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# K-Book Trends

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

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## TOPIC

[Publishing &amp; AI]

# Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Cases in the Korean Publishing Market

Written by Ryu Young-Ho  
(General Manager of IP Business Team, Kyobo Book Centre)

At the 75th Frankfurt Book Fair in Germany this past October, a program dedicated to artificial intelligence (AI) was the center of attention. Stakeholders in the publishing industry, including writers, publishers, bookstores, and readers, have entered an era where books are being created and used in a completely different way. AI is shaking up the entire publishing industry. In particular, generative AI, such as ChatGPT and Midjourney, is rapidly being adopted in the process of writing and distributing books. At the same time, the industry is also facing new challenges, such as the need to prevent inappropriate use of AI. In the international publishing market, books written in whole or in part by generative AI are already popping up in online stores.

In fact, Amazon's Kindle e-book store has more than 1,000 titles listed.

Since AI is highly skilled at editing data, it can reduce the amount of time writers need to spend editing their original work. It can also automate laborious processes such as text analysis, formatting, personalization, and translation. This allows writers to focus on research and content. At the same time, publishers can also use AI to recommend better topics to writers based on its fast and extensive ability to analyze reader needs. Thus, it will become commonplace for AI to make the work of publishing content planning and production more efficient and effective.

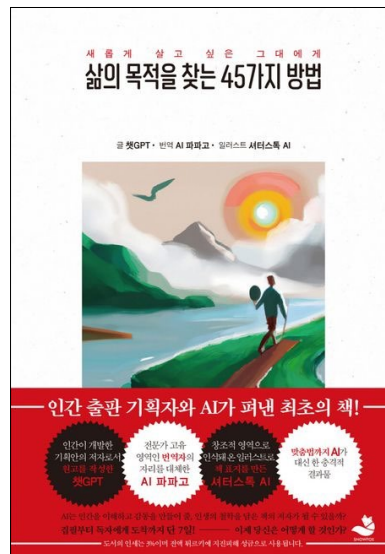
Recently, the Korean publishing market has been discussing the impact of AI, and several initiatives have emerged. From the perspective of "book tech," AI and the publishing industry are rapidly converging. In addition to traditional publishing content such as paperbacks, e-books, and audiobooks, AI is also creating new results in the production and distribution of content such as webnovels and webtoons, in which Korea leads the global market. In this article, we will take a look at how the Korean publishing market is being affected by AI and how it is responding and envisioning the future with key examples.



## Creating a book in a fraction of the time with generative AI

In February 2023, the book *45 Ways to Find Your Life's Purpose* (Snowfox Books) was published in Korea. It was written by ChatGPT and translated into Korean by Naver's translation program Papago. The book is a self-help book that offers advice on how to lead a happy life with a clear sense of purpose through 45 chapters on topics such as relationships, satisfaction, and happiness. The cover illustration was created by Shutterstock AI, a generative AI that specializes in making images. The book was completed in just seven days, from writing to proofreading and printing.

According to the publisher, the book's title and table of contents were not generated by AI. It was selected from a list of projects in which the publisher missed the timing after development, did not meet the right writer, or the level of planning was not satisfactory to the publisher. It was only by utilizing ChatGPT and Papago that the publisher was able to drastically shorten the conventional publishing timeframe of months or even years, which would include the writer's writing period, the translator's translation period, the editor's editing and proofreading, and the proofreading and printing period. ChatGPT generated essays of 3,000 characters each to match the table of contents, and the publisher used Papago to translate all 135 pages of the original English text in two hours.



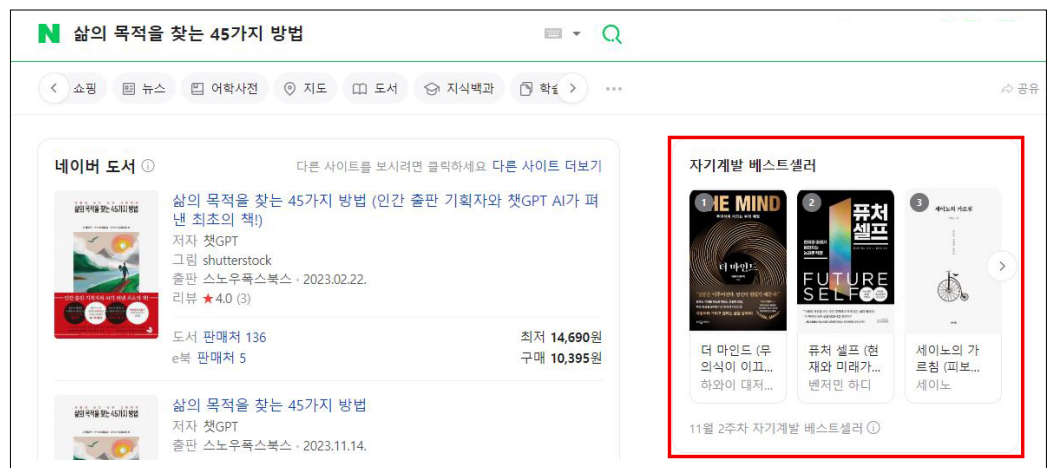
*45 Ways to Find Your Life's Purpose*, written by ChatGPT and translated by Papago.

## Utilizing bestseller searches and book recommendations

In May 2023, Naver introduced “Smart Block,” an AI-powered book recommendation feature that helps users find the books they want faster. It not only recommends books similar to the one you are looking for, but also finds and displays bestsellers in the field. This Smart Block feature is a model that applies AiTEMS, a product recommendation system based on AI technology, to the book search service. Users can effectively utilize it when conducting further searches to find books similar to the ones they searched for.

AiTEMS is a deep learning-based system that recommends products by learning and analyzing personal interests and tastes based on user data. It also discovers and introduces books that similar users showed interest in. If you search for essays on the topic of “healing,” it will also recommend other essay

books related to healing, comfort, human relations, psychology, and happiness. If you search for books on stock investment, it will recommend books based on your interest in stocks, such as economics, finance, and investment. And, if you click on a recommended book, you will be directed to the book's category, where you can utilize comprehensive book-related content such as retailer information, book critiques, and reviews. As a result, the competition between searching in existing online bookstores and AI-recommended book searching is expected to intensify.



A quick Naver search for *45 Ways to Find Your Life's Purpose* will bring up a list of bestsellers in the field.

## Reducing audiobook production costs and increasing user-friendliness

The changing media landscape has brought about many changes in readers' attitudes. This is because people are not only reading books, but also “listening” to them. Previously, audiobooks were produced by professional narrators, such as voice actors and

newscasters, who read the text sentence by sentence. Due to high production costs, the content quantity was small, and the interest and utilization of publishers and readers were low. However, with the recent integration of AI into the audiobook market, production costs have been drastically reduced, and it has developed to a level similar to human speech. To take advantage of the new market conditions, companies are actively investing in audio content production and distribution.

In March 2023, the audiobook platform Welaaa developed a high-quality playback technology for audiobooks based on AI through an industry-academia collaboration with Hanyang University. This is the world's first clustering-based AI playback technology to be commercialized for audiobook services, and it minimizes sound quality cracks and inaccuracies during high-speed playback, such as 1.5x and 2x, allowing natural and clear content playback even at high speeds. Members who have experienced the audiobook playback service are highly satisfied. "We were very hopeful that AI would help alleviate the time burden of reading and provide a new alternative to increase reading, and we are seeing positive results," said an official from Welaaa.

In May 2023, telecommunications company KT unveiled an audiobook featuring an "Announcer AI Voice" in conjunction with Millie, the book subscription service provider. The content was created with the "My AI Voice" technology of KT's AI Voice Studio. This is a technology that can produce AI voices with vivid emotions by recording only 30 sentences. It is characterized by

clear pronunciation and accurate delivery that gives listeners trust. To date, 17 “Announcer AI Voices” have been created in conjunction with actual newscasters. In terms of books, there are currently four liberal arts and self-help books, including *Money, Me, and Work* (Alone Book) by Lee Won-Ji and 12 other writers, *Studying Life to Change Tomorrow* (Media Soop) by Shin Shin-Sang, *30 Great Economics Classics in One Book* (Big Fish) by Hong Ki-Hoon, and *Snack Humanities* (Stable) by Timesnack.



