

가까운 미래에서  
온 사과문

An Apology  
from the Near  
Future

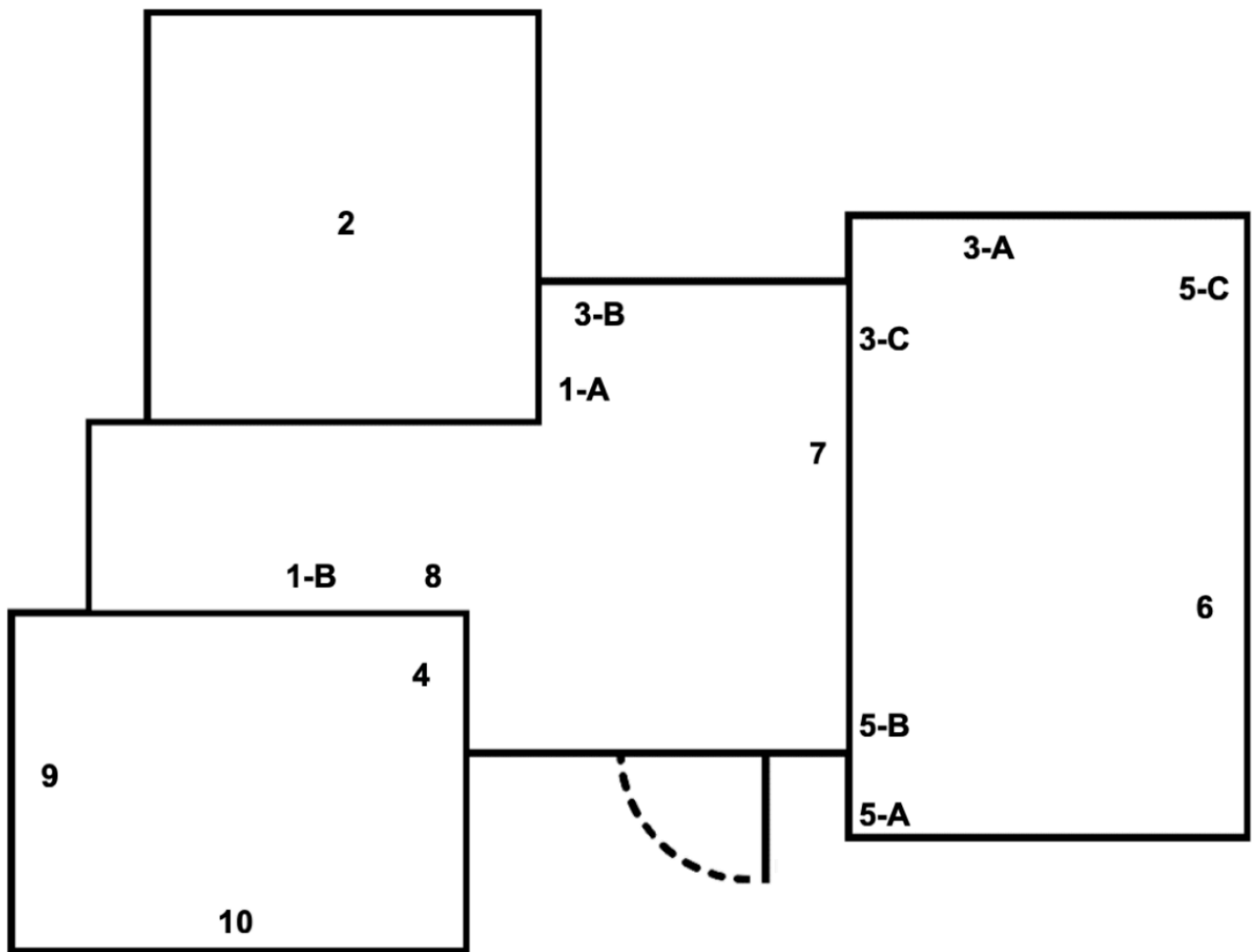
최수현

Soohyun Choi

I was invited by the curator Daniel Lee to take part in the group exhibition titled 'Surplus Value' at Euljiro OF in Seoul, Korea from 4 June to 3 July 2022.

Daniel asked three artists (Bangjoo Kim, Gihun Noh and myself) to either create new work or present an existing work roughly related to Artist Basic Income. I made a piece of work titled 'An Apology from the Near Future'.

'An Apology from the Near Future' is divided into two installations. One is the sound work in a dark room, and the other is an audience-participatory installation outside of the room.



