

**The Significance of the Alternative Space
As Seen through the Characteristics of Korean
Alternative Spaces and the Challenges they face**

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1. Introduction:

As a Member of Asia's Alternative Space Pursuing Non-Western Values, What are the Characteristics of Korean Alternative Spaces and their Challenges?

1. Introduction:

- Alternative spaces and biennales can be seen as a new cultural phenomenon in contemporary Asia since the 1990s.
- Alternative space in Asia promotes non-Western values along with efforts to re-map Asia into the world of contemporary art.
- Alternative space serves as a cognitive signifier as well as a spatial matrix of the works of artists who are struggling with identity problems.
- As a member of Asia's alternative space, what are the characteristics of Korean alternative spaces and their challenges?

2. The Spatiotemporal Context of the Emergence of Alternative Space in Korea:

Appeared at the time of IMF Crisis at the End of 1990s and from the backdrop of City of Seoul

2. The Spatiotemporal Context of the Emergence of Alternative Space in Korea

Alternative space emerged as a way to overcome the financial crisis (IMF)

- 1998 SSamzie Art project
- 1999 Loop, Sarubia, and Pool
- 2000 SSamzie Space
- 2000 Insa Art Space and Ilju Art Center



1998 SSamzie Art project: Launched by SSamzie Inc., providing artists with studios and supporting their domestic and overseas exhibitions



1999 Loop, Sarubia, and Pool:
Artists-formed, community-based alternative spaces

2000 SSamzie Space:
Multi-cultural space incubating youth art, cutting-edge art,
and post-genre art



SSamzie Space



Curatorial Office



Exhibition View of SSamzie Space



Insa Art Space, new building

2000
Insa Art Space
Ilju Art Center

Government-run and corporate
Supported organizations

2. The Spatiotemporal Context of the Emergence of Alternative Space in Korea

Metropolis and capital city of Seoul becomes the backdrop of birthplace and cradle for alternative spaces in Korea.



2. The Spatiotemporal Context of the Emergence of Alternative Space in Korea

- Pool, Sarubia and Insa Art Space are located in Insa dong, the birthplace of traditional cultures.
- SSamzie Space and Loop are located in Hongik University area where youth culture originated.





Jazz Club Evans



Hongik University area

3. The Structural and Systemic Characteristics of Korean Alternative Space:

Dependent on Government Funds and Corporate Sponsorship Albeit Alternative and Independent

3. The Structural and Systemic Characteristics of Korean Alternative Space

- Loop, Sarubia, and Pool were established as community and friendship-based alternative spaces voluntarily organized by artists.
- SSamzie Space, Insa Art Space and Ilju Art Center were formed as affiliated organizations managed by government funds and corporate sponsorships.

3. The Structural and Systemic Characteristics of Korean Alternative Space

- Improvements in government support and corporate sponsorships imply the changes of national art policy and business minds.
- National, public, and private art museums and commercial art galleries seek for transformation narrowing the gap with alternative spaces.
- Korean alternative space manifests ambivalent position, being confrontational and critical against the establishments, while aligning with them.

4. The Orientation and Aspirations of Korean Alternative Space:

Characterized by New Generation Artists and Leading the Task of Globalization

4. The Orientation and Aspirations of Korean Alternative Space

- The emergence of alternative space boosted new generation artists and transformed the landscape of the Korean art world.
- Alternative space and new generation artists are gaining force and becoming mainstream.
- New generations emerged from alternative space proclaim overground, starship, internationalization and globalization from the early stages of their career.
- Advancement into international stage becomes the biggest aspiration and final goal for the new generational artists.
- New generations pursue cosmopolitan Asia, new Asian identity with glocal vision, manifesting themselves as glocal hybrid models.

4. The Orientation and Aspirations of Korean Alternative Space

- Choi Jung-hwa, Lee Su-kyung and Ham Kyung-ah utilize Korean traditions and Asian spirits as the main, modal and medium motifs, creating a new aesthetic identity.



Choi Jung-wha



Choi Jung-wha



Lee Su-kyung



Lee Su-kyung



Ham Kyung-ah



Ham Kyung-ah

4. The Orientation and Aspirations of Korean Alternative Space

Kim Hong-suk, Jung Yeon-doo, and Yang Hye-kyu come up with a mixture of ideas transcending regional characteristics of Korea and Asia, and establish their own cosmopolitan world of art