“Announcer AI Voice” audiobooks from KT and Millie

## Increasing the efficiency of webnovel and webtoon production process

In the webnovel market, dominated by big tech companies such as Naver and Kakao, startups are creating a new wave. They provide creative tools that are completely different from the existing webnovel platforms and encourage users to participate as the main characters. The story tech ecosystem is growing, helping not only professional writers but also ordinary people to easily write webnovels and create secondary works.

Writinggel (<https://tinytingel.ai>), a natural language processing AI-powered writing service launched in December 2021, offers a webnovel package. Writers input the basic elements of their story, and the AI suggests an introduction and a plot. Writers can choose the genre, protagonist, location, subject, and theme of the story, and once the introduction is generated, the writer is free to continue building on it. It is used by people who are interested in webnovels but are intimidated to start writing one, or by writers who have difficulty generating ideas.

The use of AI in the webtoon industry spans from generative AI that creates new webtoon images to functions that assist writers. Kakao is actively sharing its image-generating AI, Karlo, with the industry. Karlo learns from 300 million images and texts to understand user input and create new images. It also understands sentence expressions of objects, backgrounds, lighting, composition, and style combinations, and quickly

generates images of the desired concept. The goal is to help webtoon artists fulfill their imagination and significantly save time when drawing and coloring images.

Meanwhile, launched by Naver Webtoon in October 2021, “AI Painter” is a feature that allows AI trained by extracting data from 300,000 webtoons to naturally color characters’ faces, bodies, and backgrounds. An official from NAVER Webtoon said, “AI Painter has colored 720,000 webtoons by authors for about a year and two months since its launch, and we are expecting to reduce the work time of authors by 30 to 50 percent compared to before.”

There are also famous artists who have actively utilized AI technology in their creative work. Lee Hyun-Se, the writer of the comic book *The Terrifying Mercenary Baseball Team* (Haksan Publishing), is working with Jaedam Media to teach AI 4,174 volumes of comics he has drawn over the past 44 years. The goal is to make it possible for AI to draw not only his worldview but also his artistic style even after his death. Lee Hyun-Se will release a new work utilizing AI in the second half of 2023.



## Expectations and concerns are high, but the challenges will continue

As promising as the new developments in AI and the publishing industry are, there are also many concerns. In particular, copyright is an important issue surrounding generative AI, which learns and combines a large amount of data to produce new creations. There are two sides to the debate: those who argue that using other people's works in AI learning should be prevented to protect creators, and those who argue that copyright should be exempted to facilitate the development of the AI industry.

Over-utilization of AI can diminish our ability to think and create creatively. There are many books that contain general knowledge and information, but relatively few that contain human empirical wisdom. While AI is great at processing and summarizing information, there will be a growing need for authors who can share their wisdom in an authoritative manner. Therefore, it is necessary to use AI to help authors expand their intellectual imagination or refine how to use their creative time efficiently.

AI will further transform publishing marketing, following in the footsteps of the creative sector. Algorithmic recommendation systems powered by machine learning will leverage user data to be more customized and enhance the reader experience. These technologies will enable publishers and bookstores to improve marketing performance by analyzing customer behavior and reading preferences. This is where the Korean publishing market



should focus its investments and expect future growth through the use of AI.

Alongside the opportunities that AI creates for the publishing market, there are also challenges to adopting AI. These include the lack of skills in the workforce as technology advances, changes in the structure of publishing jobs, access to technology, and ethical concerns. All parties in the publishing industry will need to respond to these challenges by establishing rational business strategies and ethical guidelines.

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## SPECIAL PROJECT

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[Book × Art]

# Modern Korean Art

Written by Kim In-Hye (Art historian, former senior curator of the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea)

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By their very nature, books are vessels of knowledge encompassing all fields. Endless topics can be written about depending on the material and message. In the [Book × \_\_\_\_] series, experts recommend Korean books in their respective fields that you've been curious about but had trouble discovering more about. Now, let's jump into the infinite world of books through the collaboration of books with various fields.

Until the end of the 19th century, Joseon was a nation unknown to most of the world. This is because it strictly limited its interactions with other countries, only sending envoys and emissaries to its neighbors, China and Japan. It was not until the 1880s that Joseon began to establish trade deals with the US and other Western nations in Europe. The country eventually became a colony of Japan in 1910, the victor of the Sino-Japanese War

(1894) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904). Although Joseon was freed from colonial rule at the end of World War II in 1945, the country was divided into North and South Korea based on the 38th parallel north line, and the country is still divided to this day after the Korean War (1950-1953).

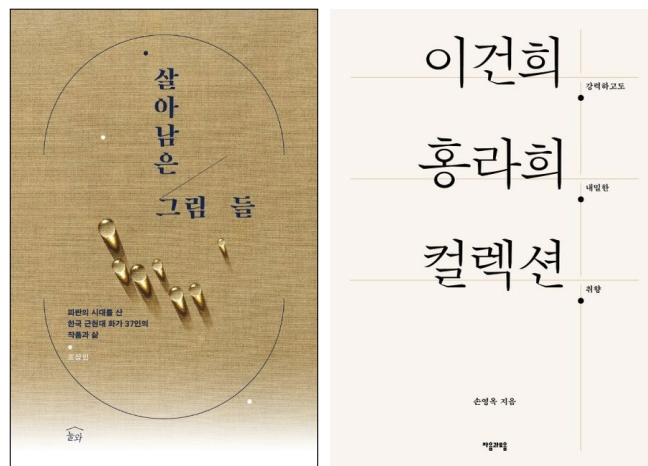
For a country with a history, traditions, and language that spans five millennia, the turbulent experiences of the 20th century have left Koreans in great shock and stimulation. What did Korean intellectuals, especially artists, think and dream about during this dramatic period from the 1900s to the 1960s? What kind of lives did they lead, and what kind of works did they leave behind as traces and products of their time? Several books have been published in recent years trying to answer these questions. Apart from specialized books on the history of modern Korean art, this article will focus on the more casual, popular books on the subject.

### History flows, but art stays

Published in 2020, *The Survived Pictures* (Nulwa) is a collection of revised and complemented articles that writer Cho Sang-In, a journalist for *Seoul Daily*, wrote for the paper. As the title suggests, it tells the story of the ‘survived pictures’ that have survived Korea’s modern colonization, post-liberation conflicts, and wars. The book covers 37 artists in total, from representative modern Korean painters such as Lee Joong-Sub, Park Su-Geun,

and Kim Hwan-Ki to monochromatic artists such as Yoon Hyung-Geun, Park Seo-Bo, and Lee Woo-Hwan. Notably, the book also includes major contemporary Korean painters who were active in the 1970s.

The book begins by introducing one work by each artist at the beginning of the chapter, and then continues with the artist's life and thoughts, tracing the journey to the production of the work. Through the lens of surviving artworks, this book brings the world of artists to life. The author, a former journalist, makes the story come alive.



*The Survived Pictures and The Lee Kun-Hee & Hong Ra-Hee Collection*

*The Lee Kun-Hee & Hong Ra-Hee Collection* (Jamo Books) is a book that introduces the major works collected by Lee Kun-Hee (former chairman of Samsung Electronics) and the history surrounding them, which attracted national attention in April 2021 as the “donation of the century.” Author Sohn Young-Ok, a journalist at *Kukmin Ilbo*, began reporting from the moment the

donation by the late chairman's family was first reported, and delved into the details of each work's production and the history behind the collection. Utilizing her investigative skills, she also interviewed the gallerists who helped Lee Kun-Hee and his wife build the collection.

