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Caught in the Act: Korean Experimental Performance of the 1960s and the 1970s

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Introduction

I begin with a photograph: "Police says, 'Don't be ridiculous!' to the *Funeral Ceremony for Established Art and Culture* Performance, *Sunday Seoul*, 1970 (Figure 1). On the National Liberation Day of Korea in 1970, the members of The Fourth Group gathered at Sajik Park for a performance, *Funeral Ceremony for Established Art and Culture* (1970) to commemorate the 25th year of Liberation Anniversary. Holding a white flag, the national flag of Korea, and a coffin decorated with flowers on top, the Fourth Group marched through the center of Seoul to Gwanghwamun Plaza, proclaimed the independence of Korean culture, and announced that they were holding a funeral for both established art and culture and for the existing system. However, the procession did not last long, as what we see in the newspaper clip is the moment when they were caught in action by the police who stopped them for questioning. One of the members recollects the police officer at the performance who did not comprehend but instead kicked the coffin and asked, "You call this art?"[1] Eventually, they were cuffed, arrested in front of the old National Assembly Building and were brought to Namdaemun Police Station. The members were charged with violating the Road Traffic Act and were held in custody until the next day when they were released with a warning.[2] Furthermore, members of the Fourth Group were constantly persecuted for forming a "subversive" organization,

[1] For more details of this performance refer to Ku-rim Kim, *Kim Ku-rim: Chal Aljido Mot Hamyŏnsŏ = Kim Ku-lim [Like You Know It All]* (Seoul: SeMA: Seoul Museum of Art, 2013).

[2] See "Avant-Garde Art Caught in a Summary Trial," *Jugan Kyung-Hyang* (Weekly Kyung-Hyang Newspaper), 1970.

growing hair too long, smoking marijuana, and wearing miniskirts. They unfortunately remained under the scrutiny of the authorities until the group's dissolution in 1970.[3]

Indeed, this single photograph encapsulates the political, social, and cultural circumstances of the 1960s and the 1970s, which was unquestionably formative, transitional, and tumultuous. The political realities of Korea in the '60s and the '70s become a vital background information for the experimental artists who were pursuing to mirror that reality into their works. This period in Korean history goes hand in hand with the social and political modernization of the Korean nation under the authoritative regime of the former president Park Chung Hee (1917-1979). Park was a remarkable nation builder but a heartless dictator of nearly two decades, who is at the center of the inquiry into South Korea's famed twin success in economic development and democracy after the destructions and debris of Korean War (1950-1953).

The joy of freedom and independence was only short-lived, as the Korean War broke out only after three years, in 1948, that officially divided the peninsula into North and South.[4] The small infrastructural base built during Japanese rule was mostly destroyed during the Korean War of 1950-1953.[5] Although armed conflicts ended following years of peace negotiations, the country stays divided since 1953 and the

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[3] Mi Kyung Kim, Hangu *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 124-134.

[4] The ancient dynastic kingdom of Joseon (1392-1897) had been involuntarily absorbed into Japan in 1910 until 1945, following more than three decades of Japanese domination after the slow collapse of the long-lasting dynasty of Joseon. The Japanese colonial rule during the period of 1910 to 1945 brought both exploitation and modernization, influencing the country's future course of development. On August 15, 1945, Korea finally became independent after long thirty-five years of harsh colonial rule by Japan.

[5] Kwan S. Kim, "The Korean Miracle (1982-1980) Revisited: Myths and Realities in Strategy and Development," Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, University of Notre Dame (1991):2-3.

citizens of Korea still live in fear of war and the sorrow of separated families. Due to the war, Korean society was still pretty traditional, feudalistic, agrarian, and isolated from the West until the late nineteenth century.[6] South Korea nonetheless remained a poor and largely underdeveloped nation for more than a decade after the end of the war. Instability, hunger, desperation was some of the large prices to pay that was brought forth onto the lives of Koreans until South Korea quickly overcame the challenges within thirty years. Unemployment, underemployment, and poverty were widespread, with over 40 percent of the nation's population suffering from absolute poverty.[7] Up until the middle to the late 1960s, Korea had suffered through immense economic difficulty and population growth, poverty, and food problem were still nationally urgent tasks. Korea up to well into the 1960s truly represented a 'backward,' desolate economy based on subsistence agriculture with all the difficulties facing a typical developing country today.[8]

Instead of devoting its full attention to overcome the economic difficulties, the South Korean government suffered through a number of severe cases of political corruption, including several illegal elections. Consequently, several demonstrations against military control and the unstable government continued to arise in the hopes of bringing change. However, thousands of demonstrators were often brutally suppressed by the government as the result. For example, the students who led the protest against the

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[6] Eun Suk Sa, "Development of Press Freedom in South Korea since Japanese Colonial Rule," *Asian Culture and History* 1, no. 2 (2009): 8-10.

[7] Kwan S. Kim, "The Korean Miracle (1982-1980) Revisited: Myths and Realities in Strategy and Development," Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, University of Notre Dame (1991): 3.

[8] Kwan S. Kim, "The Korean Miracle (1982-1980) Revisited: Myths and Realities in Strategy and Development," Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, University of Notre Dame (1991): 3.

unscrupulous government and demanded the president's resignation due to his charges of electoral corruption in the demonstrations were shot and found dead on the streets during the April Revolution of 1960, sometimes called the April 19 Movement.[9] In the following year of 1961, a military coup d'etat of May 16 was organized and carried out by military general Park Chung Hee. The revolt was instrumental in bringing to power a new leader and in laying the foundations for the rapid industrialization of Korea under Park's leadership, but his suppression of democracy is still somewhat controversial.[10] Most of the 1960s and 1970s in Korea exacerbated the unrest under the authoritarian rule of President Park, who was elected as the president after his successful military coup d'état.

By 1962, Park's military regime initiated and guided development strategies of industrialization by placing emphasis on export expansion in the hope of becoming a developed country. However, population growth, poverty, and hunger issues remained among the urgent national concerns that still needed to be addressed even until the mid-1960s. President Park Chung Hee made economic development his first priority and gave the country a positive alternative to communism for the colonial past. In this process, Japan's experience was the explicit model, and the government adopted an economic strategy through exports. Park inaugurated the martial law under the name of Yushin (Revitalizing Reform) from 1972 to 1979 under his military regime, which became synonymous with the second half of the 'Park Chung Hee era' (1961-1979) when

[9] Mi Kyung Kim, *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 23.

[10] Mi Kyung Kim, *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 23.

extreme political repression was coupled with total mobilization of society under the double imperatives of modernization and development.[11] The prolongation and increasing repressiveness of the Yushin Reform prevented the growth of democracy in South Korea, narrowed the popular base of political activity, and exacerbated unrest.

Another failure of the Park administration was South Korea's image throughout the world became increasingly negative.[12] Above all, the martial law under the name of *Yushin* (Revitalizing) Reform from 1972 to 1979 that was declared by former president Park Chung Hee limited political activities and freedom of expression. As a result, the severe censorship, policies, political surveillance, and restrictions of the government on artists had an immense impact on how the experimental art of Korea developed in the 1960s to the 1970s. Any public space where a crowd could gather was guarded perpetually under constant control and regulations. Naturally, art museums were no exception. These authoritative supervisions of the government petrified not only the atmosphere of the society but also the early developments of Korean experimental art. In this way, it seemed impossible for the economic development and efforts for artistic liberties in Korea to advance simultaneously during this 'era of bewilderment.'[13] These distressing political events are some major painful and horrific events from the '60s to '70s that reflect the time of social and political anarchy. It sure was a very heartbreaking

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[11] Eun Suk Sa, "Development of Press Freedom in South Korea since Japanese Colonial Rule," *Asian Culture and History* 1, no. 2 (2009): 6.

[12] Mi Kyung Kim, *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 23.

[13] Mi Kyung Kim, *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 23.

moment in Korean history. The demonstrations never stopped. A series of unceasing demonstrations like the April Revolution in 1960 against violent repressions of the military control, the ever-transforming government, and their corruption continued to arise in the hopes of bringing change but left South Korea constantly unstable. Therefore, it is undeniable that this period represents a crucial turning point when Korea advanced into the age of modernity despite its tremendous political and social challenge.

Consequently, the art world experienced seismic changes rapidly and demanded for a new democratic exhibition system corresponding with the drastic social transformations of South Korea. Art historians and art critics previously agreed that the emergence of modern Korean art could be traced back to the iconic abstract paintings of Kim Whanki (1913-1974) (Fig. 2, 1957) and Lee Ufan (b. 1936) (Fig. 3, 1975) from the *Korean Informel* Movement[14] of the late 1950s and the rise of the trend in *Dansaekhwa*, Korean Monochrome Paintings, which came into full bloom by the 1970s.[15] The ascendancy of these two significant art movements resulted in the marginalization of experimental art of Korea of the 1960s and early 1970s. Experimental art is often used interchangeably with "Avant-Garde" art since experimental art is often a form of "Avant-Garde" art. The experimental artists continue the avant-grade practice of deploying art as a means for social and cultural critique and their political engagement. Through their interaction with their own body, performance, and event-based art, the experimentalists

[14] Korean Art *Informel*, emerged in the mid-1950s, is often seen as the first abstract art movement in Korean history.

[15] *Dansaekhwa* is understood as a contemplative style of subtly layered and textured minimalist abstract monochrome painting that sprung up in the 1970s.

sought to move more directly from the realm of art to the realm of interactions in the world. Consequently, Korean experimental art suffered from misrepresentation of being labeled as "in-between-art" or 'the mere outcome of the chaotic transitional period,' despite the fact that various experiments have been carried out through their unique and independent works of installations and performances. [16]

If most of the scholarship focused on more conventional 20th century Korean art, which solely took the form of paintings such as in the *Korean Informel* Movement of the late '50s or *Dansaekhwa*, Korean Monochrome Paintings of the '70s, there is a gap of ten years in Korean art history. I wonder, does this mean that Korean artists were not producing any other significant works for a decade? As a matter of fact, the most vibrant, powerful, and original achievements were made through experimental artists and their performances during this time. However, the Korean experimental artists and their works were not only neglected but were constantly persecuted, even ridiculed, cuffed, and imprisoned as one can in the newspaper clip.

Naturally, my project began by questioning, why were the Korean experimentalists alienated and harshly repressed when their performances were so unique and fascinating? What were their aim and vision in the process? In order to provide answers to these questions and a key to interpreting the experimental performances of the '60s and the '70s, this thesis excavates the climactic moments in Korean history of art, in which art served as reflections of the very own political reality of Korea's democratic

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[16] Mi Kyung Kim, *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 23.

transition, allowing artists to break boundaries of the long-established frameworks of Korean art. Of course, creative scholars and leading curators like Kim Mikyoung, Bae Myungji, and Yoon Jinsup did not miss the opportunity to analyze the Korean experimental performance art in the process of recognizing them as the origin of modern Korean art but many have struggled to find the common linkage between these works since they reflect a wide scope of interests reflected in the seemingly random choices of the various styles and media including installation, art object, photography, and performance, making it almost impossible to categorize them under one umbrella.

Besides, historical records of experimental artists are scattered and limited, being passed on only in forms of photographs, press releases or personal recollections instead of artworks that actually exist in the physical form. Perhaps, this is another big reason for not receiving the attention they deserved but in fact, these different types of media to record and document their performative practices bring in the most interesting methodological questions at stake that need to be addressed. How does one speak fully about works of art, such as performance, that only appear to viewers in the record as partial and incomplete? Do they affect one's interpretation of works of art or one's evaluation of their art historical significance? How can one read into these images beyond what Roland Barthes called our unfortunate predisposition to see only the "le sens obvie," the "obvious sense" in photography and avoid what one already knows without diminishing interpretation?[17] How is this situation, then, complicated within the

[17] Roland Barthes, *The Semiotic Challenge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 45.

Korean context, where the availability of technology, the very relationship to the mode of recording, could be limited compared to their Western and Japanese contemporaries?

Together, these two chapters tell a story of how postwar Korean experimental art was caught in the act of their persistent efforts and their performative practices in the course of modern South Korean art history. Performance is widely regarded as that which cannot be archived. Its temporality is at odds with the archive's quest for permanence, its disappearing acts resisting the inclination to label works of art as ornaments. Performance and performative arts transcend their radical ephemerality, and, at the same time, the demand for documenting and archiving their practices on behalf of performance research and history has grown. What then is the relationship between performance and the archive? How can contemporary exhibitions explore and challenge this relationship in all its facets, including the role of performance in the culture of museum collections and the role of the archive in conceptualizations of performance; the cultural histories and ideologies of archival practices; performative interventions into archival culture; the role of the document in performance research; the practices of performance archives; and performers' archives?

This thesis will outline some of these central questions in a case study on the performances of Lee Seung-Taek (b. 1932), Sung Neung Kyung (b. 1944), Lee Kun-Yong (b. 1942) and the Fourth Group. By probing methodological issues, the aim, here, is to address how to political circumstances contributed to the development of

performance, manifesting their experience to demonstrate and denounce the authority.[18] More often, these performances were subtle, ambiguous, and disconcerting to the audience and played a more peripheral role in the country's push towards a regime change or policy changes. In this project, therefore, I focus on artists whose radical politics of opposition are less spectacular than the predictable repertoires of *Art Informel* or *Dansaekhwa*, but no less significant to understanding the origin and development of experimental performance art and the full history of avant-garde art in South Korea. Consequently, it is, of course, important to distinguish this functional mode from the performance images by photographers, who well understood the cultural significance of performance art and the necessity to document events, personalities, and trends and who did so with rigorous creativity as a strategy to within the Korean context. Beyond photography's documentary utility, its ability to 'distill and embellish the aura' of the underlying process is one reason I believe that photographic documentation become vital to the history and interpretation of performance.[19]

Chapter 1, Experimental Performance of Individual Korean Artists: A New Beginning, therefore, focuses on how the repressive systems imbued people with a new sense of subjectivity, triggering a wave of public opposition and igniting artistic criticisms, which can be seen through the examples of individual experimentalists' performances. The nature and legacies of Park Chung Hee's rule are not only key concerns in political studies, economics, and sociology but also are responsible for the

[18] For city as a subject of institutional critique, see Peter Eckersall, *Performativity and Event in 1960s Japan: City, Body, Memory* (Melbourne: University of Melbourne, 2013).

[19] Mark Alice Durant, "Photography & Performance," *Aperture*, No. 199 (Summer 2010): 32.