1-A, 1-B

### **An Apology from the Near Future**

A3 Posters, Instruction on the wall, Acrylic plate with the artist's bank detail, certificate of authenticity stamp, audience participation performance, 2022

2

### **An Apology from the Near Future**

05:33, stereo sound installation, 2022

An Apology from the Near Future  
05:33, stereo sound installation, 2022

[Click here to listen](#)

## English Script of An Apology from the Near Future

*Thank you for coming to my exhibition. It's really nice to meet you.*

*It may sound meretricious, but I mean it.*

*Now that you've come here paying a small sum of money, you might be a pretty serious art audience.*

*I think you may look, no, listen to my art diligently.*

*But unfortunately, I couldn't present to you the art I wanted to show you today.*

*It's not just because I was too lazy, travelling, or too busy to prepare my real art.*

*But for many reasons, I couldn't make the art that I wanted to make, and I have ended up telling you a story in this dark room.*

*Today, perhaps, we're here to share the reasons.*

*As you already know, all Koreans, including artists, receive a basic living income from 2025. Of course, many people opposed the decision, but as the economic value of culture and art was gradually proven, there were growing calls for financial freedom for artists with unstable incomes, and even art practices that do not create immediate economic value were recognized as a form of labour.*

*I was thrilled about this decision. The fact that a certain amount of money gets deposited into my bank account every month eased some of the heavy burden that I have been bearing inside me. I was excited to think that artists will be all free to make art as there will be no need to work for an income outside of working as an artist.*

*But as time passed by and now that it's 2030, I'm living in fear. Because I receive a basic living income as an artist, all my artistic activities are recorded and managed by government agencies. And every month I need to write a report that*

*justifies my artistic practice. The political nature of the work and hostile remarks toward the current government are censored, and the art should be faithful to the norms for promoting the cultural literacy of the Korean designated by the government. If the penalty points are accumulated and my art does not meet the standards of art recognized by the government, my basic living income will be suspended. Additionally, since some of the funding must be used to promote my art practice, I often encounter situations where I don't have the autonomy of expenditure, therefore I make unnecessary expenditures rather than buying things that I need.*

*Another problem is that as an artist, it has become harder than ever to generate income in other ways. Galleries no longer feel a need to pay a fair fee to artists. And the government started privatizing public services in reaction to the basic income and living on basic income alone became more and more difficult. There were fewer support programs for artists, and more organizations displayed artists' works without paying artist fees. Therefore, artists who meet the government's art guidelines or whose works are actively sold, and who have financial leeway could only continue their artistic practice. In this current state, I no longer remember the initial art that I was trying to make. I may be too immature to think this way. In these concerns, I gradually return to the question of what the original purpose of art is.*

*So the original purpose of art is...[confused and overlapping voices]*

*In the near future, I hope I can greet you with my real art in a bright place.*



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The installation outside the room is a social experiment of selling the print which is a visual representation of the sound work transferred on the piece of paper. The visitors can purchase the poster-artwork without help from the gallery or a dealer. By stamping the certificate of authenticity stamp at the back of the poster and writing down the price they want to pay, they are atomonously buying a piece of artwork. The purchase amount of the work should be paid directly to the artist's bank account. Without the certificate of authenticity stamp, the poster will not be validated as an original work.

무인 작품 구매 안내서  
An Independent Purchase Artwork Guide

1. 본 안내서는 을지로 오브에서 2022년 6월 4일부터 7월 3일까지 진행되는 전시 ‘잉여 가치’에서 보여지는 최수현 작가의 ‘가까운 미래에서 온 사과문’의 실물 작품의 무인 구매를 위한 안내서입니다.

This guideline is for making an independent purchase of Soohyun Choi’s physical artwork titled “An Apology from the Near Future”, which is shown at the exhibition “Surplus Value” held at Euljiro Of from June 4th to July 3rd, 2022.

2. 본 작품을 구매하기 위해서는 구비된 진품 증명 도장을 포스터 작품 뒷면에 구매자가 스스로 찍고 구매자가 구매하고자 하는 구매 금액과 구매 날짜를 구비된 펜으로 작성합니다.

In order to purchase this artwork, the buyer should stamp the provided proof of authenticity of the artwork seal on the back of the artwork and write down the date and the purchase price that buyer wants to pay.

3. 작품 가격은 구매자가 스스로 책정하며 계좌 이체 최소 금액인 1원부터 구매가 가능합니다. 최대 금액은 책정되어 있지 않으며 구매자가 스스로 그 금액을 판단하여 결정합니다.

The price of the work is determined by the buyer and can be purchased from KRW 1, the minimum bank transferable amount. The maximum amount is not set, and the buyer decides the amount by herself.

