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For immediate release

The Kitchen presents an exhibition of three recent video works
SOWON KWON: SOMETHING NEW

January 31, New York – From **March 4 to April 16, 2005**, The Kitchen will present *Sowon Kwon: Something New*, an exhibition of two new animation based video works titled *Calendar* (2004) and *Sonogong 2* (2005) as well as the New York-premiere of *Average female (Perfect)* (2001). Scaled from the spectacular to the intimate, these three projects explore interiors as both physical and psychological spaces as a way to reflect on the interrelationships between spectatorship, desire, and the formation of identity.

Curated by Christina Yang, this exhibition is Kwon's first solo show in New York in five years. There will be a **public, free gallery talk with the artist on Thursday, March 17th at 6:00 pm**. The gallery is open from **Tuesday to Saturday from noon to 6:00 pm**.

Average female (Perfect) (2001) is a two-channel, split-screen video installation featuring the 1976 Olympic performances of the first (Nadia Comenci) and second (Nellie Kim) perfect "10s" in women's amateur gymnastics. Superimposed over the appropriated video footage of these "perfect" performances are animated drawings of silhouetted figures, based on ergonomic templates of the "average female." Through the layering of these two near-impossible measures of physical form, viewers are faced with a ghostly meditation on the standardization and idealization of beauty.

Calendar also features the "average female" animated figures, but in this instance, as un-average "pin-ups" in this multi-channel video installation that references the twelve month yearly cycle. Replicating such motifs as Max Ernst's *la femme 100 têtes/the hundred headless woman* from his surrealist collage novel of the same name, these black-and-white looped digital animations expand on Kwon's earlier explorations of the "average female" in blueprints and architectural settings by activating these new figures with repetitive, and sometimes futile (but not humorless) gestures and actions. Designed to be flexible in its presentation format, *Calendar* is intended to be displayed on almost any combination of available audio-visual equipment ranging from television monitors and analog tape players to computer screens and digital compact disc systems. In this way, it becomes an indirect marker of time, as the installation itself reflects a kind of inventory of "new media" apparatus ranging from the outmoded to the "state of the art" that varies from site to site.

The third piece, *Sonogong 2* is a single-channel projected video featuring figurative line animations set against a black background. The sequences imitate loosely the actions from iconic performances videos

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from the 1970s such as Martha Rosler's *Vital Statistics* or Joan Jonas' *Vertical Roll*. These sequences are then intercut with ambient sound footage from Kwon's videotapes of passersby on city streets and other urban settings. The seemingly random collection of abstractly remembered excerpts invites the viewer to fill in the blanks and to make possible connections between the relevance of impulses that motivated post-Minimalist and feminist artists of a generation ago and contemporary artistic practice, while also intimating the need for a radical art that embraces politics in ways that may counter a sense of activist pessimism and powerlessness in today's predominantly conservative cultural and political climate.

Together, all three works continue the artists' interest in questioning ideals of traditional media, positing the body as a central site of social and political inscription, and focusing on the phenomenological experience of the viewer.

About The Artist:

Over the last fifteen years, Sowon Kwon has created a body of work that extends over a range of media including prints, drawings, video, digital collage, animation, architectural installations, and sculptural reliefs. Kwon holds a MFA from Pratt University (1989), is a graduate of the Whitney Independent Study Program (1991), and a Visiting Faculty at the MFA Program for Visual Arts at Vermont College. The artist has been featured in numerous international group shows including the *2000 Gwangju Biennial*, *2001 Yokohama Triennial*, *BodySpace* at the Baltimore Museum of Art (2001), *Live/Work in Queens* at the Queens Museum of Art (1995), among many others. She has had one-person shows at the University Art Museum, Berkeley; Art in General, New York; and the Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria, New York. She has been selected as a 2005 Media Arts Fellow at the Wexner Center for the Arts.

Funding:

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