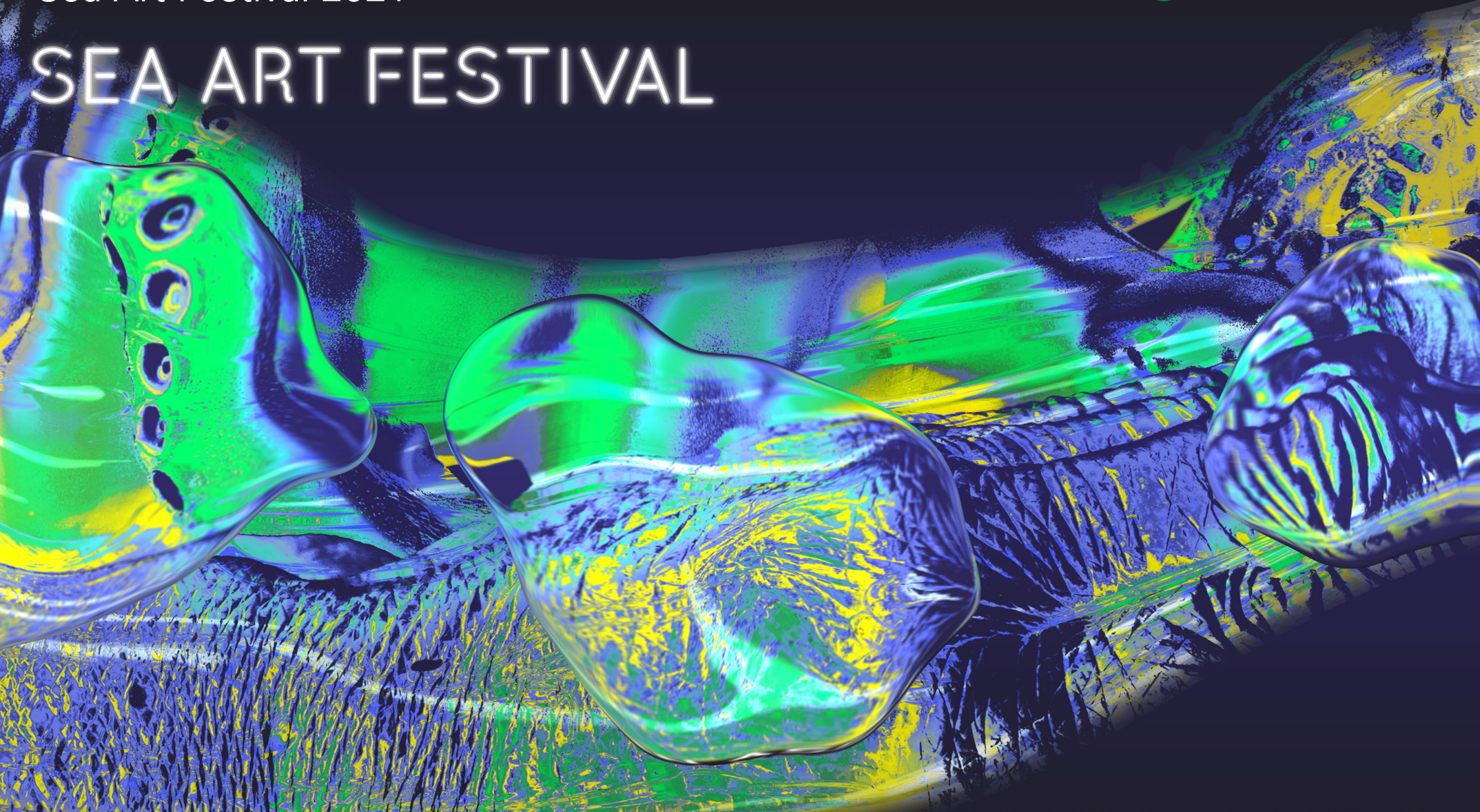


Sea Art Festival 2021

 부산비엔날레조직위원회
Busan Biennale Organizing Committee

SEA ART FESTIVAL



NON-/HUMAN ASSEMBLAGES

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NON-/HUMAN ASSEMBLAGES

Busan Biennale Organizing Committee

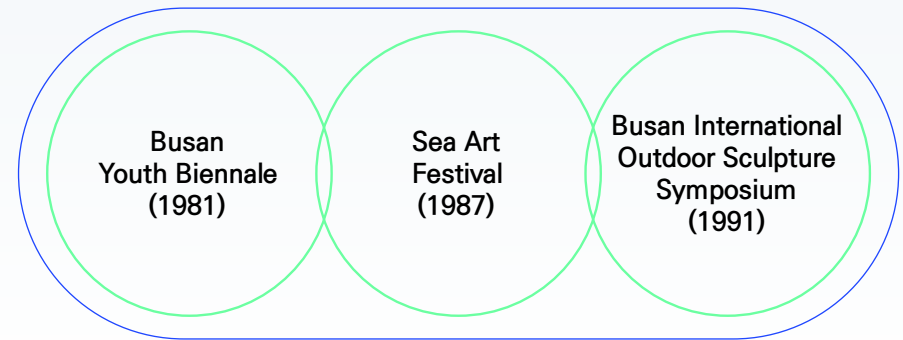
BUSAN BIENNALE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

is a non-profit organisation funded by
Busan Metropolitan City.

The Organizing Committee was first established in 1999 as Busan International Art Festival Organizing Committee and changed its name in 2001 as the 'Busan Biennale'. After then, through opening the Busan Biennales and promoting and expanding Korean art culture and inspired the specific characteristics of the local arts and their productions in purposes of improving international stance of the local art and at the same time consolidating contemporary art within local.

The Busan Biennale, created spontaneously together with Busan Youth Biennale, Sea Arts Festival and Busan International Outdoor Sculpture Symposium, has become a pride of the local art in Busan. The last iterations of the Busan Biennale have been highly acclaimed as their highly elaborated exhibitions that aptly represented the status quo of contemporary art along with experimental artworks invited.