4. 구매자는 본인이 소지한 스마트 폰과 같은 기기를 통해 비치된 작가의 계좌 번호로 작성한 금액을 송금합니다. 송금 후 작품을 가져가실 수 있습니다.

The buyer transfers the amount of money to the artist’s account number provided by using her personal device such as smart phone. You can take the work after sending the money.

5. 구매자는 작품을 갤러리 관계자 혹은 바이어 없이 스스로 구매하게 되며 구매 과정 역시 스스로 진행합니다. 하지만 구매 어려움이 있을 시 전시 지킴이에게 도움을 요청합니다.

The buyer purchases the work on her own without a gallery official or middleman, and the purchase process will be carried out on her own. However, if there is any difficulty in purchasing, please ask the exhibition invigilator for help.

6. 작품을 계좌 송금 없이 가져가는 것은 불가능합니다. 이 작품은 작가와 구매자 간의 직접 거래이므로 을지로 오브를 통해 다른 지불 수단을 사용하는 것을 금합니다.

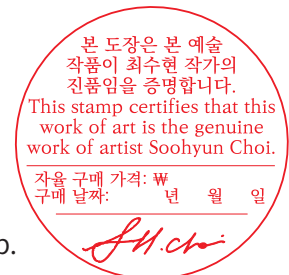
It is not possible to take the work without payment. This work is a direct transaction between the artist and the buyer, so you are prohibited from using other means of payment through Euljiro Of.

7. 이 거래 행위를 통해 구매자는 ‘가까운 미래에서 온 사과문’ 포스터 작품의 퍼포먼스 참여자로 참여하게 됩니다.

Through this transaction, the buyer takes part as a performance participant in the physical artwork ‘An Apology from the Near Future’.

\*진품 증명 도장 사용 시 옆의 이미지를 참고해 주시기 바랍니다.

Please refer to the image next to it when using the authentication stamp.





(left) An Independent Purchase Artwork Guide for the visitors to buy the poster

(right) Installation view of the stack of posters, certificate of authenticity stamp, and the bank details

By authenticating the reproducible print, each print obtains a status of genuinely authentic piece of art. Unlike NFT, the reproduced prints are all equally original as long as a buyer had followed the purchase guide.

I was curious to know if anybody would buy my poster and how much would they pay. I knew some friends and members of my family would buy to support me. There was a case that my mom's friend sent me money as a donation without fully understanding the work. She said, "I couldn't read what those small words say."

As an ever so emerging artist, my work has very little economical value, therefore, I thought if people buy the poster, it would be as an appreciation of the whole work as an installation, or they were pleased with the aesthetic of the poster for a decorative purpose. Or, they would like to take part of exhibition by participating as a performer and the poster is a concomitant of the participation.

I wasn't sure if I could include the money I received from the friends and family, but I realised that this kind of transaction actually happens in the 'real' art world. Friends often buy a friend's artwork and sometimes pay less and more depends on the situation. My mom sent me 200,000 won (equivalent of \$150), which is the highest amount I received in this experiment. I thought this price is not realistic, but the prices of high art out there are not realistic anyways.

# 가까운 미래에서 온 사과문 An Apology from the Near Future

제 전시에 와 주셨군요. 만나게 되어 정말 반갑습니다.

오래 하는 말이기도 하지만, 진심입니다.

소정의 금액을 내고 이 곳에 오신 걸 보니, 당신은 꽤 진지한 예술 관객일지 모릅니다.

제 예술을 열심히 봐주시 않을까, 아니 들어주시 않을까 생각이 듭니다.

하지만 안타깝게도 제가 보여드리고 싶었던 예술을 이 자리에서는 보여드릴 수 없게 되었어요.

단지 게으르기 때문이요, 혹은 여행 중이라, 너무 바빠서, 본래의 예술을 준비하지 못한 것은 아니에요.

하지만 여러 가지 이유로 저는 제가 만들고자 했던 예술을 만들지 못하고 단지 이 어두운 방 안에서 여러분들에게 이야기를 건네게 되었습니다.

오늘은 어쩌면 그 이유들을 공유하기 위한 자리입니다.

이미 알고 계시겠지만 2025년부터 예술가를 포함한 모든 대한민국 국민은 기본생활소득을 받게 되었어요. 물론 이 결정에 반대하는 사람들도 넘쳐났지만 점차 문화 예술이 가지는 경제적 가치가 입증되면서 소득이 불안정한 예술가들의 예술적 행위를 위한 금전적 자유가 필요하다는 목소리가 커졌고, 당장의 경제적 가치를 창출하지 못하는 예술이라고 그 일을 노동으로 인정해 정부 차원의 지원이 시작되었습니다.

