

Note on the Exhibitions:

Like Words in Flow and Flowing like a Body are solo exhibitions by the duo Sulme & Jae-Nder Fluid. Like Words in Flow draws on interviews with undocumented Cambodian workers in Pohang, Jaehwa's hometown, and reflects a direction more strongly led by Jaehwa. The Anyang exhibition, Flowing like a Body, explores the notion of water as it circulates through all living beings, informed by Astrida Neimanis's concept of hydrofeminism. It is more strongly directed by Sulme and was presented in Anyang, her birthplace.

[Dialogue] A Conversation Crossing Between Fluid Bodies and Flowing Language

Jeram: Hello. I'm Jeram, the curator of the first exhibition in Korea by the visual art duo *Sulme & Jae-Nder Fluid*, formed by Kang Yeosulme and Baek Jaehwa. Although the two of you have been working together for several years, you mentioned that there hasn't yet been a proper opportunity to document and organize your work in Korean. To commemorate this exhibition, we've decided to publish your first catalog. Along with an introduction and work details, we plan to include critical essays and a dialogue at the end of the book that may support your future artistic journey. The content will be presented in both Korean and English, published as a small physical book and also distributed as a PDF. Today's conversation will primarily involve artists Jaehwa, Yeosulme, and Hwayong Kim, and I will intervene minimally to help guide the flow.

Yeosulme / Jaehwa: We are Kang Yeosulme and Baek Jaehwa of *Sulme & Jae-Nder Fluid*.

Yeosulme: Over the past few years, we've been working in Germany, and in 2025 we held two solo exhibitions in Korea for the first time. Our work mainly explores the fluidity of gender and identity.

Jaehwa: The core concept that runs through our work is "fluidity." Living as queer migrants in Germany, we examined the sensations we experience,

the spaces surrounding us, the bodies that respond to them, and our ways of engaging with language. We continue our work with the idea that our existence sometimes flows, seeps, and overflows.

Yeosulme: While in Germany we worked from the perspective of migrants, in Korea we attempted to view two Cambodian workers living in Pohang from the perspective of local residents. Having spent a long time abroad, living between places, we believe we can offer a slightly different viewpoint from those who have lived only in Korea.

Jaehwa: When living outside Korea, you need countless documents to prove your existence and reside legally. Through that experience, we came to understand migrants in Korea more deeply. We empathized with how anxiety, stress, fear, and frustration disrupt everyday life, though it was also painful because it remains an ongoing reality for us.

Jeram: With that context, could you explain your solo exhibitions *Flowing like a Body*(Seoul) and *Like Words in Flow* (Anyang)?

Jaehwa: I'll start with *Like Words in Flow*. While discussing migration discourse in Europe, I began questioning how much I actually knew about migrants in my "home country," Korea. I realized I knew very little, which felt embarrassing, so I decided to begin a journey of reflection and learning in Pohang, where I was born and raised. Coincidentally, Bremen in Germany and Pohang are quite similar—both are port cities with heavy industries, similar population scales, and significant inflows of migrant workers. During my research, I met two migrant workers in Pohang, and through conversations with them, I found a starting point for the work.

Yeosulme: While *Like Words in Flow* focuses on the possibility of communication through language, using sound and text as main materials, the connected exhibition *Flowing like a Body* centers on sensation and intuition. We used water as a medium because it best expresses the metaphor of "flow," but we also felt that water alone could not fully represent the work.

Jeram: Based on your explanation, Hwayong, could you share your impressions and continue the conversation with questions?

Hwayong: I first saw *Like Words in Flow*. At that time, I hadn't closely reviewed your portfolio or seen *Flowing like a Body*. Borrowing your language, I felt that you were creating "flows where boundaries are ambiguous, sometimes meaningless, and sometimes broken," and that this metaphorically reflected your method of representation. I also felt that audiences encountering the work in Seoul without background context might not have fully grasped that flow. After seeing *Flowing like a Body* and reviewing your portfolio, I understood more clearly how you arrived at this work.