Besides, the Busan Biennale has become a festive event in which citizens can actively participate. Bringing together with experimental contemporary art exhibitions and diverse local programs, we will put our best efforts to establish Busan as a cultural place.



PURPOSE

Busan Biennale is a comprehensive art festival that integrated three different festival that had been held in the city: Busan Youth Biennale, Busan Sea Festival, Busan International Outdoor Sculpture Symposium.



DIRECTION

With a long history of serving as an art stronghold in Asian, Busan is a perfect place to host an art festival for the region and beyond. The biennale art event was intended to present an easy interpretation of the hard-to-understand contemporary art and make it more accessible to the general public.

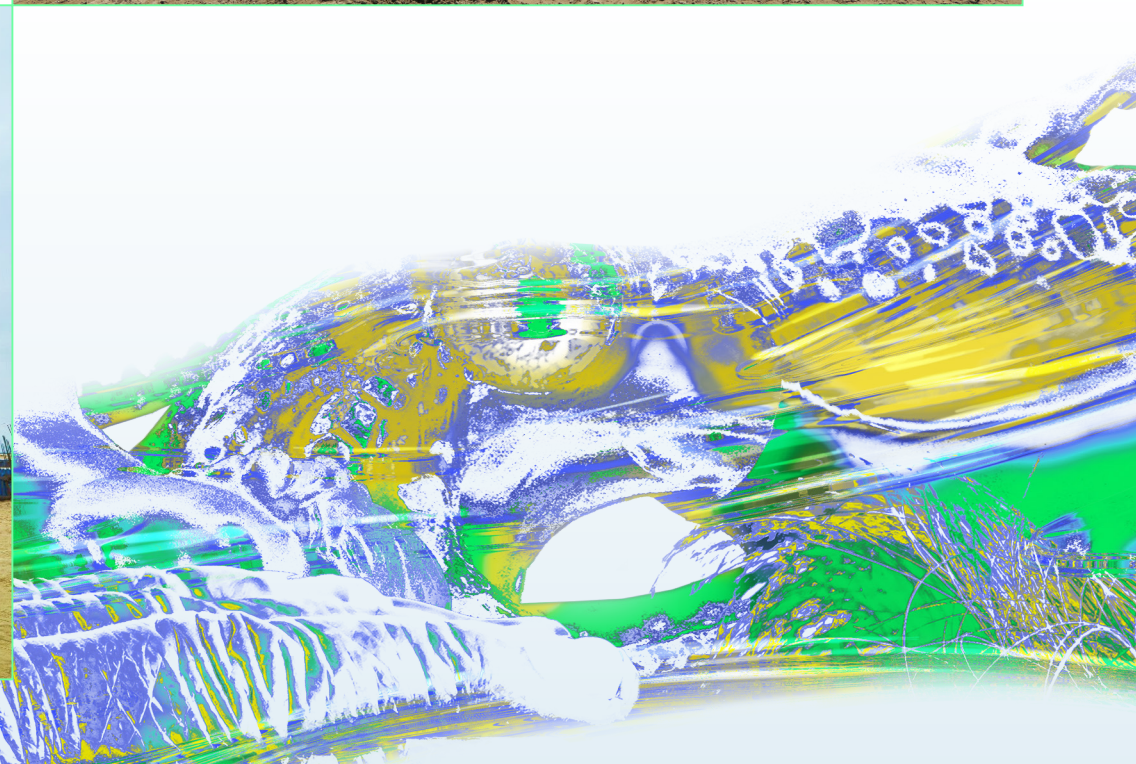
The festival serves as an arena where locals can mingle with people from other countries and communicate with each other. Busan Biennale will be entrenched as representative culture event of Korea and, ultimately, achieve a worldwide recognition.

