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# K-Book Trends

offers Korea's highly informative publishing content  
to those in the global publishing industry.

## TREND

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<b>Special Project</b>	K-DRAMA
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<b>Korean Publishers</b>	Geulhangari
<b>Korean Authors</b>	Writer Kim Keum-Hee

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<b>New Books</b>	Regarding Starknitting
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<b>#K-Book</b>	#Traditional Culture(Picture Books)

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## TOPIC

## Seoul International Book Fair 2020

New Attempts and Experiments in the Era of COVID-19

Written by Park Ji-Sun (Director of the Seoul International Book Fair 2020)



Official poster of the Seoul International Book Fair

Early this year, the Seoul International Book Fair organizers had been busy preparing for the next fair set to be held in June as usual. However, as the first big wave of the pandemic crisis hit Korea in

February and persisted into March and April, most cultural art events that amass a big audience had to be canceled or postponed until the second half of the year. As such, the SIBF could not be held in June, as unforeseeable circumstances curtailed the freedom of movement. It was also difficult to predict how the situation would change, so taking the event's original form and plans was a high risk. The Seoul International Book Fair 2020 had no other choice but to take on a new challenge. Physical isolation, non-contact, and online platforms accelerated the changes and made the Book Fair think of a new paradigm. It postponed the schedule to October, and while preparing for an online book fair, it saved room for a possible chance that it might go offline again. Taking a new perspective towards the totally different platform, the SIBF began to think of fundamental questions.

A book fair is a platform where many different groups meet with books as an intermediary. Readers meet authors, authors meet publishers, and publishers meet other publishers. Contemporary discussions are held through knowledge and information seminars, and publishers from home and abroad come together, exchange information, and build relationships for further copyright agreements. How should book fairs cope with the crisis of restricted traveling, people-to-people interaction, and human relationships in the era of COVID-19, where in-person meetings, communications, interactions are inevitable? How should they meet people, and how should they build relationships? How should the new way of beginning a relationship change? The SIBF was most deeply

concerned about the style. What does it mean to transform an offline book fair into an online one? It did not merely mean the shifting of publishers' booths to the digital fair. Questions seemed to never end.

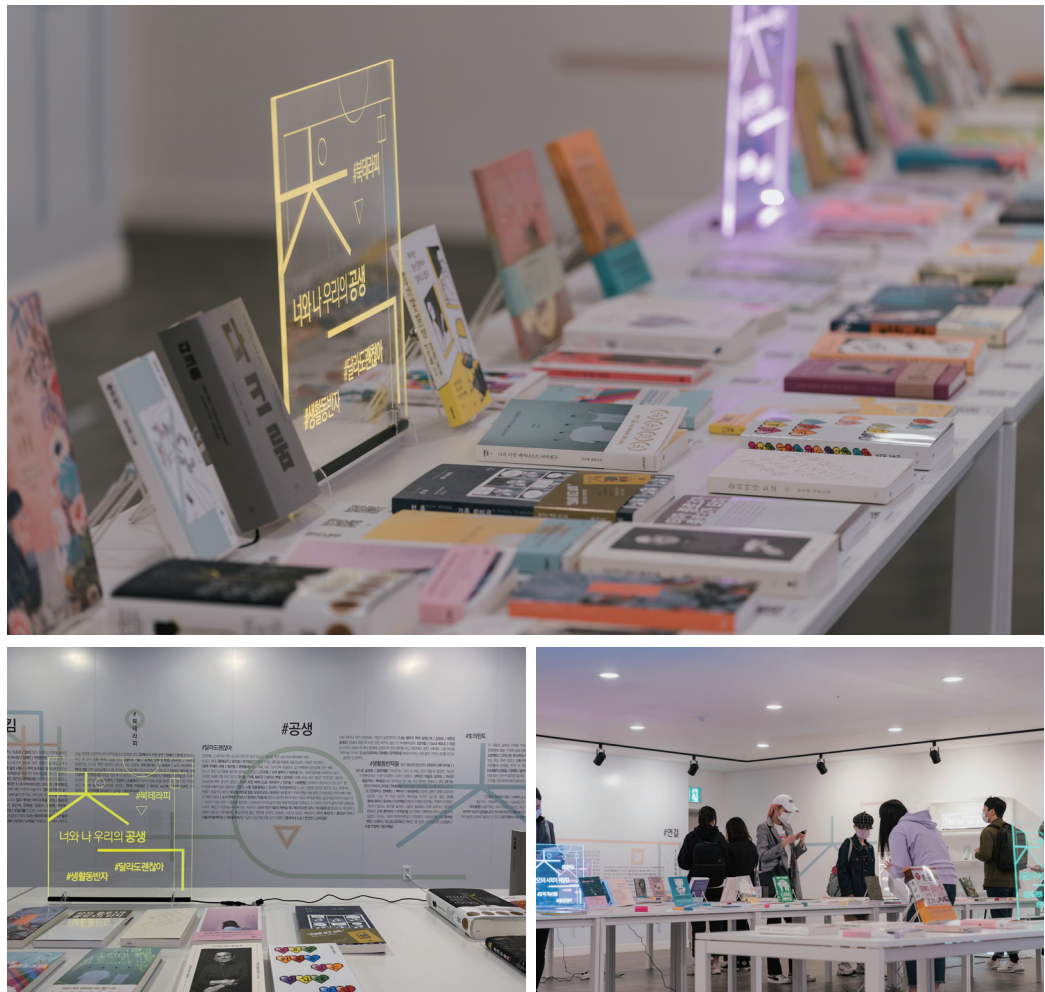


Website of the Seoul International Book Fair 2020

How can the two worlds – online and offline book fairs – be connected and interact with each other and diversify people's experience? If an offline event used to host a massive audience turns online, how can the elements of time and space from the offline fair be realized in the online platform? How can the readers stroll around inside the digital space as if they are on a trip, meet publishers and books, and even purchase one? What would be the motivation for people to stay in the virtual space and make frequent visits? And would it be possible for the online fair to build solidarity rather than merely ending as an individual's experience? What would be the way to raise the accessibility of publishers, bookstores, and readers to the virtual space? From the copyright-exchange

perspective, which is another purpose of the book fair, what is needed for publishers from home and abroad to build networks, share information, and carry on valuable business relationships online? What is the crisis, and what is the opportunity? Questions followed one after another, and hosting the Seoul International Book Fair 2020 was a journey to find the answers for them.

The organizing committee of the SIBF 2020 decided to design the online fair with visual and spatial elements in which readers could expand their experiences while interacting in both the online and offline world. The online fair was planned to be a three-dimensional space for exploration and travel, rather than being a mere information provider. An exhibition section for publishers was prepared where their identities could be most effectively shown. It is sad that online fairs cannot mimic the corporeity of books consisting of paper and ink in the physical world and that we cannot meet various and unique curations of the publishers. This was why the fair this year put more focus on the "theme" when planning programs.



Exhibition of "XYZ:Entanglement", the theme of the SIBF 2020

The theme of the Seoul International Book Fair 2020 was **"XYZ: Entanglement."** It was decided before the pandemic broke out, but no other topic would suit the situation better. The book fair format, where both online and offline styles are blended, also reflects this theme. The letters XYZ imply various things such as the generation, males and females, the third gender, and humanity's end. Issues related to gender, feminism, the Anthropocene, and the environment that have been keenly rising above the surface for recent years have significantly influenced everyone's life, let



alone the pandemic. The book fair wanted to explore the beauty of coexistence and entanglement across generations, genders, animals, and plants through seminars and books. More than 40 seminars were opened on various topics such as the Anthropocene, the environment, the millennial generation, feminism, gender, animal rights, and plant rights. Being a **"book-cast"** program, some seminars presented high-quality videos with pre-recording and editing. Most of the seminars were open for pre-booking during the fair period inviting small groups of readers to the site and expanded accessibility by running real-time video streaming online for more readers to join.



Book-Cast Lecture (left) and Youth Program (right)

Themed exhibitions were also a total makeover compared to last year. About 300 "entangled" books recommended by around 100 authors and speakers participating in the book fair were exhibited online and offline through curations. These books were curated based on the five keywords of "**solidarity** in the story surpassing time and space," "**coexistence** of nature and humanity," "**entanglement** of society and humanity," "**symbiosis** between

you and I," and "**connections** surrounding us." As the books were grouped with more detailed hashtags, readers could have a book journey following the intertwined books from sub-topics to the main topic. Publishers participating in the book fair also exhibited recommended books about "entanglement" both online and offline, allowing readers to meet around 1,000 curated books offline. While frustrated that they cannot get to enjoy fancy and various publisher booths just like before, the readers that came to the offline fair commented that it was in another way a good exhibition in that they could meet all the fine books at once and enjoy curated books entangled together like our lives, which helped them expand their thinking box through books. The theme of the fair was also applied to various programs; "My Entangled Exhibition – Curation in My Room" was designed to open book fairs at each participant's house as the number of allowed guests to the offline fair was highly restricted. Readers got to choose their topic about "entanglement" with their book and share and curate it online with others. Thanks to this, the scope of discussed topics could expand, and information about more books could be shared.



Program for Publishers

Another new program of the Seoul International Book Fair 2020 was **"Strolling the Book City,"** a joint program of the fair, publishers, and bookstores. As not many people could gather around in one place due to the pandemic, the program was designed to scatter people as much as it could. The idea was to make people visit bookstores and cultural spaces while walking around the city with books as an intermediary, meet books and authors, and experience various programs. A total of 32 bookstores and publishers were matched one on one to plan and operate the joint program, and a variety of programs were prepared, such as book exhibitions, meet & greet, lectures, workshops, and performances. Readers held a specially-made paper map in their hand and visited bookstores located in parts of Seoul, getting stamps, participating in programs, and making their version of a book-stroll map as a mission. They could also use a digital map on the SIBF website alongside a paper map. So, when you arrive at a bookstore, it would be recorded automatically on the digital map, and you could carry out a mission for a digital bingo game depending on the number of bookstores and places you have visited. As the pandemic persisted longer than expected, people began to go out to local bookstores that were significantly hit by the crisis and reinvigorate the area. The "Ghost Publisher" that was specially designed as part of the 1:1 program for publishers and bookstores was an extension of the year's featured genres – mystery, thriller, and horror. Alongside various lectures and talks of those featured genres, exhibitions and game-style programs where readers could be engaged in were held



both online and offline. The readers could meet 32 curated books at a mystery-specialized bookstore or online. They could experience becoming a real mystery writer by signing a contract with a "ghost publisher" that is only open during the fair. While participation was not limited, you had to visit those mystery-specialized bookstores in person to find more clues.