Korean experimental expressions of the 1960s. In this project, I locate and delineate the political and artistic impasses in Korea as much as the revolutionary fervor felt by the individual Korean artists that have formed their dynamic body of works.

Here, I hope to argue that Korean experimental performers, as citizens of a nation where their voices were unheard, sought to dismantle the existing boundaries of art and establish a new beginning of visual language in Korea where they could honestly reflect the shifting realities of democratic transition and the frustration that came along with the insignificance of their existence. This is an effort to understand Lee Seung-Taek, Sung Neung Kyung and Lee Kun-Yong's use of unconventional vernacular media that were hard to accept as art media for Koreans, to whom art meant painting. Consequently, I attempt to unearth the traces of the development of Korean experimental performances in Korea within the issues of documentation and representation by analyzing how these rebellious tendencies were caught in action through photographs or other various forms of documentation, investigating its phenomenological constitution, the specificity of certain mediums of documentary transmission, as well as interrogating modes of reception of Korean performance.

Chapter 2 critically analyzes the vision of the Fourth Group with a collective identity within the experimental performance artists of the 1960s and 1970s.[20] Spurred by Kim Ku Lim (b. 1936) and others members of the Fourth Group, the Korean avant-garde art emerged during the 1960s post-war period under the heavy opposition of the

[20] For more information on art collectives, see Reiko Tomii, "After the 'Descent to the Everyday: Japanese Collectivism from High Red Center to The Play, 1964-1973," in Collectivism after Modernism: The Art of Social Imagination after 1945, eds. Blake Stimson & Gregory Scholette (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 68-9.

authoritarian military regime. In order to challenge, Kim developed radical forms of expression that cut across the genres, from performance to film. These works were often rebellious and metaphorically nuanced or strategized appropriately to provoke urgent political and social questions among the Korean society. This chapter outlines the different modes of agency for artistic actions that were foundational and generative in times of uncertainty. I hope to reconstruct the Fourth Group's experimental performance that set a point of departure in the Korean art scene within the confines of the political climate of the '60s and the '70s that arrested and tortured the artists who responded critically to the present system.

In addition, I will explore how their unprecedented, collaborative, and nuanced resistance to violence might offer different modalities for the ways one regards the moments of reality. Instead of labeling the modernization of Korean art as a mere mimesis of the 'latecomer' into the global art scene, I ask the question of how the art collectives aspired to institute the frameworks of 'modern' for the future generations of artists as well as for the viewers of South Korea, by accounting for these Korean practitioners' engagement with the country's complex socio-political and cultural particularities by drastically transforming the popular perception of art and an artist. Establishing a genealogy of experimental performance within the concurrent workings of modernization and democratization of Korea constitutes an inquiry into how the Fourth Group interpreted and negotiated between Korean experimental art's seemingly challenging juxtapositions of modern interpretation to the Korean art history's long-established canonical boundaries.

In spite of its vibrant, powerful and original achievements, Korean experimental art, unfortunately, did not receive close attention from the academia both domestically and internationally for several decades until the recent frenzy of collecting and admiration for non-European and non-American art. Although it was never considered 'mainstream' nor did it attract much attention in the field of Korean art history until recently, it should be considered to be an important opportunity to unravel the political, social, cultural, and artistic circumstances of the period. Finally, half a century after its manifestations, the time has come to discuss the development and vision of Korean experimental art that emerged in the mid-20th century. Accordingly, I feel the need for a more objective historical evaluation of this formative period to take place in academia, by revealing how and why the experimental artists in Korea came together in a time of unprecedented turmoil. By continuing the legacy, I hope to build upon previous researches to unearth and link the Korean experimental artists' visions and strategies in questioning and redefining the established artistic frameworks based on the social, political and cultural implications of the period. As an effort to comprehensively examine performance works from the '60s and '70s, this project aims to become a benchmark for the ongoing revision of the historical and critical conception of Korean experimental art.

Chapter 1. Experimental Performance of Individual Korean Artists: A New Beginning

There is something iconic, yet unsettling, about the images of Korean performance from the 1960s and 1970s. These photographs strike the viewers like rarified chronicles of some lost secret society's obscure rituals. Fabrics streaming in the wind, burning objects emitting smoke, randomly cut or broken objects, unusual funeral ceremonies for established art instead of for a human, profane orgies, and self-inflicted bite marks, such actions have gained a prolonged life through photographs. The goal of much performances and conceptual works of those years was the dematerialization of art: an attempt to separate art from precious materials and pretentious institutions so that it could exist in purer, less compromised forms. Nonetheless, it is the still shots that are now ingrained in the imaginations of the viewers, critics, and art historians instead of the actual event, to the point that at least some of them seem to be permeated by an unmistakable aura of the artists.

As curator Ann Temkin has pointed out, the ongoing power and influence of Marcel Duchamp's 1917 *Fountain* are largely transmitted through the images Alfred Stieglitz made of the "original" urinal (Fig. 4).[21] Photography can serve performance in many ways, considering the nature of performance as it is only performed once and disappears, without a promise of audience especially seen often in Korean cases, photography is the only reliable information available to art historians of later generations like myself. First, photography can be understood and utilized as a functional medium

[21] Mark Alice Durant, "Photography & Performance," *Aperture*, No. 199 (Summer 2010): 32.

meant to produce an affectless record, without the taint of style or authorship.[22] Since photography is a distinct discipline with its own history, it can be seen simply as a means either to document transitory actions or to separate the viewer from direct engagement with an object for many. However, the photographic documentation of Korean experimental artists saves the ephemeral instant from the temporality of performance before its disappearance by composing a moment at its narrative and symbolic zenith, and with its potential by taking the viewers back to the moment in which the work was created.[23] Consequently, it is, of course, important to distinguish this utilitarian mode from the performance images by photographers, who well understood the cultural significance of performance art and the necessity to document events, personalities, and trends – and who did so with rigorous creativity as an artistic strategy to 're-present' their works within the Korean context.

Beyond photography's documentary utility, its ability to summarize and amplify the changing state of Korean art and its socio-political milieu of the '60 and '70s is one reason photographs are critical to the history and interpretation of performance. Therefore, this chapter investigates how and why Korean experimental artists have explored the material dimensions of the photographic medium for documentation in Korea as part of their process to mirror the political reality. In particular, it examines the works of Lee Seung-Take, Sung Neung Kyung, and Lee Kun-Yong, a few of individual experimental

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[22] My argument is based on Philip Auslander, "The Performativity of Performance Documentation," *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 28, no. 3 (2006): 1.

[23] Philip Auslander, "The Performativity of Performance Documentation," *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 28, no. 3 (2006): 5.

artists who publicized a specific visualization of the urban landscape through their performances during the course of the late 1960s and '70s. Although their ways of recording their actions were not just limited to photography, photographs became one of the most effective strategies adopted by artists to document their works among available media such as cover writings, journal reports or even personal interviews. Rejecting the complacent perspectives of the conventional reportage and realism, Lee Seung-Taek, Sung Neung Kyung and Lee Kun-Yong attempted to construct a direct synthesis of experimental avant-garde and documentary practice as a useful method of social critique in the most subtle and ambiguous ways.

Consider Lee Seung-Taek's (b. 1932) *Wind* performance from 1971 (Fig.5). Lee daringly produced a wide range of experiments in his art practice and continued to expand the concept of dematerialization through the forms of nature, such as wind, fire, water, and smoke, as seen in his celebrated *Wind* series, which he has been creating since the mid-'60s. The birth and development of Korean experimental performance can be traced back to Lee Seung-Taek, who is an uncontested pioneer of experimental performance since the progressive nature of Lee's art is clearly reflected in his works of art. He works independently, investigating unique forms and using indigenous materials found in nature that were significantly different from those found in the much-lauded movements of the past.

Lee was born in 1932 in Kowon in the region of South Hamgyeong province above the 38th parallel, a part of Korea that is now considered North Korea. Before Lee fled to the South after the outbreak of the Korean War (1950-1953), he undertook

commissions from the North Korean communist authorities to produce statues of Stalin and Kim Il-Sung.[24] Many of the artists from this period were actually from parts of Korea that are now considered North Korea. They had to leave their homes and flee to South Korea or actually participated in the war themselves, witnessing and surviving the disastrous bloodshed first hand. Lee Seung-Taek is one of the many Korean artists of this generation who personally experienced the war and instability himself. After Lee moved to South Korea, he soon became a student at the department of sculpture at Hongik University in Seoul, one of Korea's leading schools of art, where he pondered at length on the questions of agency and his newly assigned role in the Korean society as an artist in this politically charged period. The artist states that he "wanted to express the tragedy of weak countries caught between warring Cold War superpowers, like Korea during the Korean War."[25] This is his accurate portrayal to the painful realities recent past and the ramifications of this history on the articulation of the self in the present.

Lee is most well-known for his deviations from the assumed norms of the artistic medium on a conceptual level. In particular, the artist, with the help of a few of his friends, unwrapped three 80-meter strips of scarlet cloth in the windy skies on Nanji Island at the Han River in 1971. The cloths picked up the wind as the artist held down each end and gradually unraveled into their full lengths, creating undulating patterns of enormous arcs, billowing, swaying and whipping in the sky. The pieces of red cloth are merely entrusting themselves in the wind, acting as a mediator, possibly representing the

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[24] Lee Seung-Taek, *Seung-Taek Lee* (New York, NY: Lévy Gorvy, 2017).

[25] Joan Kee, "Use of Vacation: The Non-Sculptures of Lee Seung-Taek," *Archives of Asian Art*, v. 63, no. 1 (2013): 105.

social and political situation that he and many others are in.[26] Through *Wind*, Lee expressed his skepticism and disagreement with the accepted trends of painting at the moment and emphasized that the purpose of his art was to create visuals that were unexplored by his peers. Lee's objection starts by proposing alternative media to contemporary art-making in Korea. His journal writings and interviews become key to understanding the critical approach to Lee's experimentation against what is already well-established in order to discover and rediscover the new possibilities of art. He writes, "My art questions stereotypical notions of materials. I work by looking at the world upside down. Most Korean artists followed the norm, but I took an oppositional stance against that."[27] Lee's claim is clearly demonstrated in his juxtaposition of the low, vernacular sort of materials or functional objects that are generally not used in fine art and turning it around by changing its perception into fine arts form.

In the early 1960s, his contemporaries were very much consumed by the *Informel* movement, producing modern abstract or non-objective art oil paintings on canvas, a relatively new style introduced from the West through the Japanese during the occupation (1910-1945). The academic institutions in Japan played a critical role in introducing modern Western art to Korea. Accordingly, Korean artists learned to employ Western aesthetic principles, styles, and mediums through the teachings of The Tokyo School of Fine Arts, one of the leading national art institutions in Japan. Its curriculum stressed faithful depictions of conventional subject matter, such as still lives, landscapes, and

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[26] Rawlings Ashley, "Harnessing the Elements," *Art Asia Pacific*, no. 69 (July/August 2010): 72-81.

[27] Seung-Taek Lee and Sang-Ghil Oh, *Lee Seung-Taek: Non-material Works*, (Seoul, Korea: ICAS Publishing, 2004): 59.

figure paintings.[28] While studying in art schools in Japan, a handful of progressive Korean artists began to discard the academic tradition of representation and moved towards non-representation. They became increasingly aware of European avant-garde art, which challenged the tradition of representational art and sought new ways of expression. After Korea's liberation from Japanese colonial rule, abstract paintings in Korea gradually evolved, and by the mid-1960s expressive abstraction was quite prominent. The Japanese colonial authorities institutionalized the Japanese system of art education and art exhibitions in Korea and thus continued their control over Korean artists. This eventually provoked the young Korean artists such as Lee Seung-Taek to resist and challenge them.

Against this current, Lee completely moved away from the norms of mainstream Korean art, which up until that point was entirely concerned with the conventional making of paintings. Instead, he is preoccupied with by the space and objects of our everyday life based on his belief that "the most local is the most universal."[29] His use of various everyday materials ranges from lumber, glass, vinyl, human hair, broken tree branches, rocks, as well as everyday objects in traditional Korean sense such as *hanji* papers, totem poles, *godret* stones, and earthenware jars. Lee continues:

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[28] Hee Young Kim, *Korean Abstract Painting: A Formation of Korean Avant-Garde* (Seoul, Korea: Hollym Corp., Publishers, 2013), 14.

[29] Kyung An, "Between the Local and the Global: Seung-Taek Lee in the 1960s and 1970s," *Seung-Taek Lee,* (New York, NY: Lévy Gorvy, 2017): 14.

> In our mind, stones should be hard and heavy. But to create a stone that is soft and squishy signifies the overturning of traditional beliefs….I realized that art is not the act of painting with oil on canvas and sculpture is not plaster casts, but something completely different.[30]

Lee's idea here was to disrupt the boundaries of the established frames in Korean modern art by using media that comes from local Korean traditional crafts, transforming familiar objects that are customarily bizarre in the mainstream Korean art in order to 're-define' the values and legacy of Korean art and tradition in the face of rapid modernization and Westernization in the post-Korean War era.

In the *Wind*, Lee rather uniquely reinterpreted the scarlet fabric that represents Korean traditional culture and reflects Korean fettered modern history as Lee experienced it. Since the concept of the ephemeral was important to experimental performances, the *Wind* is a temporary experience, and it is only performed for once until the recent video re-enactment of the original in 2015. The only artifacts remaining from Lee's performance are photographs and oral accounts. This is the time when Korean artists actually did not have access to videotaping devices so Lee was obligated to express his thought through words alone. Thus, one cannot help but rely on his own accounts from journal writing or from press interviews as the only evidence to get a picture of what actually happened during the performance.

In the essay, "The Origin of My Non-Sculpture,"[31]which Lee wrote for an art magazine in May of 1980, he included the following excerpt:

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[30]Lee Seung Taek, "The Origin of My Non-Sculpture," Space 15, no. 5 (May 1980).