Sea Art Festival

Sea Art Festival

Sea Art Festival is a unique art exhibition biannually held on the beautiful beaches in Busan, South Korea. Sea Art Festival pursues a friendly yet distinctive outdoor art exhibition which interprets the ocean – a representative locality of Busan – as an artistic venue.

Begun as one of cultural event of Pre-Olympic of Seoul Olympic in 1987, it has been continued as a marine festival linked to public art which communicates with audiences.



Previously



Sea Art Festival 2011

THEME | Songdo
PERIOD | Oct 1–Oct 21, 2011 (21days)
VENUE | Songdo Beach
 (Amnam-dong, Seo-gu,
 Busan Metropolitan City)
ARTISTS · ARTWORKS |
 29 artworks from 12 countries
VISITORS | 139,680 (6,651/day)



Sea Art Festival 2013

THEME | 'With Songdo :
 Remembrance · Marks · People'
PERIOD | Sep. 14–Oct. 7, 2013 (24days)
VENUE | Songdo beach
ARTISTS · ARTWORKS |
 34 artworks from 11 countries
VISITORS | 174,490 (7,270/day)



Sea Art Festival 2015

THEME | See – Sea & Seed
PERIOD | Sep 19 – Oct 18, 2015 (30days)
VENUE | Dadaepo Beach, Busan
ARTISTS · ARTWORKS |
 34 artworks from 16 countries
VISITORS | 213,748 (7,125/day)



Sea Art Festival 2017

THEME | Ars Ludens: Sea+Art+Fun
PERIOD | Sep 16 – Oct 15, 2017(30days)
VENUE | Dadaepo Beach, Busan
ARTISTS · ARTWORKS |
 40 artworks of 41 artists(team)
 from 11 countries
VISITORS | 384,526 (12,818/day)



Sea Art Festival 2019

THEME | Sea of Heartbreak
PERIOD | Sep 28 – Oct 27, 2019 (30days)
VENUE | Dadaepo Beach, Busan
ARTISTS · ARTWORKS |
 21 artworks from 12 countries
VISITORS | 219,718(7,324/day)

