

Introduction

by Steven Anggrek

Earlier this year, during a gathering for the first exhibition at Anggrek Agency, I mentioned to some friends that the agency would focus on exhibiting and collaborating with Asian, queer, and photographic artists and contributors. Why these groups? Because I believe they deserve more exposure. It was after a few Negronis that I first heard about the young Swiss photographer Federico Hurth.



Federico Hurth (Swiss, b. 1998) is a film photographer known for his powerful storytelling. Raised between Lugano and Milan, Hurth started his photography journey by pointing his lens towards the social exclusion and overlooked individuals on the streets of Italy. From there, he traveled to capture the criminality and harsh realities in cities like Los Angeles, Rio de Janeiro, Tokyo, and Seoul, the capital city of South Korea.¹

South Korea is one of Asia's most highly developed countries and the tenth largest economy in the world². However, like many other nations, it still faces economic disparities³. Approximately 14.9% of the population lives in poverty⁴, deprived of basic human needs such as food, water, and shelter. This is the case for those living in the Moon Villages, illegal settlements that emerged during the country's rapid industrialisation which began in the early 1960s⁵. During that time, people flocked to cities in search of work and settled on the outskirts, often in hilly areas where the moon is prominently visible.

Through the alumni network of the Executive Master in Art Market Studies program at the University of Zurich, I have gotten to know some friends from South Korea. One of them is Jiwon Choi, who has taken the time to write her perspective as a South Korean on this topic.

Please join us for the opening of *Untitled Seoul* on Saturday, August 17th, from 18:00 to 21:00.

Anggrek Agency

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¹ <https://www.federicohurth.com/about>

² https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/f90366a0-6243-469b-89b5-737cfa93a9ab?_gl=1*mqcb8u*_gcl_au*ODI0NTMzMMDc1LjE3MjM4NjQ2MjMDY.

³ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/07/06/gangnam-seoul-south-korea-rich-inequality/>

⁴ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1225832/south-korea-relative-poverty-rate/#statisticContainer>

⁵ <https://oxfordre.com/asianhistory/display/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277727.001.0001/acrefore-9780190277727-e-271?d=/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277727.001.0001/acrefore-9780190277727-e-271&p=emailA6f6JPign4L8l#:~:text=South Korea's economic takeoff,its,direction of the military government.>

Untitled Seoul

by Jiwon Choi⁶

Federico Hurth's photographic journey begins with a profound narrative of contrast and harmony, a visual symphony on the streets of the world's cities. His photographs are not mere images but stories told through contrasts of light and dark, modernity and tradition, silence and noise.

The "Untitled Seoul" series is a testament to this, where the remnants of the past stand stark against rapid modernisation. Through the timeless medium of analog film, Hurth turns his lens toward Seoul's 'moon villages (Daldongne)', shantytowns established on relatively cheap hillside land by the poor.

These villages emerged during the rapid industrialisation and urbanisation of the 1960s and 1970s when many people migrated from rural areas to cities in search of employment. The name 'moon villages' originated because the moon was visible through the impoverished tents when lying down, and the settlements were located at a high altitude, close to the moon. Despite the gruelling routine of early departures and late returns under the moonlight, for those who had lost personal space, these villages served as sanctuaries to rest their weary bodies and to dream of a better tomorrow.

Focusing on these marginalised areas, whose realities differ greatly from the bustling metropolis, Hurth unveils the often-overlooked shadows of progress. Each photograph tells a story of resilience and survival, capturing the lives of those who exist on the periphery of society, often unnoticed and unacknowledged. This evokes a sense of nostalgia and melancholy, while also serving as a critical commentary on the cost of progress. Ultimately, he invites viewers to walk through historical alleys, witness the coexistence of different eras, and contemplate the ever-evolving urban landscape and its identity.

⁶ Jiwon Choi (Korean, b. 1994) is an independent curator and art consultant specialising in East Asian art. Choi holds a bachelor's degree in Painting from Seoul, and an executive master's degree in Art Market Studies at the University of Zurich. Driven by a profound interest in globalised art and its market, Choi has honed a diverse skill set in art exhibition planning and project management throughout her career in both Seoul and Zurich.

Federico Hurth - Untitled Seoul



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
60 x 40 cm
1/3

CHF 1100



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
60 x 40 cm
1/3

CHF 1100



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
60 x 40 cm
1/3

CHF 1100



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
60 x 40 cm
1/3

CHF 1100



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
40 x 30 cm
1/5

CHF 800



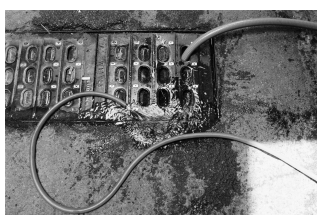
Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
30 x 40 cm
1/5

CHF 800



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
20 x 30 cm
1/5

CHF 400



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
20 x 30 cm
1/5

CHF 400



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
20 x 30 cm
1/5

CHF 400



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
30 x 20 cm
1/5

CHF 400



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
30 x 20 cm
1/5

CHF 400



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
40 x 30 cm
1/5

CHF 800



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
40 x 30 cm
1/5

CHF 800

Federico Hurth - Untitled Seoul, other available works



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
75 x 50 cm
2/5

CHF 1500



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
75 x 50 cm
2/5

CHF 1500



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
30 x 20 cm
2/5

CHF 400



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
60 x 40 cm
2/5

CHF 1100



Federico Hurth, Untitled Seoul, 2024
C-print, framed
40 x 30 cm
2/5

CHF 800