



# focus

Issue No: 8 January 2009

# Contents

Editorial	03
InKo Screenings	04
Korean Novelist at Sangam House Writing Residency <i>in Auroville</i>	07
Twelve <i>An exhibition of paintings inspired by the Korean Calendar</i>	09
Dance Theatre CcadoO <i>at the Attakkalari Biennial in Bangalore</i>	11
Imagining in Korea <i>A Conference on Imagination as National Competitiveness in Seoul</i>	14
Seoul Sojourn: <i>A unique Arts Administration training programme in Korea</i>	16
WFF	18
Newspicks	20

# Editorial

Cultural goods as defined by a UNESCO publication in 2005 are consumer goods that convey ideas, symbols and ways of life. They inform or entertain, contribute to build collective identity and influence cultural practices. They are the result of individual or collective creativity. A performance, a film, the written word, the visual form combine individual talent and a collective consciousness on two ends of a taut and engaging tangent. As cultural ambassadors, these art forms are some of the most effective vehicles in creating awareness, appreciation and understanding of the culture from which they emanate even while infusing an acute awareness, by comparison or contrast, of the creative expressions of one's own culture.

At InKo Centre, we aim through our programmes and services to enhance the cultural understanding between India and Korea and to deepen the engagement by reaching out to connect people in these two countries in a meaningful and sustained manner.

This January, we are delighted in association with the Arts Council Korea, to support the contemporary novelist Honggyu Son who will join a number of international writers in residence at the Sangam House Writing Residency at Adi Shakti, Auroville. This Residency is a unique initiative that aims at providing a save haven for writers from different parts of the world to meet and interact in a creative environment. Following a four-week residency Honggyu will read from his work at a special event in Chennai. Read of the Chennai-based artist Asma Menon's exhibition *Twelve*, inspired by the Korean calendar, that will parallel this reading.

From the magic of words and visuals in January, we move on in February to the power of movement in Dance Theatre CcadoO's evocative, contemporary performance *The Murder in the Elevator* at the Attakkalari Biennial at Chowdiah Hall in Bangalore. The Biennial is an important festival that aims to showcase contemporary dancers from around the world and we are delighted at the opportunity to present Theatre CcadoO, one of Korea's most promising contemporary dance companies in what is their Indian debut.

Films hold up a mirror to life in a compelling manner, powerfully combining narrative, image, sound and movement. Encouraged by the response following the 1st Women's Film Festival in March 2008 and the extremely positive feedback that we have received from both individuals and the media, we are delighted to announce that the 2nd edition of the Women's Film Festival will be held in Chennai from 1- 8 March, 2009. The 2nd Women's Film Festival will be presented by InKo Centre in collaboration with the Women's International Film Festival in Seoul (WIFF), the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) and the National Film Archives of India (NFAI) along with a host of partners including key cultural organizations and national Embassies in India. In its second year, the Festival will include feature, documentary and short films by women directors from Korea and India and from around the world as well as films by male directors whose work present a distinct women's perspective. Every effort will be made to initiate discussions with film practitioners and viewers to enhance our understanding of this often debatable question of what constitutes a "woman's film".

Following the extremely enthusiastic response, the weekly and monthly 'InKo happenings' – Language classes; Yoga; Taekwondo and Film screenings, continue at the Centre

As we close the calendar year, I would like to thank you for joining us in our endeavour to discover, engage and connect. In the new year, I look forward to greeting you at our events and courses, to receiving your feedback online or over the telephone and to deepening this dialogue with your participation and support.

**Rathi Jafer**  
Director, InKo Centre

# InKo Screenings

This quarter, InKo screenings present three acclaimed Korean directors Park, Kwang-su, Bong, Joon-ho and Park Kwang-hyun who made landmark films that infused Korean cinema with a unique social critique reflecting the times and the concerns of a generation, be it the inequities of authoritarian rule as in *Chilsu and Mansu*; the intense media frenzy and police investigation that followed serial murders in *Memories of a Murder* or a realistic evocation of the war experience and its very real tragedy in *Welcome to Dongmakol*.

**23 January 2009**

**Chilsu and Mansu**

칠수와 만수, 1988

Directed by Park, Kwang-su

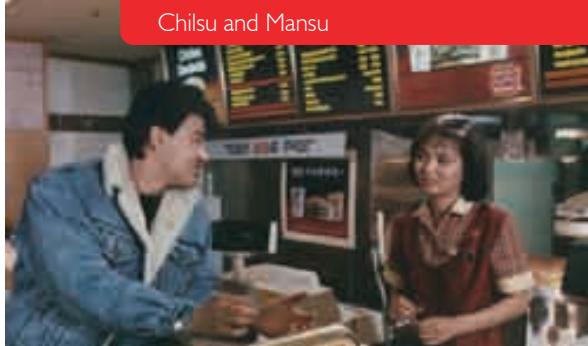
*Chilsu and Mansu* is noted director Park Kwang-su's debut film. The film is remembered as a major step towards freedom of expression in South Korean cinema. 1988 was the year of the Seoul Olympics, and a time of great political and social change for South Korea. Massive street protests against the military government and on behalf of workers' rights had reached their peak. However the Korean society portrayed through cinema in those days little resembled the passions on display in the street. Government censors, wielding an iron grip over the film industry, ensured that the slightest hint of social

criticism was clipped in the screenplay or in the editing room before the film reached its audience.

*Chilsu and Mansu*, released in 1988 is a frequently-cited landmark on Korea's path from restrictive censorship to a greater freedom of expression. It is based on a story by Taiwanese writer Huang Chunming, whose writings were banned in Korea at the time. The movie focuses on Chil-su, a smooth-talking billboard painter who struggles to hold down a job and his evolving friendship with Man-su, a capable and intelligent worker who is held back in life because his father is an "unreformed" Communist sympathizer, serving a long sentence in a South Korean prison.

After meeting at a small workshop where movie billboards are drawn and painted, the two eventually team up to search for temporary work. Yet society gives them few opportunities, as economically and personally they struggle to make ends meet. Finally one hot summer day, they find themselves atop a building in southern Seoul painting a beer ad on a huge billboard. Looking down on all the "well-off, educated, upper class bastards of Seoul," the two begin screaming out their

Chilsu and Mansu





Memories of a Murder

frustrations to the city below. At this time, some policemen on the street hear their shouting and misinterpret their actions, which ultimately leads to an unexpected and somewhat surreal confrontation that reflects the dominant tensions of the age.