[31] Lee Seung-Taek is certainly best known for his free-standing, three-dimensional forms and materials of the 1960s and 1970s that he described as "non-sculptures," which he chose to place directly on the gallery floor by transforming an enclosed space of an art institution into an extension of the physical space outside

> The *Onggi*[32] series was based on ordinary pottery found in every household, while the *Wind* series was based on shamanist temples in small villages, trees wrapped with cords and strips of clothing by shamans, and fishing nets cast by the fishermen. These early works translate the form into a state of existence and visualize invisible air. I worked intently on the concept of "non-sculpture" through the binding of objects including cloth, *Hanji*[33] (mulberry paper), books, porcelain, and stone, neglecting the conventional sculptural materials altogether.[34]

According to Lee, the *Wind* comes from the traditional shamanist rituals by using red garments that were traditionally used by Korean fishermen to ward off evil spirits in a type of shamanistic ceremony. He often used different colored fabrics in other works from the Wind series and the colorful, banner-like strips of cloth recall *Obangsaek*,[35] the five cardinal colors: blue, red, yellow, white and black, that recur in Korean classical art and architecture. Also, the undulating patterns created by strips of scarlet against the blue sky are reminiscent of the traditional game of kite-flying, which has often been cited as a reference for the *Wind* performance. By taking these familiar ideas and removing them from their original function, which was largely associated with memories of a nation that was still largely agricultural up to this point, and placing them in a completely new

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the exhibition venue. For example, the *godret* stones are traditionally used by traditional Korean artisans. They are stones customarily strung to assist in tying knots when handcrafting woven mats. He carved the stone to make it look like the rope is being fused into the stone as if the material is malleable. Lee pushes it further by putting in on the floor without any pre-planned shape, where he gets that idea that it is "non-sculpture."

[32] Traditional earthenware bowls used to store kimchi or other pickled condiments during their fermentation process in rural villages

[33] Hanji paper literally means 'the paper of Korea,' which is made with the fibrous skin of the mulberry. Hanji papers are used in a variety of ways and could have different names according to its use (window, books, drawing paper, wrapping paper, etc).

[34] Lee Seung Taek, "The Origin of My Non-Sculpture," Space 15, no. 5 (May 1980).

[35] Refers to the Five Elements of ancient Chinese astrology: wood, fire, earth, metal, and water, respectively.

context, Lee alludes to the constant tensions and negotiations between the rural, defeated, and dependent Korean past and its urbanized, industrialized, and autonomous present.

South Korea nonetheless remained a poor and largely underdeveloped nation for more than a decade after the end of the war. Instability, hunger, desperation was some of the large prices to pay that was brought forth onto the lives of Koreans until South Korea quickly overcame the challenges within thirty years. Unemployment, underemployment, and poverty were widespread, with over 40 percent of the nation's population suffering from absolute poverty.[36] Up until the middle to the late 1960s, Korea had suffered through immense economic difficulty and population growth, poverty, and food problem were still nationally urgent tasks. Hence, Korea, up to well into the 1960s truly represented a backward, desolate economy based on subsistence agriculture with all the difficulties facing a typical developing country today. Korean society was still pretty traditional, feudalistic, agrarian, and isolated from the West until the late nineteenth century.

The scarlet draperies are no longer just mundane props used in rituals of the past, but now they become elevated to hold the status of fine art in the contemporary stage. Deeply affected by the contemporary intellectual, social, and political atmosphere, Lee attempts to create a synthesis between a pictorial heritage of the Korean past and the new language of modern art as a subtle reflection of the radical transformation under the

[36] Kwan S. Kim, "The Korean Miracle (1982-1980) Revisited: Myths and Realities in Strategy and Development," Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, University of Notre Dame (1991): 2-3. The country's per capita income in the early 1960s was lower than those of Haiti, Ethiopia, and Yemen and about 40 percent below India's. The per capita income was recorded at $87 in 1962. The population growth of nearly 3 percent a year in an already densely populated country meant that the country had to depend on foreign aid for sheer survival.

oppressive control of President Park Chung-Hee era (1963-1979). To illuminate similarities and differences of modern art in different parts of the world, or to make the point that similar things may have happened under very different circumstances, in different times, and different places, John Clark analyzed the phenomenon of 'neotraditional art' as a distinct feature of modernity in Asian art. He defined the concept as 'accepting the legitimacy of past forms and techniques and an attempt to reinvent the context from which that legitimacy is drawn.'[37] It involves 'a reinterpretation of the formal value systems that govern art [i.e., style, technique, content]... and the legitimizing of a claim to authority over the future.'[38] Clark's notion of 'neotraditional art' certainly concerns the period of time in modern Korean experimental performances, such as that of Lee Seung Taek, when there was an increasing tendency to confront conflicts between past and present and when the quest for an artistic identity coincided with forces of modernity inherent in Korean sensibility. Thus, Lee attempts to develop his own formal language that does not simply illustrate the turbulent state of South Korea literally but internalized the tragic mood of the decade as he felt, as a manifestation of his rejection of existing system and artistic values, in search of Korea's own autonomous modern art and expansion of the framework.

Again, in "The Origin of My Non-Sculpture," Lee claims that he was ultimately after the 'vitality' full of life in the *Wind*.[39] The pieces of cloth that were lifeless are all of

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[37] John Clark, *Modern Asian Art* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998), 2.

[38] John Clark, *Modern Asian Art* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998), 2.

[39] Lee Seung Taek, "The Origin of My Non-Sculpture," Space 15, no. 5 (May 1980).

a sudden charged with vitality once they begin to fly as the wind picks them up and start flapping vigorously as if life has been penetrated in the dead body. The garments that were listlessly still and silent as if they were dead suddenly flutter through the unexpected flow of air, making the once invisible wind now to appear visibly at the same time. One can experience the presence of the invisible wind through the nuance of fluttering fabric in the air. Without warning, it becomes alive in this specific place, space, and moment in time. Lee uses the natural wind in the open air instead of using a fan to artificially blow up pieces of cloth, making it impossible to predict the speed, direction, or duration of the wind. Lee gives form to the transience of nature and tries to make the wind create the performance, but only a temporary one. In "An Historiographic Perspective on Practice as Research," Angela Piccini pointed to the elusiveness of performance since performance 'exists through only one space and time with no possibility of object repetition.'[40] It is exactly that ephemeral and transient quality of the wind that is the most striking in his performance. In other words, the same situation is an infinite sequence of what is never once again reproduced in such a natural environment, and the work is over before any specific pattern begins to set in. Thus, what Lee Seung-Taek is absolutely paying attention to as the subject of *Wind* is 'the wind as it is,' the formless force that is the wind that constantly escapes the control of man.

The common characteristic of Lee's performance is existence and disappearance in a specific place in space and moment in time. His work has a deep respect for natural

[40] Angela Piccini, "An Historiographic Perspective on Practice as Research," *Studies in Theatre and Performance*, vol. 23 (2004): 191-207.

phenomena, allowing them to happen and then pass without a trace. Naturally, this is also a typical feature of nature, which is the primary subject of the *Wind*. Lee gently distorts this tendency of the material by turning the invisible into the visible, which occurs through a photograph. The visual confusion, here, is to make the viewer see the other side by transcending a visual that is normally limited to the surface. His work does not remain on the surface of a single image but floats continuously in the viewer just like the wind. The repeated echoes of the wind beat against the soft, streaming pieces of fabric supported that phenomenon, then disappear but appear again in a photograph. In a concrete composition, the still shot of the *Wind* manages to turn the invisible existence of the wind into a visible phenomenon, bringing together verification of one's existence and of nature, non-abstract existence. Although the artist emphasized that he did not have any direct encounter with foreign or Western avant-garde art, there is parallel between each other that is necessary to analyze. In a similar way, as Allan Kaprow did for the *18 Happenings in 6 Parts* (Fig. 6), Lee frames the ordinary life, perform it and then blur the disparity between them. In the end, the work dissolves away, and the wind also disappears back into the unframed spaces of nature from which they came from, back into the cruel flux of time.

The *Wind* is the most distinct from the 18 *Happenings in 6 Parts* in the size of its audience. Kaprow explained why chose the word 'happening' "I didn't know what else to call it, and my piece was something that was just supposed to happen naturally."[41] This statement suggests something spontaneous, something that just happens to happen.

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[41] Dick Higgins, "The Origin of Happening," *American Speech*, vol. 51, no. 3/4 (1976): 268.

Despite their name, the *Happenings* were actually tightly planned attempt with a participatory ethic that includes the audience within the performance framework. For example, 1*8 Happenings in 6 Parts* involves the audience's reception, breaking them up into groups and assigning them particular sites for certain durations, and then moving them to another site. Under those circumstances, no group had the same experience at any time as any other. While Kaprow's *Happenings* were highly participative fully engaging the active participation of the public, Lee eliminated the audience altogether in all of his performances, including the *Wind*. No one other than the artist and a few of his friends who were present to help out has witnessed the *Wind* performance. This is another clue to understanding the experimental performances of Korean artists in the '60 and the '70 who were fairly uninterested in the usual trappings of art-world success as the refusal to represent any traditionally understood forms at all.

How does one know that the *Wind* staging really existed for a moment, then disappeared in the next moment without the audience? How can one discern the *Wind* as an art form from an episode from ordinary life? Only the photograph survives as the only evidence that the performance, the *Wind*, happened. For this reason, Lee strategically adopted the photography as an imperative medium for his austere conceptualism and autobiographical archive particularly fitting to the oppression in the culturally conservative Korean society of the '60s and the '70s. In this sense, the photograph of the *Wind* serves as 'explanatory instructions.'[42] From the photograph, one can learn that,

[42] Philip Auslander, "The Performativity of Performance Documentation," *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 28, no. 3 (2006): 4.

including the *Wind*, many of Lee's innovative and diverse practices were staged outdoors and without any specific audience most of the times as an antithetical proclamation to the extremely narrow trends of modern Korean art that occupied the Korean society. The *Wind* could not be exhibited in a museum in the traditional sense as a challenge to art that had previously been defined by the art object itself. The unpreparedness to accept performance as a form of art among the Korean audience had resonance with its failed reception and misconception towards Korean experimental art of the '60s and the '70s.

For this reason, Lee realized the need to abandon the white walls of the government-controlled art institutions and display his performative works in a random open field in Han River as a form of institutional critique against the existing boundaries of art history. Taken out of its accepted museum context, the *Wind* does not ask for the presumed esteem for the artwork as an object of appreciation nor the premised comprehension for complex artistic concepts. No one else witnessed the performance, nor was it reenacted again, a line of thinking that recalls Friedrich Nietzsche's "monological" conception of art, art that does not seek "witnesses" or an audience."[43] Nietzsche consistently throughout his writings argues that the genius should truly be for himself because the governing authorities will sedate or even steal such energies, for their own purposes and, thereby, give a trifling notion of art's true value, which for Nietzsche lies in the very "transitions of life itself."[44] And yet, the *Wind* lived, still lives, and will live

[43] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science (The Joyful Wisdom),* 1882.

[44] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science (The Joyful Wisdom),* 1882.

on in a photograph, that is to be more precise as prints displayed on the museum walls or sold as limited editions.

Lee's search for expansion of formal values, which surpasses existing ideas and artistic values in Korean systems, reveals itself fully in a more literal rejection of convention evident in his work, *Burning Canvases Floating on the River* (1964) (Fig. 7), by burning all the figural and naturalistic paintings he made while he was an undergraduate student at Hongik University and discarding them into the Han River. He took the three figurative paintings that were symbolically reminiscent of the common trends of modern Korean art at the time, set them alight and cast them adrift in the Han River at dusk. Furthermore, he hoped to visualize his concepts through a performance that only lasted for once, and only once. It was recorded that he set the canvases on the water and photographed them and left the scene. How long the canvases floated there and whether or not anybody saw them still remains unknown. No one else witnessed the performance, nor was it reenacted again. In addition, because of the large-scale economic reform programs that were initiated in the late 1960s, one could easily see its resemblance to the numerous industrial factories fuming out sickly smoke. Perhaps the artist was critical of frustration among the public who suffered the most from the reformation.

The social and political circumstances were responsible for the slow progress of artistic development. The Korean Experimentalists were critical of the suppressive nature of the dictatorship. In particular, Sung Neung Kyung (b. 1944), another fascinating and deeply committed artist of this generation, is best known for his performances that

projected society of the 1970s as the reflection of the relationship between art and the socio-political realities of Korea through his conceptual performances and photography. Like Lee Seung-Taek, Sung also graduated from Hongik University, where he studied the Western paintings alongside with linguistics and semiotics. Based on his interests in the language of newspapers concerned with daily life and events, Sung developed his rejection against the media censorship that the strictly controlled by the government under the Park administration, which severely distorted particular events and memories from the people of Korea since the 1970s. Therefore, Sung resisted an authoritative system which formed dominant information and discussions into the media through the series of the *Newspapers* performance, his notable works of the '70s.

Newspaper: From June 1, 1974, One (Fig. 8) was featured in the 3rd Space and Time Exhibition. Sung displayed deliberately tattered *The Dong-a Ilbo*, The East Asia Daily, one of the longest existing Korean newspapers since 1920. The artist places the pages from the newspaper on four panels installed on the gallery wall and cuts out articles with a razor blade. The clipped articles are discarded in a translucent blue acrylic box at the front of the stage, while the remaining newspaper, including advertisements, cartoon comics, photographs, and the margins are stacked in the transparent acrylic box. The following day, Sung repeats the same performance with the daily newspaper of that day. Then, the parts that were removed from the newspaper are added to the pile in the acrylic boxes once again. At a more advanced time in 1947, Yoko Ono's *Cut Piece* (Fig. 9) practices the act of cutting and Luciano Fabro from the *Arte Povera* also adopts newspaper a medium by putting it on the floor in the *Pavement* (Fig.10, 1967), which are

likely to have affected Sung's performance, but his work differs from that of Ono and Fabro in a sense that *Newspaper: From June 1, 1974* does not incorporate active participants and mirrors the particular social and political realities of Korea. Sung's gesture of clipping out newspapers alludes to the mechanism of control over censorship suggesting bondage to accuse the Korean media of fabricating facts, resisting them with each of these carefully executed performances.

The year is 1974 was a profoundly difficult time for artists in Korea since a number of complicated events have occurred to narrate the faults in modern Korean history. In October 1973, there was the first protest against the Yushin Reform at Seoul National University. Within 10 days into the protest, the student protestors made an amazing achievement of getting more than three-hundred-thousand people to sign for the abolition campaign against the Yushin Reform.[45] However, in 1974, President Park declared a series of emergency measures to prohibit any act of denying, distorting, or denouncing the martial law and announced that those who violated this measure could be arrested without a warrant.

As a result, the first violation was imposed, and all related activities were prohibited. The authoritarian Park regime imposed harsh media restrictions through the Declaration of the State of National Emergency, and the Martial Law Decree, which banned "all indoor and outdoor assemblies and demonstrations for the purpose of

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[45] Mi Kyung Kim, Hangu *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 192-195.

political activities and speeches, publications, press, and broadcasts."[46] Furthermore, the Yushin Constitution omitted the natural-law languages of the chapter on basic rights and duties of the citizen, and simply stated that legal restrictions on the rights and freedoms of citizens should be imposed 'only when necessary.' On the other hand, other parts of this Constitution gave the president broad and unlimited power to rule.[47] Therefore, freedom of expression became a core control issue for the state.