Beyond issues of sexual identity or settlement, I could see the existence of "the self before being an artist"—a being formed by competing and intermingling elements. I wondered how it might have felt if I had seen the second exhibition first. Things that once felt natural while living in Pohang only became visible after experiencing migration. I encourage you to consider how to carry this sense of flow into a more coherent narrative moving forward. Since there is no guarantee that audiences will have seen your previous exhibitions, this will be especially important. Knowing your trajectory deepens understanding, but without that, exhibitions risk remaining confined within their own formal limits.

One exhibition had a strong flow of language (*Like Words in Flow*), while the other felt like air currents spreading invisibly and briefly audible (*Flowing like a Body*)—your flow seemed to transfer and linger. That continuity made the exhibitions persuasive. This is less a critique and more an ongoing challenge for those who present exhibitions.

Given time constraints, attempting the work itself is important. It's nearly impossible to present work in a perfect state. Exhibitions can be sites of evaluation, but they are also just moments within your ongoing flow. Even after the exhibitions end, there are still floating, ungraspable images within you.

The Anyang exhibition (*Flowing like a Body*) felt more visually grounded. As you build more concrete narratives, I hope you consider how the “language” explored this time can meet those ambiguous, drifting entities.

In Seoul (*Like Words in Flow*), I remember asking Jaehwa whether you had a background in visual design. The duo’s portfolio presented compelling, boundary-blurring compositions, but in the Seoul exhibition the design felt more fixed. I wondered whether this may have constrained your more experimental, hybrid qualities. I found myself hoping that the bold, mutating forms seen in your digital images would emerge more fully in the physical space.

You seemed very attentive listeners, prioritizing “listening” and faithful transmission. But your collective produces hybrid, mixed entities. You may have felt cautious about shaping others’ narratives, but I think you can more actively tell the story of how you arrived here.

The Seoul exhibition could serve as a starting point for building a world by adding narrative to your images and poetry. Your experiences will be a strong foundation moving forward. Living in cities outside major centers like Berlin also offers distinct perspectives. The physical conditions artists face and the reasons for living in certain places are part of identity. Connect these hybrid stories formed through different environments and experiences. Even if rooted in personal history, connecting that narrative to others is crucial for artists dealing with identity.

The Anyang exhibition felt comfortable. Various media coexisted without one dominating. In a time when media power can overwhelm, it’s meaningful that you can work across multiple forms.

Jaehwa later spoke confessional aspects—those could be expressed more openly. There’s no need for excessive modesty in the art world. You don’t need to distance yourself from fine art. Today’s discourse includes industrial art and technology as well. Some works could have been technically refined, but fragile, ambiguous objects—like seemingly breakable ceramics—better conveyed your experimentation. The installation, which

didn't feel fully resolved, effectively expressed fluidity and lack of boundaries.

Unstable elements—video illusions, fragile ceramics, dispersing liquids—supported each other to create stability. Fluidity wasn't just about identity but about beings that cannot settle, temporarily gathering.

The locations in the video made it unclear whether they were artificial or natural lakes. The installations felt like water briefly pooling after flowing. That connection was convincing. The sense of stability emerging from raw, unrefined elements felt like an image-based narrative.

Compared to your previous exhibition in Germany, the Anyang exhibition seemed to center more strongly on the narrative of lakes and water. The ability to create a unified installation experience is a strength. I encourage you to think about how to connect the narratives of Seoul and Anyang more effectively.

Identity should not only be defined in terms of sexual identity but also through adjectives—qualities. The word “fluid” in your name suggests not just gender fluidity but broader hybridity and flow. While ambiguity may seem conservative, I see it as subversive—blurring boundaries allows inclusion of what was excluded by rigid distinctions.