*Chilsu and Mansu* marks the directorial debut of Park Kwang-su, who would go on to become not only an accomplished director in his own right, but an influential role model for a new generation of socially-conscious filmmakers. The film also marks one of the most memorable performances of two famous veteran actors, Ahn Sung-ki and Park Joong-hoon. Contemporary audiences may look upon *Chilsu and Mansu* as a comparatively light-hitting political statement, but taken within the context of 1980's Korean cinema and society, it was a bold attempt to mix popular and political cinema. It was not a box-office hit, but in reflecting the frustrations of a generation growing up under social inequality and authoritarian rule, *Chilsu and Mansu* has become one of the best-remembered Korean films of its era.

## 27 February 2009 **Memories of a Murder** 살인의 추억, 2003 Directed by Bong, Joon-ho

*Memories of Murder* is based on the true story of the country's first known serial murders, which took place between 1986 and 1991 in Hwaseong, Gyeonggi Province.

Between the year 1986 and 1991, a small village in Korea's Gyeonggi Province was witness to the rape and murder of 10 women, all killed in the same grotesque and brutal manner. Korea had never

before experienced serial murders of this kind, and an intense media frenzy and police investigation followed. As the murders continued to take place over the years, investigators grew more desperate, at one point even consulting a shaman who advised them to move the gate of the police station to a more favourable location! All investigative efforts failed and to this day, nobody knows who the murderer was or whether he is still alive.

In 1996, the poignant memories of this incident were reshaped into a successful stage play directed by Kim Kwang-rim. The dramatic intensity of the story attracted the interest of several filmmakers who wished to make a film of the material, but ultimately it was Bong Joon-ho, the talented director who debuted in 2000 with *Barking Dogs Never Bite*, who was charged with the task. Bong took the stage play and, consulting historical documents, wrote a screenplay focusing on two of the police investigators. Bong's primary addition to the material was to highlight the era in which the murders took place - a time in which the Korean populace was struggling to shake off its authoritarian past.

The end result is perhaps Korea's biggest event film since *Joint Security Area*, a masterfully directed, superbly acted film which is at once blackly humourous, thought-provoking, and horrifying. The film stars top actor Song Kang-ho (*Joint Security*





Welcome to Dongmakgol

Area) and Kim Sang-kyung (*Turning Gate*) as the two investigators, the former, a local policeman and the latter, a detective who comes from Seoul to assist in the case. The first part of the film focuses on the character of the two men and the rivalry that builds between them. As time passes however, the narrative becomes more complex, as the two lead characters begin to transform under pressure. The film is gradually infused with references to the social situation in Korea at the time, when the government, too busy suppressing its own citizens, did not provide adequate resources for a proper investigation.

Apart from a sterling cast and powerful performances, another impressive aspect of this film are its visuals. The production set a record for using the most locations in any Korean film to date, in an effort to recreate the underdeveloped rural landscape of the mid-80's. Director of photography, Kim Hyung-gu creates striking images out of ordinary objects, with earthy browns and yellows painting an unforgettable portrait of small town life.

## 27 March 2009

### Welcome to Dongmakgol

웰컴투 동막골, 2005

Directed by Park, Kwang-hyun

A ragtag group of North Korean soldiers led by Commander Lee are ambushed. Only Lee, Private Jang and teenager Taeg-ki survive. Encountering a strange young girl Yeo-il, they find temporary refuge in her village, called Dongmakgol. Its residents are blissfully unaware that the Korean

War has been raging on. The villagers also offer refuge to South Korean soldiers, Lieutenant Pyo, the medic Moon and to Smith, an American pilot. After a tense standoff, resulting in the blowing up of the warehouse in the village, the soldiers agree to a reluctant truce, at least until the warehouse and its contents are restored.

Based on the long-running play written by Jang Jin, *Welcome to Dongmakgol* is directed by Park Kwang-hyun, previously responsible for the beautiful "My Nike" segment in the omnibus film *No Comment* (2002). The fantasy sequences are brilliantly combined with the more evidently theatre-driven set pieces. One jaw-dropping moment is a sequence involving a boar.

*Welcome to Dongmakgol*'s power must be attributed to its director Park Kwang-hyun. He does a superb job of walking the tightrope between fidelity to the genre conventions and the logic of humanist fantasy on the one hand and a realistic evocation of the war experience and its very real tragedy on the other. *Welcome to Dongmakgol* has been rated as one of the most accomplished feature film debuts of a Korean filmmaker.

For information regarding **Korean Language** classes, **Yoga, Taekwondo and Calligraphy** classes, Please contact  
InKo Centre 51, 6th Main Road, Raja Annamalaipuram, Chennai - 600 028,  
T : 044 2436 1224  
or log on to [www.inkocentre.org](http://www.inkocentre.org)

# Korean Novelist at Sangam House Writing Residency in Auroville

InKo Centre and the Arts Council Korea (ARKO) are delighted to support Korean novelist, Honggyu Son at the Sangam House Writing Residency, at Adi Shakti, Auroville from 4 - 31 Jan 2009. Dr Arshia Sattar, convenor of The Sangam House Writing Residency outlines this unique programme in arts and letters that aims to bring writers from around the world to live and work in a safe, peaceful setting.

The Sangam House Writing Residency Programme starting in December 2008 is the inaugural undertaking of what will become an on-going annual programme in arts and letters located in India. The residency is conceived and co-ordinated by Arshia Sattar from India and DW Gibson from USA. The word *sangam* in Sanskrit literally means "going together." In most Indian languages, *sangam* has come to mean such confluences as the flowing together of rivers and coincidence.

The intention of Sangam House is to bring together writers from around the world to live and work in a safe, peaceful setting. The world we live in makes a space such as this necessary on many levels. Sangam House will invite approximately twenty writers to live and work at Adishakti in South India. Residencies are structured in 1-3 month intervals, determined by individual needs. Of the twenty invited writers, ten will come from the South Asian subcontinent (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka) and ten from other countries around the world. Sangam House is open to writers in all languages. The first winter session will run for approximately three months from mid-November 2008 to mid-February 2009. Partnering with local organizations and individuals on each continent, Sangam House aims to secure diverse and peaceful havens for writers to work and meet. Each participating writer can deepen his or her understanding of the diverse emotional and social climates in which literature is conceived and received.