In 1974, the Park junta outlawed the National Federation of Democratic Youths and Students, which was characterized by the authorities as an "unlawful underground organization manipulated by the North Korean communists."[48] Park restricted press freedom relating to the Federation and its members through the Emergency Measure, which banned "any act to publish, produce, process, distribute, exhibit, and sell papers, books, disks, and other presentations."[49] The government justified their actions by stressing that economic development and national security against North Korea were their front line concerns. Accordingly, anyone who opposed to this position was considered a 'communist' with an anti-national behavior, which deserved to be arrested.[50] The cost of his unbridled ambition was fully paid by the citizens who were denied of

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[46] Eun Suk Sa, "Development of Press Freedom in South Korea since Japanese Colonial Rule," *Asian Culture and History* 1, no. 2 (2009): 6.

[47] C.K. Choi, *Law and Justice in Korea South and North* (Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 2007), 380.

[48] K. H. Youm, *Press Law in South Korea* (Ames: Iowa State Univ. Press, 1996), 56.

[49] K.H. Youm, *Press Law in South Korea* (Ames: Iowa State Univ. Press, 1996), 56.

[50] Mi Kyung Kim, Hangu *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 192-195.

personal autonomy and were obligated to conform to a set of arbitrary norms. In addition, the increase in prices for everything, which had accelerated since 1973, made it even more difficult for the ordinary people to live but instead of trying to overcome economic difficulties the government began a full-scale repression towards the protests against the Yushin restoration that tightly suppressed and controlled the society. What does this all mean? It means that Korea has entered the period in its modern history under the terror of the frightening political and social atmosphere since the declaration of the Yushin Constitution.

Needless to say, the newspaper reports of this era embodied the generally the dark infighting moods of the Korean society of this time. Therefore, through *Newspaper*, Sung Neung Kyung expressed his concern and critique against the threatening atmosphere of the Korean society where the freedom of the press and the freedom of speech could not be found. He testified in an interview that he “wanted to be at the very site of history,” and his opinion was based on that the notion that facts and newspaper articles could be different, often blurred, depending on how they are edited.[51] He also claims that he put in to practice what Catherine Millet said immediately after the Paris Biennial in 1973 emphasizing the importance of self-reflection on one’s historical consciousness, which should become the driving force of the avant-garde.[52] Sung began to question the true purpose of a newspaper when he witnessed the external restraints deteriorated the

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[51] Eun Suk Sa, "Development of Press Freedom in South Korea since Japanese Colonial Rule," *Asian Culture and History* 1, no. 2 (2009): 6.

[52] Mi Kyung Kim, Hangu *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 193.

newspapers so much to the point where they could not report the news as they were. If *Newspaper* was to support the current state of the Korean modern history, he would have had to underline and highlight the newspaper articles. Instead, he mimics the process of government censorship by cutting off all the articles only leaving the advertisements, cartoons, photographs, and the margins.

For this reason, the articles of the newspaper that Sung cut out of the newspapers become the accurate representation of the Korean society that does not recognize the freedom of the press, the rampant governmental policies, the downside of economic developments, the marginalized citizens of Korea, and the dark and inflexible political posture. In this sense, Sung brings the viewers not only to performance, to the *Newspaper*, but also to the impermanence of the Korean society through a photograph to be more precise. Since their works were largely based on their critique against their very own social phenomena, the group of experimental artists was also tightly suppressed and controlled. However, Sung's statement against censorship and the oppression during Park's military regime in the Republic of Korea was subtly camouflaged in a photograph of the *Newspaper*, narrowly escaping to be defined as an anti-systematic act.

At the dawn of this new beginning, the foremost and clearest experimentation began with new forms of medium. As we have seen in the examples above, Korean experimentalists such as Lee Seung-Taek and Sung Neung Kyung took materials or readymade objects originally made for a specific purpose, then reconfigured them in ways that fundamentally compromised or, more specifically, vacated from the original purpose or symbolic use. Experimentations of new media were also investigated by an

experimental artist, Lee Kun-Yong (b. 1942), who began another experimentation by incorporating parts of his own body as the core source of media either as part of the art-making process or through performances. As another artist who comes from North Korea, Lee also left his hometown in Sariwon, Hwanghae province during the Korean War and took refuge in Seoul, where he graduated from Hongik University with a degree in painting. However, Seoul's urban landscape of the '60s and the '70s offered him, not the peaceful tranquility he had hoped for, instead, the sense of terror and pain of the *Yushin*, which Lee was able to embody more directly and immediately through the use of his body.

Bounded by the unthinkable acts of brutality, Lee produced *The Method of Drawing* 76-2 (Fig. 11, 1976) as his alternative answer to the fundamental questions of 'What is art? What is sculpture? What is the essence of an artwork, and where can an artist find the true meaning of art?' Lee declared, "I began drawing because of my fundamental suspicion concerning the history of art and its meaning."[53] Through drawing and performance of the *Method of Drawing*, the artist explores the limits of the human body. It was his effort to present works that do not immediately strike the viewers as artworks. Lee stood against a large black canvas and drew an outline of his shower-capped head, making broad, ovular strokes on the surface behind him. Questioning the bodily relationship to the canvas, Lee approached the surface from various different directions: from behind, over top of, next to, or with his back turned to it. Lee explores

[53] Lee Kun-yong, 'Drawing that is a Method of Understanding the Whole of the World and Humanity,' *Hwarang*, no.26, Winter 1979, p.76.

the body's limitations and its relationship to the canvas through the amount of space he is able to mark with his repetitive curves, leaving his own silhouette as a point of reference He does not look at the canvas while he is drawing for he works either with his back turned away from the canvas, from behind the canvas reaching his hand around it, or stand beside the canvas with his arm extended sideways.

Since the 1960s, the interrogation of the artist's body as media has been related to the emergence of a new subjectivity, and the body has become a way or understanding the world. Lee Kun-Yong also adopted the use of the body as an effective medium but reinterpreted it in their own indigenous apparatus of expression. Body is not merely a tool for responding to the socio-political issues but can act as a site of powerful cultural critique. Accounts of various violent incidents in Korea have also had a latent physical effect on artists' bodies and shaped their collective unconscious - potentially allowing us to draw connections between Korea's own complicated history and these bodies. Performance provides individuals with an experiential, communicative tool to express what might otherwise be inexpressible. Performance art appeared in the 1960s, reacting to the prevailing representation paradigm of visual performative art such as theatre. Performance has evaded representation by focusing on the materiality of the performer's bodies and presenting concrete life actions. In the wake of performance, a large body of scholarship focused on the significance of the materiality of the body in performance, many highlighting the meaning of the body

By the mid-20th century, Lee's contemporaries in the West and in Japan were actively exploring different ways of applying paint to a canvas, especially with using

their own physical body. For example, in *One: Number 31, 1950*, Jackson Pollock laid the canvas on the floor and splashed paint across it (Fig. 12, 1950), while Murakami Saburo tore the canvas completely in *Passing Through* (Fig.13, 1965). Similarly, Lee Kun-Yong experimented with new and unconventional methods of painting by placing himself to the side or behind the canvas but never facing the canvas directly. A painter was expected to stand and face the canvas but by intentionally restricting the painting is enriched by the resonance left behind from the limited and controlled conditions of his body. Considering the fact that Lee's major works were performed only a few years after the Martial Law was declared, the of the purposeful constrain put on the body is reminiscent of the period of extreme political repression coupled with widespread mobilization of the citizenry towards the statist gospel of modernization and development. Lee's practice as an artist, borne from intense reflections about man and his world, were often contrary to the traditional concept of art shared by the Korean art community. Lee's body drawings trace the course of reactions that the body undergoes according to its location. Lee's use of the body was lauded notably, "artists like Lee Kun-Yong differed from his painting-obsessed colleagues by focusing on mark-making rather than on picturing."[54]

Lee Kun-Yong twisted the popular aphorism, "life is short, art is long," by saying "life is short, art is also short."[55] Lee's statement that "art is also short" refers to the temporality of his performance that remain only through the visual traces captured in

[54]Lee, Kun Yong. *Lee Kun-Yong*. Edited by Sae Mi Kim. Seoul, Korea: aMart Publications, Inc., 2012.

[55] Lee, Kun Yong. *Lee Kun-Yong*. Edited by Sae Mi Kim. Seoul, Korea: aMart Publications, Inc., 2012.

photographs. Korean experimental performance of Lee belongs to what Philip Auslander calls "performed photography,"[56] which performance was staged solely to be photographed and had no meaning prior existence as autonomous events presented to audiences. A document offers a record of the process and also a proof of the existence of performance so technically performance depends on documentation as it gains authority by being recorded. The photographic document becomes the only space in which the performance occurs. In this sense, the documentation also depends on performance, since there would be nothing to document if there if there was not a performance. Thus, the photograph one sees records Lee's method of drawing that never took place except in the photograph itself. Although it is true that the *Method of Drawing* had no significant audience other than "a few of the artist's friends and a photographer," it is equally true that the performance was staged in front of the camera.[57]

Although some of the early documentation of performance might not have been carefully planned or conceived as such, Korean experimental performers grew their interest in archiving their works. Artists like Lee quickly became fully conscious of role of photography in his performance. He realized that photography could create the work the audience could see afterwards and felt the need to meticulously orchestrate the work for the camera as much as for an immediately present audience, if not more so. Lee was well aware of what Amelia Jones describes as performance's "dependence on

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[56] Auslander, Philip. "The Performativity of Performance Documentation." *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 28, no. 3 (2006): 2-4.

[57] Lee, Kun Yong. *Lee Kun-Yong*. Edited by Sae Mi Kim. Seoul, Korea: aMart Publications, Inc., 2012.

documentation to attain symbolic status within the realm of culture."[58] Lee, for example, carefully staged, then photographed, the six different stages of the *Method of Drawing* photographed so that he could put the selected photographs together as one work to display in exhibitions and museum catalogs.

Lee Seung-Taek, Sung Neung Kyung, and Lee Kun-Yong undertook their responsibility as artists beyond the conventional meanings and parameters of acceptance deeply ingrained in Korean art through their experimental performances since the late 1960s. The shared goals of modernization and democracy during the Park Chung Hee era (1961-79) become the important backdrop for the crazy amalgam of various ideological strands coming from colonial past, resistance tendency towards established orders, and the experimentations of new media in the postwar decades, pivoting around the notion of self-expression. Their vision behind intentionally cryptic experimentation was to reflect South Korea as they personally experienced the radical transformation in the '60s and '70s brought on by decolonization, ideological conflicts rooted in the Cold War, the outbreak of the Vietnam War (1955-1975), the rise of nationalism, rapid modernization, and its own democratic movements as real as possible.

The progressive reforms, democratic adjustments to Korean political, social, and educational systems established the basis for Korea's rapid growth in the following years. Many avant-garde artists, appeared to be fully aware of the changing realities of this era, which aspired them to break away from the conventions vigorously. Instead, Lee S., Sung,

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[58] Amelia Jones, "'Presence' in Absentia: Experiencing Performance as Documentation." *Art Journal 56*, 4 (1997): 16.

and Lee K. legitimatize their resentment for the authority by interpreting the value they find in objects from the ordinary. The issue of the independence of aesthetic qualities and values validates the belief that artistic values must be connected with the Korean society of that period. Like the sense of tragedy after World War II (1939-1945) inspired the aspiration of European and American to break away from the conventions, Korean postwar experimentations also began to completely move away from artistic conventions to start from scratch, to produce 'art as it never existed before'[59] in search of originality within of Korean context. Consequently, a connection between the omnipresent threat of war and intensified unsettling pessimistic attitude of Korean citizens at the time, including these artists, definitely seems to reside in the experimental performances.

At the same time, the new technologically mediated urban culture incited a passion for multimedia experimentation and prompted artists to seek a new visual language. Their experiments with photographs brought forth the effective dynamics of urban forms, signs, and textuality, through which the artists were able to reflect a new ontology of the city in relation to the specific physical materiality of their documentation.[60] Documentation has become an essential corollary to ephemeral

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[59] "In 1940, some of us woke up to find ourselves without hope – to find that painting did not really exist," that painting "was dead," recalls Newman in a tribute to Pollock. "The awakening had the exaltation of a revolution. It was that awakening that inspired the aspiration…to start from scratch, to paint as if painting never existed before." The search for a new beginning, for a new origin of painting, led them to break and reject Western traditions of painting with a sense of limitless freedom and utopian ambition. The atmosphere of the war, the experience of terror, violence, brutality and tragedy led them to seek out for primitivism. See more in Yve-Alain Bois, *Painting as Model* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1993), 187.

[60] For discussions on city, industrial society in Asian contemporary art, see C.J. Wan-Ling Wee's "'We Asians?' Modernity, Visual Art Exhibitions, and East Asia," *Boundary 2*, no. 37, iss.1 (2010): 91-126; Choi Min, Sung Wan Kyung, eds., *Vision and Language I: Industrial Society and Art* (Seoul: Yeolhwadang, 1982).

performance practices that have grown steadily in importance and photography as a means of documentation is ubiquitous in late 1960s art.[61] The '60s and '70s were pivotal to the changing epistemologies of the document and of documentation. As the beginning of the information age, this period ushered in new media and new attitudes about mediation, data, and knowledge. The experimental individuals adopted the strategies of documentation within their experimentations to comment on unjust power of the institutional orders in Korea. By 'documentation' I mean both the material processes of creating documents and the complex work of assembling a set of documents, organizing systems of materials, or drawing connections between them. Art historian T.J. Demos sums up the power of these changes when he argues that artists have "reinvented the conditions of moving images in the documentary art of photography, film, and video, that is, images that are globally circulating and politically affective."[62] While moving images of performance have long existed in the West, unfortunately, they were not available in Korea. In this context, Lee and Sung caught themselves in action engaging with the mundane every day with a politically charged critique of the existing system and their discourses; documentation was a core strategy to this end. Lee Seung-Taek, Sung Neung Kyung and Lee Kun-Yong's innovative conceptual approach and method of social critique were caught in action and mediated through various kinds of recording media such photographs as essential material support of their performative works.

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[61] Christian Berger and Jessica Santone, "Documentation as Art Practice in the 1960s," *Visual Resources*, no. 32 (2016): 3-4, 201-209.

