



Theresa Hak Kyung Cha

# WHITE DUST FROM MONGOLIA

April 9-May 3, 2026

*marabouparken*



Theresa Hak Kyung Cha  
White Dust from Mongolia

Martin Grennberger

In 1979, twenty-eight-year-old multi-artist Theresa Hak Kyung Cha traveled to her native South Korea to document what has been described as the haunted remains of the Japanese occupation of the country during World War II. It was her first trip back since her family emigrated to the United States in 1962. She and her brother James returned in 1980 to film her most ambitious project, *White Dust from Mongolia*, but political unrest in Seoul complicated the work, which was not completed at the time of her death in 1982. Witnessing the fragmentary material raises complex questions about history, memory, amnesia, and film as a mnemonic machinery and apparatus. With a background in French psychoanalytic film theory, Cha was interested both in the interiority of memory and in how film materializes memory physically on the screen – the film projected on the screen is the projected memory. She talks about it in terms of “Film/dream projection of unconscious images.”

Also recurring is the idea of narrative as “non-linear tracing,” something that had been an explicit goal of her best-known work, the polyphonic, richly stratified, and multilingual prose-poetic book *Dictée*, published posthumously in 1982. A similar activity occurs when viewing the images we have from *White Dust from Mongolia*; tracing, mapping, a disparate, loosely connected catalog of environments: marketplaces, railways, a walk along a temple facade, forest parks, an amusement park, James and Theresa self-reflexively present in the image. Motifs are repeated, gestures and movements likewise, but with a peculiar sense of displacement, an oscillation between concretion and dispossession.

As much as the material can be experienced as something almost phantasmatic, of absence but also of in situ traces of past (and future) decisive events, it emerges as a subtle, suggestive visual document for us to orient ourselves in and continue to work with.

In conjunction with the opening, Thursday, April 9 at 6 p.m., Martin Grennberger will present Theresa Hak Kyung Cha’s work with moving images. During the period, two programs will also be arranged that relate to Cha’s interdisciplinary practice in text and image.

▷ Repeating and unravelling I:  
Workshop in speculative translation  
April 19, 12pm–4pm

*To name it now so as not to repeat history in oblivion. To extract each fragment by each fragment from the word from the image another word another image the reply that will not repeat history in oblivion.*

– Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, *Dictée*

Jennifer Hayashida and Sara Wengström, translators and writers, will facilitate a workshop in speculative translation in Marabouparken’s library. This workshop takes as its starting point Cha’s interdisciplinary work in the borderlands between text and image. Curator Martin Grennberger will introduce Cha’s practice and together we will then read, discuss and write/translate in dialogue with a selection of Cha’s works, including *Dictée*.

How can writers, translators and artists today continue to work in Cha’s footsteps? What methods does she propose that are useful when we think, write and live multilingually? How can we implement Cha’s methods to examine how history repeats itself and not let it fall into oblivion?

Limited number of participants: register to [osa@marabouparken.se](mailto:osa@marabouparken.se)

▷ Repeating and unravelling II:  
Readings in the Library  
On Saturday, May 2nd, from 1–2 pm, readings will be held in the Marabouparken konsthall library where poets and artists will read texts that operate in relation to Cha’s interdisciplinary practice. More info will follow.

The program is organized by Jennifer Hayashida

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Theresa Hak Kyung Cha (1951–1982) was an American writer and artist of Korean origin. She is best known for her 1982 masterpiece, the genre defying book project *Dictée*, and her film works.

In the spring of 2026, Marabouparken konsthall will show two films in the upper gallery. The films will be screened separately but have thematic similarities and aesthetic affinities. In both films, there is an awareness of the camera's particular gaze and relationship to memory and historiography – the first one with the Italian fascism of the 1930s in focus. In the second film the post-war Korean military dictatorship, forms the background.

April 9, 5pm–7pm

**Opening and introduction by Martin Grennberger at 6pm**

April 19, 12pm–4pm

**Repeating and unravelling I: Workshop in speculative translation**

With Jennifer Hayashida and Sara Wengström

May 2, 1pm–2pm

**Repeating and unravelling II: Readings in the Library**

Readings by Leila Inanna Sultan, Jenny Nguyen, Burcu Sahin and Athena Farrokhzad. The program is organized by Jennifer Hayashida.

The exhibitions are curated in collaboration between Marabouparken konsthall and Martin Grennberger, writer and curator. Both films will be accompanied by programs.

Thanks to Pacific Film Archive

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