Most importantly, the residency programmes are designed for writers who have published to some acclaim but not yet enjoyed substantial commercial success. Sangam House seeks to give writers (including translators, poets, playwrights and those involved in creating





Honggyu Son will read from his work at a special event in Chennai on **29 January 2009**. For further information, please call InKo Centre- 044-24361224

fiction and non-fiction works) a chance to build a substantial and influential network of personal and professional relationships that can deepen their own work, in effect, expanding and diversifying literature.

The following organisations currently partner Sangam House: Danish Council for the Arts; InKo Centre, Arts Council Korea, Finnish Literature Exchange (FILI); Random House India; Penguin India; freeDimensional; Neemrana Hotels; Lavanya Sankaran; The Centre for Communication and Development Studies; Sahitya Akademi (The Indian National Academy for Letters).

Korean novelist, Son Honggyu will join the Sangam House Writing residency at Adi Shakti, Auroville from 4 - 31 Jan 2009. Honggyu Son was born in Jeongeup-si, Jeollabuk-do, Korea in 1975. He graduated from Dongguk University as a Korean Language and Literature major. He completed the course in Korean Language and Literature at Graduate School of Dongguk University. Receiving the Best New Writer of Jakgasegy(The World of Writers) in 2001, He started his career as a writer. He was granted Daesan Creative Writing Funds. He wrote Saramui Shinwha (The Myth of Human Being), Bongseobi Garasadae(As Bongseob Says...), Gwishinui Sidae(The Age of Ghosts).

**Dr Arshia Sattar**

The following writers will be in residence, at varying dates over the course of the Sangam House Writing residency at Adi Shakti:

Mohammed Hanif (Pakistan, Fiction)  
Charlotte Inuk Hoff Hansen (Denmark, Fiction)  
Michael Obert (Germany, Fiction/Nonfiction)  
N.S. Koenings (US, Fiction)  
Honggyu Son (Korea, Fiction)  
Leonora Christina Skov (Denmark, Fiction)  
Joshua Furst (US, Fiction)  
Lidia Bravo (Spain, Poetry/Fiction/Translation)

  
Khadem-ul-Islam (Bangladesh)  
Fiction/Non-Fiction/Translation)  
Bedartha Goswami (India, Fiction)  
Kishore Singh (India, Non-fiction)  
Sharanya Manivanan (India, Fiction/Poetry)  
Salma (India, Poetry/Fiction)  
Meena Menon (India, Non-Fiction/Fiction)  
Aseem Shrivastava (India, Non-Fiction)

**Arts Council Korea** was established to promote creativity and enjoyment of the arts by supporting diverse arts and cultural activities in Korea. The Council consists of eleven dedicated professionals of the cultural and arts sector in Korea. The Arts Council also places emphasis on the establishment of arts infrastructure. It facilitates the rise of practice-oriented policy implementation in line with the increasingly sophisticated cultural environment of Korea.



# Twelve

## An exhibition of paintings inspired by the Korean Calendar

Twelve, a series of twelve paintings by Asma Menon, a Chennai-based painter, draws its inspiration from the Korean calendar. The exhibition celebrates the Korean New Year and parallels a reading by the Sangam House Korean writer-in-residence, Honggyu Son - both art forms expressing a wish for peace and creativity with January being the start of the calendar year and Sangam House being the start of an initiative which looks at nurturing creative expression in a safe haven.



Asma Menon

The universe as we know it has 12 planets. The world as we know it has 12 months in a year. The zodiac as we know it has 12 signs. Oriental astrology as we know it has 12 personalities. Thus was born the idea of exploring this concept of 12 via a visual medium.

The attraction to the oriental concept is that personalities are based on animals / birds, etc. As people we often say that this person looks like a "horse" or that person is a "real cat" ! Animal terms are used as adjectives to describe a situation / reason / mood and so on.

The idea of pursuing the visual medium of the oriental horoscope via the Korean line of thought is that the city of Chennai plays host to a large community of Koreans who have made this city their home. Twelve is a series of paintings in honour of the people of Korea who have integrated themselves into a culture far removed from their homeland, whether for a long or short period of time. It ties in with the Korean New Year which is celebrated in January, according to the lunar Korean calendar. Information about the significance of the Korean calendar has fortunately been available on account of the library at the InKo Centre.

The Korean New Year, 설날, known as Seollal (설날) or Gujeong (구정) is the first day of the lunar Korean calendar. The Korean New Year generally falls on the second new moon after the winter solstice. The Korean New Year is typically a holiday for the whole family. Many Koreans dress up in their colourful hanboks, the traditional Korean clothing, and perform rituals in honour of their ancestors, in the morning. Tteok guk (떡국) (soup with rice cakes) is commonly served during this holiday.



**Twelve**, an exhibition by Asma Menon that draws its inspiration from the Korean calendar and which celebrates the Korean New Year will parallel a reading by the Sangam House Korean writer-in-residence, Honggyu Son on 29 January, 2009 in Chennai.

For further information, please call  
InKo Centre-  
044- 24361224



Many Koreans look forward to greeting the New Year (both Western and lunar) by visiting the cities of Gangneung and Donghae on the east coast, where they are most likely to see the first rays of the sun as it rises for the first time in the New Year.

Sebae, a traditional practice of paying respect to parents and grandparents, is followed on Korean New Year. Children visit their parents and wish them a "Happy New Year" with a deep traditional bow. This is accompanied by the words saehae bok manhi badeseyo (새해 복 많이 받으세요) which literally means receive a lot of new year's luck. Parents reward their children with 'new year money' (usually a crisp note) and offer words of wisdom.

The traditional Korean calendar is a lunisolar calendar which, like the traditional calendars of other East Asian countries, was based on the Chinese calendar. Dates are calculated from Korea's meridian. The Gregorian calendar was officially adopted in 1895, but traditional holidays and age-reckoning for older generations are still based on the old calendar. The biggest festival in Korea today is Seollal, the first day of the traditional Korean New Year. Other important festivals include Daeboreum (the first full moon), Dano (spring festival) and Chuseok (harvest festival).