Photos from "Strolling the Book City"

The special publication named "Limited Edition," published by the Seoul International Book Fair, has been published since 2017. After publishing *Era of Bookstores* in 2017 and *Bookstores and Memory of Flavor* in 2018, the SIBF released *Chaotic Illustration (hondonsaphwa)* in which 11 highly-anticipated writers in

the contemporary world wrote on the topic of the "millennial generation." The story of the writers living the world as a millennial generation themselves depicts entanglement in today's world and across generations, along with the chaotic situation today. The edition was greatly loved by readers from the book fair. The audiobook edition of *Chaotic Illustration* narrated by a writer reached more readers. Also, the re-covered books of publishers were displayed in special exhibitions as well.

Interest in digital platforms and discussions surrounding the methodology would never be hotter than in 2020. People were also more interested in digital books. The Seoul International Book Fair 2020 organized the 14 years of history since 2007 in a timeline when the first generation of Amazon Kindle and the first smartphone was released, taking the year 2020 as a critical turning point for the post-COVID-19 era, and looked at the development of technology and media, and changes in the publishing industry. The exhibition was open to various questions about books and publications in the post-COVID-19 era alongside topics such as the expansion of the e-book and audiobook markets, big data and subscribing economy, and combination of AR, VR, XR technologies with publishing.



Exhibition of digital books

The restricted movement across borders due to the pandemic has almost made it impossible to carry out international exchanges and copyright business. Overseas publishers that were planning to participate in the fair early this year waited for things to settle down, but meetings surrounding copyright business had to be conducted online. Here, an online Copyright Exchange Center was established for publishers from both Korea and other countries apart from the official SIBF website for readers. It was a platform in which both domestic and international copyright information was collected, not to mention news from overseas markets, and people could communicate through it online. It was an unfamiliar method for all, but through the online meeting channel, experts from Europe, North America, and Asia could gather and discuss how publishers worldwide should respond in the era of COVID-19 and what kind of changes could be made. Business talks continued in meeting rooms organized online. Programs prepared by Russia, who was the guest of honor for the Seoul International Book Fair 2020, were organized online for various exchanges of information; meet & greet sessions for overseas writers were also held online.

As a sizable offline book fair could not be held due to the pandemic, the Seoul International Book Fair 2020 thought of opening it online, not as an alternative for an offline fair, but as a new way of hosting it. Many questions were thrown out for answers to be found - "What should we do to make a divided form of book fair offer new experiences to readers, and how can we make an environment where publishers and bookstores coexist in harmony? What would be the new way of connecting a digital book fair with a physical fair, encouraging interaction between the two, and expand readers' experience and the publishing industry?" We are already standing at the end of 2020, where we have had hope in our hearts that maybe things might go back to normal in the second half of the year while suffering from the hard times the pandemic has given us. The book fair in the era of the virus has taken various attempts and conducted experiments from October 16th to 25th. The Seoul International Book Fair is now discussing the direction book fairs should take in the post-COVID-19 era. Just like this year's theme "entanglement," everything is entangled in the world. Here, book fairs seek to find various paths that are based on and lead to books by promoting coexistence and symbiosis with publishers, bookstores, and readers.

\* Official website of the Seoul International Book Fair

[sibf.or.kr](http://sibf.or.kr)

\* Official Youtube channel of the Seoul International Book Fair

[youtube.com/channel/UC9zOV9ldhMGconA9rPm7Q1Q/featured](https://youtube.com/channel/UC9zOV9ldhMGconA9rPm7Q1Q/featured)

## SPECIAL PROJECT

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# K-DRAMA

The Heart-Pounding Time Between Imagination and Reality

Written by Lee Ji-Hyeon

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The "K" brands, taking the first letter of Korea, are spreading across the world. They have taken root as a trusted brand for people. As people are spending more time at home due to the pandemic,



the K-content market is embracing an unexpected boom. The most popular of all is K-Drama. The fast-paced and breathtaking storylines, compact organization, thought-provoking plots, appropriate editing with no boring moments, and the most good-looking celebrities starring in TV dramas are attractive enough to catch everyone's attention. Recently, as the OTT market where people can watch TV programs on the Internet is expanding, K-Dramas are being exported worldwide across national borders. In this episode, we take a look at how to enjoy K-Dramas twice as much as before.

### **1. Read the original stories of K-Dramas where you can imagine the scenes**

K-Dramas are riding a perfect wave with the development of OTT (Over-The-Top) services and are being widely enjoyed around the world. Netflix, the biggest pay-to-watch streaming service in the world, is basking in soaring profits as more people are staying home due to the pandemic. The number of paid subscribers in the first quarter more than doubled year on year, and it has recorded exponential growth reaching 45.2 billion won worth of brand value. The best supporter behind such rapid growth is indeed the K-Dramas. Ranking in the top 10 most-watched dramas in almost all Asian countries, including Japan, Hongkong, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam, is proof that K-Dramas are winning fans around the world.

Netflix's Original "The School Nurse Files," recently produced and funded by Netflix, is drawing great popularity in Korea and the world. School nurse Ahn Eun-Young, who has a special ability to see 'jellies' invisible to others, discovers a hidden mystery in a high school she was newly assigned to and goes on adventures to solve the mystery with her colleagues. This fantasy drama's original story is *School Nurse Ahn Eunyong* (Minumsa), a full-length novel written by Chung Se-Rang. The book has other entertaining elements than the drama, as there is room for imagination alongside various episodes. If you could not fully understand the story in the drama, you may want to look at the book's details. So, if you would like to catch two birds – the fun of imagination and cute visual elements – at once, we recommend you to watch the drama with the book in your hand.

Meanwhile, "When the Weather is Fine" is a drama about peaceful love. It is a heartwarming romance novel where the main character moves to the countryside after being exhausted by their busy urban life and meets her classmate from a long time ago running an independent bookstore. Its original story is *I'll Find You on a Beautiful Day* (Sigongsa). If you would like to experience the sweetness and fluttering moments of love along with the beautiful scenes in the drama, how about reading this book, too? You will find yourself smiling as you feel small but precious happiness as you flip the last page of the book.



*School Nurse Ahn Eunyoung, I'll Find You on a Beautiful Day*

## 2. Collect scripts and photo essays that would leave a long-lasting impression

If you feel sad that a work you liked has ended or are yet living in the drama, we suggest you find scripts and photo essays of the work and embrace the drama's long-lasting impression. The behind-the-scenes photos and bountiful episodes related to the drama will satisfy the emptiness you feel after it finishes. Following are the works that have published scripts and photo essays that you can own and look at them whenever you want.

Drama “Voice” is a thriller crime drama featuring the intense moments of 112 agents (like 911 in the US) securing the golden time of crime scenes led by the center's leader who gets supernormal ears after an abrupt accident. Catching the attention of overseas fans too, the work was remade in Japan. Season 3 was released this year in Korea, and season 4 is scheduled to be released next year. The books that fill in the gap are *Voice Making Story & Script* (IAMStory). The book includes the overall production process of the previous



seasons, synopsis and scripts of the writer, and stories written by ten staff members and 12 actors and actresses. You can add your imagination to the story as you read through the well-organized story and lively scene description while enjoying highlight scenes in each season, high-quality photos from shooting sites, and behind-the-scene shots.

In January last year, the number one TV drama in Korea was "SKY Castle," which recorded 23.8% of viewership at its peak, rewriting the highest viewership record among dramas on cable TV. "SKY Castle" is a humorous but satirical drama that depicts rich housewives' desperate desire to make their husbands stand on top of everyone else, like a king, and their children as a prince and princess. It is the story of the most prestigious families living in SKY Castle Townhouse, where the top 0.1% of families in Korea are gathered. It delivers a message that criticizes society's abnormal enthusiasm towards college entrance along with its high-quality storyline and attention-gathering power. The drama has also released *SKY Castle Script Collection* (Wisdom House) for its fans to enjoy the drama even after the episodes have ended. How about reading a director's edition of the delicate and complex war of these wives' nerves and conflicts in the townhouse? Keep it on your shelf and read it every time you start to miss it.

Drama "The Descendants of the Sun," which made all our hearts flutter in 2016, recorded prime-time viewership of 38.8%, with its OST songs ranking first place in the chart for six weeks in a row. It is a blockbuster drama that was exported to a whopping 32 countries

across the world. The most popular lines such as "I just get to do such a difficult thing every time," "Your mission is to worry about me only from now on," and "I am attracted to you every single moment when my eyes meet yours" have won the hearts of millions of women around the world and made them love-sick even after the end of the series. This mega-hit drama also has *The Descendants of the Sun Photo Essay* (Wisdom House). You can feel the yet unfilled holes in your heart with 240 HD photos, 50 behind-the-scenes shots, and a photo-essay collection with the episodes' best lines. You can also find printed versions of four main actors/actresses' signatures and a photo card set of highlight scenes. The heart-rending impression you had from the episodes can be recalled again as you read through the novel *The Descendants of the Sun* (Wisdom House). Even though the series may have ended, the deep scent and impression lingers on in the books.



*Voice Making Story & Script, SKY Castle Script Collection,  
The Descendants of the Sun Photo Essay*

### 3. Thoroughly read through special bonus books that appeared in the drama

K-Dramas have various visually-entertaining elements, as from the bottom to the top, everything is delicately directed. This is why everything shown in an episode could become a point of interest. Books are not an exception, too. Even though books are sometimes used as a prop for reading scenes or for backgrounds, they are also used as an essential key point when expressing the character's values or emotions or foreshadowing a future development. Then, what kind of good books can we find in dramas?

The romantic thriller drama "W" is a melodrama where the main female character, an amateur doctor in the real world, falls into her father's highly popular webcomics titled "W," meets a man inside, and falls in love with him. The real world and the world inside the comics are intertwined as the story goes, and *Love TMI Book* (ARTE) by Korean illustrator Puuung appears as a reference book for the couple as they show their affection to each other while looking at illustrations of ordinary couples' sweet daily life. The warm strokes drawing the not-so-fancy but peaceful days of couples have caught the minds of many people. Here, the book has added a part where one can write a line they want to hear from their loved ones and exchange it with each other, drawing significant attention from overseas fans in the illustration field. The book once hit the top 2 in the bestsellers' rank.

