

Laurent Grasso "Memories of the Future"

August 31, 2025 – February 22, 2026



Laurent Grasso, Orchid Island, 20 min 01 sec, HR Film, 2023. Video still
© Laurent Grasso / ADAGP, Paris, 2025. Courtesy of the artist and Perrotin

HEREDIUM, a multicultural art space in Indong, Daejeon, with over a century of history tracing back of the Oriental Development Company in 1922, has announced an upcoming exhibition for the second half of 2025. From August 31st, a solo exhibition by French contemporary artist Laurent Grasso, *Memories of the Future*, will be held at HEREDIUM. This will be the fourth solo exhibition at HEREDIUM, following previous ones by Anselm Kiefer, Leiko Ikemura, and Markus Lüpertz. The exhibition will run from August 31st, 2025, to February 22nd, 2026.

Laurent Grasso established himself as a world-renowned contemporary artist after winning the Marcel Duchamp Prize in 2008 and holding an exhibition at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. In 2015, he was awarded the Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters by the French government, and in 2021, his film work was presented at the Musée d'Orsay, one of the most prestigious art museums in France. He has held solo exhibitions in various parts of the world, including the Montreal Museum of Contemporary Art, the Hermès Foundation in Tokyo, and the Jeonnam Museum of Art in Korea. He is well known in Korea as the artist of the neon light installation 'Memories of the Future' on the facade of the Leeum Museum of Art in Seoul – a title that reappears in this exhibition, reflecting the artist's constant interest in temporal shifts.

The immersive installation conceived as a landscape will feature around twenty artworks—some of them specially conceived for the show, spanning various forms including film, painting, sculpture, and neon light installation. Within the exhibition halls, the presentation integrates large-scale LED panels displaying high-resolution film works alongside paintings and sculptures, connected through dense spatial and conceptual relationships.

Among the exhibited works, 'Orchid Island' presents black-and-white footage shot off the coast of Taiwan. A dark rectangular form floats silently above the tropical landscape, creating a science-fictional presence into otherwise pristine areas—an image subtly charged with contemporary anxieties. The resulting tension between the artificial and the natural evokes an unsettling reality, while the original soundtrack composed by Nicolas Godin (of the music duo Air), deepens the atmospheric dimension of the work.

Beyond its seemingly peaceful symbolism, the monumental copper sculpture 'Clouds Theory' extends this ambiguous atmosphere. Laurent Grasso describes it as a piece of sky that has fallen to the ground, or a physical embodiment of disaster. One side of each sculpture is polished like a mirror, reflecting its surroundings—most notably a set of neon flames—while the other is scorched with a blowtorch, producing an oxidized surface darkened by iridescent hues. This interplay of reflective and opaque surfaces embodies the dual nature of clouds, which can appear both poetic and unpredictable—echoing the shifting perceptions of a climate increasingly marked by instability and contradiction.

The exhibition also includes several works from Laurent Grasso's 'Studies into the Past' series, notably a sequence of small-format paintings depicting imagined catastrophes. Drawing from the visual language of medieval painting, the series transcends temporal boundaries by integrating strange celestial phenomena—such as solar eclipses or northern lights—often derived from the artist's own films. Far from merely replicating historical compositions, these works create a sense of temporal discordance, prompting viewers to question their perception of both reality and history. They also reflect Laurent Grasso's ongoing fascination with scientific observation and primal human fears, themes previously explored in his exhibition *Disasters and Miracles* (Basel, 2013). By fabricating a false historical archive, the series expands conventional notions of time through a layered and conceptual investigation.

Another major film work in the exhibition, 'Artificialis', explores the impact of human activity on the environment by presenting a succession of landscapes—some visibly reshaped by human intervention, others marked by natural phenomena imbued with a surreal intensity. The boundary between the two remains deliberately ambiguous, making it difficult to discern whether what is shown results from technological intervention or from nature's own forces.