Sea Art Festival 2021

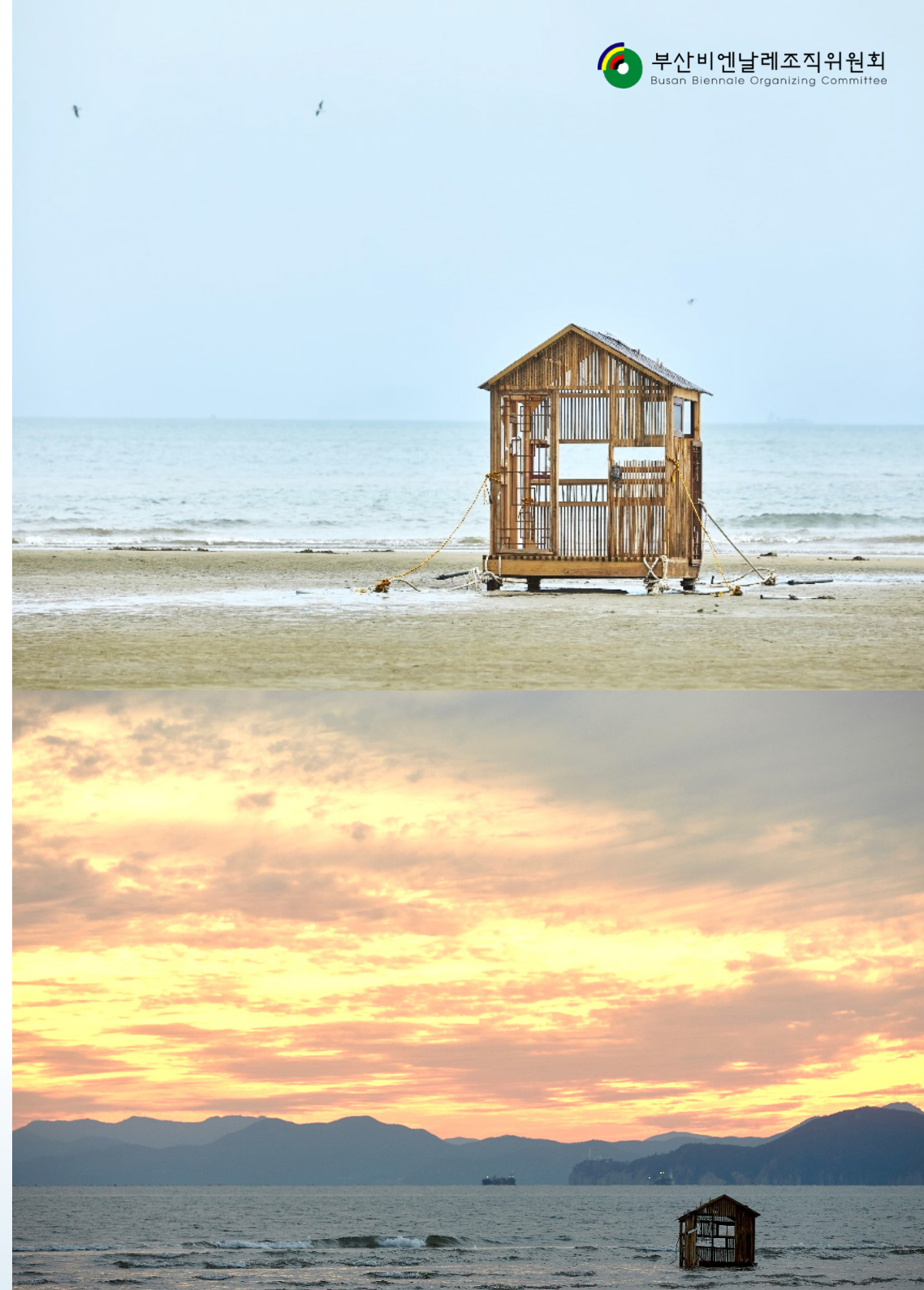
Sea Art Festival 2021

Period	16 Oct – 14 Nov 2021 (30 days)
Venue	Ilgwang Beach, Busan, South Korea
Art Director	Ritika Biswas
Theme	Non-/Human assemblages
Host	Busan Metropolitan City, Busan Biennale Organizing Committee

Details & Programs

Sea Art Festival 2021 is open to everyone with no admission fees.
With various programmes including academic programmes,
Sea Art Festival aims to communicate closely with audiences.