[62] Christian Berger and Jessica Santone, "Documentation as Art Practice in the 1960s," *Visual Resources*, no. 32 (2016): 3-4, 201-209.

Their groundbreaking performances of the ‘60s and the ‘70s remain in the past, but the photographic records of that era have been transformed from mere visual marginalia to indispensable information that is every bit as foundational for the interpretations of the experimental performances as the canvases of conventional painters for earlier generations. In the process, they intentionally left the meaning open for their audiences of later generations to decode. For the Korean audience who were accustomed to traditionally oriented paintings, the documentation archived by the artists seem insufficient to accept or appreciate the seemingly random works and demanded to read the score or compositional procedures. Although the practicality of photography’s utilitarian features initially fulfilled the artists needs to archive performance, all three of them were investigated in its ability to distill and embellish the aura of the radical process within the social, political, historical and cultural context of Korea.

A burgeoning range of recording formats, media, and production techniques newly available in Korea also made it possible for the young artists to challenge the presumed neutrality of these forms and their function as straightforward records. The potential for documentation to somehow re-stage site-specific or performative works for other audiences was compelling. Moreover, written or photographic documentation granted access to the witness or audience. The combination of text and photographic media, the interweaving of modes of writing and manipulation of images to highlight the crucial moments in Korean history as a slice of life have implications for performance. As the types of recording equipment have become cheaper and more accessible in Korea, there has been a clear growth in the use of recording for documentation of performance.

Thereupon, documentation came to be understood as a key transmission of details about Korean experimental art. With the increased presence of photography, the documentation itself also could be understood a creative practice, allowing artists to reshape, multiple or develop new works by rejecting, in the process, the stability of recorded information. Their investigations of documenting not only reflect technological changes that have made the recording possible, but also question the importance of testimony and witnessing in Korea during the political tension, which is significantly different from those of the much-accepted avant-garde movement of the *Art Informel*. Therefore, I would like to accredit their unusual approach to the rupture between the ideal and the real can be recognized as the point of historical origin for Korean performance art. By virtue of their achievements, Korea witnessed the new beginning of modern Korean art which in the space of a few years succeeded in shifting the focus from the academic traditions of representation towards a more expressive abstract non-representation at the moment when significant political changes when individual and collective came directly into conflict with oppressive state apparatuses.

Chapter 2. Experimental Performance of the Fourth Group: In Search of the Real

In the academia of Korean art history, there has been more than enough interest in the *Art Informel* and the *Dansaekhwa*, Korean monochrome paintings, as the representative modern and contemporary art of Korea due to the vigorous pursuit after the currents of the contemporary Western art movements. However, scholars have shown little interest toward the pioneering performative practices of the experimental artists who introduced a new style in Korea beyond the acknowledged tendencies. As I discussed earlier, experimental art was never truly embraced as the mainstream in Korean art, never receiving the appreciation that truly that they deserved for successfully laying the foundation for the concept of performance and experimental art in Korea. It was perceived to bear no real significance until the late 90s and early 2000, as '60s Korean art began to receive historical legitimacy under the name of "experimental art."

Some of the Korean experimental art trends centered around art collectives such as the Young Artists Association, A.G. (Avant-Garde Group), ST (Space and Time), and the Fourth Group. Lee Seung-Taek, Sung Neung Kyung and Lee Kun-Yong were also the leaders of these avant-garde art group. Among them, the Fourth Group is the most significant for being one of the earliest art collectives to appear in post-war Korean contemporary art. The Fourth Group aspired to stage performances as a synthesis of fine art, music, film, theatre, and dance. The members who knew each other closely. Most of the members were young artists who graduated from newly opened universities such as

from Hongik University with an undergraduate degree in fine art .[63] They actively took the lead in the Korean experimental group exhibitions. For the first time in Korean art history, these groups' experimental works were exhibited at the *Hankuk Cheongnyeon Jakga Yeollipjeon* (Exhibition of the Young Artists Association) in 1967.

Initially, its members were not regarded as pioneers at the time of their founding because they were complete novices in the Korean art world, fresh out of universities. The group also failed to draw much of the public's attention as the term 'exhibition' still predominantly stood solely for paintings. The generation of young Korean artists became frustrated with unpreparedness and unwillingness of Korean art community to accept performance as a form of art. Indeed, in the field of Korean art, an unprecedented drive to experiment in and out of the canvas was erupting. And it was these experimental art collectives who took the lead in this new wave of art. It was an important opportunity to question the established system and a necessary step for the Korean art community in order to expand on outdated concepts such as art, artist, audience, and reception. This determined such consequences as an emergence of new, modern culture and further appearance of the meaning of being an artist in Korea under its own political circumstances in the '60s after Park Chung Hee becomes the president after his military coup d'état.

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[63] Art education from newly opened art colleges largely contributed to the modernization of Korean art as well. After the liberation, several art schools opened in major universities in Seoul, and art was finally taught as an independent discipline in modern educational institutions for the first time in Korea. Between 1945 and 1950, Seoul National University, Ehwa Women's College, and Hongik University opened colleges of art. Some of the artists who had previously studied in Japan, France, and the United States came back as professors to teach at those universities and introduced Western avant-garde art to the students. The first generation of their graduates played a crucial role in confronting the colonial academicism and shaping the character of Korean avant-garde art.

Consequently, the rupture between the ideal and the real provided an arena for the art intellectuals to form collaborative groups under similar interest across disciplines in innovative practices. In search of the real meaning of art, the Fourth group and its leader, Kim Ku Lim (b. 1936), envisioned to pose the broader existential question of what it means to live in a coercive environment established in Korean state amidst a new world of competing civilizations, and what their roles are in this process. The realities of Korean art world and state-driven developmental systems of South Korea in the '60s and the '70s simultaneously provided artists who came of age during the tumultuous postwar period with a rich visual source and artistic stage to produce creative expression, as well as a subject to critique. Therefore, Kim and the Fourth Group found the answer in a new form of expression of the urban city, Seoul, through the lens of a camera.

To begin with, the Korean government played a big role in exacerbating the sort of disapproval against progressive works by controlling the specific contents and styles that were exhibited in national museums during this period. Based on the earlier colonial period's *Seonjeon* exhibition system, the Korean government launched the National Art Exhibition, in 1949, called *Gukjeon* for short.[64] For a very long period of time, it closely echoed the previous Japanese art exhibitions in its system and standards favoring the academic, salon-style exhibitions established under the Japanese occupation. It was very

[64] The colonial government sponsored *Seonjeon* (Annual Korean Art Exhibition) from 1922 until 1944 as a counterpart to *Teiten* (Japan's Imperial Exhibition) to get a control of the artistic landscape of Korea. The *Seonjeon* represented apolitical themes in the style of modern Japanese art. Korean artists ultimately conformed to the Japanese guideline laid out by colonial cultural policy. The Japanese jurors specifically demanded works that "absorbed and digested superior techniques of the artists in the central art world" (meaning Japan) as well as represented colors, techniques, and conventions "proper to the peninsula" (meaning Korea). Hee Young Kim, *Korean Abstract Painting: A Formation of Korean Avant-Garde* (Seoul, Korea: Hollym Corp., Publishers, 2013), 20.

selective in making sure that all the works celebrated at *Gukjeon* were oil paintings. As a result, Korean experimental artists were underrepresented, suffered from the lack of written scholarship, and were denied agency in Korean hegemonic society of the period. Kim Ku Lim expressed his disinterest in following the traditional guidelines set by Korean art communities by asserting, "I do not feel bound by media, and my decisions about media are always spontaneous and accommodating. My ideas and philosophies should convey themselves independent of media."[65] In his freshman year at Hongik University, he protested against conservative art education and dropped out of school, but he was not the only one were concerned with the uncompromising regulations of Korean art system.

Despite the criticism of its rigid academicism and policing jury system, the *Gukjeon* served as the major gateway to public recognition for many Korean artists until the mid-1950s.[66] However, its stagnating academicism became increasingly frustrating to the group of experimentalists who were beginning to threaten the existing boundaries of Korean art. For years, the works exhibited at the *Gukjeon* indiscriminately emulated the styles of the West and Japan, which were hardly relevant to the raw realities of the Korean society at the moment and the devastations as the people of Korea had just experienced. Park Seo Bo (b. 1931), a Korean monochrome painter, recalls "When I returned to Seoul after the War, I saw that the entire city was devastated… Yet the

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[65] Kim Ku Lim and Sook-Kyung Lee. *Kim Ku Lim*. Seoul, Korea: AMart Publications, 2015.

[66] Hee Young Kim, *Korean Abstract Painting: A Formation of Korean Avant-Garde* (Seoul, Korea: Hollym Corp., Publishers, 2013), 20-21.

Gukjeon remained the same, presenting almost identical paintings depicting only good things. Why do they continue to exhibit such meaningless works?"[67]

By the '70s, the government made national attempts to make art more accessible to the public by opening up a large number of museums and galleries. However, it was not a complete success due to its exclusiveness and resulted in creating even a bigger gap in the audience. Art museums and private galleries were being built at an accelerated speed. Yet, many of the newly convened Korean art institutions were also biased in their selection for exhibitions because they had to meet the needs of their clients. They were financially dependent on the meteoric rise of conglomerates, or *jaebeol*, such as Samsung, Lucky Goldstar, and Hyundai, who decided to extend their investment to the arts. These large-scale corporations opened the first commercial art galleries, Hyundai Gallery and Myongdong Gallery, and began selling traditional calligraphy or ink paintings, which were the most popular among a small number of collectors who were their newly wealthy clients. On the other hand, the general reception towards experimental art continued to be largely negative, confused, and reluctant, and their works were overlooked.

This means that the collecting of works is inherently tied to the institutional notions of significance, meaning it was the museum's role to determine the value of art and also how the work is received by the viewers. An important motivation in Korean experimentalists comes from their ambivalent attitude toward the older painters who sought to promote a uniquely Korean art, which made many of them instant millionaires.

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[67] Hee Young Kim, *Korean Abstract Painting: A Formation of Korean Avant-Garde* (Seoul, Korea: Hollym Corp., Publishers, 2013), 26.

Their paintings became valuable commodities that were in high demand in the postwar art market. For this reason, a growing number of younger artists expressed their disdain with the *Gukjeon* and wanted to experiment with forms that would not be fair game for capitalist appropriation while preserving the expressionist gesture.[68]

Instead of self-consciously composing themselves under a single ideology or a movement, they brought in the force of avant-garde art with a collective sensibility among like-minded friends and colleagues who regularly spent time together sharing their opinions. Although most of them did not achieve fame nor economic success through their performances, Kim and his colleagues had great confidence and pride in being the trendsetters, instead of following the trend. They probably considered themselves as the elite group of Korean art communities who were the only ones able to produce works that Korea has never seen before, enjoying such comments on their works as “freaky” and “bizarre.”[69] In a news report that featured their interviews, they prided in their work by saying:

> We determine whether our performance is successful or not by how it is received by the public. If they leave either shocked or laughing, then the work is a success. We should no longer consider art work as mere decor. The artist has the right and the responsibility to agonize the limits he or she faces as a human being and to criticize the reality as one feels.[70]

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[68] Hee Young Kim, *Korean Abstract Painting: A Formation of Korean Avant-Garde* (Seoul, Korea: Hollym Corp., Publishers, 2013), 15.

[69] Mi Kyung Kim, Hangu *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 44.

[70] Mi Kyung Kim, *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 195.

The Fourth Group united a diverse group of people with different professions in various fields. The members of the Fourth Group included the artists Kim Ku Lim, Jung Kang Ja, Chung Chan Seung, Kang Kuk Jin, a theatre director Bang Tae Soo, a fashion designer Son Il Kwang, a pantomime artist Go Ho, a film director Lee Ik Tae, a scriptwriter Lim Joong Woon, a sound engineer Kim Bul Rae, a musician Tak Young, a seal engraver Seok Ya Jeong, a journalist Lee Ja Kyung, and a monk Suk Ya Jeong. On June 20, 1970, the group was initiated with the founding ceremony, which took place in a small cafe in Seoul where they spend quite of time discussing their philosophy and criticizing the limited conditions of the Korean art world on a daily basis.

They began the ceremony by the allegiance to the flag while the national anthem of South Korea played in the background, then the leader, Kim Ku Lim, recited the founding declaration and doctrine (Fig. 14):

> We were born on this land with a historical mission, and thus we seek to overthrow misinformed errors; end all contradictions that stem from the separation of spirit and body and form a new human culture that goes from human to human.
>
> This is a claim to advocate new human ethics - under which the original form of the universe, as *Muche*, makes up the whole, and human, who is the materialization of *Muche*, sets off from *Muche* and returns to *Muche*.
>
> We acknowledge that body and mind, night and day, black and white, coincidence and inevitability are the same, and the idea of the original form, which claims that all things in this world are the nature of the universe, is the principle of *Muche*. We establish *The Fourth Group* with the aim of thinking and acting together on such ground.
>
> We, hereby, declare the liberation of humans to return them to their natural state and the independence of pure Korean culture. We will integrate all art under the principle of *Muche* and form a single system by directly participating in all areas including politics, economy, society, culture, science, and religion.

Hereupon, we set our code of conduct as follows:

1. We liberate man to his original state.
1. We affirm that world cultures are subjective to pure independence of Korean culture.
1. We unify all structures through participation.
1. We constitute unity through non-constitution.

Like that of 'Dada Manifesto,' 'Futurist Manifesto' or 'Fluxus Manifesto' the Fourth Group produced manifestos or declarations that articulated their ultimate aim, ensuring collaboration across experimentation by generating new ways of thinking about art and making art through their performative works. Unlike the Western avant-garde movement, this ceremony and the recitation of the manifesto itself could be understood as a performance that clearly reflects their purpose and intentions in forming the Fourth Group. By starting off the declaration with the phrase, "We were born on this land with a historical mission," the same as the introductory passage to the People's Charter that all Koreans had to recite at various official events at the time of Park Chung Hee's regime, the Fourth Group intends to criticize and destroy the existing orders and the erroneous societal constraints that dominated the Korean society at the time through the shocking demonstrations and new media such as performance.

On August 15, 1970, the group recited the declaration and doctrine for *Funeral Ceremony for Established Art and Culture* (1970) (Fig.1) in front of the statue of Yulgok Yi I at Sajik Park. It is explicitly stated that they aim to liberate human beings into one's natural state and establish the independence of pure Korean culture over the external domination in the group's declaration and doctrine and declared the independence of Korean culture. In the course of the development of Korean contemporary art, the independence of Korean culture has never been strongly declared by any groups or

individuals. It is also the first time that calls for the unity of integration and participation from different fields like art, theatre, music, politics, economics, science, and religion. After reciting the declaration and a brief silent tribute, they announced that they were holding a funeral for established art and culture.

