

SFAC Monthly Review on Culture & Policy Trend of October 2022

by Hae-Bo Kim

(Advising Director, Policy & Strategy Division, Seoul Foundation for Arts and Culture, PhD. Sociology)

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Selected Culture & Policy News with three keywords

_ #State and culture, #Hangul, #Simulation

The satirical cartoon "Yoonseok Train," which won the gold prize at the nationwide student cartoon contest hosted by the Korea Cartoon and Video Agency, reminds of the relationship between the **state and culture** that came to a bad conclusion a few years ago. The Ministry of Culture does not hesitate to say that it sends a "strict warning to the color of politics" ([Chosun Ilbo, October 4, 2022](#)), as if they have learned nothing from history, the blacklist scandal.

The head of the court administration, who must know the law well, says, "Just by looking at the cartoon, it belongs to the freedom of expression" ([Newsis, October 4, 2022](#)) with a very principled attitude. The culture and arts world, recalling painful memories, protested, saying, "The Ministry of Culture has overtly blacklisted" ([JungAngIlbo, October 5, 2022](#)). The National Association of Cartoonists released a statement only filled with the 33 "Freedom!" as if they satirize the president's recent speech. ([Hankyoreh Newspaper, October 6, 2022](#)).

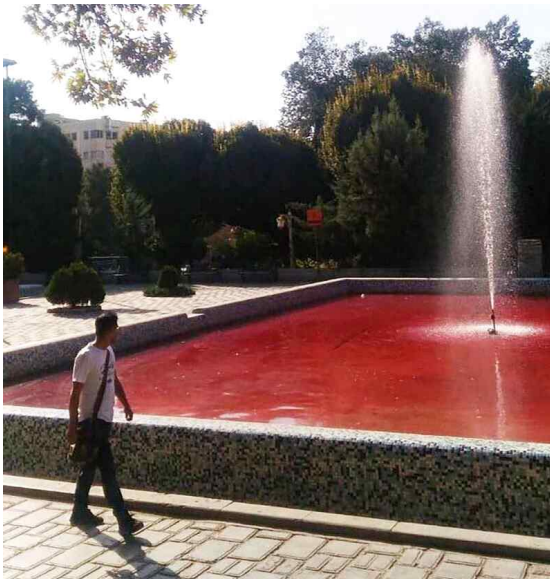


"Yoonseok Train" won the gold prize at the nationwide student cartoon contest ([Chosun Ilbo, Oct. 4, 2022](#))

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Cartoonists' statement filled with 33 "Freedom!" ([Hankyoreh Newspaper, Oct. 6, 2022](#)).

It's not just about Korea. In Iran, a "hijab protest" has been going on for over a month, following the death of a 22-year-old woman who was arrested in September for improperly wearing a hijab. In this protest procession, even a death-defying satire appeared in which a fountain in Tehran spews blood-red water ([Hankyoreh Newspaper, October 10, 2022](#)). Individual people's cultural choice of whether to wear the hijab is in conflict with the state that wants to rule the customs of the people through the patrol of the 'moral police'.



Fountain in Tehran spews blood-red water in connection with the hijab protest ([Hankyoreh Newspaper, Oct. 10, 2022](#))

In China, before President Xi Jinping's third consecutive election, which is comparable to Emperor Qin Shi Huang, an art film expressing rural absurdity was expelled. On the other hand, the patriotic film, which was produced in only 100 days in time for the party's convention, is gaining great popularity. ([Yonhap News TV, October 3, 2022](#)) The Chinese government required all cinema theaters to screen so-called patriotic films at least twice a week ahead of the party convention, which will be

President's coronation. The patriotism of the Chinese people promoted in this way may be related with the recent absurd that Chinese porcelain with an appraised value of 2.8 million won was sold at a French auction for 10.8 billion won([Yonhap News, October 4, 2022](#)).