Exhibition | About 20 artworks will be presented
Academic & Public Programme



SAF2021 THEME

Non-/human Assemblages

인간과 비인간 : 아상블라주

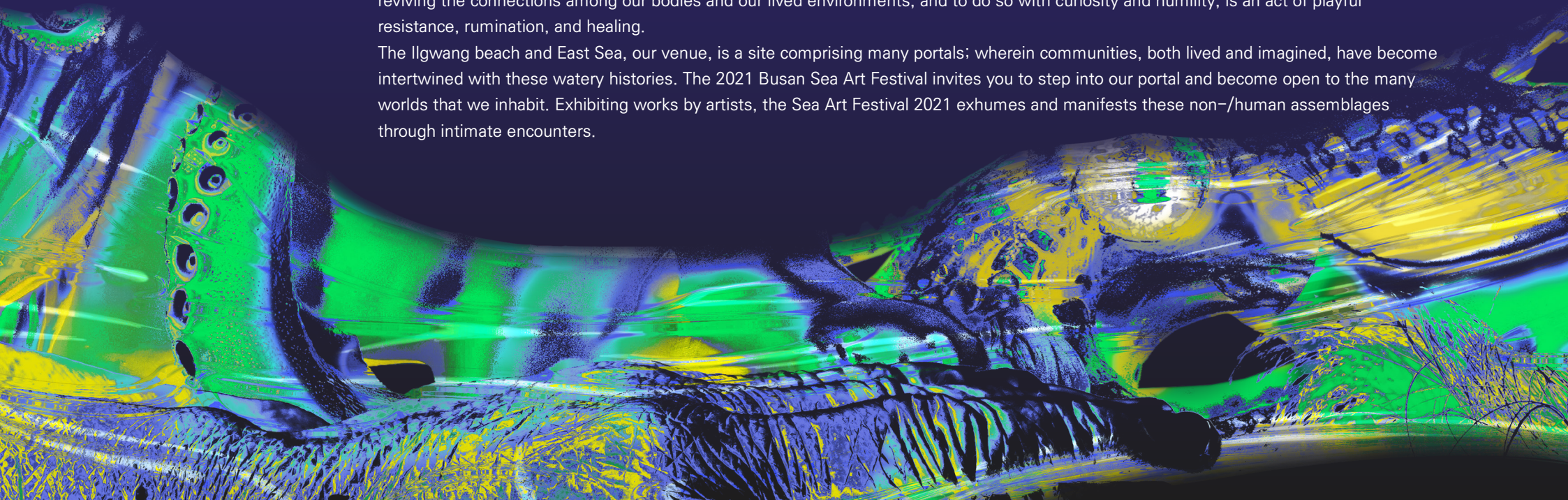
This year, the Busan Sea Art Festival embraces the flux, unknowability, and precarity within which we all find ourselves, and it does so through the sea. In considering the human— be it a viewer, an artist, or their artwork— and the non-human sea, as part of a ‘non-/human’ assemblage, a fluid network of beings, we begin to become porous to the forms of kinship and friction among ourselves and within our wider liquid ecologies.

Referring to the always hybrid assemblage of matters that constitutes watery embodiment, we might say that we have never been (only) human. This is not to forsake our inescapable humanness, but to suggest that the human is always also more-than-human. Our wateriness verifies this, both materially and conceptually.

Astrida Neimanis, *Bodies of Water*

In the spirit of Neimanis’ words, the sea and its deeper ecosystems encompass us all. It is a constantly changing landscape that creates and holds collective imagination, grief, joy, political histories, and temporal cycles. In the age of the climate crisis and geo-social upheaval, reviving the connections among our bodies and our lived environments, and to do so with curiosity and humility, is an act of playful resistance, rumination, and healing.

The Ilgwang beach and East Sea, our venue, is a site comprising many portals; wherein communities, both lived and imagined, have become intertwined with these watery histories. The 2021 Busan Sea Art Festival invites you to step into our portal and become open to the many worlds that we inhabit. Exhibiting works by artists, the Sea Art Festival 2021 exhumes and manifests these non-/human assemblages through intimate encounters.