"So, don't forget it. Don't forget it and get over it. If you can't get

over it, you are just a little kid with a soul that does not grow." Drama "It's Okay to Not Be Okay" aired in 190 countries through Netflix and is a strange but romantic comedy-drama. It tells the story of how Munyoung, a writer of children's books who does not know what love is due to a genetic defect, meets Gangtae, a heavily-burdened caregiver in a psychiatric ward who refuses to fall in love, and how they heal each other's pain and grow up. *The Boy Who Fed on Nightmares* (Wisdom House) is a special book that appears in the series. The book was actually made to be used as a prop in the drama but ended up being officially published. This book, written by Munyoung, was meaningful in that it symbolizes the relationship between Munyoung and Gangtae and their minds; it is also highly valuable to keep as the originally non-commercial book made for the scene has gone commercial after the end of the series. As soon as the book was shown on the screen, it became one of the top 10 most-searched-terms, followed by explosive inquiries from fans. This led to the publication of the book. Ever since it was published, *The Boy Who Fed on Nightmares* has been a bestseller, giving a lingering impression to fans.

The new drama series "The King: Eternal Monarch (or 'The King')" by popular writer Kim Eun-Sook of multiple mega-hit titles such as "Mr. Sunshine," "Guardian: The Lonely and Great God," "The Descendants of the Sun," and "The Heirs," has also mesmerized global citizens with the spread of the OTT service. In a parallel world where the Kingdom of Korea and the Republic of Korea coexist, the emperor of the kingdom and a detective from the Republic

of Korea cooperate in shutting a dimensional gate against devils. It is a fantasy drama added with a wholly different romance and has gained tremendous popularity outside Korea. When the main character experiences "the fantastic moment" for the first time as the side effect of crossing the dimension, the book *Kim So-Wol's Poem Collection: Azalea Flowers* (RH Korea) heightens the soft and vague atmosphere. His work *Chohon* (meaning 'evocation') is read by the main character as a background narration, which worked as a catalyst for intensifying the scene's tingling and calm atmosphere.



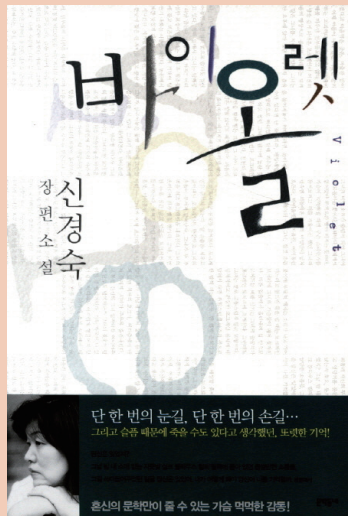
*Love TMI Book, The Boy Who Fed on Nightmares,  
Kim So-Wol's Poem Collection: Azalea Flowers*

You will be able to find more dramas in Korea, both new and diverse, on top of the ones mentioned above. Genres, topics, and stories come in different sizes and styles ranging from history to fantasy, melodrama, humor, and horror. While we are living in a time where our minds also need help due to the pandemic, how about strengthening our minds with K-Dramas that you like? The persisting COVID-19 would be over even without notice when we spend happy and lively days with K-Dramas.

## EXPORT CASE

# Korean Literature in the European Publishing Market

Written by Joseph Lee (President of KL Management)



*Violet*

The publication rights of writer Shin Kyung-Sook's third full-length novel *Violet* (Munhakdongne) were sold to Weidenfeld & Nicolson in Britain in November 2020. This publisher released *Please Look After Mom* (Changbi) of writer Shin in April 2011,



and in the following year, the writer was honored with the Man Asian Literary Prize. *Violet* is Shin Kyung-Sook's second full-length novel to be published in Britain after *Please Look After Mom*. The title "Violet" has multiple implications; it is a type of flower, a color, and a metaphor for a shy woman. And at the same time, the feeble image is naturally linked to "violence." The writer blends such various meanings embedded within the story through several illustrations and metaphors. *Violet* is a story of distorted desire and a rotation of all writings where the frustration of all desires and desires for writing follow one after another into the novel and then into literature. The publication rights of the book were sold in 2019 to Feminist Press. The British and American editions of *Violet* will be translated and published in March 2021. Writer Shin's books translated and published in the United States after *Please Look After Mom* are *I'll Be Right There* (Munhakdongne), *The Girl Who Wrote Loneliness* (Munhakdongne), and *The Court Dancer* (Munhakdongne).



Korean, American Hard-Cover, and American Soft-Cover of *Please Look After Mom*

While *Fauster* (Wisdom House), the fourth full-length novel of writer Kim Ho-Yeon, is gaining popularity in the European region, its publishing rights were sold to Germany for the first time. As people are paying greater attention to the book where the main idea was derived from *Faust* by German master writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, more publishers in Europe and other English-speaking regions are positively reviewing the publication. The novel, which features the breathtaking combat of an old man who manifests a young man's body to fulfill his desires and the young man who tries to protect himself, is a magnificent thriller that is a metaphor for the apocalyptic manifestation and surveillance in Korean society. A society where old people pay certain money and choose young men or women in their 20s to control their life and feel satisfaction – such relationships are traded in an underground market called the Fauster and Mephisto System. The desire of the old men in power who enjoy observing and controlling someone grows with nothing holding them back, and the young who desperately fight against them is vividly depicted in the story. While taking a keen look into the free will of human beings and the meaning of an individual, the novel is an intriguing story that has a twist at the end that would surprise readers' predictions. Referred to as an all-around storyteller, having had multiple jobs from a novelist, scenario writer, and story writer for comics, writer Kim Ho-Yeon won the 9th Segye Literary Prize (hosted by Segye Ilbo) with his full-length novel *Mangwondong Brothers* (Namu Bench) in 2013. Adapted into a play, *Mangwondong Brothers* is performed every year in



theaters and is currently under film production.



*Fauster, Mangwondong Brothers*

*Honggildongjeon* (Minumsa), originally written by Heo Gyun, is a modern reinterpretation of writer Kim Takhwan, a representative storyteller in Korea. It was translated into Portuguese and published in Brazil in late November 2020. *Honggildongjeon*, which is the first novel written in Hangeul (Korean alphabet) and a representative classic novel in Korea, will be sold in the Portuguese market in Europe on top of Brazil. This enabled Portuguese readers worldwide to enjoy the modern version of *Honggildongjeon*, the classic piece to be remembered forever in Korean history. The original story is about Hong Gildong, a heroic character, who is used as the eyes of the writer Heo Gyun to look at the social issues in Joseon and make sharp criticisms and show his yearning for a new society. Inside is the commonly known storyline where Hong Gildong is born as the child of a concubine and grows up being

treated with contempt, but later becomes a righteous outlaw, punishes corrupt officials, helps people, and founds a country named Yuldoguk, which enjoys a reign of peace. Heo Gyun's utopia blends well with the social aspects of the Joseon Dynasty, and the story itself is a naked description of discrimination against those born from a concubine, corrupt bureaucrats, and incapable government. The book's translation and publishing rights were sold to the Turkish region in October 2020 and will soon be ready to meet local Turkish readers.



Korean and Portuguese Covers of *Honggildongjeon*

## BOOK TRIP

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Suncheon, Jeollanam-do

A Place Full of Peace and Literature

Written by Kang Chan-Hwi

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Suncheon, Jeollanam-do, boasts a God-given natural landscape where the mountains, sea, and lakes make a beautiful mixture. With people calling the region "sogangnam (meaning the second Gangnam in Chinese, which refers to the prosperous region on the southern Yangzi river), the city, nature, and people live in peaceful

harmony. The Jeolla Line and Gyeongjeon Line railroads cross to connect Youngnam and Honam regions, making Suncheon a popular tourist site for many people. Writer Kim Seung-Ok described Suncheon and Suncheonman Bay as the "utopia in Korea" in his book *Mujinghaeng*. Mujin, a mere virtual city when the novel was released, became the real name of the region later on. Let's take a look at the gem hidden in Suncheon, where the beautiful natural scenery makes a perfect blend with excellent cuisine and people.

### **Enlightened Suncheon: Book Support Project**

Suncheon City conducts several book support programs to encourage people to read. And such projects have helped citizens save their budget for purchasing books and reinvigorated the regional economy by cooperating with small local bookstores. Also, as the city provided financial support for young adults when buying books, it became the soil for fostering work capabilities, finding a career, and building capacity.

Such programs could reap such good outcomes, all thanks to Suncheon City's unique and continuous efforts to encourage people to read. The city opens lectures about liberal arts and education, connecting them to the financial support provided for buying books. Also, by running the "Give a Book Library" that displays books for unlimited reading in public organizations, the city has established a reading environment for its citizens. What's more,

83 small libraries are set up for citizens of Suncheon so that it takes just 5 minutes to walk to a library. On top of these, Suncheon City is also much interested in publishing projects as it publishes manuscripts of civil writers into books. And the city acknowledges the importance of young adults and is carrying out support programs for them such as "Finding Dreams for Young Adults." The city also actively supports start-up companies established by them with spaces forged for their activities.



Poster of "Finding Dreams for Young Adults"

### A treasure house for young dreams: "Cheongchun Warehouse"

Suncheon City remodeled a building that has been used as a granary for more than 50 years since 1961 into a start-up base camp for young adults. A warehouse that used to keep grains has now turned into a place that nurtures youth's dreams. Cheongchun



Warehouse, once a granary, is a place where young cultures are shared as the youth come together, share food, and enjoy good times. It has settled down as the central pillar for the youth culture where it is produced, consumed, and shared. Also, as an "incubating area" for the youth to start a business, food, and beverage stores are located on the first floor, and a handicraft shop sits on the second floor; the building provides a hall reservation for all sorts of performances and also for "meeting cubes," where various experience programs can be enjoyed as well. Right next to the warehouse is the VR SQUARE, adding more youth to the place.