An art film “隱入尘烟” expressing rural absurdity was expelled in China.. ([Yonhap News TV, Oct. 3, 2022](#))

We must recognize and critique the state and the government separately. And cultural policy should follow the “principle of minimum intervention”, no matter how benevolent the cultural state that provides cultural welfare to all citizens. By any chance, if the British government launched the Ministry of Loneliness([Hankyoreh 21, October 18, 2022](#)), in the political calculation that ‘lonely’ voters vote for the right ([Hankyoreh 21, October 18, 2022](#)), it would rather face a political headwind. The Intervention of government into the very private realm such as loneliness and culture requires very high sensitivity. Even if the results of the policy lead to good results as expected, it should be the attitude of the state toward culture to hide its intention to change the people's inner side, at a distance that is not too far or too close.

October 9th is the day of **Hangul**(Korean alphabet system invented by King Sejong). Therefore, every year in October, Hangul-related news articles such as the "Beautiful Hangul Trademark of the Year" ([Kyungyang Newspaper, October 9, 2022](#)) are taking the pages. Though it's now a kind of conventional phenomenon, it is meaningful to look at the change of issues in those news. In recent years, we keep hearing news that Korean words that are used a lot by foreigners, such as ‘MakNae(the youngest)’ and ‘Dong Saeng(younger brother)’, are get listed in the English dictionaries as their Korean original pronunciation.([Kyungyang Newspaper, October 9, 2022](#)).

상장 종류	상표명
아름다운 상표 (문체부장관상)	배도롱
고운 상표 (특허청장상)	숨통원
정다운 상표 (국립국어원장상)	아기곶
	라운숨
	꾸버스
	사랑해벌
	광 화 벌

Beautiful Hangeul Use Trademark of the Year" ([Kyungyang Newspaper, Oct. 9, 2022](#))

The increasing number of cases in which Korean is used in the lyrics of popular songs by foreign singers shows that the popularity of Hangeul is also increasing due to the 'Korean Wave'. On the other hand, recent controversy over Korean people's Korean literacy, triggered by a "boring apology" on the Internet, throws concerns about an uncommunicated society that has gone one step further from the previous debate on the so-called "alien language" by young generations such as "Aljalttakkalsen" that cannot be understood by their seniors([KBS News, October 22, 2022](#)).



Recent controversy over people's Korean literacy ([KBS News, Oct. 22, 2022](#))

There was a decision by the Korea Internet Autonomous Organization(KISO) to show the phrase 'caution' in Internet dictionary services for discriminatory and derogatory words such as "house wife" and "one-legged" ([Newsis, September 30, 2022](#)).



'Caution' marked in Internet dictionary for discriminatory and derogatory words.
 (Newsis, Sep. 30, 2022)

And the argument “Enact a Romanization system for reading Hangeul” ([Hankyoreh Newspaper, October 5, 2022](#)) seems analog at first glance, but it may be a necessary change in the age of AI civilization. There is a need for the new principle of English notation of Hangeul suitable for the era in which artificial intelligence finds and translates use cases. Articles such as “The transformation of Hangeul: Beyond text to become art” are actually not so new([Seoul Newspaper, October 10, 2022](#)). Rather, I feel a little disappointed with the fact the final report of the “[Study on the estimation of social value and industrial size of Hangeul and Korean language](#)” commissioned by the Ministry of Culture in 2020 is not found yet. Even if you look at the private education market in Korea alone, the economic scale of the English industry is enormous. It is time to estimate the Hangeul’s industrial value that will grow as the status of Hangeul rises.



The transformation of Hangeul: Beyond text to become art
 (Seoul Newspaper, Oct. 10, 2022)

CEO of Frida.NFT, an American crypto currency company, burned the original of Frida Kahlo's work 'Fantasmones Siniestros' worth 14 billion won to sell it as NFT and promoted the video on YouTube.([YTN, Sep. 30, 2022.](#)) Although his intention of noise marketing is clearly visible, the Mexican government, Frida Kahlo's homeland, is investigating the incident as a crime of destroying cultural heritage. Shortly thereafter, this time famous contemporary artist Damien Hirst set out to burn more than 4,000 of his works for his NFT collectors. It is said that his purpose is to make the works sold as NFTs into genuine originals([Jungang Ilbo, Oct. 12, 2022.](#)).