SAF2021 THEME

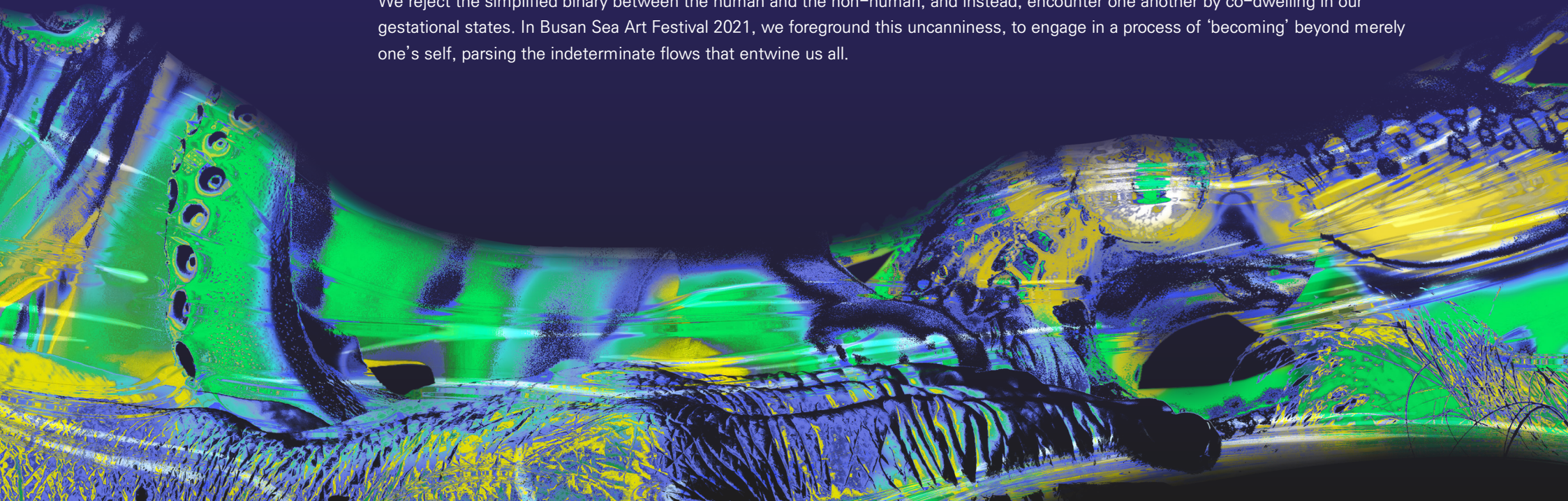
Non-/human Assemblages

인간과 비인간 : 아상블라주

How can we extend our consciousnesses in order to think beyond our individual selves in these times, and do so with joy? An assemblage is essentially a multiplicity, neither a part nor a whole, produced by the interrelations and exchanges among its elements. In attempting to reveal the underlying patterns that hold us—human societies and the non-human marine world— together, the Busan Sea Art Festival 2021 creates a non-/human assemblage.

A mutating, evolving ecology, constantly renewing as human and non-human entities morph, such an assemblage asks us to question how and why exist in relation to one another rather than as discrete subjects. We thus embrace the frictions of various differences. Water runs across our collective bodies— a force that compels our politics, our organic processes, our economies, our existences. Our conception of assemblages within the Busan Sea Art Festival 2021 thus considers the flows of water that create networks across all of our 'bodies'— the sea with its many plant and animal bodies, Ilgwang beach and surrounding spaces in Gijang, global and local art currents, and our socio-political communities.

We reject the simplified binary between the human and the non-human, and instead, encounter one another by co-dwelling in our gestational states. In Busan Sea Art Festival 2021, we foreground this uncanniness, to engage in a process of 'becoming' beyond merely one's self, parsing the indeterminate flows that entwine us all.



SAF2021 THEME

Non-/human Assemblages

인간과 비인간 : 아상블라주

The concept of a non-/human assemblage is one that I deemed crucial to re-examining the interrelations between our humanness-- bodies, societies, and systems of thinking-- and the non-human world, specifically the marine world that is often invisible to us. The flows of water do not merely run across human and non-human bodies, but are currents that channel power dynamics, inequalities, beauty, exploitation, and symbiosis. These currents are infinite, and infinitely reproduced in anthropocentric consumption and existence: from deep water fracking and sea mining, policing oceanic boundaries against refugees, extractivist fishing industries, to colonial violence against indigenous peoples. But bodies of water are also spaces of wondrous, queer ecologies, carriers of memory and histories of art and literature, of multi-species care, survival, and resilience, of deep connection within and in-between human and non-human worlds. Art can serve as catalysts that have the potential to metabolise these latent interrelations that have always existed and can exist, and instigate people to re-find their fluid kinships with those that they don't perceive as connected to them.

So the artworks at the Busan Sea Art Festival 2021, as well as our public and academic programmes, each bring their own form of instigation to this space. How do we visualise the sub-microscopic oceanic algae that provide a significant portion of the world's oxygen? How do we understand the spiritual resonances that people and cultures have always had with the seas? How can we learn from deep-sea creatures and their perception of time? How is our bodily sweat linked to the ocean? It is perhaps through these sometimes strange questions and uncanny encounters that art can provoke, that we might shift our myopic ideas about what we are composed of, what we constitute, and become more porous entities inhabiting a porous world. We are not all equally porous; the non-human, the discriminated, the socio-politically and economically relegated all hold different permeabilities in the human world, and yet, how can we see beyond our individual privileges? Art exhibitions and festivals are not going to necessarily mitigate political governance, capitalist systems, bio-ecological destruction, or systemic violence, but what it can do is hold space-- to ponder the unsettling, incite joy, allow for transient thought-experiments, sense in ways we normally may not, and maybe for a minute, see ourselves as part of a complex, real, and sometimes bewildering assemblage as we never might have.