Exterior of Cheongchun Warehouse (left), Inside the VR SQUARE (right)

### **A Book Playground Embracing Suncheon: "Simda"**

Simda, a playground of books, is a very special place for not only the Suncheon citizens but also for travelers. It is because you can see various items that connect regions and cultures on top of books. This is why travelers visiting the bookstore to look around or buy books end up leaving with their hands full of postcards, photo books, and magnets, along with a book. These items, which all began with the owner's idea that it would be good to have souvenirs

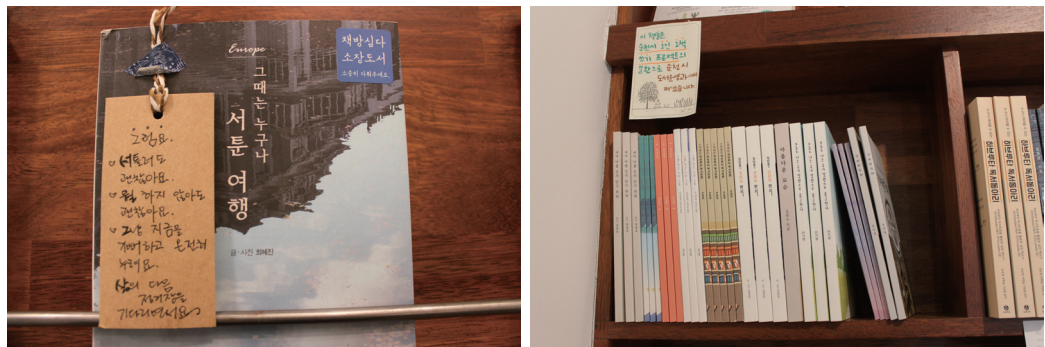
alongside books in the bookstore, have become a signature characteristic of Simda. Another unique thing about Simda is the exclusive book curations by the bookstore keeper; short reviews are written and posted on books by the keeper. Such efforts lend a warm hand to those that are unfamiliar with books or those who want to encounter new books and help lead them to the world of books.



Outside and inside of Simda

Simda also publishes books itself while covering several independent publications alongside selling souvenirs, including children's poem collection of kids from a nearby elementary school to historical novels about the Yeosu-Suncheon rebellion written by elementary school students. The bookkeeper says, "Independent publishing is an extension of one's desire to express their ideas, and it allows one's story to be fully put into letters." This is in line with Simda's slogan, "Anyone can plant (pronounced simda in Korean) a book," and makes Simda an irreplaceable place. Simda is planning to keep on making items with creators from the region that reflect the story of books and the region. Amidst the time when managing

a bookstore is tougher than ever, Simda dreams of becoming a place where people, regardless of age, come together at ease and delightfully enjoy books and regional culture – Well, Simda has already become a book playground that attracts residents and travelers within.



### A Space for Book Culture that Enriches Individuals: "Working with Books"

Working with Books is a 2-year-old independent bookstore that opened on October 9th, 2018. The bookstore mainly covers books about liberal arts, society, and art; it is also carrying out various activities related to adolescents with a great interest in them. Working with Books is hosting a variety of book-related programs such as book meetings, movie meetings, and a night bookstore while publishing a liberal arts magazine for adolescents and reading or writing reviews about classical books with students in a classic-reading meeting for teens. Being a foundation for building book culture in the region, independent bookstores like Working with Books have a significant meaning. They can introduce authors in a



variety of ways and carry out multiple programs related to books. Such small-sized activities present an in-depth impression of how neighbors read and digest books from a close distance.



Inside and Outside of Working with Books

The bookkeeper of Working with Book says, "I dream of a harmonious world where people communicate with each other through liberal arts." This is why the bookstore mainly covers books about liberal arts, society, and art. Liberal arts has a power that drives people to live a decent life. It is the philosophy of the bookkeeper and the values of Working with Books that books and book meetings are the tools for educating democratic citizens to help them move away from the attributes of capitalism. In an era where people prefer buying things at a place that offers a lower price, wouldn't they take a step back from the properties of capitalism when it comes to books? Working with Books suggests a way for us to live a decent life as a human being with the somehow cozy word, "liberal arts."



### A Place where Books and Photos Coexist: "Bookshop Studio"

When the name "independent bookstore" came to the fore, and the number of bookstores began to increase, bookstores came close to our reach in many different styles. A book cafe, which is a combination of books and a cafe, is one of the most common types that we see. In Japan, where independent bookstores developed from an early age, there are places where people can have a meal and read books at the same time, and even places where readers can have a glass of beer alongside books. Meanwhile, there is another type of bookstore in Suncheon, which is "Bookshop Studio," a combination of books with a studio. Bookshop Studio, run by a couple, displays books on the front side of the store with a small space for people to read books while having a photo studio in the back where the bookkeeper takes photos and works on them, making it a highly unique place.



Inside and outside of Bookshop Studio

Bookshop Studio mainly curates picture books, children's books, and teen books. An extraordinary insight of the bookkeeper is added who has majored in picture books and has long been making picture books while working as a picture book reviewer. As the bookstore is located in an apartment forest, many of its visitors are children and students. In particular, when students are buying books about history or social issues, the bookkeeper cannot contain himself from smiling as it is good to see them expanding their knowledge. The bookstore also hosts meetings where they show animations based on children's stories and run picture book meetings. Bookshop Studio tries to be a friendly place for children as independent publications are mainly for adults. Perhaps such efforts and considerations of adults become the fertile soil for children to grow up as good adults. The hand held out by Bookshop Studio to children is indeed beautiful as it is.



## Talking about Life with Picture Books: "Dog Bookshop"

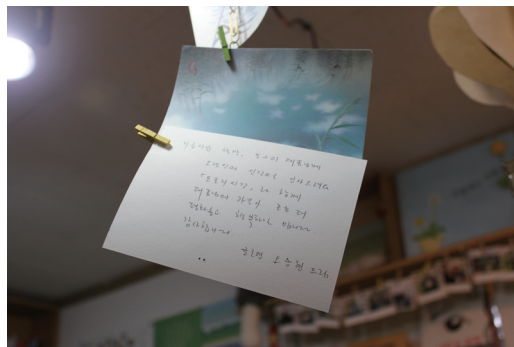
Dog Bookshop is a bookstore specialized in picture books. The bookkeeper believes that reserving children's books for children is a stereotype. Perhaps this is why many of the visitors are adults. Grownups that come to Dog Bookshop read picture books and even buy some with the bookkeeper's recommendation. In this process, they can have a friendly conversation with the bookkeeper if they want to. The bookkeeper recommends books that people would find most helpful through conversations. Such customized service is an exclusive experience you can have in independent bookstores. It is different from curations provided by big bookstores packed with a countless number of books.



Inside and outside of Dog Bookshop



But the true value of Dog Bookshop begins here. There are some people that truly "grow up" while reading picture books. One of the bookkeeper's philosophies running a picture book-specialized bookstore is that "you can truly communicate with children around you after you meet the little kid inside you." Once you look at the images in the books, you may face your true self and the times when you were pure – all those forgotten as we live. One grownup who used to cover himself with numerous masks in the harsh world would shed tears after finding himself inside a picture book. When you feel frustrated or when you need healing in daily life listening to the quiet sound of papers flipping over, you might get yourself a little pat on your back in Dog Bookshop. How about beginning a journey and find the little kid each of us has in our hearts at Dog Bookshop?



## KOREAN PUBLISHERS

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### Geulhangari

A Repository of Knowledge

Organized by Lee Ji-Hyeon

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Logo of Geulhangari

Since its establishment in 2007, Geulhangari has published around 800 titles, with a majority of them being so-called "brick books" due to how thick they are (close to a whopping 1,000 pages!). Under the company motto of "boring books are the grave of ideas," Geulhangari has been focusing on publishing history, philosophy, and classical books while expanding their fields into literature, essay, science, and not to mention practical books. While working



at its best to become a publisher of various colors, let's look into what Geulhangari has to say.

**Please introduce Geulhangari to overseas publishers.**

Geulhangari has been publishing books in various fields, including humanity, history, philosophy, art, and science, since the first title was released in 2007. While the big base is humanity and social science, we are trying to digest various fields when we discover fine titles. And we are mostly known as a publisher that makes "brick books" that are as long as 1,000 pages.

**What path has Geulhangari been walking on since 2007, and what are your achievements so far?**

We have published about 800 titles since we first opened our doors. It has been ten years of endeavor, discovering and publishing meaningful writings reflecting the meaning of the name Geulhangari, which derived from a story of Yeonam Park Ji-Won, who is known to have kept even the most trivial memos in life inside a pot. In the early years, we focused on history, philosophy, and classical titles, but now we are adding literature, essay, science, and practical books. And we think that being known and remembered as a publisher that "steadily" releases "many" of the profound liberal arts books is one of the achievements we have made until today.

Could you please introduce three of the representative books of Geulhangari to our overseas readers?

*A Book for Highly Sensitive Person* written by Jeon Hong-Jin, 2020

Written by professor Jeon Hong-Jin, who has been treating and consulting more than 10,000 patients as a psychiatry specialist at Samsung Medical Center, the book has been at the center of readers' attention as soon as it was published. Professor Jeon says that symptoms can get better without psychiatric counseling or drug treatments only if one pays good attention to the "highly sensitive" characteristic of their personality. He describes how to ease sensitiveness and improve quality of life through 40 cases he has chosen.

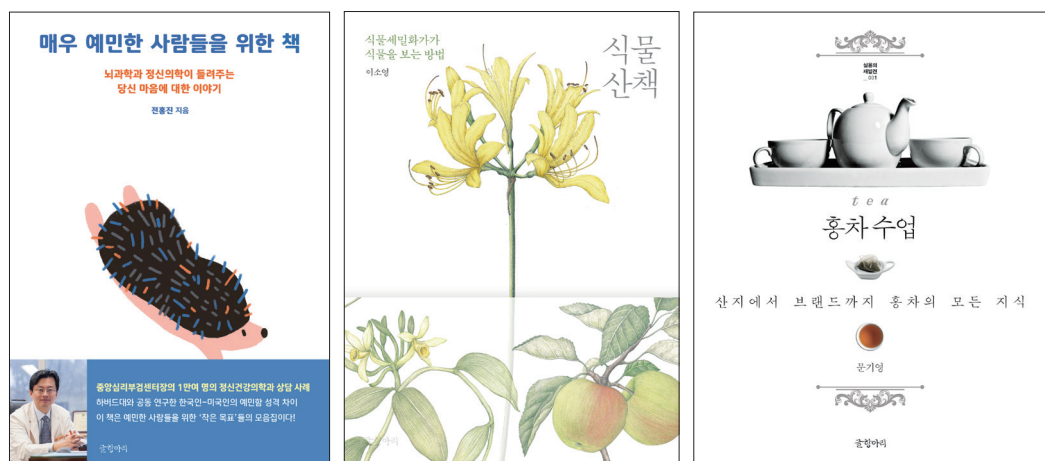
*Wandering with Plants* written by Lee So-Yeong, 2018

Writer Lee So-Yeong is a plant miniaturist and a botanist who takes records of plants by drawing. In the book, she talks about her past ten years of studying and drawing plants and stories of plants and people she met in botanic gardens, mountains, fields, gardens, and empty lots.