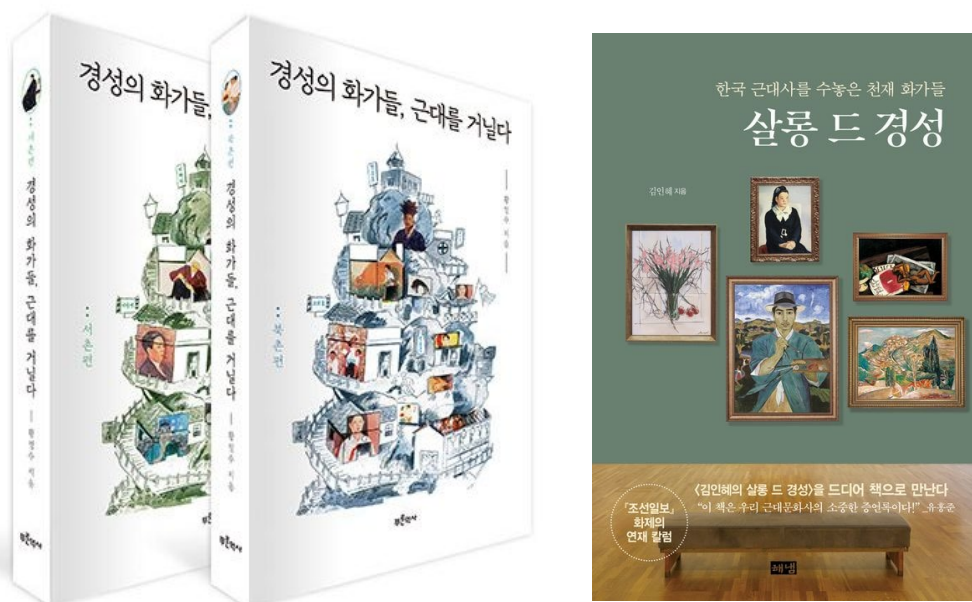
The writer divided the important donations into several categories. Masterpieces by major artists who deserve to be called national artists are organized separately from rare works that fill gaps in art history. The book emphasizes the collection's diversity, from contemporary works with abstractionist tendencies to works by individual artists who developed their own unique styles. It also includes an introduction to the Western modern works of Monet, Renoir, Chagall, and others donated to the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art.

### **Korean art blossomed amidst the pain of history**

Gyeongseong was the name of Seoul during the Japanese occupation. When Japan succeeded in annexing Korea in 1910, it renamed the country "Joseon" instead of the "Korean Empire" proclaimed by King Gojong. It gave it the Japanese name "Gyeongseong" in place of the Korean character name "Hansung" for Seoul. Gyeongseong is thus a place name that embodies the symbolism of the Japanese colonial era.

Kwang Jung-Soo, writer of *Modern Interpretation of the Gyeongseong Artists* (Purunyeoksa), is a modern art researcher

and art connoisseur. He has been writing a series of articles for newspapers and magazines such as *Ohmynews* about artists who were active in the areas of Seochon and Bukchon in Gyeongseong, introducing their lives and works. He has collected the articles and published them in two books (featuring Seochon and Bukchon each), covering quite a large number of artists. In particular, artists who tried to modernize traditional ink painting were given great attention. The book introduces several Korean artists, including Ahn Joong-Sik, Kim Eun-Ho, Noh Soo-Hyeon, Lee Sang-Beom, and Cheon Kyung-Ja. It also features a wide range of artists, including calligraphers, craftsmen, and illustrators. Significantly, the book introduces not only famous artists, but also artists who are relatively unknown to the public for reasons such as death or defection.



*Modern Interpretation of the Gyeongseong Artists (2 volumes) and Salon de Gyeongseong*

*Salon de Gyeongseong* (Hainaim) is a compilation of columns with the same title I wrote for *Chosun Ilbo* for about two years, starting in March 2021. Originally a curator at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, I curated the exhibition “Encounters Between Korean Art and Literature in the Modern Age” at the Deoksugung Pavilion in 2021, which explored the connections between literary and artistic figures in Gyeongseong in the 1930s and 1940s, and the highlights of that exhibition form the first chapter of the book. It touches on the friendship and solidarity between artists such as Lee Sang, Ku Bon-Woong, Lee Tae-Joon, Kim Yong-Joon, Baek Seok, Jung Hyeon-Woong, and others who lived through the Japanese occupation. As suggested by the book’s title, “Salon de Gyeongseong,” the book indicates that, like the salons of Paris in the 19th century and the École de Paris in the early 20th century, Korea also brought together a diverse group of artists to ignite their aspirations for a new era.

In addition, the book focuses on the lives of modern Korean artists born between the 1900s and early 1920s, who developed unique artistic worlds in the midst of harsh times. It consists of 30 articles, covering representative artists of modern Korea, as well as lesser-known but important artists such as Lee Dae-Won, Lee Sung-Ja, and Byeon Si-Ji.

### **For a broader and deeper journey into modern Korean art**

The four books introduced above have much in common, not only in that they mainly feature modern Korean artists, but also in that they started as newspaper serials and were compiled into books. As newspaper serials are written for an unspecified public, they have the advantage of being straightforward and easy to read. The relatively large number of such serials and books published in recent years is a testament to the growing public interest in modern art in Korea.

However, the limitations of newspaper serials are also apparent. As the pieces are compiled into a book, they cannot paint a comprehensive picture of the period or draw out the connections among them. Therefore, it is necessary to publish more comprehensive and multidimensional books on modern Korean art in the future. Another limitation is that the introduction of each artist or work is short due to the limited space of the newspaper series. If you want to get more in-depth information about the artists introduced, you should look for their biographies. The Korean publishing industry has already published biographies of artists such as Lee Joong-Sub, Park Soogeun, Lee In-sung, Jang Wook-jin, Chun Kyung-ja, Lee Sung-ja, and Moon Shin. There are also art booklets of solo exhibitions published by various museums, including the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, as well as a series of art books on Korean artists published by Marronnier Books.



If you are looking for more specialized knowledge, you might want to look into academic art history books. Professor Kim Young-Na's *Modern Korean Art Since 1945* (Mijinsa), published in 2020, covers the development of Korean art history after the country's liberation in 1945. In addition, *Korean Art 1900-2020*, published by the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in 2021, is an overview of a vast period of time featuring papers by a total of 34 curators and researchers.



*Modern Korean Art Since 1945 and Korean Art 1900-2020*

## EXPORT CASE

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# Successful Publication Cases of Korean Children's Books in China

The joy of Korean children's books is explained by "The Magic Elephant Books," the children's book imprint of Guangxi Normal University Press Group

Written by Wu Liyun

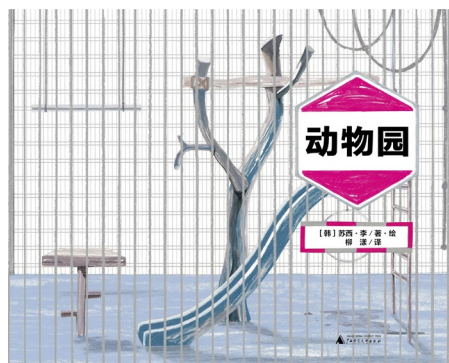
(General manager of The Magic Elephant Books, the children's book imprint of Guangxi Normal University Press Group Co., Ltd.)

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Since around 2000, Korean picture books have developed in a variety of ways, with increasingly rich materials and better illustrations, beginning to have an international presence. This led to a series of Korean children's books being imported into China around 2010. In particular, the "Survival" series on scientific facts, published in China in 2013, attracted great attention in the children's book industry and generated huge sales, triggering a boom in Korean book imports in China. Plus, with the winning of the Hans Christian Andersen Awards by Korean writers Baek Hee-Na and Suzy Lee, the fever of Korean book imports continues to this day.

## The Magic Elephant Books' overview of the current state of Korean book publishing: excellent social and economic impact

One of the goals of The Magic Elephant Books, the children's book imprint of Guangxi Normal University Press Group, is to introduce the beauty and vastness of the world to children in China, and to bring the culture and art of the world closer to them. That is why it has been focusing on Korean children's books since its foundation. In 2016, it published its first Korean picture book, *The Zoo* (BIR Publishing). A total of 67 Korean books have been published since then, including 36 picture books and 31 children's literature books. These books have been well received in China, and the overall market response has been positive. They have not only achieved good sales results, but have also been on the bestseller list in China.



The Chinese cover of *The Zoo*

For picture books, some of the best-selling titles include *The Watermelon Pool* (Changbi Publishers) by author Bonsoir Lune, and *We Are Naked Artists* (Gilbut Children Publishing) by Moon

Seung-Yeon and Suzy Lee, which went through five printings within a month. These books have won several prestigious awards, including “Favorite Children’s Book of the Year Selected by Moms” at the 2nd Parent & Child Reading Industry Summit (亲子阅读产业峰会) and “Good Children’s Book of the Year” at the 4th Chinese Children’s Book List (中国童书榜) in 2016. In children’s literature, *Let’s Go Chubby Club* by Jeon Hyeon-Jung and Park Jung-Sup (BIR Publishing) and *The Great Flight of Formica Japonica Eunbyeolbaki* by Kim Jung-Hwan and Kang Woo-Geun (Purunsoop Junior) stood out. The book, *Let’s Go Chubby Club*, was shortlisted as one of the top 150 finalists for “My Favorite Children’s Book” in 2017, and the book, *The Great Flight of Formica Japonica Eunbyeolbaki*, has been a high-quality title in The Magic Elephant Books’ science facts category in recent years.

