

Focus On: So Young Park

Gestated Leak

Exhibition Duration
April 10 - May 15, 2026

Opening Hours
Tue - Fr 11 am - 6 pm
Sat 11 -am - 4 pm

So Young Park's performative installation 'Gestated Leak' draws viewers into a process of becoming, transgressing the boundaries between ephemerality and physicality. Expanding her exploration of the in-between state of living and dying, So Young engages with both material and immaterial bodies. Through 3D-printed objects, metal structures, dried flowers and her own body, the artist invites viewers to encounter forms of being that oscillate between digital fabrication and material embodiment.

Within this process, entities named HWA emerge through prolonged state of gestation. The name HWA is derived from the pronunciation of the Chinese character 花, which consists of two components - an upper element associated with plants and lower element associated with transformation and change. Growing upon the metal sculptures, these beings undergo cycles of blooming and withering, gradually revealing their skeletal forms. Suspended in the air, they shift between leaking, holding, folding and prolonging.

On the opening night, So Young activates the installation through a live performance. Summoning the imagined presence of the printer, she translates mechanical repetition into vocal and bodily rhythms, where gestation is composed. The space is shaped by the artist's voice and cyclical movements of becoming, while sand falls alongside these two beings (So Young and HWA) across time. The performance gives form to a state that is neither fully living nor entirely inert, lingering in what the artist calls Warm Death.

About the artists:

So Young Park is a Vienna-based Korean artist working at the intersection of performative installation and live performance. Her practice explores the in-between state of living and dying, approaching life and death not as opposites, but as interwoven conditions of existence. By tracing the memories inscribed in her own body, So Young re-experiences the time her body has witnessed and lived through, sensing how presence and absence coexist. This embodied act of revisiting forms the core of her methodology, allowing her to encounter the liveness of the present as well as the fragility of existence.

Her performative installations extend these bodily experiences into temporal and spatial forms, where gesture and objects unfold as living narratives. Working with fragile materials such as dried plants, flowers, and seeds elements that hold both vitality and vulnerability, So Young creates spaces for ephemerality, mourning, and the resonance of absence. She names this approach Warm-Death, a way of integrating death into daily life with tenderness and attentiveness, embracing fragility and transience as inherent rhythms of existence.

So Young Park is the winner of the Birgit Jürgenssen Award 2026. The award ceremony will take place on Tuesday, 21 April in the Auditorium of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.