The 12 animals of the Chinese calendar are widely adopted and used in Chinese, Japanese and Korean Zodiacs- that is, the Rat, Ox, Tiger, Hare, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, Pig . 2008 was the Year of the Rat and 2009 is the Year of the Ox

This series is a natural progression from my earlier works that revolve around the abundance of life and in recent times, on animals and birds. This exhibition is an exploratory journey of mosaic and mixed media on paper.

Asma Menon

Ancient folk paintings often depict the five directional spirits and the animal gods symbolizing the 12 zodiacal signs as an expression of the desire to disperse evil spirits and invoke happiness. The five directional spirits are the blue dragon of the west; the white tiger of the east; the red peacock of the south; the black turtle snake of the north and the yellow emperor of the centre. As time passed, the red peacock was substituted with the phoenix or a mythical animal called the *kirin* and the black turtle-snake with a turtle. Ancient Korean folk paintings have the following characteristics:

They demonstrate an unequivocal yearning for happiness- to chase away evil; to enjoy a good life; to be blessed with a long life and good health, affluence and social success.

They attest in their unpretentiousness, to the honesty and simplicity of the Korean people.

They show the deep love of Koreans for nature, humankind and the deities and reflect the ideals of humanity and peace.

Their bold compositions, dynamic brushwork and intense colors are thought to display the indomitable will and courage of an agrarian society oppressed by the upper class and foreign invaders.

They abound with humour and satire and manifest the mental rigour of a people who are able to wisely surmount difficulties.

# Dance Theatre CcadoO

## at the Attakkalari Biennial in Bangalore

Dance Theatre CcadoO's dramatic and visually powerful production *The Murder in the Elevator* examines the interstices between the self and society, the challenge of communication in the modern world and the threat of isolation that reigns in our lives. InKo Centre is delighted to present the Indian premiere of CcadoO's *The Murder in the Elevator* at the Attakkalari Biennial in Bangalore on 7 and 8 February, 2009. Hobin Park, Artistic Director of Dance Theatre CcadoO outlines the multi-disciplinary approach of this most exciting contemporary dance company in Korea.

Dance Theatre CcadoO presents their dramatic production *The Murder in the Elevator* at the Attakkalari Biennial on 7 and 8 February 2009 at the Chowdiah Memorial Hall, Bangalore

For further information please contact  
the Festival Directorate at:  
T: 080-42039291/22123684  
E: attakkalari.biennial@gmail.com  
W: [www.attakkalaribiennial.org](http://www.attakkalaribiennial.org)

The name CcadoO means the repeated action of peeling an onion to find the essence. The meaning connotes a continuous experimental spirit in exploring the core of humanity and objectivity.

CcadoO is written 加頭(Cca/doO) in Chinese characters. 加 means adding and 頭 means head. Therefore the CcadoO 加頭 aims for the collective creation in which all artists of various genres share their artistic approach.

The CcadoO team, focus on the relationship and its structure between individuals and their society. The team at CcadoO have attempted to clearly represent this concept of self and society from their own particular point of view. The structure and form of their work is simple, psychological and mixed with unexpected and enjoyable elements.

*The works of CcadoO have the open structure of a new performing art that communicates with spectators and gives them a chance to be touched by the vividness and serious pleasure of being a part of it all.*

### The Murder in the Elevator

'The Murder in the Elevator' received the PAF Dance and Multi-Media Award in 2007. The performance is reminiscent of a mystery drama offering a fresh and interesting perspective not seen in dance pieces before. Images weave in and out through reality, the surreal and the grotesque and yet, an element of fun remains. The scene is unveiled to the sound of a piano at one end of the stage that reverberates the silence, the awkwardness and secrecy of



the elevator. The naked body found inside the elevator appears to be in a deep slumber with no hint of suicide or murder. Unlike when he was alive, people begin to pay more and more attention to the man, now dead. Everybody becomes involved in the mystery. A couple performs a delicate dance of sorrow as if each wishes to be recognized as an individual in a society that tends to force the identity of either male or female upon the individual. The force of mystery exudes both freshness and familiarity onto the stage for a full hour causing the audience members to hold on tightly to the tension, giving them the opportunity to consider the interrelations between the self and others.

One day, a man is found dead in an elevator. He is an ordinary salaried man. The cause of death remains a mystery. Suicide is likely, but there are no letters left to his family. Besides, there are some clues that he might have been moved to this place after his death. One peculiar thing is that the autopsy shows an image lasting about 15 seconds that was stored in the brain of the deceased man. The image can only be transferred using his eyes. Just as he is about to get out of the elevator, a beautiful prairie scene is spread out in front of his eyes. The image of a blue sky and a single tree with no shadow overhead is presented. He sees some flower petals that appear to be transparent while going up and down over a number of hills until the image disappears altogether.

The closed space of an elevator, even if a person is not claustrophobic, is enough to make one feel lonely and even to create the urge to commit suicide due to the isolation from the outside world and deep sense of loneliness. Have you ever engaged in a conversation inside an elevator? You would never have been so carefree then.

This work attempts to portray the sense of discomfort we experience in communication and the threat of isolation that reigns in our lives.

**Hobin Park**





## Artistic Director: Hobin Park

Hobin Park is CcadoO's artistic director and choreographer. He uses the collage technique or the body as an object, as in total theatre. Regarded as one of the most promising of contemporary artistic directors on the international circuit and acclaimed as Dancer of Our Time at the Dance Biennale Tokyo 2004, Hobin Park is actively involved in other productions such as opera *Don Carlo*, *Faust*, Musical *Yi, Gaetongyi*, play *The Fire*, *Blazing Sunshine*, *Ladies Macbeth*. In 2002, he was invited to 'BBB series' of SIDance and in 2004, he co-choreographed *12 SMS Across the Mountain*, co-produced by SIDance and the Singapore Arts Festival.



The Murder in the Elevator

**attakkalari** INDIA BIENNIAL 2009

**The Attakkalari India Biennial** will be held between February 6 and 15, 2009 in Bangalore, India. It will serve as a unique platform in South Asia for individual and fresh voices in contemporary movement arts and serve as a forum for the exchange of expertise in dance, design and research. Global movement arts with a special focus on works that incorporate new and emerging technologies in digital arts and interactivity will be showcased at the festival.

