

**Call for Papers:**  
**The 2025 IVSA Conference, June 25-28, 2025, Suwon, South Korea**

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: January 15, 2025

International Visual Sociology Association: Conference 2025

**Beyond the Image: Addressing Power Dynamics in Visual Scholarship**

The 2025 International Visual Sociology Association Conference invites abstracts for papers, films/videos, exhibition contributions, and workshops that embrace diverse and multidisciplinary approaches in the realms of visual sociology and broader visual studies. The 2025 Conference especially sheds light on the following dynamics of visual scholarship in three aspects:

**1. Decentering Power in Visual Studies**

**2. In/Visible Asia**

**3. Refocusing the Lens of Filmic Sociology – South Korea's Legacy**

For keynote speeches, South Korea's sociologist and filmmaker CHO Uhn will take the opening keynote, and Graeme Gilloch at Lancaster University will do the closing. CHO has explored ways to visually document the forced displacement of the poor during city development through her series of ethnographic documentary films, *A Nice Place* (2009, co-dir. PARK Kyoung-tae) and *Danldongne Up 33* (2020), and reflected on the complexity in the relationship between the researcher and research participants in such long-term ethnographic participatory research. Gilloch, well-known for his monumental work *Myth and Metropolis: Walter Benjamin and the City* (1997), is a critical theorist and sociologist of visual culture. He will finalize the conference with the Golding Address for Visual Sociology in Motion, a keynote speech in honor of the work of the late Gill Golding who was a passionate visual scholar and an invaluable former member of the IVSA's Executive Board.

Plenary Sessions consist of two panels covering two of the conference's three main sub-themes. In the "Decentering Power in Visual Studies" panel, AHN Yi-ho, a pansori artist and vocalist from the band *Leenalchi*, and Baruch Gottlieb, a media artist and curator, will take the podium. AHN has pursued to find points of contact between sound arts and social subjects through his experimental works, including *Symphoca Princess Bari – This World* (2007, dir. Eun-Me Ahn) that reinterpreted Korean traditional table "Baridegi" through the mixture of Korea's traditional music *pansori*, dance, and orchestral music, and *Pan-Drama: Yard* (2020) that visualized the sound (sori) of shipyard workers. Gottlieb continuously introduced his endeavor to unite visual arts, such as photography, film, and installation arts, with sound arts by curating a series of exhibitions in Seoul and Berlin. The two artists will make a great response to this conference's core interest in reflexively exploring the hierarchy among diverse senses and the issues of ocular-centric hegemony.

The "Refocusing the Lens of Filmic Sociology – South Korea's Legacy" panel will be comprised of works and themes of three South Korean filmmakers. The 2022 IVSA ACAR-Visual Activism Award

winner, Gina Kim's virtual reality (VR) trilogy demonstrates an ethnographic approach to US Army camp towns that have violent memories and an archival attempt to preserve the image, affect, and atmosphere of locations that are disappearing through VR technology. Long-time duo filmmakers KIM Dong-ryung and PARK Kyoung-tae, also have inquired into the pain and memories of US military comfort women carved in the remains of camp towns. Their joint works, *Tour of Duty* (2012) and *The Pregnant Tree and the Goblin* (2019), apply diverse reflections and experiments on how to document *testimonies that cannot be testimonies*. In this panel, we expect to provide room for discussing the current state of South Korea's filmic sociology, namely, the works of sociological exploration and reflexion in the form of film. The panel will be an opportunity for active conversations between visual scholars and sociological filmmakers. It will also allow ample room for multidisciplinary conversations among diverse disciplines in visual studies, including visual sociology, film & media studies, visual anthropology, communication studies, cultural studies, visual arts, and more.

Proposals need not specifically address the title and themes of the conference. We welcome abstracts that address topics and critical approaches adopting visual theories and/or methods, including, but not limited to, the following:

| Themes                                  | Possible Topics   |
|---|---|
| Decentering Power in Visual Studies     | Multi-sensory studies, sound studies and sonic ethnography, affect theory, and materiality studies  |
|   | Art-based research, bricolage, and design thinking  |
|   | Participatory research, action research, and social experiments   |
|   | Social media and influencers, attention, and digital ethnography  |
|   | Coloniality, postcoloniality, and decolonization  |
|   | Race/ethnicity, representation of races   |
|   | Gender, sexuality, queer, and intersectionality   |
|   | (Im)Mobility (human, nonhuman, and transportation mobility)   |
|   | Posthumanism, actor-network theory, anthropocene, and ecological crises   |
|   | Inequality, class, and social polarization  |
| In/Visible Asia                         | War, state violence, and memory   |
|   | Cold War in Asia, or transpacific Cold War formation  |
|   | Digital and technology-mediated violence in Asia, and the issues of generative AIs  |
|   | Asia's new prosumers of culture, and the issues of generation   |
|   | K-culture: pop, film & series (drama), food, cosmetics, etc.  |
|   | Global and local sports industry in Asia  |
|   | Tourism in Asia: overtourism, dark tourism, and sex tourism   |
|   | Urbanism, gentrification, and Asiatic city planning   |
|   | Asia's un/sustainability: waste, pollution, drugs, prostitution, and feminization of migration  |
| Refocusing the Lens of Filmic Sociology | Experiments in filmic sociology   |
|   | Documentary practices in South Korea and Asia from the filmic sociological perspective  |
|   | Expansion of filmic sociology: VR films, ethnographic films of dreams and inner stories, ethnofictional films, and AI-generated filmic explorations |

The 2025 IVSA Conference will be hosted by Ajou University in Suwon, South Korea (There will not be a hybrid option).