SAF2021 THEME

Non-/human Assemblages

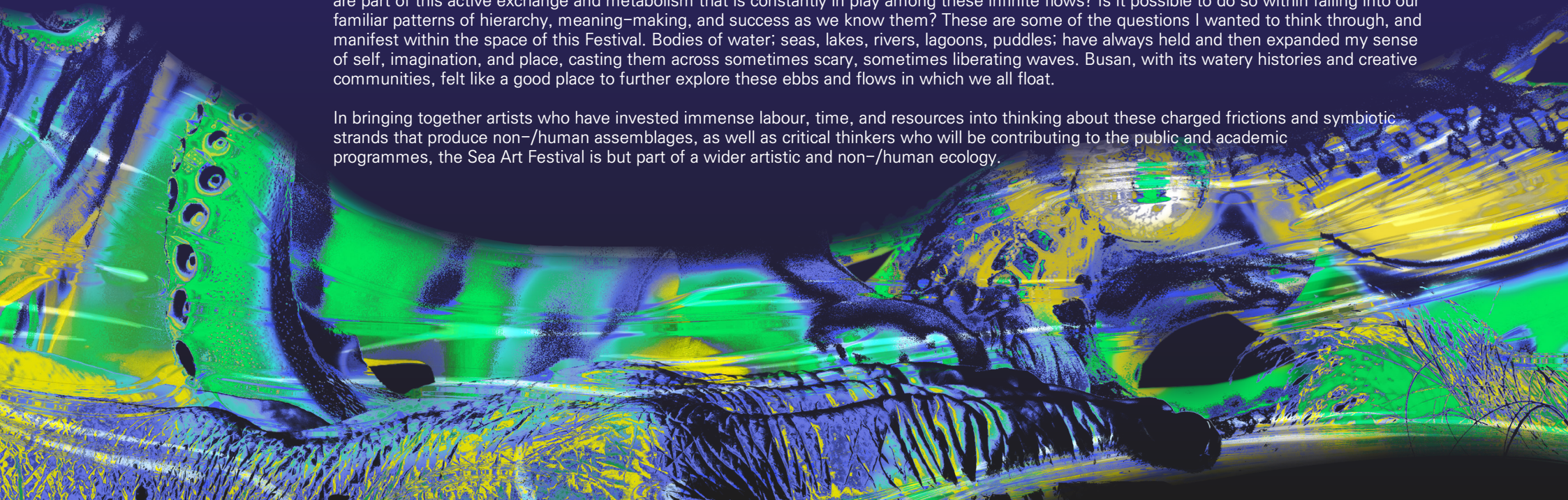
인간과 비인간 : 아상블라주

It is exciting, I think, to encounter an art festival which lets audiences play with space, especially one that is as endlessly generative as a beach and its surrounding bodies. For the Busan Sea Art Festival, we disclose all senses of boundaries even as we create portals through the artworks that can be found across the Ilgwang beach and in various niches around it. In a corner, you might find a large tapestry-map that has travelled around the globe in the last few months, from the UK to Fogo Islands to Busan, that re-imagines watery deep geological time. In another turn, you might stumble upon trees made of hair and rocks made of resin. As you walk along the beach, imagined and extant creatures made of fishing line and bronze emerge from the sea, and a little up ahead, a curious machine breathes in tandem with the ocean. You exist in an infinite realm that is made of many small worlds, around, below, and above you. The entire Festival might be its very own ocean; all you need to do is immerse yourself.

As someone who has had the opportunity, privilege, and curiosity to exist as a somewhat nomadic body, having been born in India, lived in several countries for the last few years, most recently the UK, before moving to South Korea as Artistic Director for this Festival, boundaries and their morphing natures have always fascinated me. Often, I have made sense of these through, or rather, found important non-answers in non-human ecologies. The interplay between the often anthropocentric realms of art exhibitions/museums/galleries/biennales and the non-human world has always been a fraught one for me.

