

Mioon

Interview: Mioon (MIN KIM & MOON CHOI)

Medium: New media, Installation, Moving Images, and Photography

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The EAST Bridge recently met Mioon, who was busy preparing for their upcoming solo-exhibition at Gana Forum Space starting from the 25th of February 2008. We discussed Mioon's present situation and works.

EB: Please give us a brief introduction of yourselves.

Mioon: 'Mioon' is a compound word of the participating artists' names, MIN KIM and MOON CHOI. We have worked together in Germany and Korea since 2001. KIM studied sculpture and fine art respectively in Korea and Germany, while CHOI studied civil engineering and photography. We first met in Germany as exchange students and had known each other for several years before starting to work together. The more we got to know each other, the more we realized how many similar concerns we shared. At the start of our cooperative work, KIM usually worked on sculpture, while CHOI worked on photography and moving images. At the present, we have expanded our working area into visual images and interactive installations.

EB: Tell me some about the difference between the viewing of a society versus a subject.

Mioon: It is basically an eye looking towards society. We talked a lot about social systems in Germany and Korea as overseas exchange students. Also, we often discussed works that analyzed media and society like many other collaborative groups. Our work usually addresses society in general or the small society formed by the two of us working together.

EB: Please explain of your early works.

Mioon: We did a single channel visual project, titled 'We' in 2001. The project was shot in a small theater containing just a hundred chairs. They seemed to be a card section in an animated form We were referencing the Korean group mentality and collectivism. At that point, we tended to participate in events like film festivals rather than exhibitions in galleries.

EB: We heard you would have a solo-exhibition coming up in February. Tell us about it.

Mioon: Right. The exhibition will be open at Gana Forum Space from the 25th of February. We started working on this idea last May, so we are finally looking forward to finishing the project. This exhibition also focuses on the concept of the 'crowd' like the last one. The crowd in present society has changed a lot from the past. In the past, the crowd was closer to an actual crowd of people, while nowadays the idea of a crowd often refers to the online or cyber-community. Internet surfing is separate from physical space and time and creates diverse discourses and criticisms, which are formed by a series of clicks of the mouse and words appearing on the screen. The title of the exhibition is "An Aside of Audiences." The space will be presented as a theater stage enclosed by an audience on three sides. The play will show the image of the present crowd socializing through a network that is actually an aside.

EB: Do you have any difficulties during working as a team?

Mioon: It is not that difficult to settle an idea and work out a concept. However, it sometimes takes time to modulate between different styles of expression at the final step of the process. It seems like we require a longer time to work compared to other collaborative teams for we present our work as a single person rather than dividing the work into the two.

EB: Can you give us some thoughts about media art in Korea from the perspective of a new media artist working in both Korea and Germany?

Mioon: The history of the Korean art scene is very short. It is true that the Korean art market has progressed very fast and has diversified, but it also retains its other side at the same time.

In particular, Korean "Media Art" was advanced by a few artists in the late 90s, but many young groups of artists joined the media art movement in early 2000. At the present, it has declined again.

We hope to see them to pursue a certain harmony among the individual subjects of their work, concepts, and materials rather than merely creating the work as part of a trend.

EB: Please talk about the work, 'Visible City' shown in the Kumho Museum of Art in 2007.

Mioon: It was a work completed during an exchange residency in France last year. We had to prepare for exhibitions in three cities; Germany, France and Korea. Therefore, we used light materials like snack boxes that made it possible to convey our ideas through the proper scale. 'Visible City' exposes the desires of the consumer. We made an artificial city that is representative of consumerism. The audiences strolling between the buildings become unrealistically gigantic when they are viewed through CCTV installed throughout the work.

EB: What are your plans for the year 2008?

Mioon: It won't be much different from 2007. After our solo exhibition and finishing the work for 'Media City Seoul' in September, we plan to travel to Germany for a short term for a media exhibition held in May. I guess, like most people, we are just striving for the wisdom to find out what real happiness really is.