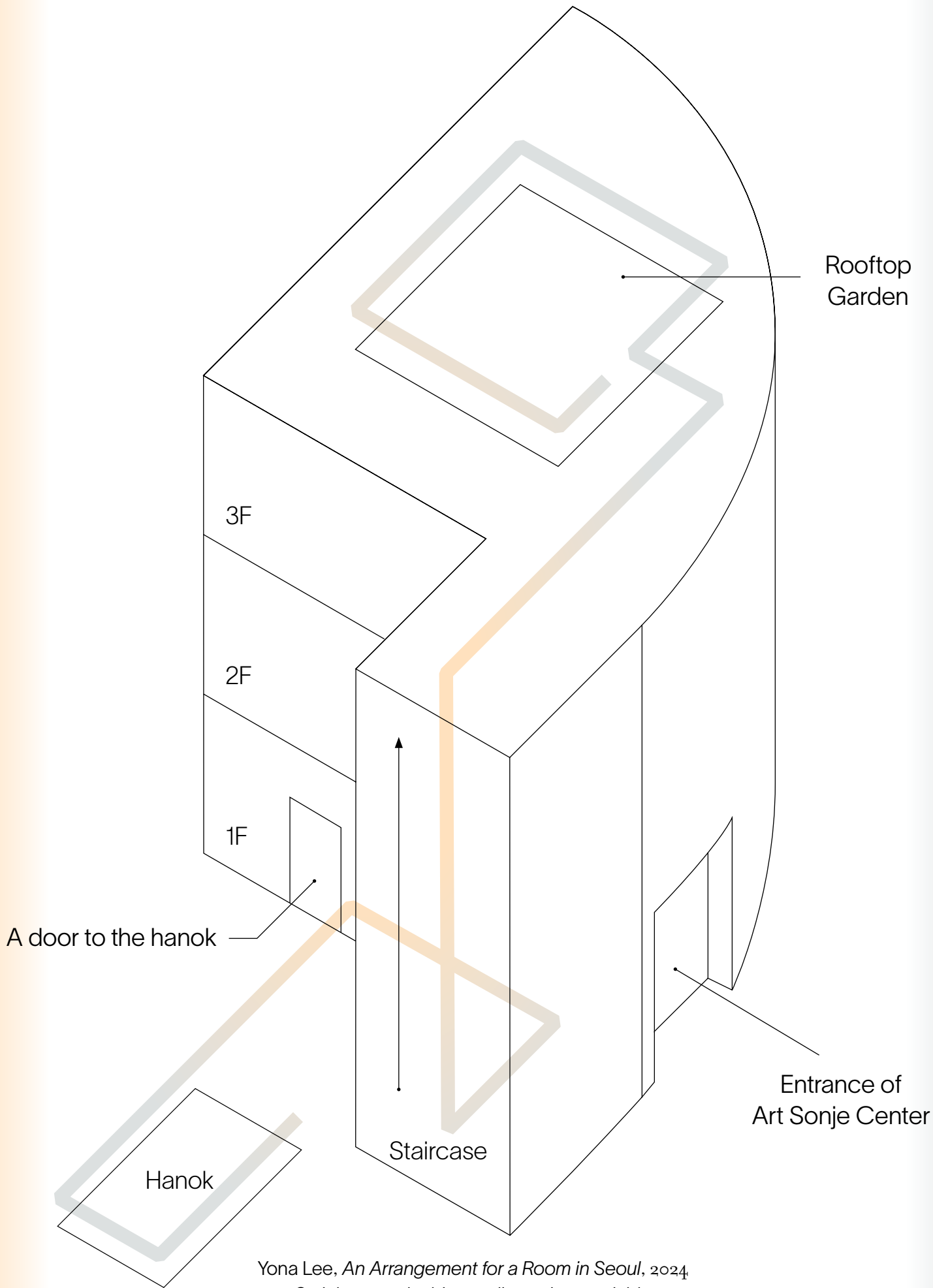
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Floor Plan



Yona Lee, *An Arrangement for a Room in Seoul*, 2024,
Stainless steel, objects, dimensions variable