Also notable is *My Grandma Reads Me Books* (Gloyeon) by Kim In-Ja and Lee Jin-Hee. As this book was a real-life representation of the publishing philosophy of The Magic Elephant Books, “We read for you and make love magical,” the publisher made every effort to promote the book. As a result, the book sold over 40,000 copies and won over 10 book awards, including the “Best Children’s Book of 2014” by the China Audio-video and Digital Publishing Association (CADPA), “Most Beautiful Picture Book” by the National Library of China (NLC) in 2015, and Top 10 Children’s Books (ranked 50th)” by Shenzhen Reading Month in 2015.



Chinese covers of *The Watermelon Pool*, *We Are Naked Artists*, *Let's Go Chubby Club*, *The Great Flight of Formica Japonica Eunbyeolbaki*, and *My Grandma Reads Me Books*

When it comes to promoting Korean books, The Magic Elephant Books usually focuses on one writer and then proceeds to promote similar books and writers. For example, in 2022, The Magic Elephant Books selected Suzy Lee as its “Writer of the Year”. They held 100 storytelling sessions from April 23 to June 15 on both online and offline channels featuring five of her works, including *The Zoo*, *River*, *the Black Dog* (BIR Publishing), *Open, Door!* (BIR Publishing), and *I Love You My Baby* (BIR Publishing). A total of 139 organizations and individuals participated in the offline storytelling sessions, across 74 cities in China, with a total



of 280 offline storytelling sessions, 2,200 families in attendance, more than 8,000 on-site participants, 50 online events, and more than 10,000 total participants. These events not only boosted book sales, but also played a crucial role in helping readers understand Suzy Lee and other Korean writers.



Chinese covers of *River*, *the Black Dog*, *Open, Door!*, and *I Love You My Baby*

## Why Korean Books are Popular in China

One of the main reasons Korean books are so popular in China is the diversity of their genres, especially their reflection on real-life issues that go far beyond the content of traditional children's books. The nearly 60 Korean titles published by The Magic Elephant Books include titles like *We Are Naked Artists* and *Daddy Can't Sleep* (Hansol Subuk), which both have a child-friendly vibe, as well as picture books such as *The Trees Know* (Borim Press) and *Hip-Hip-Hooray for Insects!* (Miseghy Children's Press), which cover science facts. There are also *Twelve Birds* (Changbi Publishers) for visually impaired

children, *The Story of Bbibi* (Changbi Publishers) and *Look Up!* (Hyeonamsa Publishing), which focus on the inner world of children with disabilities, and *Granny's Summer Vacation* (Changbi Publishers), which centers on the lives of the elderly. Other books on broader topics include *Teeth Hunters* (Iyagikot Publishing), which focuses on the illegal ivory trade and wildlife poaching, and *The Stories Shouldn't Be True* (Sigong Junior), which depicts a pluralistic world of war and oppression. These books reach deep into the hearts and minds of children without much explanation, with colorful and rich illustrations and text. Just like Korean children's literature critic Cho Sung-Soon wrote in *The History of Korean Picture Books* (Chungdong Geoul), the "biggest characteristic of Korean picture books is that they are not only aesthetic - metaphorical and experimental picture books are also constantly increasing."



Chinese covers of *Hip-Hip-Hooray for Insects!*, *Twelve Birds*, *Look Up!*



Chinese covers of *Granny's Summer Vacation*, *Teeth Hunters*, and *The Stories Shouldn't Be True*

The high quality of illustrations in Korean books is another reason for the popularity of Korean books in China – female Korean writers such as Baek Hee-Na and Suzy Lee have been spreading their influence in the world. Baek Hee-Na's first book, *Cloud Bread* (Hansol Subuk), was released in 2004 and garnered acclaim - she was selected as the "Illustrator of the Year" at the Bologna Children's Book Fair in 2005. Then, in 2020, she won the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (ALMA), giving international recognition to the value of Korean picture books. Writer Suzy Lee received a special mention at the Bologna Ragazzi Award at the 2021 Bologna Children's Book Fair and won the Hans Christian Andersen Awards in the Illustrator category in 2022, demonstrating the comprehensive competence of Korean picture books. In addition to these two outstanding writers, other Korean writers have been honored at the Bologna Children's Book Fair, resulting in the writers of 10 of the 60 books published by The Magic Elephant Books winning awards. Each of them has their own unique artistic style, including *Daddy Can't Sleep* by Kim



Wan-Jin and *The Lion Book* by Noh In-Kyung (JEI Corporation). While awards are not always the only criterion, they are an important factor for Chinese readers when choosing a book, as they show the international status of Korean illustrations to some extent.

- \* *K-Book Trends* Vol. 26 – Go to the interview with writer Baek Hee-Na  
[www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/interview.php?ptype=view&idx=550&page=3&code=interview&category=66](http://www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/interview.php?ptype=view&idx=550&page=3&code=interview&category=66)
- \* *K-Book Trends* Vol. 37 – Go to the interview with writer Suzy Lee  
[www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/interview.php?ptype=view&idx=580&page=3&code=interview&category=66](http://www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/interview.php?ptype=view&idx=580&page=3&code=interview&category=66)



Chinese covers of *Daddy Can't Sleep* and *The Lion Book*

In addition, Korean books are characterized by constant innovation in formats such as textless books and pop-up books. For their content, how they focus on objects as well as the detailed and vibrant expression, are notable. These characteristics make them more easily accepted in China, a neighboring Asian country, than in European and American cultures.

## Korean book outlook in China: There is more to anticipate in the future



Korean covers of *The Songs of Mountain* and *I Am Subway*

In October of this year, Shin Yoo-Mi's *The Songs of Mountain* (Bandal) was selected for the 2023 “White Ravens List” by the International Youth Library. The book visualizes the sounds and conveys the beauty of the four seasons of the year through the depiction of oriental motifs (写意画, a painting that emphasizes the appearance of an object based on the artist's intention). Meanwhile, the book *I Am Subway* (Munhakdongne Publishing Group), which was selected as The New York Times' Picture Book of the Year in 2021, depicts the ordinary but intricate lives of ordinary people as elaborately as a Korean drama, drawing empathy from readers. The books mentioned above show the constant exploration and innovation of Korean books in both form and content, which is exactly what Chinese picture books need now and what Chinese readers are excited about. We look forward to more surprises that Korean illustrations will bring to Chinese readers.

## BOOK TRIP

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[Into the Book ⑤]

# *Human Acts*, One Step Closer to a Painful Memory

Historical Sites of the May 18 Democratic Uprising in Gwangju Metropolitan Area

Written by Kim Kyu-Sung

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*Human Acts*

Some memories don't heal. Rather than fading away over time, the memory remains, and everything else slowly wears away.



5.18 Democracy Square seen from the Jeonil Building

Han Kang's novel published in 2014, *Human Acts* (Changbi Publishers), which won the Man Booker Prize in 2016, tells the story of the Gwangju May 18 Democratic Uprising\* through the eyes of several characters. Even though more than 40 years have passed, Gwangju is a city that still remembers and mourns the pain of the May uprising in 1980, when citizens and university students stood for democracy. The novel narrates the events of the ten days from May 18, 1980, through six characters. The writer focuses on individual emotions and pain, not political or social debates, so you can feel the pain as vividly as if you were there. The writer revealed that she felt a great deal of emotional aftermath because she was able to capture the pain of Gwangju

Metropolitan City, where she spent her childhood. We went in search of the symbolic places of the May 18 Democratic Uprising that appear throughout *Human Acts*.

\* May 18 Democratic Uprising: A democratic movement in South Korea, May 18–28, 1980, led by the people of Gwangju, demanding the establishment of a democratic government, the removal of the neo-military forces, and the end of martial law.

## The history of democracy in the 5.18 Democracy Square

Think of the cold trigger.

Think of the warm finger that pulled it.

Think of the eyes aimed at me.

Think of the man who ordered the shot.

One of the most iconic scenes of the May 18 Democratic Uprising was when martial law forces fired at citizens gathered in front of the Jeollanam-do Provincial Government Office. In Chapter 1 of *Human Acts*, the scene is described in detail as Dong-Ho runs away in extreme fear as his friend Jeong-Dae is hit by a bullet. Exposed to the hail of bullets, citizens laid down in the square in front of the old government office and on the streets of Geumnam-ro, unable to get up.