*Black Tea* written by Mun Ki-Young, 2014

This is a guide book that has all knowledge about black tea. Mun indulged in charming black tea as he was in charge of its sales during his 16 years long marketing career in the Dong Suh Foods

Corporation. He left the company and began to jump more in-depth into the world of black tea. To fill in his curiosity about black tea, he started reading books of black tea experts in Britain, the US, and France; he also visited India, Sri Lanka, and Taiwan, which are major black tea producers, not to mention Britain, a country that bloomed the black tea culture, and France, which is writing a new history of black tea today. And this book is the fruit of all his efforts. While being recognized as a bible about black tea, the book's publication rights were exported to China and Taiwan.



*A Book for Highly Sensitive Person, Wandering with Plants, Black Tea*

**Does Geulhangari have a standard or values that it considers when it comes to choosing authors or titles?**

We tend to take a general look at the text, author's career, or the topic rather than sticking to a particular standard or values. Because we always have the idea that we should publish books that talk about topics our society needs, we prefer authors that cover

such issues that raise awareness about new topics or those that others have not touched upon yet. Instead of signing a contract with a famous writer, we try to be a container for a variety of personalities.

### What is the major area of Geulhangari, and what is your growth momentum?

As we've mentioned above, we are now expanding our field into literature, essay, science, and practical knowledge from where we have been focusing on history, philosophy, and classical areas before. But still, we have not set foot in economics, business administration, self-development, and children's books. So the company is not a general publisher, so to say. Just think of us as a publisher that produces books in the great world of liberal arts and science. We believe that it was just natural to expand our publication areas. We separated Geulhangari Science as an independent brand as the importance of science grew, set up a Chinese modern novel category as we promoted learning more about China, and planned various essay books to glimpse how life would change after COVID-19. We also try to seek new opportunities, as pushing only one field would eventually have a limit in market size, and you may no longer be fast-responding to changing trends. And for the growth momentum, we think that concentrating on publishing is the power that keeps us going forward.

Geulhangari has this unique section called "EDITOR'S NOTE." It is refreshing to see the unique ideas of the editors. Is there a reason for having this separate editor's note?

Editors play a critical role in making books, but their efforts are not recognized much after publication. In fact, editors are the ones that know everything about the book as they have been there from the beginning of the production, but they do not commonly have a chance to communicate with readers. To help readers listen to the editors' story and help editors communicate with the readers, we have created the "EDITOR'S NOTE." All for our readers that are curious about what happened after the end of the story.

What kind of publisher does Geulhangari want to become, and what are your future plans?

"Boring books are the grave of ideas" was the motto when Geulhangari was first established. We believe that books must be fun and entertaining, which means that messages have to melt naturally inside the story. It could be possible for the publisher to push forward with a specific stance or values, but it would leave out various ideas. We are still pursuing the motto we set in the beginning as we publish, and it is our goal to not lose steam.

Website [geulhangari.com](http://geulhangari.com)

Instagram [instagram.com/bookpot/](https://www.instagram.com/bookpot/)

Facebook [facebook.com/geulhangari](https://www.facebook.com/geulhangari)

Twitter [twitter.com/bookpot1](https://twitter.com/bookpot1)



## KOREAN AUTHORS

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### Writer Kim Keum-Hee

The Warm Consoling Power Melted Within the Letters

Organized by Lee Ji-Hyeon

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The Novels of writer Kim Keum-Hee could not be warmer. The heartwarming stories would melt every reader's heart. There are sources from daily life that readers can relate to, and the social issues she covers make you have a profound look at them. The in-

depth impression and healing you get after finishing her books make you wait for her next work. Following is an interview with writer Kim Keum-Hee, who has been an active writer of short, medium, and full-length novels ever since she won the New Writers' Contest of Hankook Ilbo with her 'Your Document'.

**Please say hello and introduce yourself to readers of *K-Book Trends*.**

Hello, I am novelist Kim Keum-Hee, and I've been writing novels for 11 years. I've released *Dear Bokja* (Munhakdongne) recently.

**If you have a specific work or sentence from your stories that you would like to introduce to our readers, what would it be?**

I became well-known among readers with my short novel 'Too Bright Outside for Love'. Readers picked "I love you, today as well" as their favorite line. The characters in their 20s say that they love the other when they are in a frustrating and challenging situation where they cannot predict the future, even the next day, but have blasting emotions at that moment. The line entails anxiety that tomorrow might be different from today. It is highly meaningful to me, as many readers liked that sentence.

I would also recommend *Kyungae's Heart* (Changbi), my first full-length novel. The story's primary issue is the "heart (mind)" as they overcome pains in their life. As minds are uncontrollable, they are more critical and challenging to manage. In this story, Sangsoo

says, "Don't discard your mind." In difficult and challenging situations, we get to think, "It would be better without having minds," but getting rid of minds actually means giving up being the owner of your life. So this sentence, which asks you not to give up on your mind, is special to me.

I talked about failures in my newest title *Dear Bokja*. All of us experience certain times of failure in life, but the big deal is "how to overcome" those failures as we encounter. When someone has failed, it is important to understand how that person had to experience failure, cherish the fact that the person he/herself is a precious being, and not entirely stigmatize the person as a "failed" one. There is a line in the story that goes, "It's not that I didn't like you for failing. I just hated the failed situation itself." I think the key takeaway from this sentence is "I hated failure."



*Too Bright Outside for Love (Munhakdongne), Kyungae's Heart, Dear Bokja*

Could you please tell us more about your newest novel *Dear Bokja*?

It's a story about two friends, Youngchorong and Bokja, who have spent their childhood on Jeju Island together. The main character Youngchorong experiences environmental change as she moves to a dependant island of Jeju. It is Bokja that helped her to get used to things in many ways. But just like how human relationships go in childhood, a trivial misunderstanding splits the two, and they end up growing away from each other with the tie between them left entangled. Then 20 years pass, and Youngchorong, who has become a judge, is assigned to Jeju Island. There she meets her friend Bokja again, her long childhood friend. The progress of their relationship and whether the affection and friendliness they feel for each other will return are mainly described in the story. You can also see how the two girls from totally different backgrounds will be remembered by each other.

You've been saying that you want to write a story with Jeju Island as the background. What was Jeju Island to you?

Well, Jeju is a totally different environment from the city I am living in, and its people are also quite different from those in the mainland. So I've always wanted to write a story with it as the background when I build up enough capacity as a writer. Luckily, I had a chance to apply for a residence program for writers where I could stay on Jeju Island for a season. I thought it was like destiny

to me. I could learn many things and make many sketches of places on the island. If anyone asks me why I was so eager to write about Jeju, I would say, "attracted by something that I have zero knowledge about." I began writing when I returned to Seoul after finishing sketches on Jeju Island. As I was put in a situation where I had to write about Jeju – an island that I always wanted to go to – when traveling is limited due to the pandemic, I think I reflected too much of my mind missing the island. Maybe that's why the work feels a bit ardent. (Laughs)

We heard that the tragic 1999 Incheon Pub Fire was the motif for *Kyungae's Heart*, and the industrial accident of nurses on Jeju island was referred to in *Dear Bokja*. You tend to cover various social issues in your stories. Could you please tell us why?

I've always been thinking that I am also related to social issues as I live. I could turn the fire incident into the novel *Kyungae's Heart* as I have lived my whole life in Incheon, and my heart broke when I heard of the news. For *Dear Bokja*, people that particularly came into my eyes in Jeju Island were workers. So, there were quite a lot of people working in the fishing and tourism industry like *Haenyeo* (female divers), and when I was thinking of writing a novel about their life, I got to know the heart-breaking industrial accident that took place on the island. I felt that talking about such incidents in a novel would be a big step toward regaining rights for more female laborers. And I think that was how I naturally got to cover social



and historical issues within an area and mix them with individuals' lives.

*Dear Bokja* was first serialized as an audiobook before the official publication. How was it different from your previous works, and how did you feel?

When I was first suggested about serializing an audiobook, I had to think about how I would write it. Because listening and reading are different in how long readers can concentrate, I had to consider how well the story can be delivered to the listeners. And the answer I got was writing the story in the style of a letter. It was the most effective way of delivering the story considering the composition and scenes of the book. As a letter is a highly private medium exchanged between individuals, I thought writing the story in a letter might be helpful. It would enhance narrative delivery by recalling the listeners' experience related to it. So I came up with this letter format as it would be serialized as an audiobook. Literary works mainly revolve around the writer's values and the overall quality of the story, but I had to think of who is going to enjoy my work as the platform is different. It was quite a new experience, and I felt the warmth from readers as they were mostly nice and friendly. If a second chance is given, I might give it a try again.

What was the most impressive comment that you received during the series of the audiobook?

The audio clips were uploaded at midnight, and I would always go to bed after reading the comments the first-listeners left. Some of the listeners would correct some wrong information, for example, the nuance of the Jeju dialect and information about the real figures that appeared in the story. Such interaction with the listeners was a magnificent experience for me.

Also, I could recognize that quite a lot of the readership was in more than their 50s as I got to see the statistics during the series. It was good news as I felt like my readership expanded through the new medium.

The news says *Dear Bokja* began its third printing during the pre-sale period before the official release. What do you think about this explosive popularity?

What really helps me is the readers that read my previous work move on to my next work. Expanding readership is important, for sure, but I really like how readers remain fans of the author. It's because, you know, I can write for more than several decades, and my readers, they are really precious to me. (Laughs). When I released my second full-length novel, I was worried how much the readers from my previous work would have interest in it, but how it turned out in the market sounds so positive that I am relieved now.

I also grew some confidence that even though I make new attempts, my readers would accept them.

### What are your plans for the future?

I'm thinking of publishing a short-novel collection in the first half of next year with all the short stories I've released since 2019. You know, this short novel as a genre vividly reflects the changes of the writer or the writer is going through. So, I think you might be able to take a glimpse at what kind of things I am doing lately through the collection.

### Before wrapping up, what would you like to say to our subscribers?

We are undergoing an unprecedentedly challenging time due to the pandemic. All of us, not only Koreans but overseas readers, too. Some may fear why we are going through this and how the world will change in the future. I think it is like an empty schedule where we can think about future changes in our life. So, please, stay healthy. Good moments will follow after, so I hope you spend this hard time preparing for those moments that will be back someday.

