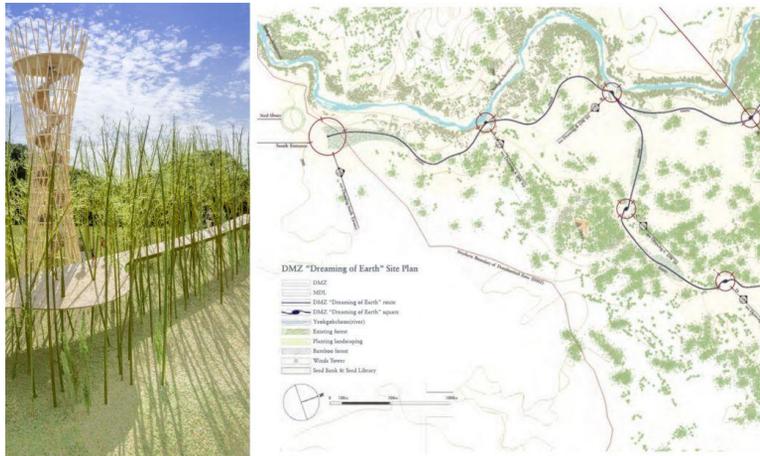


Choi Jae-Eun Brings Korea's DMZ to the Venice Architecture Biennale

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Model and aerial view (details) of the "Dreaming of Earth" project
(Courtesy Kukje Gallery)

Korean artist Choi Jae-Eun has brought materials related to her radical plan to build an ecologically sustainable walkway on Korea's Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) to the 15th Venice Architecture Biennale, which runs until November 27, 2016.

The exhibition, entitled "Dreaming of Earth," features models, maps, audiovisuals, and other documentation, and will be on display in the Korean pavilion in the city's Arsenale area.

These works are all part of a wider project by Choi, in collaboration with Pritzker Prize-winning Japanese architect Shigeru Ban. According to a press release, the project "tries to overcome the division and conflict symbolized by the DMZ by celebrating the power of life."

The initiative, expected to lead to the building of a 13 kilometer raised walkway above the DMZ, gets its central idea from the perverse duality at the heart of the Zone. Although marked by conflict and aggression — the reason the walkway has to be raised is because of the landmines that litter the region — the lack of human presence has made it an area where wildlife thrives, including a number of endangered species. Plans to turn the area into a UNESCO Biosphere were aborted in 2012 in the face of North Korean opposition.

With this project, Choi hopes to "heal" the conflict zone through "the force of nature." The walkway will be made from natural materials and feature 13 floating gardens, a seed bank, an observatory, and a library.