Jung Kang Ja took the lead with a white flag, a symbol for harmony, and *Taegeukgi*, the national flag of South Korea, in the other hand. Kim Ku Lim followed also with a white flag in his hand, accompanied by Chung Chan Seung and Son Il Kwang, who carried the coffin that held the declaration inside. Then, Kang Kuk Jin walked right behind them with a shovel to dig up the dirt and bury the coffin. They started from Sajik Park and marched to Gwanghwamun plaza until they caught in action by police officers in front of the National Assembly House, where they were put in handcuffs, brought to the nearest police station, and imprisoned until they were put on a prompt trial the following day for violating the Road Traffic Act. They originally planned to arrive under the Hanganggyo 1 (Hangang Bridge No.1) to hold a cremation ceremony, but when the artists protested against their arrest by explaining the situation as a performance, the only response that came from the police was "You call this art? Do not be ridiculous." Also, the fact that young female artists participated in the march among men was interesting enough to catch the eyes of ordinary people at that time, and attracted attention from the press, which reported with disdain, "Even a mild shame or embarrassment could not be found."[71]

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[71] Mi Kyung Kim, *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 131.

At the time, their avant-garde tendencies were reported to the public through Korean newspaper images, but most of the evaluation on Korean experimental artists were still quite cluttered. The initial reaction was very unfavorable towards the collective attempts of the experimental artists in Korea. Some critics such as Lee Il appraised the work as "noteworthy attempt beyond the conventional meanings and parameters of acceptance deeply ingrained in the Korean art world," while some argued "a rather late attempt to keep up with the trends of the West," and the general public commented that they were "too freaky and impossible to comprehend."[72] An article from the *Seoul Shinmun*, the Seoul Newspaper, marginalized the experimental performances as "a challenge against the current state of Korean art which has fallen into the stagnant ditch but definitely too strange and bizarre at first glance."[73] Thus, it was widely agreed that experimental artists were after something quite extraordinary, but the unfamiliarity and their deviated attitudes to assumed norms of the society compelled critics to stigmatize them as "heretics."[74]

Korean experimental of the postcolonial era is categorized by its acceptance of influences, the diversity of information received, and by complexity with which it is assimilated. This particular modernization process of Korean art, unlike that of the West, did not develop based on its own historical, political, social and cultural metamorphosis,

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[72] Mi Kyung Kim, *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 44.

[73] Mi Kyung Kim, *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 45.

[74] Mi Kyung Kim, *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 45.

instead, through how modern western art's influence unfolded in Japan. Korea, in turn, adopted the Western art philosophies, conceptions, style and media from Japan, thus, a sort of a second-hand westernization took place. However, the Korean artists have struggled to solve the fundamental issue, how to deal with the domestic dynamic while acknowledging the global. For example, performing in public spaces as a way of promoting new artistic media is not entirely new when compared to the Japanese performance groups who presented their works at the Yomiuri Independent Exhibition in 1960 about 10 years ahead of the Korean experimental groups. *Funeral Ceremony for Established Art and Culture* of the Fourth Group is very reminiscent of High-Red Center's *Cleaning Event* (1964) (Fig. 15) and Zero Jigen's *Rituals of Completely Naked Walks with Gas Masks* (1967) (Fig. 16). The resemblance in the formal language between them in each urban space is undeniable. Moreover, Japan's avant-garde art movement and its Anti-Art spirit that existed from the late 1950s to mid-1960s was not only similar to Korea experimental artists' stance against traditional paintings in the '60s but also its social context that served as a critical piece of information for these groups seemed to resonate that of Japan.[75]

Japanese art also experienced the seismic changes corresponding to the drastic social transformation, democratic adjustments, and progressive reforms prior to Korea. However, Japan had successfully achieved stability and was already benefiting from its

[75] The capitalized terms of Anti- Art refer to movement particular to 1960s Japan. The overarching narrative of 1960s art in Japan was codified by the Japanese Anti-Art artists who questioned the existing accepted constructs of art.

rapidly growing economy when it reached the 'Golden Age' by the 1960s.[76] While Japan was thriving after a relentless postwar reconstruction effort that culminated in the country's hosting the Olympic Games in 1964, much of Korea was still struggling at a subsistence level. In fact, the social atmosphere of Korea was very different from that of Japan for the sake of constant instability due to the flawed economic development policies, a series of demonstrations against the government, and the citizens who suffered from the unresolved food shortage.

Most importantly, the biggest difference would be that the Korean artists could not explore the freely due to the anti-communist ideology that was prevalent the social atmosphere, which the government tried to suppress under the Yushin Reform tightly. Despite such differences, the fact that experiments to break boundaries of the existing order was carried out in Korea only a few years apart from the Japanese avant-garde groups of the 1950s and 1960s was probably the Japanese art magazines that became easily accessible and were widely read by the Korean artists.[77] While introducing a variety of Western avant-garde art practices, the Japanese avant-garde art scenes motivated Korean artists to explore newness in expression.

Moreover, there is an interesting discourse of recording and documentation at stake for the Fourth Group's experimentations that brought about a new style of photographs characterized by their rough, blurry, and grainy newspaper images.

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[76] Mi Kyung Kim, *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 50.

[77] Mi Kyung Kim, *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 51.

Although they are press photographs that caught the Fourth Group in action, the 'presumption of an ontological relationship between performance and document' in this first model is ideological to Korean society of the '60s and the '70s.[78] The idea of archiving their performance with photographs as a means of accessing the reality of the society derives from the general ideology of photography, as described by Helen Gilbert, glossing Roland Barthes and Don Slater: "Through its trivial realism, photography creates the illusion of such exact correspondence between the signifier, and the signified that it appears to be the perfect instance of Barthes's 'message without a code.' The 'sense of the photograph as not only representationally accurate but ontologically connected to the real world allows it to be treated as a piece of the real world, then as a substitute for it.'"[79]

Their dark portrayal of contemporary Seoul offered up a space of excess filled with human desires, political conflicts, and filthy detritus. Such a gap between optimistic idealism of the government and grim reality as the citizens felt was frequently the politicized subject matter of the '60s and the '70s performance, in which the problematic rapid transformation of the city under the yoke of capitalist development was highlighted in direct opposition. Instead of the actual performance that cannot be reproduced, the photograph is cut from time and takes the audience back to the mid-70s as if we are standing on the streets of Seoul with Kim Ku Lim, Jung Kang Ja, Chung Chan Seung,

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[78] Auslander, Philip. "The Performativity of Performance Documentation." *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 28, no. 3 (2006): 1-10.

[79] Auslander, Philip. "The Performativity of Performance Documentation." *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 28, no. 3 (2006): 1.

and Kang Kuk Jin. The power of these photographs is that it is not clearly separable from its original context, in which it was produced, visually restoring the moment as an extension in space and time.

The performance of the Fourth Group disappeared, but the declaration, in addition to the press images, live on as an important resource echoing their resistance to the 1970s society. Although much of the enigmatic declaration would not have made sense to the general public, the written documentation here did not share the same subtlety as it did for photographic documentation. The declaration hints that, by applying radical idealism to issues of its time, the Fourth Group will pursue to restore the ability to think of a broader space and secure a relatively critical distance from the present circumstances they were facing. We also know from the declaration that Kim Ku Lim was appointed ‘tongnyeong,” the president of the group. According to Kim, they derived the word ‘tongnyeong’ from ‘daetongyeong,’ translated as president in English, by simply removing the first syllable, ‘dae.’

Regardless of their intentions establish a new form of art, the fact that they established some sort of a government organization of art on their own with appointed ‘tongneyong’ was troublesome enough to be interpreted as a rebellious gesture by the suppressive Korean government of the time. Every bit of their actions was constantly watched under close surveillance. In addition, the Park regime went as far with their regulation as to monitor the length of men’s hair and the length of the skirts that women wore (Fig. 17). The police tracked down a large number of artists of the Fourth group who had long hair and shaved their head (Fig. 18). Eventually, the police confiscated all

of Kim Ku Lim 's books and materials, detained, and even questioned his parents at the Central Intelligence Agency. They interrogated Kim with pointed questions like "Why did you name the group 'the Fourth Group? Why did you use white flags? Did they symbolize surrender to the communism of North Korea? Did you, and if so, where did you receive the funds?"[80] Kim explained that the Fourth Group had no intentions of expanding dissident ideas into violent demonstrations, but rather, their focus was on exploring new media as a pursuit of originality in the arts. He was proved to be innocent, and the authority's assertion became unreasonable intimidation, but they continued to tail Kim for 6 months pressuring him to break up the Fourth Group. Even after the members of the Fourth Group parted their ways, Kim Ku Lim continued to take on unprecedented, unconventional, and experimental artistic practices in the conservative world of Korean art. Kim produced works without being restrained to a single artistic medium. He worked in film, performance, and land art, often stretching the limits of a given medium.

In this context, Kim Ku Lim's *The Meaning of 1/24 Second* (Fig.19 1696) holds a unique position as Korea's first experimental film. *The Meaning of 1/24 Second* is interesting in that Kim blurs the boundaries between fine art and pop culture by using many of the newly introduced artistic media and technology such as a camera and a video recorder. Videotaping devices were not widely available in Korea at the time, thus, being the pioneer of experimental film definitely involved quite a number of difficulties. Kim obviously could not find any video technician who could edit his film, so he had to learn

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[80] Mi Kyung Kim, *Hanguk Ŭi Sirhŏm Misul [Experimental Art in Korea]* (Seoul, Korea: Sigongsa Co., Ltd, 2003), 127.

do all the editing and splicing himself.[81]. In addition, the final product of the work was physically fragile, and eventually, the screening did not go smoothly due to technical issues. That is exactly why the original copy of the work is missing. Luckily, it was reproduced in an original 16mm film format in 2013, the copy that viewed for my research. Yet, the original work was, in fact, slightly different from the copy as a performance. The performance involved dancers whirling under psychedelic lighting to enhance the external factors of "moving screen" by adding flickering effects to the film. The reproduction version of work, *The Meaning of 1/24 Second,* lacks the perceptual stimulations that could have been part of the experience.

Taking the basic structure of the film, which consists of 24 frames per second, Kim expressed the steep reality faced by a modern man, and the sense of alienation that comes from uncontrollable speed. The film is a series of 1 second edits, at 24 frames per second. The true portrayals of Seoul of the late '60s flash by, emphasizing the speed of modern society – cars dash through elevated highways, buildings soar among construction sites, industrial factories fuming out sickly smoke, etc. This is not at all accidental. President Park Chung Hee's economic development plans of the urban planning brought immense changes to Seoul at a lightning speed. Seoul underwent one of the most rapid transformations in history. The number of buildings with 10 stories or higher in Seoul multiplied from 18 to 122 in 1970.[82] According to a newspaper article of the time, 30 overhead walkways, 6 interchanges, 3 overpasses and 22 underground

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[81] Ku-rim Kim, *Kim Ku Lim*. Seoul: Seomoondang, 2000.

[82] Hong Hee Kim, *Kim Ku-lim: Like You Know It All*. (Seoul: Seoul Museum of Art, 2013): 215.

passages were installed just in Seoul.[83] The new urban conditions became both challenges and opportunities to the Korean artists of the time. Because of the large-scale economic reform programs that were initiated in the late 1960s, one could easily run into these real images of an urban city not much different from Kim's representation of such daily affairs.

By providing fragmented images, *The Meaning of 1/24 Second* documents Seoul as a metropolis of production and consumption in which the city is described as a place where every bits of life are simultaneously balanced. The film begins with a scene from the side window of a car running on the Samil elevated expressway, which had just opened in March of the same year.[84] What follows is a series of short urban scenes such as pedestrians, traffic policeman at work, buildings in construction, neatly lined up pipes and cement blocks, show windows, an abacus, burden carrier, outdoor plaster cast, empty cans, inside of a bus, and so on. Subsequent scenes are similar in that they all appear in front of the brand-new buildings of Seoul. For example, Samil highway, Sinsegae department store, and Chosun hotel appear in the background as newly built architecture in this urban setting. Indeed, Seoul was changing fast. The metropolis exposes itself to the camera, which with its urge was still under construction also to archive, attempts to exhaustively collect images of transforming daily environment and lives.

The Meaning of 1/24 Second is a documentation without any specific narrative or verbal communication. However, Kim breaks up the pulsating scenes with recurring cuts

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[83] Hong Hee Kim, *Kim Ku-lim: Like You Know It All*. (Seoul: Seoul Museum of Art, 2013): 215.

[84] Hong Hee Kim, *Kim Ku-lim: Like You Know It Al*l. (Seoul: Seoul Museum of Art, 2013): 213.

of a man yawning. Every 1/24 second of Seoul is transforming incredibly rapidly while the yawning man cynically captures the one who is lost in his sense of direction in a life of mechanized modern life. In addition, Kim also included a series of seemingly random scenes. Some of these scenes are quite cruel and shocking. Kim included scenes such as chopping off a fish's head with a knife, smashing an egg, and hitting a small bird with a stone. Ordinary scenes like water dripping from a shower also adds to the spectacle. By juxtaposing discontinuous and illogical fragments of images, Kim symbolizes the different aspects of one's daily life in modern Korea such as industrialization, destruction, cruelty, suffering and indifference.

Now, the Republic of Korea is considered as a model of successful economic development, experiencing stunning economic growth during the '60s and '70s in an era termed the 'Miracle on the Han River.'[85] The period transformed South Korea from one of the poorest states to its current status as the eleventh largest economy in the world.[86] Much of this growth is attributed to the actions and policies of the Park's authoritative state, as it embarked on policies which promoted export-oriented industrialization. However, a closer examination reveals the tension between Park's forceful economic projects and the citizens' sufferings. Initially, Park realized that Korea's comparative advantage was cheap and diligent labor. Despite the fact that these workers were

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[85] Hyung-A Kim, "The Miracle with a Dark Side: Korean Economic Development under Park Chung-Hee," in *Korea's Development under Park Chung Hee: Rapid Industrialization, 1961-1979* (London: Routledge, 2011): 11-13.