## Publishing Industry

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# Current status of each field in the Korean publishing market

## 11. Educational Publications (textbooks/reference books/home-study materials)

Written by Won-Keun Baek (Books & Society Research Institute, President)

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This volume will discuss the publishing industry's status in Korea related to schools' educational curriculums (curricula) from elementary to high school. In schools' academic curriculums, textbooks are designated as the basic material, and reference

books and home-study materials are used as much as textbooks as customized media to raise students' level in learning. Educational publications for students in elementary, middle, and high schools in Korea, globally known for its high passion for education, have been the central foundation for general education in Korea. Furthermore, they take an overwhelming proportion in the publishing market, implying that they are also beginning to take the center of bookstore operations.

According to the Korean Educational Statistics Service (KEDI) of the Korean government (Ministry of Education), a total of 6.12 million students were taking public education in 2019. This number includes 0.63 million kindergarteners, 2.74 million elementary school students, 1.29 million middle school students, and 1.41 million high school students. The total number of students dropped by a whopping 23.5% from 8.01 million in 2009, almost a decade ago. Korea's fall of birth rate is also relatively high from the global perspective, and a "low-birth, aging society" has long been on the table as a critical social agenda.

In fact, textbooks used as the basic material in elementary, middle, and high schools are government-authorized textbooks mostly produced by publishers and chosen by schools. And some subjects use government-designated textbooks. Some publishers focus on making reference books and exam books that support students' learning at school, and some are mostly jumping into home-study materials and educational projects. Home-study materials are learning materials developed in countries such as Korea and Japan,



which are delivered to homes in a regular subscription form. And for kindergarteners and elementary school kids, an instructor visits the subscriber's house and gives classes. Well known publishers in this field include Daekyo, Kyowon Kumon, Woongjin Thinkbig, Hansol Education, JEI, and Kumsung.



Woongjin Smart All, Book Club ©Woongjin Thinkbig (wjthinkbig.com)

The number of subscribers for the home-visiting type has reduced due to the pandemic. It is inevitable as the service requires person-to-person contact. Also, learning centers that work as a studying room are going through a hard time as social-distancing spread for quarantine. Publishers have turned their eyes to online classes to minimize the drop in demand. Meanwhile, businesses using smart devices are enjoying a healthy curve. For example, "Smart All," a learning program based on A.I. made by Woongjin Thinkbig for all subjects learned in elementary schools, the membership grew exponentially with the spread of COVID-19. As an effort to respond to the pandemic, Woongjin Thinkbig launched businesses such as "Bookclub," which is an educational business using home-study materials and a tablet PC, and saw a total of 166.1 billion won of

sales and 8.9 billion won of operating income in the third quarter this year.

According to the publications statistics announced by the Publication Industry Promotion Agency of Korea (KPIPA) in 2019, the market size of textbooks & reference books and home-study materials as of 2018 was 925.2 billion won and 1.41 trillion won, respectively. They account for quite a big slice of the pie, taking approximately 60% of the entire publishing market (3.91 trillion won), excluding magazines and webcomics. Also, 6,411 people are working in the textbook and reference book areas from the personnel perspective, while 7,753 are engaged in home-study businesses. The number of publishers in these fields may be small, but the number of people working in the industries is relatively high. Also, when looking at the proportions of major publication areas of Korean publishers, those publishing general books (60.4%) and academic/ professional materials (20.4%) took a big proportion, but those making reference books (3.9%) and home-study materials (2.0%) took a very small proportion. As such, a few big publishers are leading the educational publishing market through the economy of scale. Representative publishers for textbooks and reference books include MiraeN, Chunjae Education, Visang Education Inc., Chunjae Textbook, Dong-A Publishing, Sinsago, Jihaksa, Kyohaksa, and Key Media. The number of titles published by educational publishers as of 2019 was 4,385 for elementary education and 4,827 for middle and high school education.



Logos of Chunjae Education, Neungyule Inc., and Daekyo Co.

The recent business performance of listed educational publishers is quite good (refer to the publishing trend in the second half of 2019 released by KPIPA). The sales of listed publishers in the fields of textbooks and reference books in the second half of 2019 was 165.8 billion won, which is up by 17.7% on year and a 50.4% increase from the previous quarter. If we look at Visang, its sales for the second half of 2019 were 114.3 billion won, a 28.7% increase year on year and 72.2% up from the previous quarter. And in terms of Neungyule Inc., its sales during the same period were 45.6 billion won, which is up 2.3% from the previous year and 17.2% from the previous quarter. Meanwhile, for listed publishers in the field of home-study materials, Woongjin Thinkbig recorded 323.8 billion won of sales in the second half of 2019, which is a 1.2% increase on year and 3.0% from the previous quarter. The sales of Daekyo Co. during the same period were 346.5 billion won, which is a 2.5% increase on year and a 2.0% drop from the previous quarter.

For export volumes of publishers, Daekyo Co. recorded 11 billion won in the second half of 2019, which rose by 5% on year, and 0.6% from the previous quarter. Publishers are accelerating their efforts to draw positive outcomes by building competitiveness and continuously attempting overseas expansion. So publishers are now stepping outside the domestic ground into the global stage.

For example, Visang Education Inc. is currently selling services of multiple brands in the global market, including "Action Alphabet," an English education program for toddlers to experience and learn English with MR (Motion Recognition) technology, "English Eye," another English learning program where kids can learn English by watching and listening to storytelling videos just like how native English speakers learn their mother tongue, "ELiF," an interactive English learning program where students get to "participate" in learning English through multimedia, "AllviA," which is a futuristic smart class that uses smart boards and tablet PCs, "Quiz Monster," which is a quiz program where kids can have fun learning English and mathematics while solving quizzes like playing a game, and "KLaSS," which is a real-time interactive Korean learning program customized for each level. (Website of Visang Global: [global.visang.com](http://global.visang.com))



Global website of Visang Education Inc.

Publishers producing textbooks, reference books, and home-study materials in Korea could carry on relatively stable management based on the fact that such materials are a "necessity" in the educational industry. However, as the birth rate drops, the number of students is falling as well. Also, the publishers share a common issue of how to respond to the changing market environment of the educational industry where diversification is taking place based on digital platforms and devices. Publishers are therefore taking the move of developing content that can raise educational effects with high added-value for learners studying in the digital environment amidst the changing situation where digital textbooks have begun to be introduced to the curriculum.



## Publishing Policy

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# Publication-Related Organizations in Korea

We introduce to you  
**Various  
Publication-Related  
Organizations in Korea**

that believe in the value of books  
and spread the good influence of reading!



**Publication Industry  
Promotion Agency  
of Korea**

[kpiipa.or.kr](http://kpiipa.or.kr)

KPIPA is a public organization  
established to promote the publishing  
industry in a comprehensive and organized  
way in response to the publishing market's  
diversification and globalization.

## Publication Industry Promotion Agency of Korea

- ✓ Boosts demand for publication and advances distribution network
- ✓ Facilitates the creation of outstanding publications
- ✓ Establishes an infrastructure for the publishing & cultural industry

#K-Publishing #Public\_Organization  
#Policy-making



**Korea  
Publishers  
Association**

kpa21.or.kr

KPA promotes projects for the development of the publishing industry while setting up an order in distribution and resolving diverse issues related to the publishing environment with publishers in various fields.

## Korea Publishers Association

- ✓ Hosts “Book Day” on October 11th every year
- ✓ Hosts the Seoul International Book Fair and participates in other International Book Fairs
- ✓ Hosts the Publishing Policy Forum

#Book\_Fairs #Overseas\_Promotion  
#Support\_for\_Publications



## Korea Federation of Bookstore Association

[kfoba.or.kr](http://kfoba.or.kr)

KFOBA works to enhance bookstores' rights and interests across the nation and spread reading culture among Koreans, thereby improving the roles of bookstores and promoting the book culture of people.

## Korea Federation of Bookstore Association

- ✓ Hosts "Bookstore's Day" on November 11th every year
- ✓ Revitalizes regional bookstores
- ✓ Fosters bookstore specialists

#Bookstore\_People #Reading\_as\_a\_Habit  
#Fixed\_Book\_Price



## Korea Publishers Society

[kopus.org](http://kopus.org)

KOPUS is an incorporated association under the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism to contribute to the freedom of publication, cultural and industrial development of publishing, and prosperity of its culture.

## Korea Publishers Society

- ✓ Carries out policy & planning projects of the publishing industry
- ✓ Conducts enhancement projects for the distribution environment of the publishing industry
- ✓ Runs publishing education projects

#Environmental\_Improvement #External\_Cooperation  
#Promotion\_of\_Reading Books

You can find the list of  
**More Organizations  
Related to Publishing**  
on the website of  
the Korea Publishers Society.

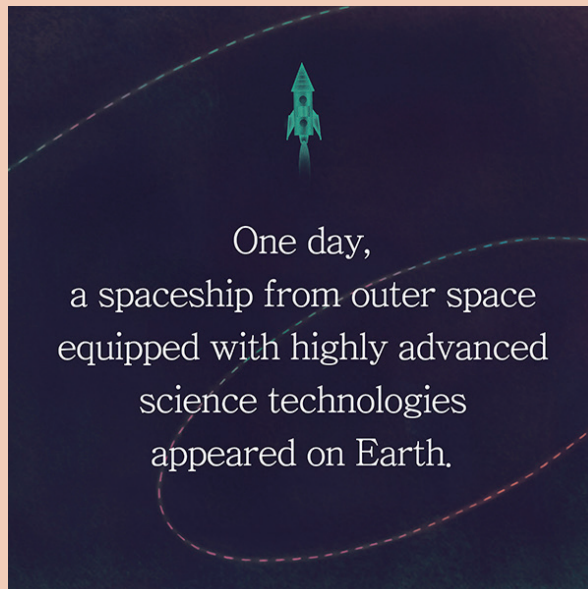


**Go to list! ▶**

## New Books

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### Regarding Starknitting





The Earthlings and the Wetans,  
both in their infancy stage in the universe,



continue having multiple exchanges  
in preparation for the space era...

## “Starknitting,”

the lifeline skill for Wetans  
to survive in the universe.

“

“Meet an earthling.  
They have an astrology specialist  
that studies reinterpreted astrology  
in quite a modern style.  
He calls himself, the ‘Star-knitter’.

”

**Humorous storyline  
Unpredictable twist**



Will their journey into space  
flow as smooth as water?