Although the Jeollanam-do government has been relocated to Muan-gun, the related buildings remain at 5.18 Democracy Square in Dong-gu, Gwangju. The former government building and annex, where the citizen army was based, as well as the Sangmugwan building, where the bodies of the victims were



temporarily placed, remain, and are currently being restored to their original state. The square also features a fountain and clock tower that symbolize the May 18 Democratic Uprising. At the time, the fountain was draped with a giant Korean flag, and people filled the square to resist the martial law forces. Jürgen Hinzpeter, a reporter for the German public broadcast NDR, who was the first to report on the events in Gwangju, emphasized the importance of the clock tower, saying, “The clock tower symbolizes the beginning of democracy and freedom, so it should be protected as a witness for future generations.”



5.18 Democracy Square Fountain and former Jeollanam-do government building under restoration



5.18 Clock Tower

Right next to the square is the Jeonil Building, which provides an observation deck overlooking the 5.18 Democracy Square. It was the first office building in Gwangju, a symbol of the former government office square, and the largest building in Gwangju when it was established in 1968. You can see the former government building, Sangmugwan, fountain, and clock tower from the rooftop observation deck. The Jeonil Building was recognized for its historical value when 245 bullet holes from helicopter gunshots were found on the 10th floor. It is now preserved as a cultural space, observation deck, and democracy movement exhibition hall.



The May 18 Democratic Uprising exhibit space in the Jeonil Building, with 245 helicopter gunshot holes preserved.

## 5.18 Archives exhibits UNESCO Memory of the World archives

I fight, and I fight alone, every day.

I fight the shame of being alive.

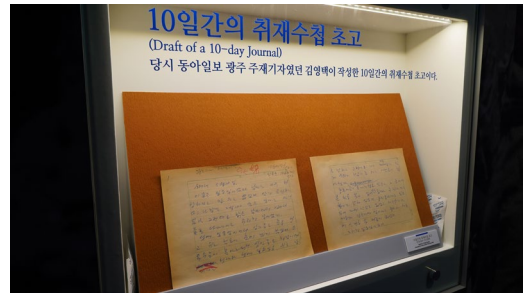
I fight the fact that I am human.

I fight the idea that death is the only way to escape that fact.

About 200 meters along the main road from the Jeonil Building is the 5.18 Archives, where you can learn more about the May 18 Democratic Uprising. Here, various records and materials related to the May 18 Democratic Uprising are stored and displayed. In particular, the importance of the 5.18 Archives, which preserves citizens' statements and manifestos, medical records, and U.S. declassified documents, was heightened when the May 18 Democratic Uprising was added to the UNESCO Memory of the World list in 2011.

While we may not have personally experienced the May 18 Democratic Uprising, we all owe it to ourselves to remember the event that symbolizes the growth of democracy in South Korea. The 5.18 Archives also offers exhibitions and experiences for visitors on four floors, with permanent exhibitions on the first through third floors and the May 18 Democratic Uprising VR room on the basement floor. In the exhibition hall, you can look at the records left by citizens, such as draft articles and statements, and the UNESCO listing process. In the VR experience room, you can directly experience the heat of the time by virtually boarding hot air balloons and taxis with VR devices.





A view of the 5.18 Archives,  
an interview notebook written by a reporter from *The Dong-A Ilbo* at the time.



Multimedia materials in the 5.18 Archives,  
hot air balloon and taxi experiences in the VR Experience Room

Currently, a total of 29 historical sites related to the May 18 Democratic Uprising have been selected in Gwangju Metropolitan City, and markers have been installed to commemorate and preserve their historical significance. The first historical site marker is located at the main gate of Chonnam National University, considered the starting point of the May 18 Democratic Uprising. The marker stone here is larger than the others to commemorate the beginning of the uprising, and documents the students' resistance to the martial law forces in detail. Other historical sites can be found throughout the city, including Chonnam National University Hospital, where the wounded were treated, the former Gwangju Munwha Broadcasting Building, Namdong Catholic Church, and the former site of the 505 Security Force.



The marker stone at the main gate of Chonnam National University, which is designated as Historic Site No.1, and the marker stone at Chonnam National University Hospital

## Yangnim Historical and Cultural Village, the beginning of Gwangju's modern history

Once you have had sufficient time to explore the May 18 Democratic Uprising, visit Yangnim Historical and Cultural Village in Yangnim-dong, Nam-gu. This cultural village marks the beginning of Gwangju's modern history and is a popular tourist destination in Gwangju Metropolitan City, with modern heritage sites scattered throughout.

Yangnim Historical and Cultural Village has been a popular place to live since the Joseon Dynasty, as it is supported by ridges leading to Sajik and Yangnim Mountain, and the Gwangju Stream flows in front of it. It is famous for being the home of the five richest men in Gwangju, and you can see old-fashioned Korean-style *hanok* houses everywhere. Later, in the early 20th century, Western missionaries such as Eugene Bell and Owen gathered and opened churches, schools, and hospitals, leading the trend of modernization. The combination of traditional cultural properties, modern buildings, and current cultural and business spaces creates a unique atmosphere in Yangnim Historical and

Cultural Village. The Lee Jang-Woo House, a traditional upper-class house in the early modern era, and the Owen Memorial Hall, commemorates Owen and his grandfather, who were martyred while serving as the first missionaries in Jeollanam-do, are also must-see buildings. Established in 1914, the Owen Memorial Hall has two floors of gray brick and a wooden interior. It was designed to be used as a cultural space, with seats on the first floor and balconies on the second floor. There are records of many operas, concerts, and plays being performed there, as well as being used as a place of worship.



Lee Jang-Woo House, an example of early modern Korean *hanok* architecture, and Owen Memorial Hall, a modern Western cultural space

*Human Acts* is a heartbreaking history of the people of Gwangju and a tribute to the democratization process that we must remember. In her introduction, the writer expressed her hope that “more young people and young readers, will read this book.” This may be the reason why she painstakingly wrote the story of Gwangju, which has been gradually forgotten over the past 40 years. Visit the historical sites related to the May 18 Democratic Uprising in Gwangju Metropolitan City, where you can encounter the pain and memories of that day.

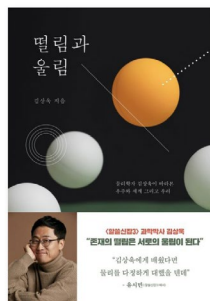
## ONE-LINER QUOTES

Endless Possibilities in  
Korean Science Books and SF

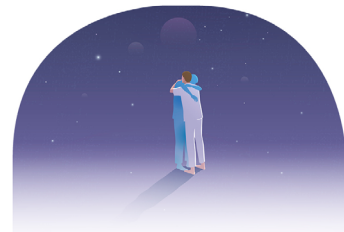
## Emergency Doctor's Pick

Written by Namkoong-Ihn (Writer and emergency doctor  
at Ewha Mokdong Women's University Hospital)

Namkoong-Ihn is an emergency doctor currently working at Ewha Mokdong Women's University Hospital. He is also a writer, releasing *No Ifs* (Munhakdongne), *A Vicious Day* (Munhakdongne), and *Some Fairly Peaceful Days* (Munhakdongne).



*Tremolo and Echo*  
Kim Sang-Wook, East-Asia Publishing



Humans live happily in this meaningless universe  
inside their own imaginary world, enjoying  
an imaginary happiness they created.

That is why humans are  
far more extraordinary than the universe,

Science is hard. But there is nothing more fun than science. Science is about exploring the nature of the world, and when you study science, you always get to the root of existence. After all, our world looks different through the eyes of science. On the other hand, science is also a difficult field for the public. It is inevitably accompanied by difficult formulas and unfriendly, counterintuitive facts. Dr. Kim Sang-Wook, a professor of physics at Kyunghee University, is one of the scientists who interacts most closely with the public in Korea. Among the many branches of science, he specializes in physics, which is the closest to the essence of science, but also the most complex.