[86] Hyung-A Kim, "The Miracle with a Dark Side: Korean Economic Development under Park Chung-Hee," in *Korea's Development under Park Chung Hee: Rapid Industrialization, 1961-1979* (London: Routledge, 2011): 17.

ultimately instrumental in providing the true driving force behind the 'Miracle on the Han River,' their wellness, safety, and suffering were not protected and supported by the state. The labor conditions during the era of economic growth were brutal. They had to work ten hours in a day without any breaks or vacations for months.[87] Naturally, the government's focus on cheap exports led to the repression of labor in order to maintain low labor costs. This upset the majority of Korean citizens. Therefore, in *The Meaning of 1/24 Second,* Kim questioned Park's economic policies that failed to ensure the collective rights of Korean citizens. For Kim, art is not a simple replication of formal elements, but a refreshment of hidden social values that have been ignored by the custom of the society for a long time.

The Fourth Group and Kim Ku Lim have been at the forefront of experimental performance art in Korea as one of the earliest artists to have explored "something that has never been tried."[88] They envisioned to pose the broader existential question of what it means to live in a coercive environment established in Korean state amidst a new world of competing civilizations, and what their roles are in this process. Korean understanding of contemporary art begins to shift significantly in the '60s after Park Chung Hee becomes the president after his successful coup. It was an important opportunity to question the established system and a necessary step for the Korean art community in order to expand on outdated concepts such as art, artist, audience, and reception. This determined such consequences as an emergence of new, modern culture and further

[87] Kwan S. Kim, "The Korean Miracle (1982-1980) Revisited: Myths and Realities in Strategy and Development," Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, University of Notre Dame (1991): 28.

[88] Kim Ku Lim and Sook-Kyung Lee. *Kim Ku Lim*. Seoul, Korea: AMart Publications, 2015.

appearance of the meaning of being an artist in Korea under its own political circumstances.

Under the collective identity, the Fourth Group realized that in order to reconstruct the development and interpretation of Korean experimental art, these terms must be first challenged and re-conceptualized in Korea's own terms. Along with the placing greatest importance on the artist's role in Korea, these intellectuals also designated new significance for collective identity by advancing performative works that brought art out into public spaces that were not part of the museum or gallery spaces. Although how people responded to the modernization process is varied, I believe there was certain self-realization, the moment of Korean artistic enlightenment, within the group of artists who recognized the problem and search for where they come from and where they are going. Therefore, these art groups should be thought of pathfinders in Korean art as they established standards for their own creative expression of the avant-garde, a platform for further Korean performative practices, and paved the way for further Korean artistic development.

Conclusion

In recent years, the birth and development of Korean experimental art of the 1960s and 1970s have been attracting attention from scholars internationally. This phenomenon was propelled by growing enthusiasm and scholarship towards contemporary art of non-Western countries due to the high demands in the rising art market for Asian art and an influential series of exhibitions organized by art institutions. As the result, scholars like Hans Belting, John Clark, Christine Clark, Caroline Turner, Minglu Gao, Wu Hung, Jim Supangkat, Ushiroshoji Masahiro, T.K. Sabapathy, Redza Piyadasa and Apinan Poshyananda, began to actively pursue writing on modern and contemporary Asian art under the issues of tradition, modernity, westernization and identity.[89] Their scholarship and unprecedented expansion challenged the continuity of any Eurocentric view of art. Accordingly, the rising international prominence of Asian contemporary art enabled Korean Experimental art to gain currency among the global art historical discourses, confirming its worthy of the art world's attention.

The new focus on Korean art adheres to the broader tendency within art history to think beyond and against Western priorities and paradigms of influence. The ongoing process of decolonizing, democratizing, and decentering Korean art history has become increasingly urgent in recent years, meeting the need to readdress colonial legacies. In recent years the contemporary art of non-Western countries has been attracting attention. This project illuminated the social, political, and cultural transformations that occurred in Korea in the 1960s and 1970s and the subsequent changes in Korean contemporary art by

[89] See scholars who were actively writing on modern and contemporary Asian art.

taking a comparative approach transcending national boundaries to introducing the dynamic qualities of avant-garde art in Korea.

When was Korea ever a nation before this time? When did Korea have its own artistic structure since the end of Joseon dynasty? Never. Hence, like the much earlier waves of Confucian ideals or Buddhism that emerged from elsewhere but was altered to fit the ideologies of Korea, modern Euro-American avant-garde philosophy was accepted but also "revised" since the time it was officially adopted. The subject of this study is the very nature of that transformation, the forces at play in its own complex history, and the identity of Korean art that emerged as an effort to modernize Korean art in the specific moments of history. Characterized by their use of vernacular media and action, outdoor performance, and enigmatic practices of documentation, the pioneers of Korean experimental art as early as the late 1950s paved the way by opening the door for the next generations of Korean conceptual artist and their art to be more accepted globally by beginning to question the conventional ways of thinking about producing art in this transitional moment of Korea.

First, at the center of the Korean experimental performances is the critique against the uncompromising paradigms of Korean art society and the backdrop of Korea's struggle for transformation into a nation-state. Whereas artists have once exclusively served the royal court or upper class, producing artworks according to the demands of the patrons prior to its establishment of the nation, they were now beginning to open their eyes to the freedom of pursuing their own creative will and expression. Small groups of Korean experimental artists of the 1960s and 1970s continually adapted to the rapidly

changing world around them to revise the accepted frameworks of art in their own creative path in this era of conflict and confusion, while the bigger majority of artists remained steadfast. Unfortunately, the experimental performances the time were either overlooked or critically dismissed.

However, one should acknowledge the significance of moving completely away from paintings to unconventional media. The Korean experimental performance marked a new era in Korean history by bolstering the development that was drastically progressing the popular perception of art and of an artist. Therefore, the '60s and the '70s were crucial stages in Korean art when the definition of art, its boundaries, and the roles of the artists were first criticized, expanded, and shifted. The Korean experimental artists sought to challenge art as an outmoded form of knowledge and discourse. This shift towards the use of unorthodox media, such as everyday objects, photography, installations, video, and performance exemplifies the various artistic practices that sought to directly articulate their disapproval towards Korean art's unpreparedness to accept other forms of art.

In addition, Korea's independence and socio-political development allowed Korean experimental art to determine its own structures of art in terms of collective-identification and expression in the midst of the era, which was viciously dampened by corruption, extreme imbalance in wealth distribution, social upheaval, and economic strife. The post-war art of Korea was confronted by the moment in history when its own transition was delicate, complex, and overwhelming. What is a transition, and why are moments of transition important in history? A transition is a process of changing from one state or condition to another by leaving the long-standing past that has been

reasonably steady and familiar, in the hope of moving forward for the new, discontinuous, strange and unpredictable growth in the future. Although each nation experiences transition differently, national growth is rarely straightforward, and often disguised as chaos, a feeling of irritability, confusion. These moments of transition in Korean history was abrupt, shaky, long, and arduous, or anywhere in between. If transitional moments in history are not done right, one cannot move on to the next stage, meaning there is no development in the future.

Moreover, Korean art also found itself at a crossroads between West and East, tradition and westernization, due to the influx of new ideologies, styles, media, and techniques from the West, mediated through Japan. Radical and experimental artistic practices appeared at different times in Europe, the United States, Japan, and Korea. For early years of Korean Art *Informel*, the domination of Japanese and Western art history was indiscriminately and inevitably accepted by Korean artists. In truth, during this transitional period, there were some efforts made to question and challenge the established hegemony, oppressive authoritarian government, rapid modernization that excluded the citizens through art, with foreign elements being embraced as a way to improve, rather than replace, the existing boundaries. Along with the placing greatest importance on the artist's role in Korea, these intellectuals also designated new significance for collective identity by advancing performative works that brought art out into public spaces that were not part of the museum or gallery spaces. This determined such consequences as an emergence of new, modern culture and further appearance of the meaning of being an artist in Korea under its own political circumstances. Through this

process, the artistic and visual culture of the nation was transformed, as exemplified by the works of the experimental artist, which embodies that vision and intention of the artists. Thus, this period was unquestionably a formative and transitional moment in Korean art history, when various phenomena converged to discover the foundation for Korean modern art.

The socio-political realities of South Korea in the ‘60s and the ‘70s also became essential subject for artists to criticize who sought to adopt art became a means of socio-cultural communication. Consequently, Korea’s repressive systems of the 1960s and the ‘70s imbued artists with a new sense of subjectivity, triggering a wave of public opposition and igniting artistic criticisms, which can be seen through these examples of their works. The Korean experimental artists express how they personally experienced modern Korea in their own terms, adopting alternative vernacular media that were hard to accept as art media for Koreans, to whom art meant painting. Nonetheless, the shifting realities of democratic transition and modernization are reflected and expressed through their frustration, the insignificance of their existence as a citizen of a nation where their voices were unheard.

Lastly, Korean experimental artists caught themselves or each other in the act during the performance in photographic documentations that now serve as key to understanding the real moments of the modern Korean history as real as possible. As both witnesses of South Korea’s social transformations and pioneers of artistic production, individual Korean experimental artists and artistic collectives such as Lee Seung-Taek, Sung Neung Kyung, Lee Kun-Yong, Kim Ku Lim, and the Fourth Group strived to

capture the essence of their lives in their artwork. They recorded the new cityscape as they closely as they experienced and also, recorded the accounts of their performance at the same time. They might not have been aware of the implications of these photographic images at the time. The different modes of documentation were initially adopted by artists to simply make a note of the work, but their potential increasingly grew due to its ability to be reproduced infinitely. Again, their works are emblems of this shift, which is now permeated with their enduring spirit. Therefore, these art groups should be thought of pathfinders in Korean art as they established a platform for further Korean debates on art and paved the way for further Korean artistic development.

It is undeniable that this period represents a crucial turning point when Korea advanced into the age of modernity despite the tremendous political and social challenge. Thus, the following chapters discussed specific moments in South Korean art history and socio-political history that bring these dialectical histories into focus: the conceptualization of dissident political reality through performance; the formation of artistic collectives by the artists to revise the boundaries of art in the transitioning moment of Korean history seemed to successfully mark the end of the colonial past and the origin of Korean experimental art, in which Korean art was able to see the transition from ‘pre-modern’ to ‘modern’ and set the stage for the unique contemporary art practices in Korea for future generations to come.

선데이 서울 선데이 서울 (12)

棺메고 藝術하니 警官이 웃기지마

화제의 情報

即決로 直行한 即興派藝術人들

스물다섯번째 광복절인 8월15일 한낮, 태극기와 백기 그리고 꽃관(棺)을 들고 「문화의 독립」을 외치며 漢江으로 향하던 「가칭 제4집단」소속 9명의 장발족들은 도로교통법위반으로 한강 아닌 즉결재판소로 행렬의 「코스」가 빗나갔는데—.

한국문화의 독립을 선언 기성 예술인 장례한다고

꽃장식 棺보고 "이게뭐요" 경관이 본서에 급히 연락

경관이 발로 棺 건드리자 作品 함부로 다룬다 항의

Figure 1. "Police says, 'Don't be ridiculous!' to the *Funeral Ceremony for Established Art and Culture* Performance, *Sunday Seoul*, 1970.

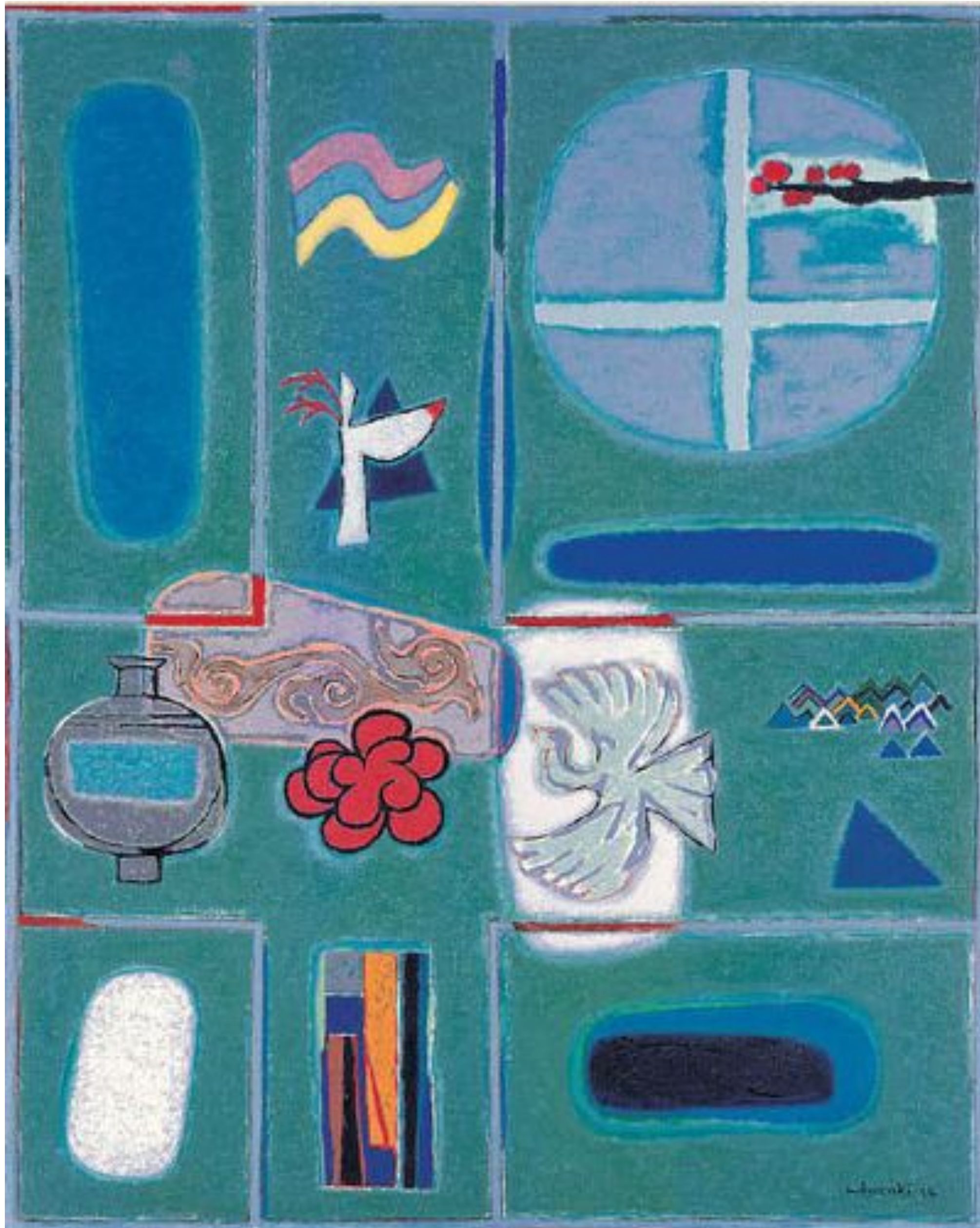


Figure 2. Kim Whanki, Song of Eternity, 1957. Oil on canvas., 162.4 x 129 cm.

