

PRESS RELEASE

MEIER PARTNERS PRESENTS FINAL PHOTOGRAPHY OF THE NEW SOROL ART MUSEUM IN SOUTH KOREA



Central courtyard with reflecting pool, looking towards the “cube” and the transparent entrance and lobby pavilion
Photography by Roland Halbe, October 2024

New York, New York - October 22, 2024 – Meier Partners is pleased to present the final photography of the Sorol Art Museum, photographed by Roland Halbe.

Since its opening on February 14, 2024, the Sorol Art Museum in Gangneung, South Korea, has experienced an exciting inaugural year. The museum has hosted its first major exhibition, *Spatial Concept*, featuring the work of Lucio Fontana, presented in dialogue with Korean artist Quac Insik. Most recently, it showcased the landmark exhibition *Moments of Perfection*, highlighting Agnes

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Martin's work—the first exhibition in Korea of a North American artist whose exploration of pure abstraction was deeply influenced by Zen Buddhism and Taoism, alongside the Korean artist Chung Sang-Hwa. These exhibitions have fostered an engaging dialogue with the museum's overarching design vision, inspired by Korean Confucian heritage and its philosophy of art. This vision is expressed through simplicity in form, materiality, and composition, while promoting a harmonious relationship with nature.

Designing a museum today demands a delicate balance between engaging authentically with its context and landscape and providing versatile exhibition spaces that can adapt to various installations. Increasingly, artists consider the specificity of a museum's design when creating their installations, and yet there is a rising need for spaces that are adaptable, allowing for a dynamic range of exhibitions. This interplay between specific design elements and flexibility is essential for accommodating the evolving needs of contemporary art.

Meier Partners has designed the Sorol Museum with this balance in mind, creating a dynamic interplay between introverted gallery spaces and extroverted circulation areas. The gallery spaces are designed to be flexible and receptive to the artist's or curator's creative intent, while the circulation areas, defined by rhythmic and choreographed views and natural light, offer an architectural framework that fosters a unique dialogue between the museum, the exhibitions it houses and its surrounding landscape.

The key design intent of connecting the building to its setting is achieved through the continuous interaction between the interior and the surrounding landscape, primarily facilitated by the circulation spaces. The museum is organized around a central courtyard, inspired by traditional Korean architecture, and comprises three main volumes: the north wing, a large cantilevered pavilion; the "cube," a pristine structure housing galleries and offices; and a transparent pavilion that encompasses the main entrance, lobby, and café. The circulation follows a T-shape, allowing movement between different floors and spaces while providing opportunities for engagement with outdoor exhibits, gardens, and the reflecting pool. A signature ramp serves as a sculptural element, linking indoor and outdoor areas as well as the two levels. Large windows and expansive vistas throughout the circulation spaces maximize natural light, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere that enhances the visual connection to the landscape.

In contrast, the three separate gallery spaces are more introverted, featuring controlled natural light modulated by shading devices, while maximizing display areas for exhibitions and creating a serene and adaptable backdrop for world-class art. The main gallery, featuring a skylight with integrated shading devices to control daylight, is large and flexible in order to accommodate multiple types of exhibitions. The "cube" consists of an extra-tall space topped with a skylight fitted with opaque-translucent glass, allowing for diffused and indirect light. Modestly sized windows are strategically positioned to introduce carefully controlled natural light while framing views of the park, all while preserving ample wall space for exhibits. Each gallery possesses a distinct character, equipped with the ability to finely control the interplay of natural and artificial light, enabling curators to tailor the lighting experience to the specific needs of the artwork.

These new photographs by Roland Halbe highlight how the space is designed to bring the unique landscape and natural light in, while providing flexible gallery environments for the many exhibitions to come.

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Dukho Yeon, Design Partner-in-Charge, comments: "The design vision was to create a modest but lyrical composition incised into this spectacular landscape that would become the perfect backdrop for art and remain forever memorable to all who visit. It is a true collaborative effort, and I am extremely proud to be part of our incredible project team."

Guillermo Murcia, Principal, comments: "The Sorol Museum sets an important milestone as a team effort and as our first project built under the name Meier Partners. Designed to convey simplicity, the Sorol Museum harmonizes with its site and context, letting the spectator engage in a personal journey of discovery interacting with the art. Gallery spaces, though dispersed, remain connected along a path of framed views, filled with abundant natural light."

Sharon Oh, Project Architect and Manager, comments: "The concept behind the Sorol Museum was to create a serene and simple yet memorable space that presents a harmonious blend of art, architecture, and nature. We envisioned the museum to beautifully exemplify the continuous dialogue between interior and exterior elements, creating tranquil exhibition spaces that serve as a neutral backdrop for the art. We are grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this unforgettable project and believe the Sorol Museum will be a destination that captivates visitors."