“  
May your life  
be an honor  
for your universe.  
”

From fantasy to romance,

**the World of  
Lee Yeong-Do is**

filled with extraordinary stories  
and explosive imagination.



## Regarding Starknitting

Lee, Yeong-Do | Goldenbough

## Best Sellers

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## 2nd Week, November 2020

### Bestseller Trends in the Four Biggest Online Bookstores in Korea

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In the ranks of bestsellers announced by four major online bookstores in Korea for the second week of November, books that are keeping their place since last year catch our eyes. For example, the top bestseller *See What They Mean, Say What You Mean* is a reality-based guide book for parents to have the right conversations with their kid written by doctor Oh Eun Young, a national mentor for child-raising. And the second to the top was *Trend Korea 2021*, which has selected upcoming trends for 2021 with a sub-title “What is the strategy against the pandemic crisis?” Ranked third was *Dollargut Dream Department Store*, a fantasy novel about stories in a dream department where only those asleep are allowed to enter. As such, it is notable that the top three bestsellers are from different fields.

Meanwhile, some books are steady-sellers as well on the list. For example, *The Property of Money* features a philosophy about money that the writer offers to readers that want economic freedom. Ever since its publication in June, it has never come down from the list. Wearing a new cover marking the 100th printing, the book is ready to meet new readers. Also, as a series packed with intriguing stories, knowledge, fun, impressions, and lessons, *Seol Min-Seok's Korean History Adventure* has been protecting its place on the list for children's comics each time a new volume is released.

Among the new faces on the list, *The Story of Art* featuring art was released after its former series *Korean History*, produced by the same publisher, made a great hit this June. Also, *HEAT* is an essay written by Swings, a rapper in Korea, which talks about his rapper life where he ceaselessly takes on challenges. It was added to the bestsellers' list after it began taking pre-orders before the official release. It seems that the recent popularity of hip-hop in Korea has worked as leverage for the book's high sales.

\* The rank of bestsellers below was organized after integrating domestic best sellers in the second week of November from the four biggest online bookstores in Korea – Kyobo Bookstore, Aladdin, Yes 24, and Interpark.

# BEST SELLERS

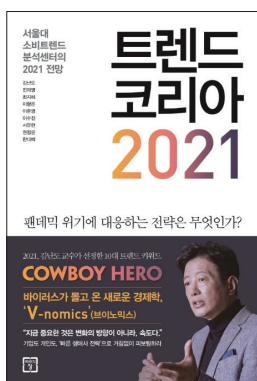
1



## See What They Mean, Say What You Mean

Author | Oh Eun Young  
Publisher | Gimm-Young Publishers Inc.  
Genre | Home & Childcare

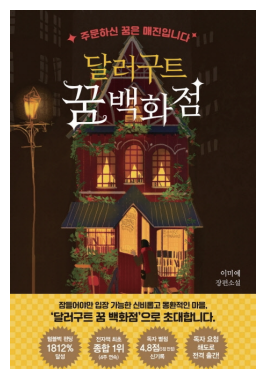
2



## Trend Korea 2021

Author | Kim Nam-Do, Jeon Mi-Young, Choi Ji-Hye, Lee Hyang-Eun, Lee Joon-Young, Lee Su-Jin, Seo Yu-Hyun, Kwon Jeong-Yoon, Han Da-Hye  
Publisher | Miraebook  
Genre | Economics & Business Administration

3



## Dollargut Dream Department Store

Author | Lee Mi-Ye  
Publisher | Factory Nine  
Genre | Novel

4



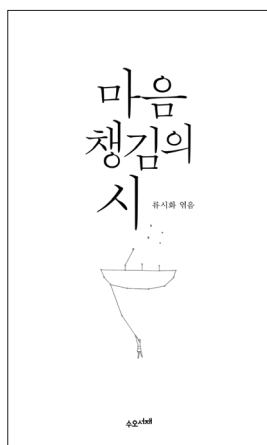
## My Day Begins at 4:30 AM

Author | Kim Yu-Jin  
Publisher | Tornado  
Genre | Self-development



# BEST SELLERS

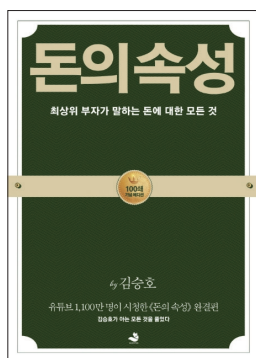
5



## Poem of Mindfulness

Author | Ryu Si-Hwa (edited)  
Publisher | Suo Books  
Genre | Poem

6



## The Property of Money (100th Print Special Edition)

Author | Kim Seung-Ho  
Publisher | Snowfox Books  
Genre | Economics & Business Administration

7



## Seol Min-Seok's Korean History Adventure 15

Author | Seol Min-Seok, Storybox  
Publisher | I-Human  
Genre | Children's Comics

8

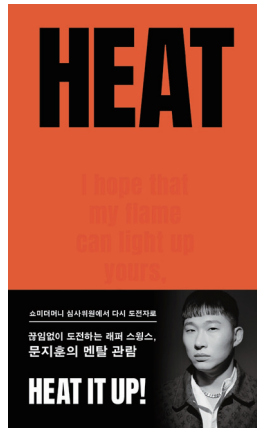


## John Lee's Breaking Out of Financial Illiteracy

Author | John Lee  
Publisher | Vegabooks  
Genre | Economics & Business Administration

# BEST SELLERS

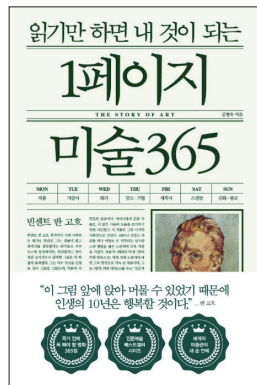
9



## HEAT

Author | Swings  
Publisher | Feelm  
Genre | Essay

9



## The Story of Art

Author | Kim Young-Sook  
Publisher | B.able  
Genre | Art

## #K-Book

# #Traditional Culture(Picture Books)

KPIPA introduces K-Books for global publishing markets through K-Book Platform

### *Setting the Table*

#### 1. Publication Details

Title | Setting the Table  
 Author | Joo Youngha  
 Publisher | BORIM PRESS  
 Publication Date | 2013-05-15  
 ISBN | 9788943309107  
 No. of pages | 60  
 Dimensions | 285 \* 225

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#### 3. Book Intro

Korean food is usually called as "hansik." We talk about the uniqueness and excellence of "hansik" by mentioning the efficacy or nutritional balance of some foods, such as kimchi and "jang" (Korean pastes). However, the uniqueness of our food culture should be seen in more broader perspective, for example, how to look for foods in the environment of the Korean Peninsula over many years, how to prepare meals, how to serve, how to eat, etc. That is, the book intends to explore almost everything about foods: production and choosing of food ingredients, cooking and serving, utensils, cutlery, etiquette and so on. Also, we should remember that



food culture is shared by neighboring countries and understand universality and uniqueness from the perspective of the history of mankind.

This book examines how our ancestors satiated their instinct of hunger in the natural environment of Korean Peninsula and social system, and looks closely into what food culture and traditions they have built up. In the Paleolithic era, humans as omnivores who did not have an edge in the food chain began cooking with tools and fire. In the Neolithic era, humans understood the difference of plants and animal in respect to growth and reproduction and considered wild crops as future food source. And now we are facing a challenge of looking for foods that benefit environment and humans amid the flood of fast food, processed food, and imported crops. Such process is examined in detail under 22 topics.

Furthermore, the book explores other interesting topics: the table setting of hansik comprising rice, soup and side dishes; the history of traditional Korean food, such as "jang" and kimchi; kitchen utensils, including cutlery, bowls and dishes; seasonal customs related to food; and the acceptance of foreign foods such as red pepper, noodle, and tofu. Other interesting topics are: the comparison of size of one portion from Three Kingdoms era until now; the origin of foods served in the ceremonies or rituals; the influence of Buddhism and Confucianism on the food culture, and dietary in Joseon era.

\* [http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2324](http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2324)

## *Hangeul as a Container of Korean Language*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Hangeul as a Container of Korean Language

Author | Park Donghwa

Publisher | Bear Books Inc.

Publication Date | 2008-10-01

ISBN | 9788993242041

No. of pages | 40

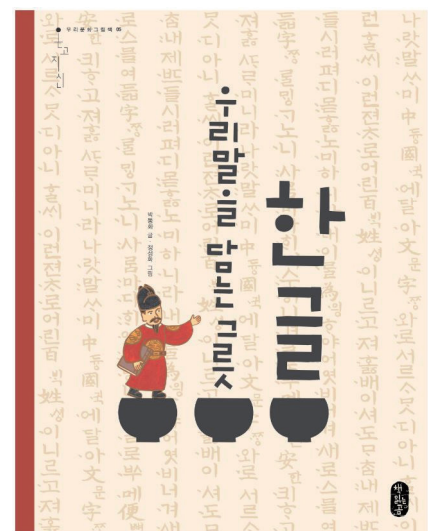
Dimensions | 220 \* 285

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### 3. Book Intro

In the days when there were no Korean alphabets, many commoners suffered injustice and discomfort because they could not read and write at all. Only after King Sejong made Hangeul was it possible for all the people to read and write by learning letters. The significance and principles of Hangeul, as the Korea's greatest cultural heritage and the most suitable medium for Korean language, are explained at a child's level.

\* [http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2305](http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2305)

### *The Great Meal*

#### 1. Publication Details

Title | The Great Meal  
Author | Park Kwangmyung  
Publisher | GORAEBAETSOK  
Publication Date | 2015-07-31  
ISBN | 9788992505499  
No. of pages | 32  
Dimensions | 210 \* 280

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### 3. Book Intro

A bowl of rice contains the whole universe!

"Meal time!" Mom calls to the child. The kid, glancing at the table, complains, "Is it rice again?" Mom begins to tell the story of the meal to the child, who sits at the table with a sullen expression.

In order for a meal to be served, somebody must make food early in the morning. You have to go shopping at the grocery store before you cook. The food in the mart comes from a big market. To get it there, someone needs to load and carry it in a big truck. But before that, people pack the food in boxes. Some people study ways to make more delicious and healthy varieties of food.

*The Great Meal* is a picture book that shows the cycle that connects people with nature. Starting from the table and moving through marts, auction houses, wholesale markets, ranches, seas, farms, and in rain and sunshine, this story gives

you a chance to think differently about food. As you follow the path of the meal, you realize how many people's dishes come from this laborious process. As we turn the pages, the interest of the children reading the book gradually expands from themselves to others, then far away from people to nature, to the universe. At the same time, their thoughts and perspectives will expand.