Damien Hirst set out to burn more than 4,000 of his works for his NFT collectors ([Jungang Ilbo, Oct. 12, 2022.](#))

In fact, the case of burning an offline original work so that the digitized virtual has the status of the original started with [the incineration of Banksy's work "moron" in 2021.](#) It looks like it will spread like a boom in the future. Just as the real Onggojip(a stubborn old man in a Korean fairy tale) is kicked out by the fake Onggojip(a mouse transformed) in the Korean old fairy tale "Onggojipjeon", a phenomenon in which the virtual takes the status of the real is happening everywhere.

The era when the meta-verse replaces the universe is not far off. The French philosopher Jean Baudrillard explained this phenomenon with "Simulacres et **Simulation**", and the Wachowski sisters showed it with the movie "Matrix." To say that this is only a story only in the movie, the attraction of the "virtual human" model and idol singers([ACKIS briefing, October 4, 2022](#)), which shakes the culture and arts market without sleeping or worrying about scandals, is already too real.



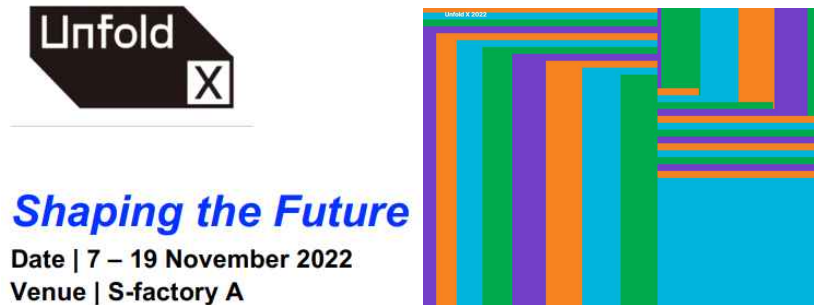
The attraction of the "virtual human" model and idol singers shakes the culture and arts market. ([ACKIS briefing, Oct. 4, 2022](#))

The leader of the Synthetic Party, which has the slogan "representing 20% of Danish people who do not vote," is an AI chatbot. Is their story of challenging general election of Denmark next month ([AI Times, October 14, 2022](#)) only a very liberal story in some country? In fact, in our country also, the desire to replace lawmakers who are inferior to AI in making reasonable policies or even in communication skills with AI is not less than in that country. In order to understand the cultural and political changes that are taking place throughout the Culture As Algorithm era, we'd better keep close eye on the results of the Danish general election.



A member of Synthetic Party, represented by AI, in Denmark ([AI Times, Oct. 14, 2022](#))

What's up SFAC



<http://unfoldx.org/>

Seoul Foundation for Arts and Culture(SFAC) will hold **<Unfold X 2022>** in Seongsu-dong, a very hip place in Seoul, the capital of Korea, from November 7 to 19.

Unfold X is a representative project of the SFAC that presents the current state of new artistic creation based on cutting-edge technology. This event inherits the legacy of SFAC, which has been experimenting with connecting and fusion between arts and science & technology since 2010 under the title Da Vinci Creative. And it shows the current status of the SFAC's technology-related arts support policies.

The Unfold X 2022 consists of exhibition and performance in 3 sections(Data Fantasy, Uncertain Species, Meta-scape) and Dialogue X(talks and lecture by Sarah Dondere and Daria Mille(curators at ZKM), Sabine Himmelsbach(Director of HEK) and presenting artists)

This year's theme is **"Shaping the Future: A new art ecosystem mediated by technology"**. It raises questions on the changing relationship between art and technology, showcasing unexpected "happenings" that occurred in the process of humans collaborating with technologies and the art capacity building a symbiotic relationship with technologies. (<http://unfoldx.org/>)

☞ **SFAC looks forward to exchanging cultural news with partners around the world.**

If you have any news to share, please forward it to sea@sfac.or.kr.

☞ The position of this article is not the official position of the Seoul Cultural Foundation, but it is respected as the author's position.