The Attakkalari India Biennial 2009 aims at investing in knowledge creation by mapping new territories, identities, localities and culture with works from different regions and countries.

Artists from various parts of the world that include Germany, Korea, Japan, Netherlands, Finland, Burkina Faso, UK, USA, Sweden, Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, Canada, Belgium and India will come together to present their work, share their experiences, exchange ideas, explore new territories and throw open a dynamic space for creative expression through performance.

The ten-day festival will include performances in theatre spaces, site-specific works, master classes, dance on camera and "Conversations": a series of three seminars.

# Imagining in Korea

## A Conference on *Imagination as National Competitiveness* in Seoul

At a conference in Seoul, arts consultant VR Devika, searches for new possibilities of exploring the meaning of Asian imagination in a global context.



"You know we look similar" said Jin (Jinkyun Na). "you could be my mother!" well he did mother me when I cut my finger on the hairdryer in the hotel room at Gwangju. Jan-Ru Wan (a Taiwanese born artist from the US) brought a medical glu which she said would kill germs and bind the open wound on the spot. She told Jin that I might scream the roof down as it will sting like hell and that he had to hold me down. I screamed beating my legs for a few seconds as Jin struggled to hold me down.

After that drama, I said, "Jin you are my son". He said he loved everything about India and was very happy when I gifted him some pre-cooked instant food from India that I had packed in my box just in case I did not get any vegetarian food, but found. I had no use for this as the organisers of the 2008 TIF (Technology-Imagination-Future) International Forum's seminar "Imagination is National Competitiveness" ,The Institute of Media Arts (IMA), pulled out all stops to get me quality vegetarian food through the seminar crowned by a visit to Sanchon, the high quality vegetarian restaurant founded by a former Buddhist Monk who told me after I told him how fantastic the food was, that he had visited India and that paper dosa is the best food in the whole world!

Mr.Lim (Jeong Taeg), had seen me do a "thank you" in the Bharatanatyam format on behalf of the delegates at the World Creativity summit in

Taipei, Taiwan and invited me to their conference. Ranjit Makkunni, the technology design visionary who has created the multimedia exhibition "Eternal Gandhi" at Gandhi Smriti in New Delhi was also invited but he could not make it due to health reasons and asked me to make his presentation as well. I decided to present a paper in the session "Cultural Imagination of Asia" giving a power point presentation on the icon of Nataraja and its mythical, scientific, historical and astronomy aspects. I had also in my presentation clippings of the dance Natanam Adinar in Bharathanatyam by Lokesh and Rajamalli of Kalakshetra and Sangeeta Isvaran. It was received with great enthusiasm.

The Institute of Media arts at Yonsei University, Seoul, implements the Humanities Korea Project, which is planned by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and supported by the Korea Research Foundation. In order to promote the Humanities into Korea's future 'cultural asset' and spiritual infrastructure, the Humanities Korea Project will develop an international research institute for the next 10 years.

With the 10-year agenda "Imagination and Technology: Humanities of Man and Machine," IMA constantly conducts research on technology, imagination and future, which are the main key words of the 21st century. TIF (Technology-Imagination-Future) International Forum 2008 was a part of the first 2008 forum held in the first week of November at Yonsei University, Seoul and Kimdaejung Convention Center, Gwangju was "Imagination is national competitiveness." Co-organizers: Office for the Asian Hub-City of Culture (Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism) and Korean Society of Information Design

Mr.Lim, the director of the conference said "The rise of digital civilization in the 21st century continuously generates discourse on imagination. By

exceeding its conventional areas of the Humanities and Art into Science and Technology, Business Management, Culture Industry and Design, imagination has become the main key word in these various fields." He went on to add "What factors affect this emphasis on imagination across all social fields in this era? First of all, the unprecedented change in the knowledge system that was triggered by the development of digital technology can be pointed to be an essential impact. The flexible digital operation process does not restrict knowledge in a particular field, but allows infinite networking with other fields. In order to dismantle the conventional academic system and create a new system, imagination is inevitably necessary. From the viewpoint of cultural history, science technology and imagination have developed in a complementary relationship. Furthermore, collaboration between these two sources appears to be indispensable in the 21st century. Therefore, this forum focused on the interaction between technology and imagination."

Culture is the asset of every country and an important element of national competitiveness. In addition, science technology and culture are linked together. The source of culture is imagination, so its value subsequently rises. By taking down the boundaries between media and human, culture and industry, Asian and Western countries, high-technology and new information systems connect all differences. While keeping in mind that technology and imagination are not contrary to each other but two sides of a coin, this forum, therefore, searched for new imagination for the 21st century.

In Korea, culture contents and design are increasingly developing as the leading industry for national growth. With expanding criticism and reflective speculation regarding the exclusive support for IT technology, many people continuously recognize the importance of imagination as national competitiveness.

The 2008 TIF International Forum had four sessions categorised as Conversion of Civilization and Imagination, Culture Contents and Imagination , Design and Imagination , Asian Culture and Imagination exploring the historical background of how imagination became the subject in all social fields of the 21st century and discussing the necessity and objectives of imagination and creativity in the various areas of the Humanities, Engineering, Natural Science, Culture, Art, Business

Management, etc, to understand imagination as the basis of the expanding culture industry and explore theories and practices regarding the origin of culture contents, which include image, sound, space, storytelling, etc, to discuss the aspects of imagination and creativity which form the basis of practical design business, including city space, cyber space, architecture, etc. and to discuss Asian imagination together with the Gwangju Asian Culture Complex and search for new possibilities of Asian culture by exploring the foundation of Asian imagination in the global context.

Apart from the intense experience of the conference, added pleasure was a visit to the information centre of the proposed Asian hub city of culture in Gwangju, the garden of Soswaewon. This garden was made by men but remains natural. It is the example of a natural garden of the mid Joseon dynasty. Scholar Sanbo Yang gave up his political ambition when his mentor and radical reformist, Gwangjo Jo(1482~1519) was purged and killed by the corrupt ruling class, and he built this building going back to rural life.

Driving to Gwangju, stopping at moffusil bus stops and finding absolutely clean toilets was a delight, as also the hot stone vessel for rice and vegetables giving a much needed spice fix.