Kim Hong-suk



Kim Hong-suk



Jung Yeon-doo



Jung Yeon-doo



Yang Hye-kyu

4. The Orientation and Aspirations of Korean Alternative Space

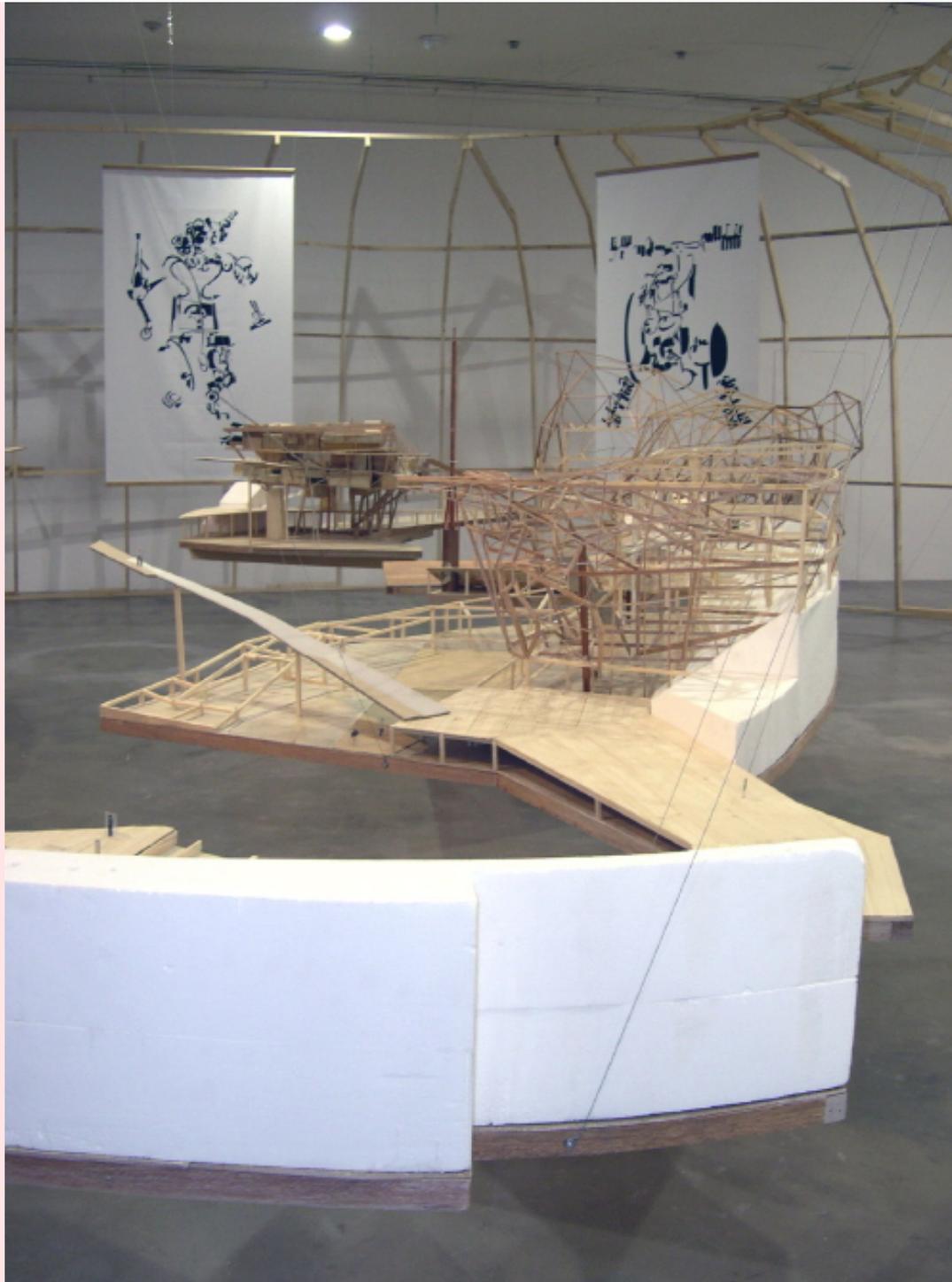
Park Chan-kyung, FlyingCity, Mix Rice and others criticize and reflect on socio-political realities concerning the inter-Korean conflicts, urban development, diaspora and migration labor, changing and expand the Min-jung art spirits of the 80s into a new paradigm.



Park Chan-kyung



Park Chan-kyung







Mix Rice



살면 웃음을
해야 한다. 다. 다.

때리어서
그대 사랑을 알려준
한국사람 두명과는
아직도 연락을
하고 있어요.

방글라데시 가면
불러준다고 했어

네 딸
사람들은 먼저
가세요.
걱정 하셔야 되고.

익스리이스라는 공항에서 만난 사이
입니다. 제 고향은 부탄월이요. 전 한국에서
산업연수생으로 있는데 지금 휴가중이예요.
한국에 돌아가면 불법을 하려고 해요.
불법하면 5년뒤에 고향에 갈지, 10년 뒤에
갈지 모르잖아요. 그래서 마지막 휴가로
고향에 온거예요.

림,
이로
잡다던데?

미스터존. 그 사람 잡히면
죽었다고 나서는 사랑들 수줍음해요.
네 딸처럼 아세요 한국사람인데
미스터존이라고 불러요
돌키니 동문회사 사장.

한국어 미래의 열이라는
고문이 9년도에 앞뎠거든요.
그래서 가게되었요. 한국어 가는
내년에 가야되잖아, 내년에 가야되잖아
내년이면, 그내년에, 또 내년이면
그내년에... 그래서
14년이 되거요 아버지
때문에 비탈에 돌아온거예요

5. Conclusion:

Alternative Spaces in Korea to Serve as a Conduit for Spreading *hallyu*, or a Korean Wave of Visual Art Through International Networking

5. Conclusion

- Globalization is not a confrontation with what is local, but a significant encounter between regions and the world, which leads to returning to roots.
- Alternative space in Korea promotes opportunities for direct exchanges among Asian neighbor countries via Asian networking.
- *Hallyu*, or Korean Wave, can be seen as a new quality of contemporary Asia, the subtle mixture of cultural hybridity.
- We may carefully propose the possibility of continuity of *hallyu* of pop culture and the *hallyu* of visual art.
- Alternative spaces or biennales could serve as a conduit for spreading *hallyu*, achieving the tasks of searching for non-Western values.



Lee Young-ae, Bae Yong-june
the most popular *hallyu* stars