Yeosulme: Opening *Flowing like a Body* in Anyang—my hometown, yet unfamiliar due to migration—felt strange. It reminded me of returning from Australia. I liked how instability supported itself to create unexpected stability. Perhaps the ambiguous emotions filling the spaces between overlapping migrations reflect an inner longing I hadn't been able to articulate.

Hwayong: I relate deeply. Moving across places expands our sensory awareness. Revisiting your experiences—your time in Australia, Jaehwa's reasons for leaving Korea—could be meaningful. Though painful, opening those “black boxes” of memory can become an important motif for connecting unstable elements.

In Anyang, you spoke of “flow,” but the water was actually dammed—still water. You engaged with the narrative of submerged villages. Still water can be seen as stored energy waiting to flow. Flow is not constant. It depends on gravity—on inclined bodies. Perhaps it is because bodies are tilted, unstable, that they can flow. Expanding the metaphor of “flow” to connect multiple narratives could strengthen your work.

Yeosulme: Near where I live is Paldang Dam. I used to go there with my parents. Watching water—like the Weser River in Bremen—calms me.

Hwayong: That calmness is universal, beyond political or historical context. Still water carries a different feeling from flowing water. Expanding this into diaspora narratives could be interesting.

Yeosulme: Thinking about efficiency, defining identity as adjectives rather than nouns feels important. Nouns may be efficient but exclude too much. Perhaps inefficiency allows us to be ourselves.

Hwayong: Exactly. Modern systems demand clear categorization for efficiency. I was also struck by the connection between water and the body. Our bodies are largely water, though invisible. Water enables metabolism—it is a medium. Expanding toward invisible elements that mediate life and death could be compelling.

Your use of pink was also striking—not the violent or conventional “flesh tone,” but something entirely different. It disrupted habitual perception and raised questions about what “real” skin color is. It connects to unseen aspects of the body—organs, hybrid bodies merged with technology and experience.

Jeram: Jaehwa, do you have anything to add?

Jaehwa: At the Seoul exhibition, someone asked if this was our usual style, and I couldn’t answer. I questioned whether it truly was. Using interview material made us cautious about shaping narratives. We worried about handling others’ stories. So we focused on “language” itself—miscommunication and fluidity. We’re still thinking about how to

structure our portfolio and integrate these exhibitions into our overall practice.

Hwayong: I heard someone questioned your use of pink in relation to gender. But for you, pink is not fixed—it represents fluidity. It could connect with earlier works exploring shifts in identity through objects like glasses. Your previous work with migration documents and water also connects to this project—the documents themselves are barriers to meeting people. These fragments can form a cohesive exhibition language.

Jeram: Yeosulme, anything further?

Yeosulme: This was our first time working with a curator. Previously we worked independently, but collaborating closely with others was unfamiliar yet necessary. It was a valuable experience, and we realized the importance of feedback from trusted collaborators.

Hwayong: What matters is not just having a curator but gaining collaborators. Working with designer Myunggyu was also impressive—it felt like true collaboration.

Yeosulme: He deeply understood our context, and the design supported the exhibition seamlessly.

Jaehwa: Even the poster captured the idea of “flow,” designed to connect in any orientation.

Yeosulme: This was our first time working from migrant interviews, and we felt unprepared in articulating what we wanted to say. It was challenging but meaningful, and we hope to develop it further.

Jeram: I was concerned about the depth of the interviews. Meaningful narratives usually require many encounters, and communication felt limited. That’s why I focused on “the flow of communication” in the exhibition text rather than the content itself. Still, deeper engagement will be necessary in future work.

Hwayong: I understand that concern, but it's also worth questioning whether only those directly involved can speak. There are many ways to approach others' narratives—not only interviews. Find the method that allows you to listen best.

Jaehwa: Working together, Jeram helped clarify direction and enrich language, and Hwayong's insights were invaluable. This exhibition feels like an important starting point in our career.

Jeram: This has been a dense conversation. I will organize it so that it can serve as a source of encouragement when you face uncertainty in the future. Thank you to all participants and readers.