\* *K-Book Trends* Vol. 42 – Go to the interview with writer Kim Sang-Wook  
[www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/interview.php?ptype=view&idx=894&page=3&code=interview](http://www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/interview.php?ptype=view&idx=894&page=3&code=interview)

Science is like a textbook, if it is explained at an easy and moderate level. If you explain it in a straightforward manner based on evidence and principles, it is like a professional textbook. On the other hand, if you explain it in your own literary language with philosophy, history, and a sense of awe and wonder about the world, then it becomes a good liberal arts book. Professor Kim Sang-Wook is one of the best liberal arts writers in Korea who writes books about physics. He is also a popular lecturer who has been on various TV programs, introducing intricate concepts like quantum mechanics in the most interesting way possible. His book *Tremolo and Echo* (East-Asia Publishing) is a science book that is comparable to Carl



Sagan's *Cosmos*, at least in Korea. Let me end with a quote from him about the nature of the world and the source of existence. "Humans live happily in this meaningless universe inside their own imaginary world, enjoying an imaginary happiness they created. That is why humans are far more extraordinary than the universe."



*Eversible*  
Moon Mokha, Arzaklivres



It would have been nice to have killed  
this man at that moment, by any means necessary.  
That is what comes to her mind  
whenever she thinks about the moment,

Diligent Korean writers are already producing world-class science fiction. Korean science fiction is characterized by a wide variety of native references that are borrowed and transformed. The book *Eversible* (Arzaklivres) is a work that pushes the boundaries of how far Korean science fiction can go.

In this novel, metaphors for periodic disasters and catastrophes in Korea, its dynamic social structure, its exclusionary culture for foreign members, and its corrupt public authorities and illegal organizations function as one axis. On the other hand, the battles of superheroes, the rules of romance genre-fiction, the fan-fiction culture of idols, and extreme and unyielding love operate on the other axis. These two axes seem disjointed, but at some point,

they blend together and penetrate our minds. With the main characters acting with clear motivations and the fantasy setting explained, the genre of the novel shifts from mystery to romance, which makes “irreversible” an overly sad statement for time travelers. There is a sentence that I keep coming back to after the story ends. “It would have been nice to have killed this man at that moment, by any means necessary. That is what comes to her mind whenever she thinks about the moment.” Closing the book, I felt so torn that I wanted to hug the person who wrote this sentence.



## KOREAN PUBLISHERS

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### Hakgojae Publishers

Turning the Old Into the New, Towards a Broader, Richer Future



Korean and English logos of Hakgojae Publishers

A new trend in Korea - *newtro* (a newly coined word combining “new” and “retro”) - has recently become popular among the younger generation. It is about finding new meaning and charm in old things and enjoying them as a culture. But even before the word *newtro* was created, there was a publishing company that worked tirelessly to promote the beauty of Korea on the global stage with such a spirit. Hakgojae Publishers, a publisher founded in 1991, has been at the forefront of exploring Korean

culture and beauty for over 30 years. It is also a company that cherishes the past yet gradually broadens its horizons according to the changing demands of readers and the needs of the times, receiving encouragement and acclaim from Korean readers beyond recognition. Hakgojae Publishers, which has been committed to promoting the true beauty of Korea, is ready to tell the entire story to readers around the world as the “K-craze” sweeps the world. Following is an interview with Hakgojae Publishers, a company creating new value from the old.

It's an honor to have you with us on *K-Book Trends*. Please introduce your company to our international readers along with the meaning of the company's name.

Hello, we are Hakgojae Publishers. The name of Hakgojae Publishers (學古齋) stems from the Chinese classic, *ongojisin* (溫故知新) which means “to learn the old and create the new.” Learning the old and creating the new doesn't just mean accumulating knowledge of the past; it is the spirit of *ongojisin* at Hakgojae Publishers, which is to position ourselves on the basis of accurate perception and criticism of the old, and to create something new on that basis, contributing to the world's cultural currents. Publishing Choi Soon-Woo's *The Choi Soon-Woo Complete Collection* and *Leaning Against the Entasis Solumns at Muryangsujeon Hall*, as well as Kim Hoon's *Namhansanseong Fortress, Hyecho's Wang-Ocheonchukguk-Jeon*, and *A Journey*

*Through Modern Korean Literature* series, we have been a pioneer in the exploration of Korean culture and beauty since the foundation of the company in 1991, standing at the forefront of promoting the genuine aspects of Korean culture and the humanities spirit.

Since then, Hakgojae Publishers has expanded from Korean culture to global culture and from the humanities to society, politics, and economics. We introduce the philosophies and achievements of various figures not only in Korea but also around the world, such as “The Analects of Confucius,” “Michelle Obama,” “Let Them Eat First” by Mother Teresa, and “My Life on the Road” by feminist journalist and social activist Gloria Marie Steinem. We also publish books that can be shared with the teenage and young adult generations, focusing on the core issues our society needs to solve together. We will continue to fulfill Hakgojae Publishers’ mission of finding and spreading the important issues and solutions of our society, covering everything from the humanities to the natural sciences, from teenagers to the elderly.

The background of your publishing house is unique. It started as a gallery specializing in classic calligraphy in 1988 and was expanded into a publishing house specializing in art and cultural heritage in 1991. Why and how did you expand your business from a gallery to a publishing house?

When you think of “Hakgojae Publishers,” some people think of a publishing company, and some people think of a gallery. That’s right. Hakgojae Publishers started as a gallery named Hakgojae. In 1988, Hakgojae, a gallery specializing in classic calligraphy in Insa-dong, Seoul, opened its doors with the spirit of *ongojisin*. This spirit extended beyond the gallery to an interest in Korean culture as a whole, and in 1991, Hakgojae Publishers was founded and became a leading publisher in promoting Korean culture. The first book Hakgojae Publishers produced as a publisher in 1992 was *The Choi Soon-Woo Complete Collection*. At the time, many publishers were reluctant to publish a complete collection that cost more than 100 million won for production. Still, Hakgojae Publishers boldly took on the task despite being a fledgling publishing house. It was Hakgojae Publishers’ mission to publish books by Choi Soon-Woo, a leading Korean art historian and the fourth director of the National Museum of Korea, who dedicated his life to promoting the beauty of Korea and preserving and exhibiting our cultural heritage. Since then, excerpts from *The Choi Soon-Woo Complete Collection* have been published as *Leaning Against the Entasis Solumns at*

*Muryangsujeon Hall* in 1994, and *I Find My Things Beautiful* in 2002. These books are now Hakgojae Publishers' bestsellers.



The first books published by Hakgojae Publishers – *The Choi Soon-Woo Complete Collection*, *Leaning Against the Entasis Solumns at Muryangsujeon Hall*, and *I Find My Things Beautiful*

You started out as a publisher specializing in art and cultural heritage, but now you publish books in various fields, including literature, such as fiction and non-fiction, and economics. Art and cultural heritage can be a bit difficult for the general public to absorb - is the expansion also related to broadening the publisher's target audience? Please tell us about the reasons for the expansion.

As you mentioned, we initially published *The Choi Soon-Woo Complete Collection*, followed by *Calligraphy of the Mid-Joseon Dynasty*, *Paintings and Writing of the Late Joseon Dynasty*, *Traditional Korean Paintings*, and *Beautiful Korean Ceramics*, which served as a guide to explore the aesthetics of Korean culture. Since the 2000s, Hakgojae Publishers has expanded its horizons step by step by publishing books that explore the universality of humanity and reveal the true nature of our

culture and humanistic spirit in this era, such as Kim Hoon's *Namhansanseong Fortress*, *Hyecho's Wang-Ocheonchukguk-Jeon*, and *Traditional Performing Arts of Korea*. The expansion of Hakgojae Publishers' reach from the center of art and cultural heritage to the overall culture and humanistic spirit can be seen as a result of the demands of the times and Hakgojae Publishers' spirit of learning from the old and creating the new. Readership has also expanded as a result.

In 2013, in order to better communicate with the public and improve the overall management, Hakgojae Publishers entered into a corporate merger with Current Korea, a public relations (PR) company, to expand our business scope and significantly strengthen our PR and marketing capabilities. Since then, we have broadened our coverage from Korean culture to world culture and from humanities to society, politics, and economics. In addition, we have widened our interests to core issues that our society needs to solve, and we are now developing content by expanding our target audience to teenagers and young adults.

It has been described that Hakgojae Publishers, which has been in business for more than 30 years, has a depth of flavor that is like a long-stored wine. Could you tell us a bit about what has kept you publishing for so long and the know-how you have accumulated over the years?

Hakgojae Publishers opened its doors in 1991, and it has been 33 years now. Throughout the years, many book editors who



love Korean culture and strive to spread its values have worked for Hakgojae Publishers. We believe that their efforts, along with those of our founder, have been the power behind the establishment and continuation of Hakgojae Publishers today. The *Hakgojae Publishers' New Books* series started in 1995 with Choi Soon-Woo's *Leaning Against the Entasis Solumns at Muryangsujeon Hall*, which depicts the beauty of our nature and art, and has since published many classics that contain not only the essence of our culture, but also the cultures of the East and West. During this time, we created a new form from the traces of our art, not only in terms of content, but also in terms of format and design, which led to the creation of the phrase "Hakgojae Publishers Edition" in the world.

