

Dreaming Yongsan park

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Abstract

'Dreaming Yongsan Park' is a community art project that attempts to occupy and reshape the current state of 'Yongsan Park' into a place that reflects the voice and desires of its citizens. Reconnecting the citizens to the Yongsan park and empowering the marginalized voices in the urban planning process is our main goal of the project. Collecting stories and voices through Digital Found Object (3D Scanned objects) and installing it on 3D website, we aimed to return the power to citizens to dream and re-think about Yongsan Park beyond its physical constraints and the government's top-down approach to urban planning.

Keywords

Place-making, Place based storytelling, Community art, 3D Scanning, 3D website, Yongsan Park, Participatory design, Urban Planning

Introduction

'Dreaming Yongsan Park' is driven with the central question of how 3D Scanning and Virtual space (3D website) contributes to return the inaccessible place back to citizens and empowers them in the process of Place-making.

Due to historical factors such as post-colonial influences and a government-driven top-down approach to urban planning, urban spaces in South Korea have often been disconnected from the citizens who are the true owners and users of these spaces. 'Yongsan Park' is one of South Korea's largest public parks, spanning 3 square kilometers. For over 120 years, 'Yongsan Park' has remained a 'forbidden place,' closed to the general public, starting from Japan's occupation and now with the presence of a US military base on the site.

The park is currently in the process of returning back to South Korea, but 70% of the park still remains inaccessible[Figure 1]. The government plans to regain control of the park from the US by 2027, but it will likely take another seven years before it fully reopens. Moreover, it is undergoing internal renovations guided by the government with a top-down approach which leads to the marginalization of citizens' voices during the planning process.



Figure 1. Outside of Yongsan Park. © Photograph by Jisu Kim.

Regarding this situation of public park, we aimed to return the power to citizens to dream and re-think about Yongsan Park beyond its physical constraints.

Digital Found Object

3D Scanning became a democratized method for sharing one's 3D models of everyday objects and environments. We identify 3D Scanned objects as a 'Digital Found Objects' and virtual forms of 'Self-narratives' of people within their time and place. We utilize these objects to share one's voice as a community member, allowing them to reshape and reengage the place as their own[Figure2].



Figure 2. Using 3D Scanner(Polycam) to make own Digital Found Object(3D model). © Photograph by Jisu Kim.

We encouraged Seoul citizens 3D Scan things or places they would like to bring to their dreaming 'Yongsan Park'. 13 citizens of Seoul and community member live near Yongsan participated to upload the 3D Scanned objects. We

have collected 50 of the 3D Scanned images through Polycam and received written descriptions about the reason why they would like to share those objects[Figure 3].

These collected ‘Digital Found Objects’ not only works as an individual installation that they can place freely on the virtual park but also brings their everyday lives, hidden stories, and wishes of the Yongsan park.

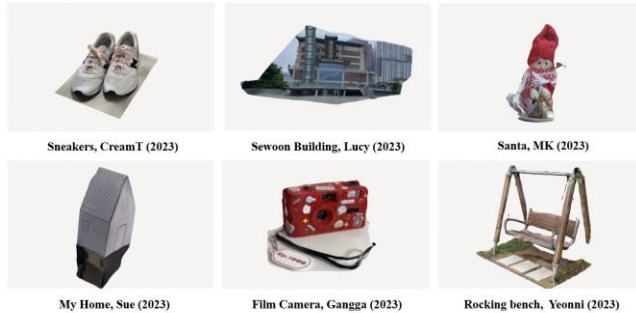


Figure 3. Collected Digital Found Objects from Seoul citizens and community members. ©Dreaming Yongsan Park.

3D website

3D website ‘Dreaming Yongsan Park’ is employed to restore the relationship between ‘Yongsan Park’ and citizens. We suggest this virtual space as an activist approach where the virtual space can be a way of reshaping engagement and attachment of the real place, and also works as a place to share voices of the citizens.

The ‘Dreaming Yongsan park’ were developed using WebGL(Web Graphics Library) and JavaScript libraries three.js that visualize the 3D graphic and give interactivity and access to the general public. Visitors freely access the ‘Dreaming Yongsan park’ through their computer with internet connection. Using shaders, animations, and movements, the visitors can virtually walk around the park and interactively tour citizens’ dreams and visions of the future Yongsan Park beyond its current reality

The 3D environment of the park was designed with reference to the map of actual Yongsan Park, including seven landmarks that represents the history of colonial and post colonial era[Figure4]. 3D models of landmarks were made with reference to the old images since the park is currently inaccessible.

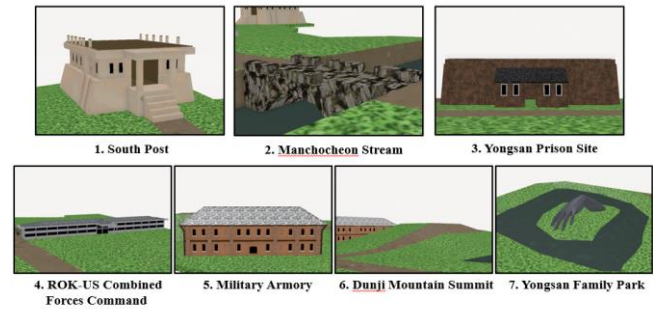


Figure 4. Seven landmarks of ‘Dreaming Yongsan Park’. ©Dreaming Yongsan Park.