But these are exciting and urgent frictions that I wanted to parse, hence why I applied for this position, coming from a more traditional gallery curatorial role. How do we create a world of artistic imagination outside of white cubes, ones that are not merely situated in non-human nature, but are part of this active exchange and metabolism that is constantly in play among these infinite flows? Is it possible to do so within falling into our familiar patterns of hierarchy, meaning-making, and success as we know them? These are some of the questions I wanted to think through, and manifest within the space of this Festival. Bodies of water: seas, lakes, rivers, lagoons, puddles; have always held and then expanded my sense of self, imagination, and place, casting them across sometimes scary, sometimes liberating waves. Busan, with its watery histories and creative communities, felt like a good place to further explore these ebbs and flows in which we all float.

In bringing together artists who have invested immense labour, time, and resources into thinking about these charged frictions and symbiotic strands that produce non-/human assemblages, as well as critical thinkers who will be contributing to the public and academic programmes, the Sea Art Festival is but part of a wider artistic and non-/human ecology.



Artistic Director of Sea Art Festival 2021

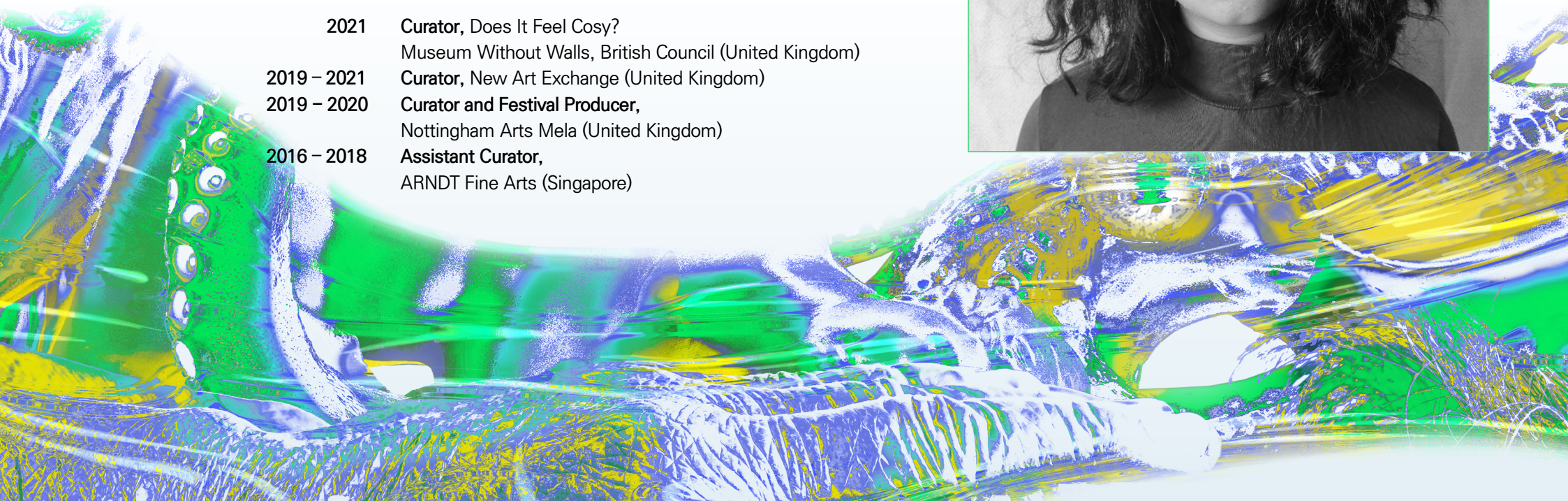
*"She is to be the first foreign and first female artistic director for the biannual representative art festival that is held in tandem with the Busan Biennale.
Born in 1995, Biswas is also the youngest person to take on the role at age 26."*

-haps magazine

Ritika Biswas

Born in 1995, India

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 2018 – 2019 | MPhil in Film and Screen Studies (with Distinction)
University of Cambridge, UK |
| 2014 – 2018 | Bachelor of Liberal Arts
(Major: Literature, Minor: Arts and Humanities)
Yale-NUS College, Singapore |
| 2021 | Curator , Does It Feel Cosy?
Museum Without Walls, British Council (United Kingdom) |
| 2019 – 2021 | Curator , New Art Exchange (United Kingdom) |
| 2019 – 2020 | Curator and Festival Producer ,
Nottingham Arts Mela (United Kingdom) |
| 2016 – 2018 | Assistant Curator ,
ARNDT Fine Arts (Singapore) |



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