On the last day in Seoul, History professor Kiyoon KIM and his research fellow of the humanities project wife , the very graceful Jeonghee LEE drove us around the down town area, the trade areas and took us over the mountains for a great view. We also walked around the Cheonggye (literally meaning "clean valley water"), a stream built by Seoul's mayor, now President, Lee Myung-Bak .

A delightful visit to Korea. So many lovely things to narrate that I can keep writing for a week or more....

V.R. Devika



# Seoul Sojourn: A unique Arts Administration training programme in Korea

Ganga Rudraiah, a postgraduate student from Stella Maris College, Chennai, who interned at InKo Centre in the run up to the 1st Women's Film Festival, was selected to participate in a unique, six-month long Arts Administration training programme in Seoul. Now back at desk in Chennai, she reflects on her Seoul sojourn.



Miles away from India, I felt home in this city of change. Seoul for me is its subway. The Subway trains might be a recent invention but the Korail is the breeding ground for Koreaness. With my eyes, ears and a heart open, I relished observing Korean people play their daily lives. Every day, at the first step into the train, I am greeted by the smell of Seoul. For me, this smell is representative of its people. It breezes by to remind you of your foreignness, of little eyes and Kimchi.

The Cultural Partnership Initiative of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, South Korea, is a dual program of international exchange and joint research. I had been specifically inducted into the Arts administration Training program instituted by the Arts Council Korea (ARKO). Spread across six months, this program oriented the participants to Korea's cultural industry.

Korea has a copious amount of entertainment to offer for its citizens. There are Norebangs (karaoke rooms), PC bangs (Internet/gaming centres), jimjilbangs (Sauna), movie theatres, art and cultural centres, traditional music and dance centres, operas, musicals, ballet, contemporary art, theatre and dance shows, festival for all genres from Hi Seoul festival to the Busan International Film Festival, amusement parks, mountain climbing, cycling, skiing, and of course the internet and TV, to finish the exhaustive list. The success of Korean wave or Hallyu speaks for its wide-spread presence in the south-east Asian domain. For three months I walked up and down art centres, opera halls and street theatre venues. To me, I see Korea providing its people walk-in opportunities for intellectual stimulation. The success of each festival is primarily because all the festivals receive significant monetary support from the Ministry of Culture among other things.

Daily life in Korea is not very different from India in the Asian sense, but over the years western imports have changed both countries at different levels. The major difference I can easily pick is the apparent absence of Western classical



music and its outrageous prominence in Korea. Perhaps, Indian classical and film music have had an overbearing influence with its unmatched extensiveness. Korea with a smaller population and smaller size has managed to provide for its citizens plenty of opportunities to entertain their mental and physical faculties. I find it awe-inspiring to see the elderly in Korea constantly active and mountain hiking comes as a complete surprise. The old in India restrict themselves to television boxes, parks or chit-chat communities. The so called economic "disadvantage" dictates the Indian scene of leisure. From school kids to adults, sadly, money fuels our choice of leisure activities. Therefore brings forth the classic divide between the classes -rich, upper-middle class, middle class and the "poor".

My strongest feeling is that I miss Korea. 'Korea' to me is collective of many things- from *kimbap* (rice rolls) to *pali pali* (hasty) Koreans, from diligence of ARKO to hospitable Korean friends, from hip-hop dance to feminist art movements, from *Ginseng* (herbs) to *Makoli* (Korean rice liquor), I have fallen head over heels for Korea like a little girl and her secret garden- a new world she continuously explores.

Cultural exchange is possible only with the existence of cultural differences. We exchange differences to understand and share the human feeling. Some of my favourite films are Korean. Sometimes, while I travel in the subways or walk on the roads, with Indian music playing in my ears, the most beautiful scenes of Korean daily life synced with the music. The smile on my face at such moments, tell that I'm on this bridge—this cultural bridge that make boundaries disappear and people as one.

**Ganga Rudraiah**





# 2nd Women's Film Festival

## March 1 - 8, 2009, Chennai

As we ready for the second edition of the annual Women's Film Festival, the Festival Curator, Dr Vasanthi Shankaranarayanan examines the ramifications of this festival, its core principles and the new additions this year.

As the preparations for the second Women's Film Festival are being initiated, the primary question that faces the organisers is the kind of films to be included in the festival. Two decisions have been made as listed below:

- Documentary and short films will also be included in this festival.
- Apart from films made by women, some films made by men which express a "Women's Point of View" or a "Women's Perspective" will also be included.

We feel that with the great success that we have had with the first women's films festival with regard to audience participation and formal and informal discussions on the content, form and ideology of the films shown, many of them with the makers themselves, we can move on from the "films made by women only" criteria. We hope that the 1st Women's Film Festival opened up at least a sizeable cross-section of our audience to a "Women's Point of View" or "Women's Perspectives" distinct from a "Man's Point of View." We hope that the audience was made aware of the special form that a film takes which allows to be termed a "Woman's Film". Apart from the obvious markers such as themes concerning women, inclusion of personal themes, avoidance of objectification, marginalisation or subjugation of women, avoidance of catering to male gaze, and formal induction of women in all aspects of film making, in second edition of this Festival we hope to introduce

to the audience formal technical elements such as special camera angles and positioning of shots, significant aspects of editing etc which distinguish a women's film from a man's film. The films which are noted for these formal elements have consciously been included into the 2nd Women's Film Festival.



It is our understanding that the "documentary" film highlights and underscores these aspects even more than feature films, as it is starker and devoid of the interesting and dramatic elements such as the story, the characters and the sheer drama and continuity of the narrative. Agnes Varda and Chantal Ackerman are good examples of such documentary film makers. In India also we do have a sizeable number of documentary film makers worth exploring such as Chandita Mukherji, Deepa Dhanraj, Soudamini etc. Even though selecting of documentary films for the festival is going to be a daunting exercise, because of the sheer numbers and variety, we propose to make a small beginning this year.

As for the inclusion of films made by men, we again feel that as the world on the whole has moved on to another stage in feminism and women's films, it would be remiss on our part not to accept that reality and give expression to the broader possibility of men understanding a Women's Point of View and vision thereby trying to lessen the gap between the two points of view.