Throughout the projects, citizens were encouraged to decide where they would like to place the objects within the virtual park, thereby actively participating in the act of occupying and reshaping the park in the way they want. The 3D Scanned objects were displayed on the ‘Dreaming Yongsan Park’ where visitors can virtually navigate through with keyboard and mouse and look around people’s objects and texts[Figure 5].



Figure 5. Installation of Digital Found Objects near South Post. ©Dreaming Yongsan Park.

This virtual park visualizes the placeness of Yongsan park that citizens think and want, and it helps to understand and connect citizens as it works as common ground to encourage discussions. The website is open to the public, and any visitors can tour 3D web version of ‘Yongsan Park’ and read the stories of how the citizens dream of the inaccessible place [Figure6].

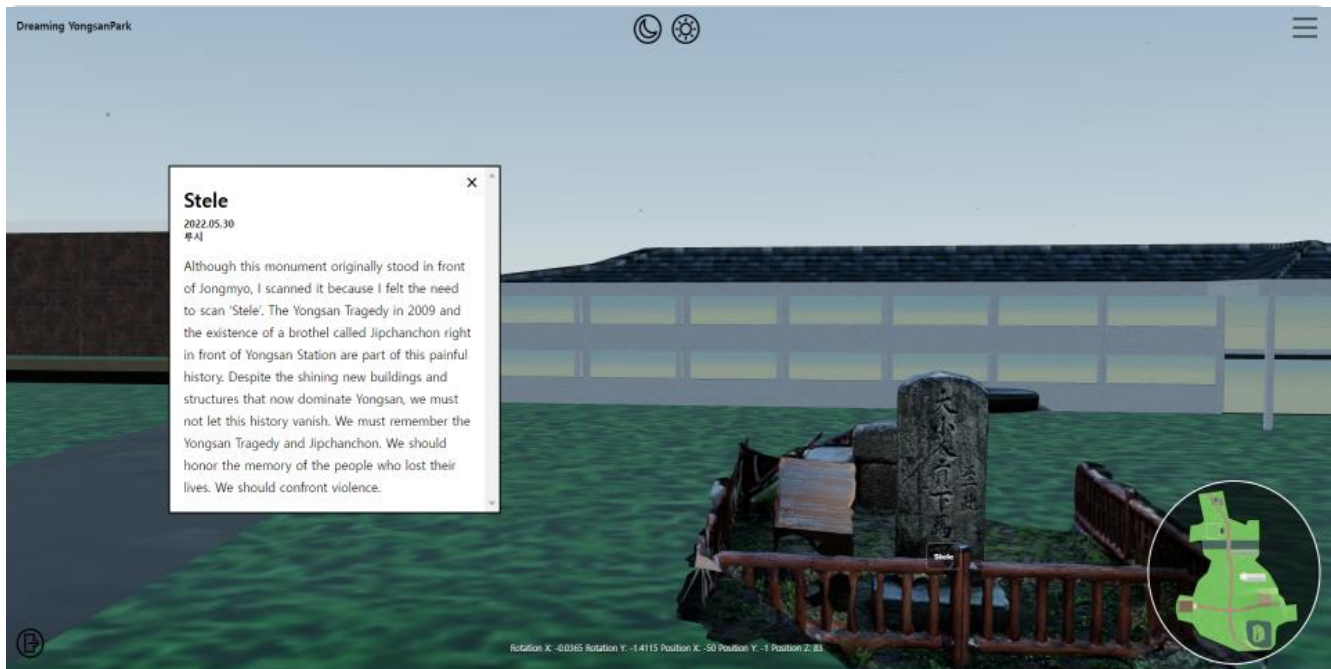


Figure 6. Digital Found objects and narratives (Stele by 루시) . ©Dreaming Yongsan Park.

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Authors Biographies

Jisu Kim is practice-based researcher of new media arts and aesthetics, project manager and director of artwork using emerging technology. Her research primarily centered on the use of 3D Scanning and virtual archives for microhistory or daily lives. She received M.A.S in Media Arts & Technology in [Sogang University], BA History of Arts with cultural Studies at [University of Leeds].

Chung Nyeong Lee is a creative coder, AR developer, and full-stack engineer, is currently pursuing a degree (B.A.S.) in Art and Technology at Sogang University, with a double major in Computer Science and Psychology. He actively engages in cutting-edge research, harnessing AR technology to craft computational media that capture and recreate cherished interpersonal memories, potentially replacing conventional mediums (photographs and videos).

Jean Ho Chu is an artist, researcher, and an educator exploring new media aesthetics, embodied inter-action, digital cultural heritage, and museum experience design. She received Ph.D. in Digital Media from Georgia Institute of Technology, M.F.A. in Digital Arts from Pratt Institut. She is currently an assistant professor in Sogang University Art & Technology program and the director of the Next Story Group (<http://nextstorygroup.org/>).