We believe that another strength of Hakgojae Publishers is the management style, which was set up as a small publishing company but has constantly pursued change. In the 1990s, when democracy and capitalism took hold in our society and emphasized productivity, Hakgojae Publishers realized the need to search for the values and roots of our culture and devoted ourselves to portraying them. Later, in order to strengthen communication with the public and improve management, we merged with Current Korea and expanded the range of published content and the target audience. Now, in the digital age, with the diversification of ways to consume content, Hakgojae Publishers is preparing for change again. Hakgojae Publishers is planning to diversify content and media.

## What is the book that best represents the identity of Hakgojae Publishers?

Our representative books, which represent the identity of Hakgojae Publishers, can be broadly categorized into Korean culture books, humanities books, art books, books on Korea's intellectual legacy, and practical books.

The first is a book about our culture, *Leaning Against the Entasis Solumns at Muryangsujeon Hall* by Dr. Choi Soon-Woo, mentioned above. Choi dedicated his life to promoting the beauty of Korea, writing about the “beauty of what is ours” through various publications during his lifetime, and spent decades working in museums to preserve and display our cultural assets. The book is a collection of more than 120 essays that draw on the entire spectrum of Korean artworks, including paintings, potteries, sculpture, and architecture, and illustrate their sheer beauty. The book has been loved by many, being selected on several lists, as “a must-read for freshmen at KAIST,” “the book of the year selected by MBC’s Exclamation Mark in 2002,” “one of the top 100 books selected by 100 experts,” and “one of the top 50 neo-classic works in the 21st century selected by Donga Ilbo in 2005.” Since the first edition was published in 1994, more than 500,000 copies have been sold, and it has grown into a steady seller, still sought after by many. It can be said to be a neo-classic of our time.

The second book we would like to introduce is *Namhansanseong*

*Fortress* by novelist Kim Hoon. The book tells the story of King Injo, who fled the army of the Qing during the Manchu Invasion in the winter of 1636 and moved into Namhansanseong Fortress, and the conflict between the anti-Chinese faction that wanted to confront the Qing and the pro-Chinese faction that wanted to reach a peace agreement. In *Namhansanseong Fortress*, Kim Hoon meticulously depicts the harsh 47 days of isolation and the lives of ordinary citizens suffering under the fate of their country. After the first edition was published in 2007, it was chosen as “the book of the year selected by netizens,” won the “Daesan Literary Award,” became a “bestselling book across genres,” and was selected as a “book of the year,” receiving much love from readers. In 2017, it reached its 100th printing and was released as a movie. To commemorate the 100th printing of *Namhansanseong Fortress*, Hakgojae Publishers released an “Art Edition” featuring 27 new paintings by Korean artist Moon Bong-Sun, a professor at Hongik University. To date, *Namhansanseong Fortress* has been a steady seller that continues to attract readers’ attention, raising the reputation of Hakgojae Publishers. In addition, *Black Mountain*, another novel by Kim Hoon, published in 2011, has also become a steady-seller after *Namhansanseong Fortress* - it is a good book to read together as well.

\* *K-Book Trends* Vol. 56 – Go to the article about *Namhansanseong Fortress*

[www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/trend.php?ptype=view&idx=1154&page=1&code=trend&category=61](http://www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/trend.php?ptype=view&idx=1154&page=1&code=trend&category=61)



*Namhansanseong Fortress and Black Mountain*

The third representative art book is *50-Day Journey in European Museums* by art critic Lee Ju-Heon. In 1995, Lee Ju-Heon wrote this book about his 50-day journey through European museums with his family. He shared his vivid experiences and appreciation of artworks in simple language, making European art accessible to even the most non-artistic people. On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the book's publication in 2015, Lee Ju-Heon took a second trip of 30 days and published a revised edition of *50-Day Journey in European Museums*, making it an “80-day journey” rather than a 50-day trip. The revised edition features 44 museums in 16 cities across 10 countries (the UK, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Czech Republic, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, and Spain). The book includes dozens of new museums from the previous edition, as well as updates to existing museums. It replaces guidebooks for those traveling to European art museums by offering basic knowledge of Western art history as well as the writer's impressions. It was selected as

an “Excellent Book Recommended by the Gyeonggido Office of Education in 2003” and a “Must Read Book for Young People by the POSCO Educational Foundation in 2005.”

As our fourth archive of Korean intellectual heritage, we would like to introduce *Hyecho's Wang-Ocheonchukguk-Jeon*. It has been a classic favorite since its publication in 2004. As the oldest surviving Korean book and the only record of 8th-century India and Central Asia, it tells the story of what Hyecho, a monk from the Silla period, saw and heard while traveling through India and Central Asia. The 6,000 Chinese characters are fully annotated and deciphered by the book's writer, Jung Su-Il, who is an established figure in the field, allowing you to learn about the dynastic and civilizational history of the countries Hyecho mentioned, as well as what the regions are like today. It is comparable to the *Great Tang Record of the Western Regions* in China and *The Travels of Ibn Battuta* in Islam. The book was selected as one of the “Outstanding Liberal Arts Books Recommended by the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism in 2004” and as one of the “100 Beautiful Books of Korea” by the Guest of Honor Organizing Committee of the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2005.



50-Day Journey in European Museum 1, 2 and Hyecho's Wang-Ocheonchukguk-Jeon

The fifth representative practical book is the *Coloring Book for Your Memory* series. Published in 2018, this book is a series that focuses on the needs of new readers and contains a program of cognitive activities tailored to the needs of the elderly. The book provides difficulty levels that take into account the poor eyesight and slower fingering of older adults, and encourages brain activities that are directly related to their daily lives to prevent their concentration and memory from deteriorating. It stimulates memory in a healthy way with materials that bring back good memories of the past. It also provides effective cognitive training by connecting brain recognition and free hand movement through coloring. In addition, the design and style preserve their taste, self-esteem, and sense of accomplishment. The series has been adopted as teaching materials by more than 200 dementia care centers nationwide. Hakgojae Publishers will continue to publish the series in the future.





The *Coloring Book for Your Memory* series published up to date

You recently published four books in the *A Journey Through Modern Korean Literature* series at the same time: *The Seoul Story*, *The Pyeongando Story*, *The Hamgyeongdo Story*, and *The Tokyo Story*. It must have been a huge undertaking. It is quite surprising that you published four books covering modern Korean literature at once, especially nowadays when people prefer smaller books and lighter stories. Can you give us a brief introduction to the books and how they were planned and published?

Novelist Kim Nam-Il has embarked on a grand project called *A Journey Through Modern Korean Literature* series, which includes *The Seoul Story*, *The Pyeongando Story*, *The Hamgyeongdo Story*, and *The Tokyo Story*. It is a kind of travelogue, or a navigation of literary history, that closely explores the modernity of this land using literature as a map, created out of our interest and love for literature as novelists. The four books took almost three years from planning to publication.

The series focuses on demonstrating vividly where modern Korean literature is rooted and what kind of features it has. That is why we adopted the “literary travelogue” format from the beginning, instead of a formal framework of literary history. Using old literary works as coordinates, we travel back through the cities, villages, mountains, and fields depicted in the novels and look at the people and lives behind the scenes. The vast *A Journey Through Modern Korean Literature* series was also intended to be a story that can be read like a novel and draw the big picture of Korean literary history on its own.



*The Seoul Story, The Pyeongando Story, The Hamgyeongdo Story, and The Tokyo Story*

While Hakgojae Publishers highly value the novelty and necessity of the project as a new approach to understanding modern Korean literature, we were heartbroken about the readers’ choice. The writer felt the same way, but unexpectedly, many readers showed interest and anticipation in the series and encouraged us by saying, “I should read Korean literature again,” “Oh, the place I’m passing through is the one that I read on the book” and “This is a must-have book to understand ourselves.”

While most of Hakgojae Publishers' books target mature audiences, its children's books also stand out. It is impressive how it manages to incorporate Eastern classics like *Mencius* and *Caigentan* into children's daily lives and explain them in a simple way. How do Hakgojae Publishers' children's books differ from those of other publishers?