Yona Lee has broken down the various binary distinctions and boundaries within social structures by linking stainless steel tubes—a universal component of urban environments around the world—to everyday objects. Twisting the conventional ideas and norms associated with the spaces where her work is displayed, even as she accepts their original architectural structures and grammar, her work erases vertical hierarchies and horizontal boundaries of space. A site-specific exhibition that connects the museum's hanok structure, internal staircase, and rooftop garden, *Yona Lee: An Arrangement for a Room in Seoul*, Lee physically and conceptually wipes away the boundaries between the building interior and exterior or between private and public settings, while weaving together the various layers of time and speed present in Seoul as a city.

Lee's work *An Arrangement for a Room in Seoul* (2024), which shares its title with the exhibition, uses the low structure of a hanok house outside the museum as a starting point to present a direction of movement up the interior's vertical staircase toward its highest point at the rooftop garden. Conventional ideas about the exhibition space are disrupted by the placement of objects that seem all too personal and practical to be shown in an exhibition setting: the bedroom furniture and bath, kitchen, and cleaning items visible in the exhibition pathways leading between the building's interior and exterior and its different levels. Blending together spatial hierarchies and structures, the placements of these objects cause visitors to question the behaviors asked of them as viewers, while guiding them to break free from norms and to respond and interact with the work directly.

The small hanok building used in the exhibition has been filled with stainless steel tube sculptures that leave it unable to operate as a space. In contrast, the broad rooftop garden has sculptures only on its periphery, while the center has been left empty—dramatically showing the contrast between the two spaces' densities. As someone who was born in Korea and moved to New Zealand in her childhood, Yona Lee has had different experiences at different times with the differing densities and everyday tempos of cities in those two countries. She uses the stainless steel tubes as a medium to link together the urban movements and speeds that she has perceived, layering them with her own personal experiences: Seoul's crowded subway lines, the tight intervals between stations, the bustling transfer stations, the crowds of people and lines of buses waiting for traffic lights, and landscapes flashing by quickly outside the window. By combining her tubes with the kinds of items found in transit experiences—bus stop request bells, hanging straps,

traffic lights, benches, and more—she takes the differing layers of time in the traditional hanok and contemporary art museum setting where her work is displayed and causes them to operate as a single time in the present moment.

The exhibition follows along with the museum's architectural space, expanding beyond the last stop on its pathway (the rooftop garden) and into the actual Seoul landscape. Lee's creations become part of the cityscape, lighting up the darkness in the Seoul evening and on the museum's roof. Yona Lee: An Arrangement for a Room in Seoul takes a space that is divided by contemporary society's demands for efficiency and ties it together with time that is disappearing as it is compressed by technological advancements. Erasing the boundaries of binary thinking and concepts, it holds onto the moments we are forgetting amid the fast pace of the city.

About the artist

Yona Lee (b. 1986)

Yona Lee is an artist who makes sculptures that combine structures of stainless steel tubing with everyday materials of urban and domestic spaces. Her work ranges in scale from tabletop objects to installations that occupy entire buildings and interior architecture. Lee's work has recently been the subject of solo museum exhibitions at the Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand (2022); Dunedin Public Art Gallery, New Zealand (2020); Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia (2018-2019); and City Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand (2018-2019). Her work has been featured in large-scale thematic exhibitions including the Busan Biennale, South Korea (2020); 15th Lyon Biennale of Contemporary Art, France (2019); and Changwon Sculpture Biennale, South Korea (2016).

Opening Hours

noon-7 p.m. (closed Mondays)

Admission

10,000 KRW (25-64 years)

7,000 KRW (19-24 years or Art Pass cardholders)

5,000 KRW (9-18 years)

Free (8 and under, over 65, Visitors with Disabilities, ICOM/CIMAM/SCM cardholders)

Docent-guided Tour

Every Friday to Sunday at 2 p.m and 4 p.m.

Duration: 30 minutes

Cost: Free for ticket holders

Reservations can be made in advance on the website

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Graphic Design: REMOTE

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