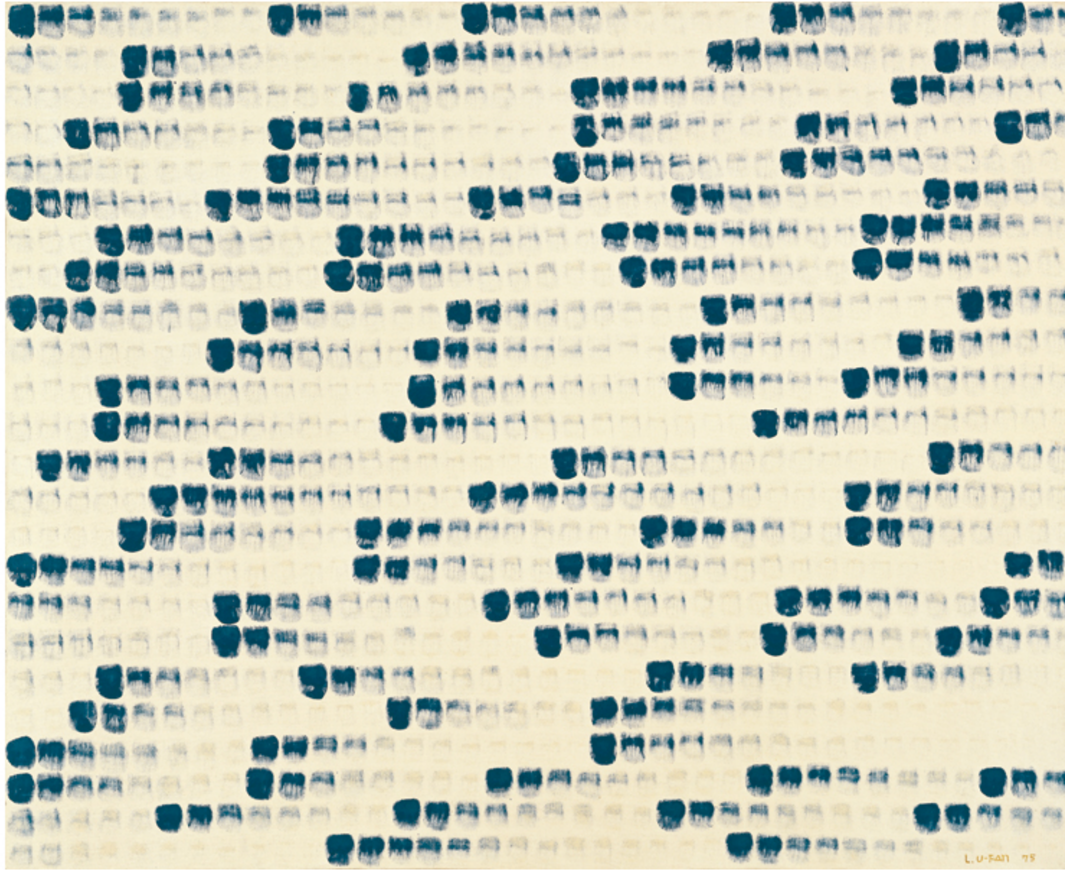


Figure 3. Lee Ufan, From Point, 1975. Oil on canvas, 145.5 x 1121 cm.

Figure 4. Alfred Stieglitz's photograph of Marcel Duchamp, *Fountain*, 1917.

Figure 5. Seung-taek Lee, *Wind-Folk Amusement,* 1971. Wind, cloths. Performance.

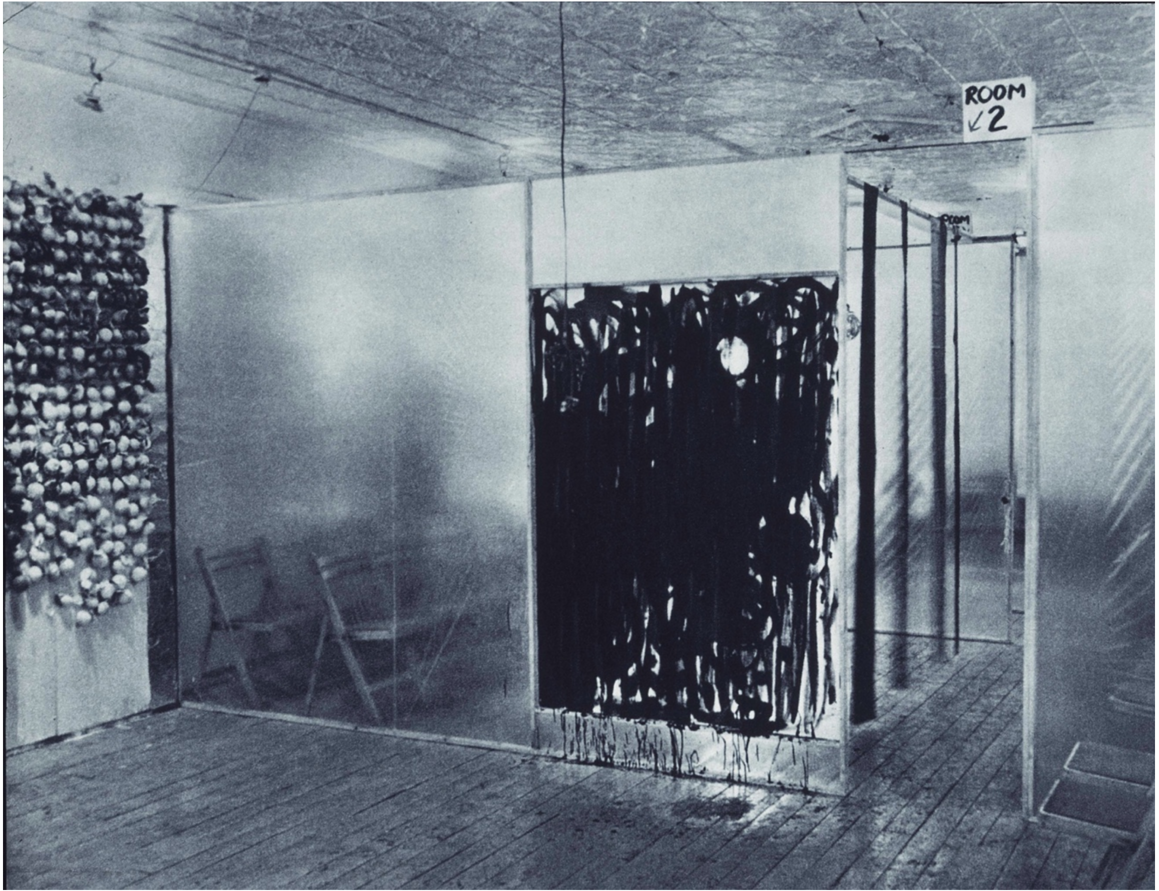


Figure 6. Allan Kaprow, *18 Happenings in 6 Parts*, 1959.

Figure 7. Lee Seung-Taek, *Burning Canvases Floating on the River*, 1964.

Figure 8. Sung Neung Kyung, *Newspaper: From June 1, 1974, One*, 1974.

Figure 9. Yoko Ono, *Cut Piece*, 1947.

Figure 10. Luciano Fabro, *Floor/tautology*, 1967.

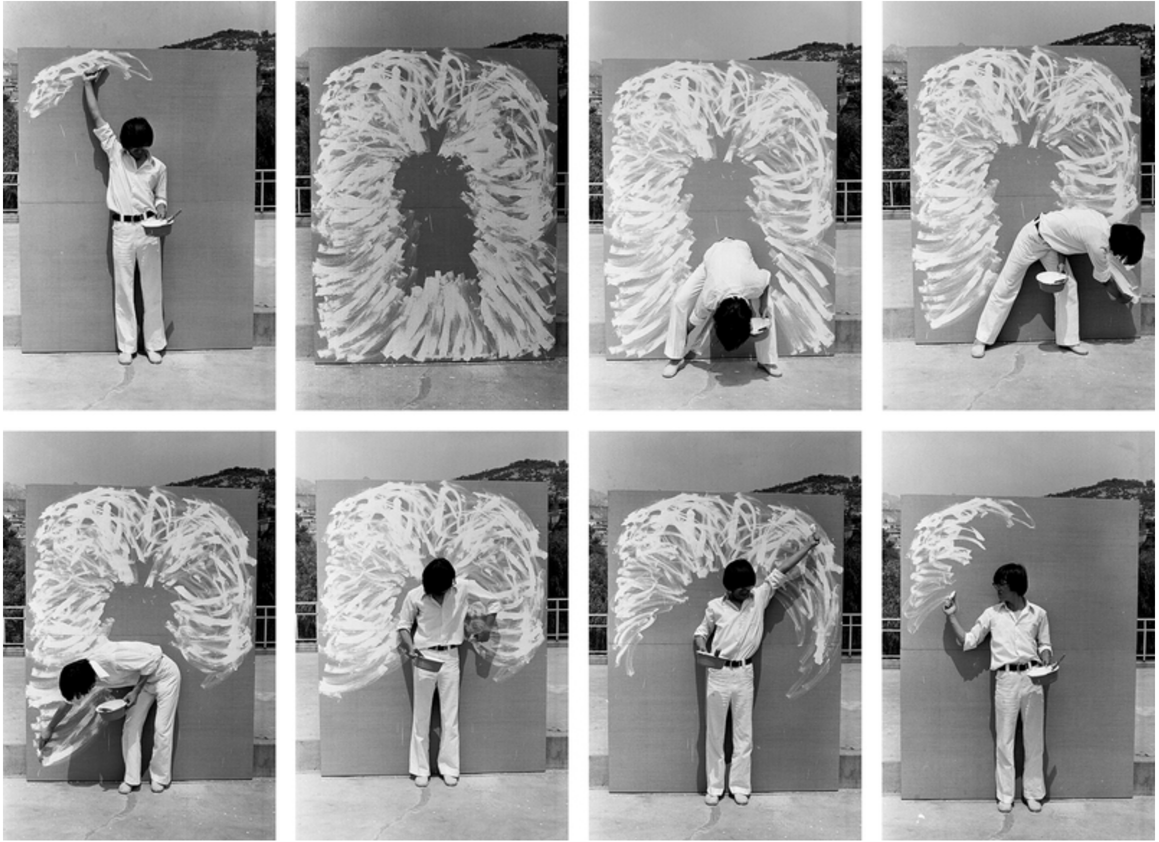
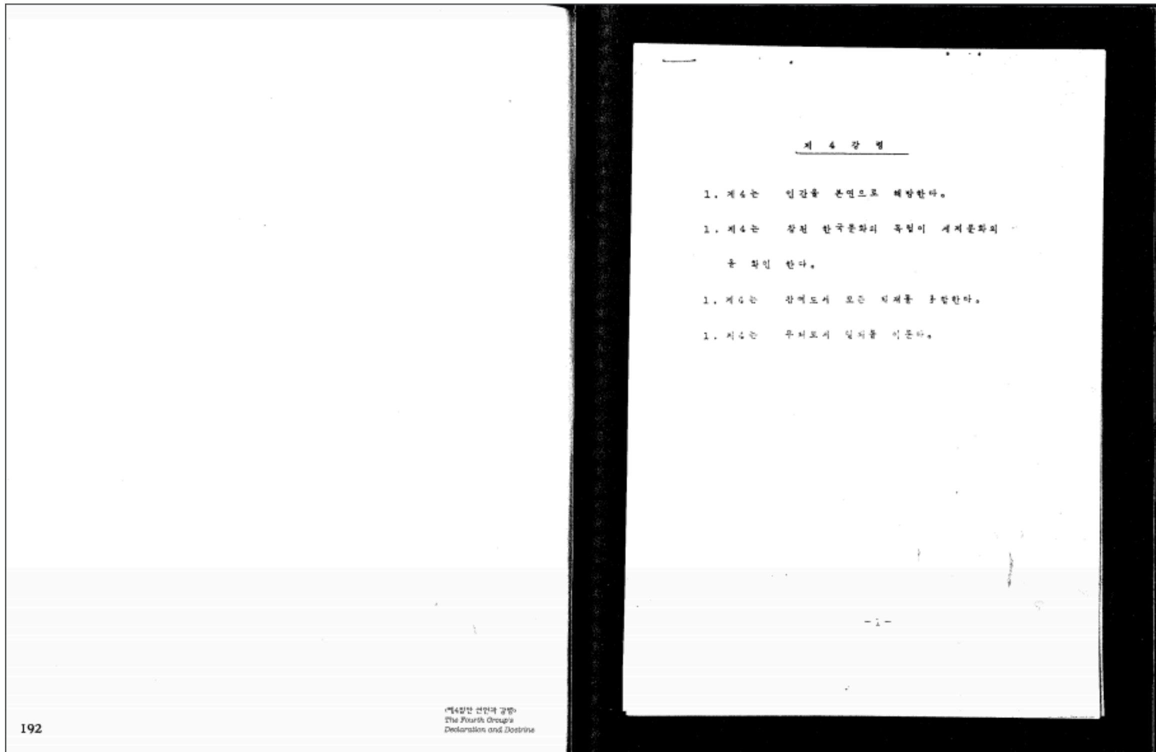


Figure 11. Lee Kun-Yong, *The Method of Drawing 76-2*, 1976.

Figure 12. Jackson Pollock, *One: Number 31, 1950*, 1950.

Figure 13. Murakami Saburo, *Passing Through*, 1965.



제 4 강 령

1. 제4는 인간을 본연으로 해방한다.

1. 제4는 참된 한국문화의 독립이 세계문화의 올 확인 한다.

1. 제4는 참여로서 모든 지체를 통합한다.

1. 제4는 무체로서 일치를 이룬다.

-1-

Figure 14. The Declaration and Doctrines of the Fourth Group, 1970.

Figure 15. The High-Red Center, *Cleaning Event, 1964*.

Figure 16. Zero Jigen, *Rituals of Completely Naked Walks with Gas Masks*, 1967.

Figure 17. The police measuring the miniskirt of a woman.

Figure 18. The police shaving the men’s hair.

Figure 19. Kim Ku Lim, *The Meaning of 1/24 Second*, 1696.

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