Simple story and stylish drawing!

Park Kwangmyung, who wrote and illustrated this book, portrays the philosophical theme of extending out from oneself into one's surroundings, the world, and the universe using simple sentences and easy vocabulary. In addition, he uses a variety of materials and techniques, including acrylic paints, colored pencils, prints, collages, and computer graphics, to create his unique paintings. The vivid expressions and gestures of various objects and figures are elaborately rendered, and the artist's humor is well captured. Readers of this book will be able to create endless new stories and find fun hiding in every corner of the page.

\* [http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2203](http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2203)

## *Traditional Korean Homes*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Traditional Korean Homes

Author | Lee Sang Hyun

Publisher | SigongJunior

Publication Date | 2017-02-20

ISBN | 9788952784872

No. of pages | 48

Dimensions | 300 \* 250

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### 3. Book Intro

In late Joseon era, during a time of great changes inside and outside the country, Jinsa Choi's family gathered and discussed two concerns. First, two daughters' wedding is at the corner but there are not enough rooms to accommodate visitors. Second, their food storage is not secure as thieves are increasing day by day due to social unrest. So Choi family decides to expand food





storage to build another building for visitors and erect walls to prevent thieves. The story begins by introducing each room of Choi's house and telling what is happening there. Readers can see the pictures of the beautiful spaces of *hanok* (traditional Korean house), such as "anchae" (main building), "sarangchae" (detached building) and courtyard.

First, the family meeting takes place in anchae, the center of the house. It is usually for women, but it is also a place where family gathers to discuss important issues. Mr Choi goes to the shrine and report to ancestors that his daughters would marry soon, and watch the new "haenlangchae" being built inside "sarangchae," a men's space. Finally, the haenlangchae and strong fence are completed. On the wedding day, Choi's relatives gather and women are busy making food in the backyard. Following the story line, reader can naturally understand what each building is used for and what it looks like, etc.

In addition, the book gives explanation on the shape of roof, pillars, doors and window, and the types of gates and fences, along with vivid pictures. The book guide readers to understand peculiar elements of hanok, such as "gudeul" (Korean floor heating system), "daechong maru" (wooden floor), and eaves, and how scientific hanok is in prevention of coldness and heat.

The books also shows how the unique cultures of Korean people - nomadic, sedentary and transitional - is reflected in hanok. This book will provide an opportunity to learn about hanok and Korean culture itself, not just as simple buildings.

\* [http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2314](http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2314)

## *Children in The Silver Paper Picture*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Children in The Silver Paper Picture

Subtitle | Beautiful Artist Lee Jungseop

Author | Gang Wonhee

Publisher | CrayonHouse Co., Ltd.

Publication Date | 2017-11-30

ISBN | 9788955475142

No. of pages | 44

Dimensions | 250 \* 240

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### 3. Book Intro

As one of Korea's most beloved and representative artists, Lee Jungseop is well known for expressing the unique atmosphere of our nation with vibrant and dynamic strokes. He drew paintings with a clear and shining spirit, even in difficult times, such as colonization, war, and division.

He was too poor to afford proper artistic materials, so he drew paintings onto the silver paper that came in the cigarette boxes of the time. Lee's longing became beautiful pictures. If you look at the topics of Lee's works, such as cows, children, and family, you can see the world that Lee dreamed of. I hope that you will feel the pain of the times as you read this book and think about the passion of artist Lee Jungseop and the meaning of art.

\* [http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2261](http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2261)

### *Have You Ever Seen such a Beautiful Daenggi?*

#### 1. Publication Details

Title | Have You Ever Seen such a Beautiful Daenggi?

Subtitle | Korean Traditional Accessories

Author | Kang Hyomi

Publisher | Mirae N Co., Ltd.

Publication Date | 2018-10-20

ISBN | 9791162338841

No. of pages | 36

Dimensions | 215 \* 273

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### 3. Book Intro

When watching historical Korean dramas, the most interesting and eye catching points after the story line are the beautiful Hanbok (traditional Korean clothing) worn by the characters and the beautiful accessories with unique personalities. That's why the old accessories in the historical dramas are often popular, and some Korean hairpin (binyeo, or Korean ribbon called daenggi) featured in drams are sold out. However, traditional accessories are not mere

beautiful things. It is because many historical facts are hidden in the materials and patterns used in jewelry. *Have You Ever Seen such a Beautiful Daenggi?* is a picture book that presents the Joseon's representative accessories and its beauty. The story is simple. The fictional character, Myeongdamjeong goes seeking a woman wearing norigae and embroidered daenggi at the request of a gentleman. At the same time, through ornaments that symbolize the social atmosphere and life of the Joseon Dynasty, the book offers a better understanding of the life of our ancestors, as seen in historical dramas.

\* [http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2216](http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2216)

## *A Long, Final Journey with the Kkokdu*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | A Long, Final Journey with the Kkokdu

Author | Lee Yun-min

Publisher | Hollym Corp., Publishers

Publication Date | 2013-07-05

ISBN | 9788970946733

No. of pages | 33

Dimensions | 260 \* 210



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### 3. Book Intro

Where do people go when they die? In the old days, people had many ideas about the afterlife. Ancient Egyptians believed that the dead become stars, and ancient Japanese people believed that they become gods and stay with us always. So what about Koreans?

Koreans believed that people enter the next world after their lives end in this world. However, Koreans thought that the journey to the next world would be a long and tough one, which is the reason their ancestors made kokdu, so that their loved ones have their company while they take the journey into the next world. A kokdu is a wooden figure that is usually hung on a bier and is believed to be the guardian spirit that ushers the dead into the next world and serves them there. It has the shape of a person, but when you look closely into it, each

has a different appearance. Why is that?

A kokdu is a wooden figure that can accompany a loved one so that they do not feel lonely, frustrated, or frightened. Each has their own roles for the dead: some of them play the role of guidance, some are for protection, some serve, and some entertain. Kokdu shows how the ancestors felt about others and how they acted toward one another.

*A Long, Final Journey with the Kokdu* is a picture book that features kokdu, a Korean tradition. Readers can learn about the meaning and roles of kokdu through a journey to the next world that is neither scary nor sad with a grandmother and a kokdu. Readers can also gain a better understanding of the thoughts and culture of ancestors behind death.

\* [http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=1125](http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=1125)

## *The Seven Friends in a Lady's Chamber*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | The Seven Friends in a Lady's Chamber

Author | Lee Youngkyoung

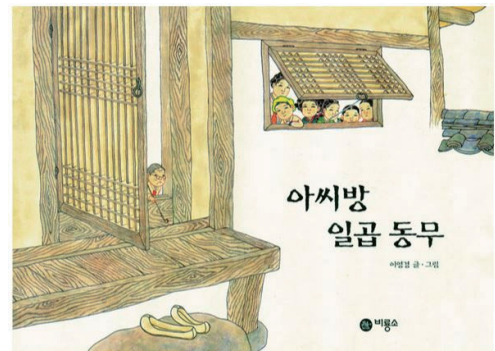
Publisher | BIR Publishing Co., Ltd.

Publication Date | 1998-04-10

ISBN | 9788949100203

No. of pages | 32

Dimensions | 325 \* 235



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### 3. Book Intro

This book is a picture book adaptation of *Gyu-joong-chil-woo-jaeng-non-gi*. While the red hood mistress is asleep, Mrs. Ruler, Miss Scissors, Madam Red Thread, Granny Thimble, Maiden Soldering Iron, and Mistress Iron all argue about who is the best. However, they are finally reconciled by realizing that each of them has a separate role in the world, where none is unimportant and all are valuable.

\* [http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2293](http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2293)

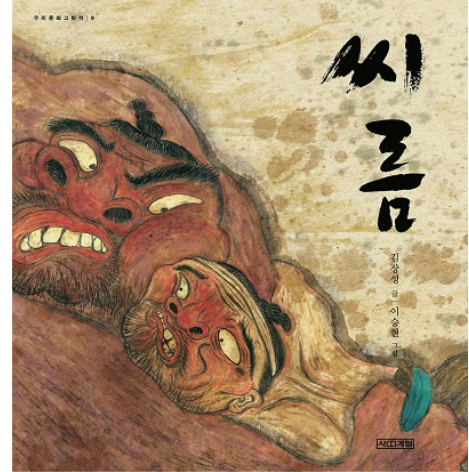
## *Ssireum*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Ssireum  
Author | Kim Jangsung  
Publisher | SAKYEJUL PUBLISHING LTD.  
Publication Date | 2007-03-05  
ISBN | 9788958282129  
No. of pages | 36  
Dimensions | 254 \* 264

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### 3. Book Intro

On Dano day, the fifth day of the fifth month of the Lunar calendar, people gather around on the sand near the river. From infants to village elders, people of all ages and genders gather. The sweets shop and rice cake shop display their goods and even the ox, which doesn't know what's going on, follows its owner to the scene. It's all because a ssireum match is taking place! Combatants are eliminated after each match until only the strongest two men remain for the final round. One of them will be crowned the strongest man in the world. Ssireum is a picture book written to introduce the excitement and fun of ssireum to the children of today. It depicts the strength and techniques of the ssireum wrestlers, the tense matches, the clanking sound of the sweets seller's scissors, the roars and cheers from the crowd, the surprise of a small man defeating a big man, and the sounds of music when the champion is determined. This wide array of excitement and fun is accompanied by witty prose. The dynamic and detailed drawings deliver the tension of the moment, from the breath of the wrestlers to the movements, expressions and gestures of the referee and crowd, delivering real-like excitement that feels like an actual ssireum match.

\* [http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2331](http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2331)



## *Rabbit's Wish*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Rabbit's Wish  
Author | Lee Hobae  
Publisher | Jaimimage Publishing Co.  
Publication Date | 2003-10-01  
ISBN | 9791185996745  
No. of pages | 40  
Dimensions | 200 \* 287

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### 3. Book Intro

The book is based on a fable of rabbit and tiger. The two meet by chance and have a conversation. The author uses the fable to introduce Korea's representative animals in folk painting (chicken, tortoise, carp, deer, crane, mandarin duck, dog, monkey, etc.) that have been well known to Koreans since the Joseon Dynasty. This book opens up the new horizon in the proper appreciation of Korean folk paintings through fun story and illustrations.

\* [http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2301](http://www.k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2301)