- Date: June 25 – 28, 2025 (4 days)
- Venue: Ajou University (Suwon, Gyeonggi-do, South Korea)

## SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

All presenters should submit abstracts of no more than 250 words through the [EasyChair](#) conference management system. Prior to submitting, you will need to create an EasyChair account if you do not already have one. **The submission deadline is January 15, 2025. The official language is English, but presentations in Korean are also welcome.**

Abstracts submitted through [EasyChair](#) must include the following:

- Title of presentation
- Name of presenter(s) as it will appear in the program
- Organization/Affiliation of the presenter(s)
- Email address of the presenter(s)
- Type of submission (paper, workshop, etc.) at the top of the abstract
- Abstract text (250 words, maximum)
- Keywords (three or four)

All submissions, regardless of their central medium, will be evaluated on their scholarly, artistic, and scientific-analytic merit.

**All conference presenters and attendees must be [members of the IVSA](#).** Participants can only be a lead author on one presentation. In the case of multiple-authored papers, all authors must be members of the IVSA and pay conference fees to be listed on the program.

The 2025 IVSA conference committees will select submissions for inclusion in panel and workshop sessions. Workshops at previous IVSA conferences have included on-site photo and film assignments and editing workshops. Workshops usually take place during the four days of the conference, and can include a one- to two-hour session on the first day (or a longer one as a pre-conference workshop) and a session on the final day for participants to present their work.

**Submission for Visualista Film Festival:** The Visualista Film Festival is an integral part of our annual conference. We invite films and film-based artefacts that explore aspects of visual sociology, from visual dimensions and documentation of social life to the way people perform creative visualization processes. Filmmakers must demonstrate clear theoretical underpinnings and context to their filmic work. We will accept films of any length and treatment, as well as non-linear film-based artefacts and interactive formats. Film artefacts that focus on process rather than product will also be considered. We value diversity in all forms and welcome submissions from around the world. Films made in local languages must carry English subtitles. All submissions of films must be made through our FilmFreeway listing, where full details and guidelines can be found. Visit <https://filmfreeway.com/visualistafilmfestival>

**Submission for *Visual Studies* exhibition:** As one component of the conference, IVSA and its affiliate journal, *Visual Studies*, are collaborating to organize an annual exhibition to facilitate dialogue among practitioners and scholars at the intersection of multiple approaches and rationalities. It invites a collective, critical reflection on what being visually engaged could mean outside the economy of scholarly knowledge and practices. In creating a space where IVSA members, visual social scientists, artists, and practitioners can experiment with visuals, visuality, and visualization (including beyond “the visual” per se through sounds and other media), we invite participants to explore how they approach the boundary between (their) scholarship and (their) art.

Details regarding the exhibition opening, location, and duration during the conference will be specified later.

Possible publication opportunities for the artists may be available in a forthcoming *Visual Studies* issue.

Through this project, *Visual Studies* continues a long-entertained idea started with the journal’s 2022 online exhibition “[What is an image?](#)”: curating an exhibition aligned with the annual conference theme. In recent years, the journal has increasingly expanded its approach to visuals and aesthetics while continuously reflecting on its practices and engagement (For example, formats such as Picture/talks, Visual Essays, and curating a forthcoming, joint issue with the [Open Eye Gallery](#) in Liverpool, United Kingdom). While these endeavors allow *Visual Studies* to better represent the diversity of visual scholarship, this evolution is less a matter of long-term strategy than the result of a fast-growing collective commitment toward inclusivity, reflexivity, and experimentation within the journal’s editorial team.

And, as the IVSA conference expands towards less writing-centered media of dissemination, including through a dedicated Visualistas film festival to be launched in 2025, we want the IVSA to continue to support the broader recognition of art-based, if not radically experimental, forms of research.

**Submission guidelines:**

Submissions may include but are not limited to paintings, drawings, photographs, art films, video installations, multimedia installations, filmed performances, and live performances. We also encourage submissions addressing the limits and definitions of “the visual” and its materialities, by emphasizing other senses and sensibilities.

All presenters should include the following:

- Title of contribution;
- Name of contributor(s) as it will appear in the exhibition program;
- Organization/Affiliation of contributor(s) – if any;
- Email address of contributor(s);
- Format and file type;
- Dimensions (if applicable);
- Requested setup (projector, sound system, light, etc.);
- Description text (250 words, maximum);
- Additional material depending on the format of the contribution (5-minute maximum video preview, or photo sample up to 5 images, or link to online portfolio).

**Submit through [Google form](#).**

All submissions, regardless of their scholarly merit and the affiliation or education of contributors, will be reviewed by an interdisciplinary Review Committee (IVSA members, visual studies scholars, artists, and practitioners) on:

- Their experimental and artistic merit;
- How they address questions and approaches suggested in the call for contributions;
- How they engage with the IVSA conference theme.

Please note that, although engaging with visual studies intellectual traditions and methodologies, the *Visual Studies* exhibition is an art event, distinct from the IVSA conference presentations and film festival.

Due to uncertainties regarding the exhibition space that the curators will secure and available on-site logistics, submitters should be open to discuss with the curators and eventually adapt the final setup for their piece if needed.

Please contact Julie Patarin-Jossec on behalf of the curation team at [patarinjossec.julie\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:patarinjossec.julie[at]gmail.com) with inquiries.

**Deadline to submit: January 15, 2025.**

**Notifications: March 1, 2025.**