Notes to the Editor

Major Building Materials:	White exposed concrete, aluminum curtain wall, aluminum composite panel, glass, and stone
Program:	Exhibition spaces, storage, offices, lobby, café, technical spaces
Floors:	2 above grade 1 below grade
Site Area:	31,262 sm (336,501 sft)
Floor Area:	3,222 sm (34,678 sft)

Project Credits

Partner:	Dukho Yeon
Principal, Team Leader:	Guillermo Murcia
Project Architect and Manager:	Sharon Oh
Project Team:	Hyunggyu Choi Yuhwa Jeong Tetsuhito Abe Jun Kawai
Owner:	Gyo-Dong Park Holdings (GDPH)
Construction Manager:	Asia General Construction

About Meier Partners:

Each Meier Partners project is a complete, immersive environment — a harmonious whole greater than the sum of its parts. The design approach undertaken for each of our projects is collaborative and driven to create architecture that has a positive social and environmental impact. The studio's thoughtful application of cohesive design principles produces architecture that is exceptional not only in its clarity and simplicity but in its capacity to elevate and inspire.

The studio's current work in Korea continues with the Children's Dream Center and Children's Eco Museum, an integrated facility that will provide a holistic learning environment for children, for which design development has just been completed. Additionally in Seoul, Meier Partners has the Palace 73 residential project under way, as well as having recently completed the design and commenced construction administration for the landmark tower Kiwoom

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Finance Square for a leading IT and high-tech financial services company. In Europe, construction is underway on The Richard Meier Tower in Jesolo, Italy. Meier Partners has been working on the ongoing master plan of the Jesolo Lido Design District, and this tower is the newest element and one of the first high-rises to be approved for construction in this seaside resort city. Recently completed in Germany are the Stuttgart Residences, a low-rise residential building, and Meier Partners also has a new residential project under way in Hanalei Bay, Hawaii. Additional projects on the boards are in Dubai and Barcelona.

Meier Partners is staffed by a diverse team of talented employees with an unmatched range of experience, positioned to offer comprehensive design services—encompassing everything from urban planning and architecture to interior and product design—to clients anywhere in the world. With projects recently completed and currently on the boards in South America, Europe, Asia, and across the US, Meier Partners continues to build on a unique legacy of visionary design. Over more than 60 years, the studio has successfully completed more than 130 projects around the globe, including celebrated buildings such as the classic Douglas House in Harbor Springs, Michigan, the iconic Getty Center in Los Angeles, and the acclaimed Jubilee Church in Rome.

**For more information on the work of Meier Partners, please visit www.meierpartners.com
Photographs courtesy of Meier Partners. Photo credit: Roland Halbe**

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_01_HERO_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PARTNERS_HALBE

Central courtyard with reflecting pool, looking towards the “cube” and the transparent entrance and lobby pavilion



_02_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PARTNERS_HALBE

Main entrance and transparent lobby pavilion



_03_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PARTNERS_HALBE

Bird's eye image of the site and building looking towards Gangneung and its mountains



_04_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PARTNERS_HALBE

Exterior ramp leading to main gallery space



_05_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PARTNERS_HALBE

Detail of exterior ramp leading to main gallery space



_06_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PARTNERS_HALBE

The facade of the north wing cantilevered pavilion and main gallery

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_07_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PART-
NERS_HALBE

North facade showing the
“Floating” stair and triangular
gallery space in the north wing
pavilion



_08_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PART-
NERS_HALBE

Detail of exterior facade and
reflecting pool in foreground



_09_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PART-
NERS_HALBE

North wing overlooking the central
courtyard and reflecting pool at
night



_10_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PART-
NERS_HALBE

“Cube” volume and main
circulation “floating” over
reflecting pool



_11_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PART-
NERS_HALBE

Central courtyard with reflecting
pool, looking towards the “cube”

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_12_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PART-
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Museum café housed within
entrance pavilion



_13_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PART-
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Detail of museum café and
circulation within the entrance
pavilion



_14_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PART-
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Bridge looking down at museum
café and exterior courtyard



_15_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PART-
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Circulation space looking towards
the ramp

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_16_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PART-
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Main gallery space looking out to
the landscape



_17_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PART-
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Main gallery space with skylight



_18_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PART-
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Detail of main gallery space with
skylight



_19_SOROLMUSEUM_MEIER PART-
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Light filtering into the triangular
gallery space of the north wing
pavilion