

Please introduce yourself and tell me a bit about your work

My name is Zune Lee and I am a Korean artist, educator and a researcher, who focuses on multi-disciplinary arts research and creation of new media art. I am also the Associate Professor at the School of the Art and Design in Korea University in South Korea.

The theme this year is “Charting the future of arts and culture” – what is an issue you found really important as discussed in the Summit?

We discussed several issues at yesterday’s World Café in my session and one of the major issues which is very important, is the co-existence and the co-evolution or collaborations between the human and non-human.

So in here, the non-human means the nature, and the artifact generated by the humans. We need to co-evolve and to make a better society. Society is a very, very, human centred terminology. But we need to make a co-society between nature and human and artifact.

These days, many, many artifacts have the artificial intelligence, so it means that they can recognise the world and then they can judge some situations, like humans or animals. So it means the machines resemble the humans and nature or living things.

So it means that the status of the artifact, from the perspective of the ontology become higher and higher like a human. So it means that we need to derive or recognise the artifact, especially artificial intelligence, in the ontology in our world in the future.

Ontology means like a study on existence. The human history and the human philosophy from the perspective of the ontology, we have a focus only on the human, ourselves. So it means that the ontology tells me about the being of the human. But these days, human’s perspective have widened. We need to think about the artifact as a being, like a human or a living thing. So it means that the ontological status of the artifact has become much higher and higher.

So think about it, we have a different attitude toward the artifact. For example, when we use the teaspoon, we control how you use the teaspoon, when you eat something. But how about the smartphone or, how about the ChatGPT? It is more like a human.

So it means that the status or our attitude towards the artificial intelligence, we have a different attitude towards the artifact, which has an artificial intelligence. So it means that the status of the being, of the artifact as a being, has become more, far higher and higher in these days.

So this is the most important issue for me. The co-existence, and co-evolution between the human and the non-human.

Did you have notions on art and technology that were confirmed or challenged by insights from the summit?

Many people don’t know about the etymological roots of the ‘art’ and ‘technology’. ‘Techne’ is a Greek terminology. Its translations in Rome, in the Latin language is ‘Ars’.

That is root of the terminology of 'art' in the Western society. It means that the root of the terminology 'art' and 'technology' is one thing, you know. A very interesting fact. So it means that 'art' and 'technology' is a kind of 'sister and brother' relationship.

But nowadays, we separately developed, I mean, the arts and technology have a different-, separately developed to specific, specialised areas. So now, it is a time to combine or, synthesise the 'art' and 'technology' in these days.

I would like to talk about the value of the art. The first value of the art is the ritual value of the art. So we worship the art. So we respect artwork. So that's why we go to the museum to respect or worship the artwork.

We would like to feel some kind of aura of the artwork. Traditionally, that is a traditional attitude towards art. But it is still effective in this modern society. So we, we recognise the ritual value, the worship value of the art.

Another value is the exhibitional value of the art. It means that it is deeply related to art as a social function.

So it means that art needs to engage in the society, social problems and social issues. We know that value of the art. But nowadays, I think that I would like to extend that that social value of the art towards the value of sustainability.

It is not enough for art itself to solve or treat that, the sustainability of the world or sustainability of the human and the non-humans, we need the technology. So what is sustainability? That means, that is a story about the co-existence and the co-evolutions. So we would like to get to the very beings, as a human, but also the, one of the member of this whole world.

So technology could be not only just the good tools, but also the good perspective to solve these problems, combined with the art in itself. So art and the technology are sister and brother. So we have harmony with each other to make a better life, a better world.