While these changes are being introduced, we hasten to assert that the fundamental principle and ideology of the festival has not changed. The festival is a platform to highlight a Women's Point of View and Women's Perspectives in the sphere of creative expression and a majority of films selected will continue to be those made by women.

Film, as one of the main artistic expressions of modern world, has been opened up now to women also. It is therefore felt that some sort of encouragement should be given to women film makers to prove that they have an identity and form of their own. The Women's Film Festival aims to provide a window of opportunity to showcase the work of women film makers even while it inclusively opens up a dialogue with the larger viewing public about just what constitutes a women's film.

**Dr Vasanthi Shankaranarayanan**

The 1st Women's Film festival held in Chennai from **1-8 March 2008** was a phenomenal success. It had an audience turnout of approximately 5000 people over 8 days. Encouraged by this response and the extremely positive feedback that we have received from both individuals and the media, we are delighted to announce that the 2nd edition of the Women's Film Festival will be held in Chennai from 1- 8 March, 2009. The 2nd Women's Film Festival will be presented by InKo Centre in collaboration with the Women's International Film Festival in Seoul (WIFF), the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) and the National Film Archives of India (NFAI) along with a host of partners including key cultural organizations and national Embassies in India.

In its second year, the Women's Film Festival will focus on a strong Korean and Indian section of feature films, short films and documentaries as well as a section on World Cinema in all three categories.

This year promises a rich haul with films from approximately 25 countries over 8 days; an international seminar and related wraparound events.

**Full details regarding the festival including the programme, venues and registration will be available on [www.inkocentre.org](http://www.inkocentre.org) by 10 February 2009.**

# Newspicks

## The Seoul Design Olympiad: A graphic contemporary statement

The city of Seoul celebrated autumn with a bang this year. Having nabbed the coveted honour of being selected as the World Design Capital 2010, Seoul highlighted its role as a hub of design in a grand way.

The gala event, titled Seoul Design Olympiad 2008, kicked off on 10<sup>th</sup> October with a special concert featuring K-pop stars BigBang, Dynamic Duo, Solbi and Kim Gun-mo.

Fireworks, design auctions, a 4-ton rice cake, fashion shows and b-boys carried on the extensive festivities.

Running the gamut from D.I.Y. activities to concerts to exhibitions, the Olympiad catered to both families and design aficionados.

Top designers and design companies aficionados got the opportunity to participate in a series of design conferences and exhibitions featuring top architects Zaha Hadid, Daniel Libeskind and industrial designer Ross Lovegrove. Design and architecture experts Yao Ying Jia, Richard Buchanan and Kazuo Sugiyama also delivered keynote speeches.

A trio of exhibits titled "Design is AIR," "Seoul Design Now" and "Vision of Design Seoul" showcased the works of top notch designers and eco-friendly creations, while also delving into the past, present and future of Seoul's architecture.

Exhibitions presented by leading design companies from Milan, Turin, Hanover, New York, Paris, Prague, Hong Kong, while the "2008 World Design Market-Seoul" exhibit turned the spotlight on the works of upcoming Korean and foreign designers.

A special exhibition focusing on the creations of Zaha Hadid – the first female to win the Pritzker Prize – and the firm's partner, Patrik Schumacher brought the creme de la creme of the design world to Seoul.

More than 2 million people participated in the Olympiad, which took place in the Jamsil Sports Complex and the Hangang Riverside Park.



**Left:** Visitors look at the creations of Zaha Hadid. (Photo: Courtesy Yonhap News)

**Right:** The 'Design is AIR' exhibition (Photo: Courtesy Seoul Metropolitan Government)

**Right** The entrance of Jamsil Sports Complex is decorated with recycled art works. (Photo: Courtesy Yonhap News)



# Newspicks

## As Hangeul marks its 562nd anniversary, Korean is rated one of the top world languages

Some 500 years ago, the upper class in Korea's Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910) wrote only in classical Chinese. This was totally different to the spoken Korean language, causing difficulty for uneducated commoners in communicating with authorities. To help them, King Sejong the Great (1397-1450) created the *Hangeul* writing system to help them read and write, but most Joseon scholars regarded *Hangeul* as being only for the lower classes and for women.

Today, however, King Sejong's creation of *Hangeul* is increasingly recognised as one of the most scientific and practical writing systems in the world. *Hangeul* has helped Korea achieve a nearly 100 percent literacy rate. It is also suitable for sending text messages or online instant messages. *Hangeul* is even becoming a global cultural commodity, often found in the artwork of world-class designers or on clothes worn by international celebrities.

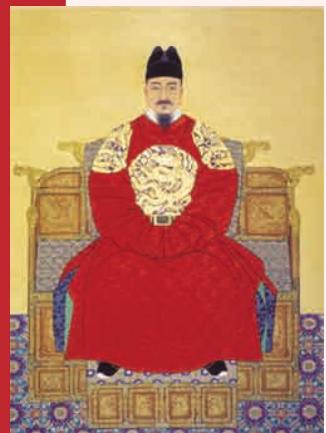
The superiority of *Hangeul* as a writing system has been noted by several world-renowned institutions. In 1995, the Department of Linguistics, Philology & Phonetics at Oxford University, ranked *Hangeul* first, after evaluating 30 writing systems in terms of their rational, scientific and unique characteristics.



**Left:** "Youth" by installation artist Kang Ik-joong who donated his block artwork to UNESCO

Last year, Korean was selected as one of the official international languages by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) under the United Nations. This is the first time it was selected as an official language by international organizations, reflecting the language's position in the world.

Thanks to international recognition of the country's economic status and the language, the number of people who want to learn Korean has also shown a sharp increase. According to Korea's Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the number of non-Koreans taking the Korean proficiency test has more than doubled to 150,000 this year, thanks to the expansion of Korean firms overseas and the increase in educational exchanges.



**Top:** King Sejong the Great (1397-1450)

# Newspicks

Besides the international popularity, the scientific writing system and uniqueness of *Hangeul* have also won global recognition. UNESCO's Memory of the World Programme designated *Hangeul* as a global documentary heritage in October 1997. Earlier, in 1989, UNESCO set May 15, the birthday of King Sejong the Great as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Now UNESCO rewards individuals or organizations that contribute to fighting illiteracy with the King Sejong Literacy Prize, named after *Hangeul*'s founder.