Set in a post-Anthropocene world, the work combines LIDAR scans with special effects, producing

ambiguous, unsettling images that blur the boundaries between reality, nature, and simulation, while the soundtrack, composed by Warren Ellis, deepens the visitor's immersive and hypnotic experience.

Echoing the atmosphere of the film, the exhibition also features large-scale triptychs inspired by the landscape paintings of 19th-century American artist Frederic Edwin Church. These works, from the 'Studies into the Past' series, incorporate imagined elements from 'Artificialis'—such as flaming torches—producing a hybrid spectacle that oscillates between historical reference and science-fictional projection.

Laurent Grasso's work explores the complex transformations of the natural world—tracing a narrative trajectory from historical time to a post-Anthropocene world—and the tensions between scientific knowledge, fiction, and perception. Rather than offering didactic responses, he constructs environments that prompt reflection. In these immersive, often ambivalent spaces, viewers experience a dissonance between the apparent stability of the landscape and the invisible forces that shape it. At a time when human influence extends to the most remote corners of the Earth, Grasso reflects on the blurred boundaries between nature and artifice, history and projection, presence and disappearance. Time—nonlinear, layered, and unstable—is a central material in his work. By combining historical references with futuristic anticipations, he opens up an experience that resists fixed interpretation. "What has always fascinated me in Korea is the connection between history and the future—a direct echo of my own concerns. I'm equally interested in tradition and science, in belief systems and science fiction," he notes. Through this oscillation, Grasso constructs a world where the known and the imagined coexist in a suspended state.

The mystical atmosphere of his works has drawn attention beyond the art world. He recently collaborated with high-end jewelry brand Bvlgari to design a watch for their Octo Finissimo Automatic collection. Furthermore, Louis Vuitton took notice of his "Studies into the Past" series, with Artistic Director Nicolas Ghesquière prominently featuring his artworks printed on garments in the Spring 2025 runway collection. Laurent Grasso's futuristic and hypnotic artistic style is also earning notable recognition in the fashion world.

The exhibition venue, HEREDIUM, derives its name from the Latin meaning 'land inherited as legacy,' and stands as a modern cultural heritage site that has transformed from its tragic history of colonial exploitation. Originally built in 1922 as the Oriental Development Company building, it was reborn in 2022 as a multicultural art space that expands artistic horizons. The site holds profound significance as a place where visitors can witness over 100 years of historical traces in Daejeon. In addition to contemporary art exhibitions, HEREDIUM contributes local development through concerts offering performance opportunities to young artists and special lectures associated to its exhibition programs.

Exhibition Overview

- ▶ Exhibition Title : Memories of the Future
 - ▶ Exhibition Period : August 31st, 2025 (Sun) – February 22nd, 2026 (Sun) (Closed every Monday and Tuesday)
 - ▶ Viewing Hours : 11:00 AM ~ 7:00 PM (Last admission at 6:30 PM)
 - ▶ Exhibition Venue : HEREDIUM (735 Daejeon-ro, Indong, Dong-gu, Daejeon)
 - ▶ Admission Fees : On-site purchase - Adults (19 and older) 15,000 KRW / Teenagers (12 to under 19) 12,000 KRW / Children (6 to under 12) 9,000 KRW
 - ▶ Audio Guide : Mobile application 'HEREDIUM'
 - ▶ Inquiries : HEREDIUM / 0507-1422-2075 / info@cncitymaum.org
 - ▶ Museum Website and Online Ticket Purchase : <https://heredium.art/>
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■ About HEREDIUM

HEREDIUM refers to 'a land inherited as a legacy,' a restored multicultural art space built on the site of the former Oriental Development Company. The former Oriental Development Company Daejeon branch was registered as a cultural asset in 2004 and subsequently restored with great care using various historical materials and methods of analysis. It is located in Indong, Dong-gu, Daejeon, and held its first exhibition, "INDONG WRITES HISTORY OF 100 YEARS." It was established in December 2022, soft opened in March 2023, and officially opened on September 8th. The multicultural space presents various cultural and artistic programs, including contemporary art exhibitions, classical performances, cultural events, and educational programs.

Promotion Partner

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