저는 이 결정에 환호했습니다. 일정한 금액이 매달 제 통장으로 입금된다는 것은 제 마음 속에 있던 어떤 무거운 짐을 덜어주는 듯했습니다. 더 이상 저의 예술과 돈을 베투는 다른 일을 병행하지 않아도 된다는 생각에, 우리 모두가 자유롭게 예술을 할 수 있다는 생각에 신이 났습니다.

하지만 조금씩 시간이 지나고 2030년이 된 지금, 저는 두려움이라는 감정에 휩싸여 살고 있습니다. 저는 예술가로서 기본생활소득을 지급받기 때문에 저의 모든 예술적 행위는 정부 기관에 의해 기록되고 관리됩니다. 그리고 매달 저는 저의 예술적 행위의 정당성을 증명하는 보고서를 작성합니다. 작품 내용의 정치성 및 현 정부를 향한 적대적 발언은 검열되며, 예술은 정부가 지정한 대한민국 국민의 문화적 소양 증진을 위한 규범에 충실해야 합니다. 별점이 쌓여 정부에서 인정하는 예술의 기준에 부합하지 못하면 기본생활소득은 중지됩니다. 그리고 지원금의 일정 부분은 예술 활동의 증진을 위해 사용되어야 하기에 정부가 지정한 명확한 가이드라인 안에서 저는 지출의 자주성 없이 불필요한 지출을 하고 제 삶에 필요한 것은 사지 못하는 상황을 마주치곤 합니다.

또 다른 문제는 예술가로서 다른 방식의 수입을 발생시키는 것이 이전보다 더욱더 어려워졌다는 것입니다. 작가들이 기본 소득을 얻게 되자 갤러리들은 미약하게나마 가지고 있던 작가들에게 정당한 수당을 지급하지 않는 것에 대한 죄책감을 단번에 털어버렸습니다. 그리고 정부는 기본생활소득을 준다는 명분으로 공공적 차원의 서비스들을 민영화하기 시작했고 기본 소득만으로는 생활을 하기 어려운 상황이 되었어요. 작가들을 위한 지원 프로그램들도 줄어든 상황에서 점차 많은 기관들이 아티스트 피 (Artist fee)에 대한 언급이 없이 작가들의 작품을 전시했죠. 결국 작품 판매가 활발하게 진행되는 정부의 예술 가이드라인에 맞는 예술가들과 경제적 여유가 있는 작가만이 작가 생활을 지속하게 되는 상황이 발생하고 있습니다.

이러한 상황 속에서 저는 제가 하고자 하던 본래의 예술을 더 이상 기억하지 못합니다. 저는 어쩌면 너무 침울한 소리를 하고 있는지 모릅니다. 저는 이 고민들 속에서 본래 예술의 목적이 무엇인가에 대한 질문으로 점차 회귀하곤 합니다.

그러니까 예술 본래의 목적이...[웅성대며 울리는 혼란스러운 목소리들]

가까운 미래에는 밝은 곳에서 저의 진짜 예술과 함께 인사드릴 수 있기를 바랍니다.

Thank you for coming to my exhibition. It's really nice to meet you.

It may sound meretricious, but I mean it.

Now that you've come here paying a small sum of money, you might be a pretty serious art audience. [why not say, "you must be pretty serious about art"?

I think you may look, no, listen to my art diligently.

But unfortunately, I couldn't present to you the art I wanted to show you today.

It's not just because I was too lazy, travelling, or too busy to prepare my real art.

But for many reasons, I couldn't make the art that I wanted to make, and I have ended up telling you a story in this dark room.

Today, perhaps, we're here to share the reasons.

As you already know, all Koreans, including artists, receive a basic living income from 2025. Of course, many people opposed the decision, but as the economic value of culture and art was gradually proven, there were growing calls for financial freedom for artists with unstable incomes, and even art practices that do not create immediate economic value were recognized as a form of labour.

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So the original purpose of art is...[confused and overlapping voices]

In the near future, I hope I can greet you with my real art in a bright place.





(left and right) Audience participation of the installation

During the month of the exhibition, 58 posters were sold in total. The highest amount paid is 200,000 Korean won and the lowest is 1 Korean won. The average price of the print is 11600 Korean won which is 7.5 in Pound sterling, 8.5 in Euro and 9 in US dollar.



Written by Soohyun Choi

More information:  
<http://soohyunchoi.me>