Renowned U.S. writer Pearl Buck (1892-1973) praised *Hangeul* in her novel *The Living Reed* (1963) saying, "Hangul (*Hangeul*) is the simplest and best script in the world. When 24 consonants and vowels are combined it can exactly vocalize all the different sounds that a human throat can express." The renowned writer also dubbed King Sejong as "truly Korea's Leonardo da Vinci" in terms of the depth and range of his talent.

According to the Ethnologue index that ranks all languages in the world by number of users, as many as 6,912 languages are spoken in the world as of 2000. Korean, used by 75 million people, including overseas Koreans and North and South Koreans, ranked 13th, followed by French.



**Left:** Hangeul consists of ten vowels and fourteen consonants.

**Right:** The introduction to Hunminjeongeum meaning The Correct Sounds for Instructing the People created by King Sejong in 1446.

To globalize the Korean language, the Korean government is using various avenues to promote the dissemination of cultural contents such as movies, TV dramas or online materials showing users, including non-Koreans, speaking Korean and by publishing Korean language books. The worldwide *Hallyu*, or Korean wave beginning with Korean TV dramas or movies in the late 1990s, also contributed to introducing Korean to the world.

Korea's National Academy of Korean Language plans to build 200 Korean language schools dubbed "Sejong Schools" by 2016 to teach the Korean language and alphabet overseas in order to globalize the language so that it can act as a bridge between Korea and the rest of the world.

**Bottom:** International students study Korean language.



# CALENDAR 2009

InKo Centre - Chennai

January

February

March

## KOREAN LANGUAGE COURSE: BEGINNERS/INTERMEDIATE COURSE

1	6	8	13
Thu	Tue	Thu	Tue
15	22	27	29
Thu	Tue	Thu	Tue

3	5	10	12
Tue	Thu	Tue	Thu
17	19	24	26
Tue	Thu	Tue	Thu

3	5	10	12	17
Tue	Thu	Tue	Thu	Tue
19	24	26	31	
Thu	Tue	Thu	Tue	

## KOREAN FOR BUSINESS PURPOSES

2	7	9	14	16
Fri	Wed	Fri	Wed	Fri
21	23	28	30	
Wed	Fri	Wed	Fri	

4	6	11	13
Wed	Fri	Wed	Fri
18	20	25	27
Wed	Fri	Wed	Fri

4	6	11	13
Wed	Fri	Wed	Fri
18	20	25	27
Wed	Fri	Wed	Fri

## ENGLISH FOR SOCIAL PURPOSES: LEVELS 1 & 2

1	6	7	8	13	14	15
Thu	Tue	Wed	Thu	Tue	Wed	Thu
20	21	22	27	28	29	
Tue	Wed	Thu	Tue	Wed	Thu	

3	4	5	10	11	12
Tue	Wed	Thu	Tue	Wed	Thu
17	18	19	24	25	26
Tue	Wed	Thu	Tue	Wed	Thu

3	4	5	10	11	12	17
Tue	Wed	Thu	Tue	Wed	Thu	Tue
18	19	24	25	26	31	
Wed	Thu	Tue	Wed	Thu	Tue	

## YOGA

2	5	7	9	12	14	16
Fri	Mon	Wed	Fri	Mon	Wed	Fri
19	21	23	26	28	30	
Mon	Wed	Fri	Mon	Wed	Fri	

2	4	6	9	11	13
Mon	Wed	Fri	Mon	Wed	Fri
16	18	20	23	25	27
Mon	Wed	Fri	Mon	Wed	Fri

2	4	6	9	11	13	16
Mon	Wed	Fri	Mon	Wed	Fri	Mon
18	20	23	25	27	30	
Wed	Fri	Mon	Wed	Fri	Mon	

## CALLIGRAPHY

4	11
Sun	Sun
18	25
Sun	Sun

1	8
Sun	Sun
15	22
Sun	Sun

1	8	15
Sun	Sun	Sun
22	29	
Sun	Sun	

## TAE KWON DO

3	4	10	11
Sat	Sun	Sat	Sun
17	18	24	25
Sat	Sun	Sat	Sun

1	7	8	14
Sun	Sat	Sun	Sat
15	21	22	28
Sun	Sat	Sun	Sat

1	7	8	14	15
Sun	Sat	Sun	Sat	Sun
21	22	28	29	
Sat	Sun	Sat	Sun	

## FILM SCREENING

23 *Chilsu and Mansu*  
Fri Director Park, Kwang-su

27 *Memories of a Murder*  
Fri Director Bong, Joon-ho

27 *Welcome to Dongmakgol*  
Fri Director Park, Kwang-hyun

All the programmes listed above will be held at INKO CENTRE, Chennai.

## EVENTS

4-31 Sangam House Writers Residency Programme at Adi Shakti, Auroville.  
29 Reading by Hongyu Son and *Twelve*, an exhibition of paintings by Asma Menon, Chennai

7&8 *The Murder in the Elevator* by Dance Theatre CcadoO at the Attakkalari India Biennial 2009, Bangalore

1-8 2nd Women's Film Festival, Chennai

**Visa Services :**

Travellers from Tamilnadu, Pondicherry and Kerala can obtain information regarding visas for travel to the Republic of South Korea from the Visa Services section at InKo Centre.

*For further details contact :*

51, 6th Main Road, Raja Annamalaipuram,  
Chennai - 600 028,  
T : 044 2436 1224, F : 044 2436 1226

**Trade Enquiries :**

Contact KOTRA (Korea Trade Agency)  
463, LR Swamy Parvatham Block, 2nd Floor,  
Teynampet, Chennai - 600 018  
T : 044 2433 7280, F : 044 2433 7281

**Contact The Korean Association in Chennai :**

51, 6th Main Road, Raja Annamalaipuram, Chennai - 600 028,  
T : 044 2432 3747, F : 044 2436 1226

*For a comprehensive overview of the Republic of Korea,  
visit [www.korea.net](http://www.korea.net)*

The Indo - Korean Cultural and Information Centre is a registered society.

**Registered office :**

51, 6th Main Road, Raja Annamalaipuram, Chennai - 600 028  
T : 044 2436 1224, F : 044 2436 1226  
[www.inkocentre.org](http://www.inkocentre.org)