Around 2010, we attempted to broaden our offerings to include children's books based on our accumulated text production and design capabilities. As a result, we have published a variety of children's books based on Korean culture, Eastern and Western classics, such as the *Hakgojae Publishers' Eastern Classics* series, the *Let's Learn About Multi-Culture* series, the *Hakgojae Publishers' Traditional Life* series exploring the traditional life of Koreans, and the *Hakgojae Publishers' Steel Key* series featuring our food and culture. Hakgojae Publishers' children's books are storytellers that use classics and Korean culture as leverage, borrowing from the way we encounter the old in children's daily lives and the way we find the lives of children today in the old to translate them into pictures and texts. This is perhaps what distinguishes our books from other children's books: we embody the spirit of *ongojisin* in them.

For example, *Confucius Analects Shake Our Classroom*, the second book in the *Hakgojae Publishers Eastern Classics* series, tells the story of Ye-Beom, a great fan of Confucius Analects who lived in the mountains of Jirisan and loved reciting Chinese characters. The book describes his conflicts, worries, and

friendships with his classmates as he transfers to the fifth class of the fourth grade at Dongjum Elementary School in Seoul. Aside from the Confucius Analects passages, the book also features heartwarming stories of children. Many other books based on Korean culture are loved by young readers, including *Celebrating the Mastery*, which revives the beautiful Korean tradition of “treating teachers and colleagues with food when mastering a book,” *I Want Some Tteokbokki*, which introduces the origins of Korean food, and *It’s Dried Yellow Croaker*, which explains the history and culture behind traditional foods.



*Confucius Analects Shake Our Classroom and Celebrating the Mastery*

How do you discover good writers or content, and what are some of the things you pay attention to make Hakgojae Publishers’ books competitive?

Finding good writers and content is the most important task that all publishers struggle with, and we do not have a special solution. Our editors meet with many external experts and search

for a lot of materials, and based on this, we create keywords and plan content through internal editorial meetings. We find writers and content in a variety of ways, including finding the most suitable authors, discovering quality content from submissions and various content platforms, and seeking out writers who come to Hakgojae Publishers directly because we have a reputation as a publisher that produces quality books. Many of our best-selling books and the know-how contained in them are also our competitive advantage. In addition to this know-how, how to communicate with new generations to create and discover new content is currently a concern for Hakgojae Publishers.

Are there any books from Hakgojae Publishers that you would like to introduce to international readers?

We would like to recommend *Namhansanseong Fortress* by Kim Hoon and *Leaning Against the Entasis Solumns at Muryangsujeon Hall* by Choi Soon-Woo, but since they were introduced earlier, we will leave them out. Instead, we would like to introduce three books that exemplify Korean values like these two.

Jeon Kyung-Wook, author of *Traditional Performing Arts of Korea*, is one of the most extensive and unrivaled researchers on the subject of “traditional play” in Korea. The author, who majored in classical novels and oral literature, has spent the past 30 years meticulously researching the history of Korean

traditional mask play, puppetry, tightrope walking, acrobatics, witchcraft, *pungmul*, shamanism, *pansori*, witticisms, and *nongak*. His research ranges from performance-oriented field performances such as *Bukcheongsaengnori*, *Bongsan* Mask Play, and *Yangju Byeolsandae Nori*, to East Asian shamanism that serves as the spiritual background of the arts and culture. Of course, it also includes the study of folk-based *Jangbadak* plays, as well as specialty theater cultures such as royal events and court performances. It is a natural extension of finding the origins of our traditional dramatic arts, defining their meaning and scope, and analyzing performance forms that have changed over time. As a scholar of comparative East Asian cultural history, author Jeon Kyung-Wook has not only analyzed Korean, Chinese, and Japanese folk performance culture in detail, but has also extensively studied cases from the West, China, and Japan to shed light on the cultural uniqueness and universality of Korean traditional performing arts. The results of his long and diligent collection and comparative analysis of scattered field records and materials have contributed to the field of Korean studies as a valuable database in the field of traditional performing arts.

*Advertisement Genius Lee Je-Seok* is a book about advertising genius Lee Je-Seok's philosophy and vision, including his success as a country boy, his challenges in advertising, how Jeski Social Campaign came to be, his success as an advertiser, and what advertising should be like in the future. By developing the innate ability to fight through the battlefield where large corporations



clog up billboards with their sheer volume, the book reveals the writer's ambition as an advertiser to change society through not just commercial advertisements, but also public service announcements that deal with political, economic, social, and cultural issues. The book features Lee Je-Seok's biggest projects, his latest ads, stories of work that have made headlines, and stories about the making of his ads. It was named Book of the Month in 2008 and Teen Book of the Year in 2010. It is still the most sought-after book for teens interested in design and advertising.

*Oh Kyung-Hwan's Art Brochure* is a catalogue raisonné of 230 pieces of "space paintings" from the life of contemporary artist Oh Kyung-Hwan. While most artists paint landscapes or the female figure, Oh Kyung-Hwan found a painterly fascination with the cosmic landscape and began to paint space as an entirely different world. His cosmic journey, from his first solo exhibition in 1969 with the Apollo lunar missions, has continued consistently for more than 50 years. His initial fascination with space as an "infinite and vast abyss" has evolved over the years to include "the instinct and fascination of untethered spacewalks." This book brings together the work of Oh Kyung-Hwan, who has consistently reflected upon his life with "space" at its center from the moment the earth, moon, and distant outer space were revealed to the world, and has experimented with the extremes of contemporary art with that philosophy and thought.



*Traditional Performing Arts of Korea, Advertisement Genius Lee Je-Seok, and Oh Kyung-Hwan's Art Brochure*

We look forward to the future of Hakgojae Publishers - a publisher that puts timeless values into books. Could you tell us about your new publication plans and future goals?

The way we consume content is changing rapidly. While the quality and value of content are important, if you don't interact with readers, it will be wasted. Hakgojae Publishing has two goals: to expand the areas and ways to communicate with the public, and to discover high-quality content. Hakgojae Publishers has completed projects that are difficult for anyone to undertake, such as the *A Journey Through Modern Korean Literature* series and the *Dictionary of Urban Planning Concepts*. The work of discovering and protecting value will continue in the future.

On the other hand, we plan to diversify the way we develop content. We aim for "One-Source Multi-Use" and envision a systematic system from content planning to finding writers. We are looking for ways to enjoy our content in a way that matches

how the public consumes it. In addition, we will significantly bolster our PR and marketing capabilities to communicate with the public, and discover and create something unique to us based on the principle that the most local is the most global.

## KOREAN AUTHORS

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### Writer Kim Hye-Jung

The Story of Becoming “Me, Different from Yesterday”

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Adolescence is a time of imperfection, making it all the more precious and beautiful because you can envision anything you want in the future. Young adult literature also colors the minds of not only children but also adults with diverse stories that cross genres such as science fiction and fantasy. It is a genre you can pick up and read for fun, and once done, you feel deeply moved. Perhaps it is the perfect genre for Kim Hye-Jung, who became a writer because she loved stories. Listening to the inner thoughts of struggling teenagers and writing their stories with sincerity, Kim hopes that her books will give teenage readers a place to breathe. Her affectionate and warm perspective on the stories of teenagers could be felt throughout the interview. Following is an interview with Kim Hye-Jung, an artist who touches our hearts

with each new story, hoping to paint a life full of the 100 colors that children possess.



It is an honor to have you with us on *K-Book Trends*. Please introduce yourself to our readers.

Hello, I'm Kim Hye-Jung, and I write "children's stories" for children and "young adult fiction" for teenagers. My published works so far include young adult fiction *Fifteen Years Old For 500 Years 1, 2* (Wisdom House), *Fantastic Girl* (BIR, the original story of the drama "Hello, It's Me!"), *Hiking Girls* (BIR), and *Diet School* (Jamo Books), as well as children's books *Hunter Girl 1-5* (Sakyejul), *Nosy Goblin Ohjirang 1-4* (Dasan Kids), and *Counselor Ms. You're Right* (BIR).



*Hiking Girls, Nosy Goblin Ohjirang 1, and Counselor Ms. You're Right*

You won the 1st Blue Fiction Award in 2008 for your book *Hiking Girls*. Since the award is for young adult literature, did you plan to write young adult fiction from the beginning? Why or how did you decide to write for young adults instead of adults?

I wanted to be a storyteller since I was a kid. I wanted to be a novelist, or a movie director, but I didn't think I would write young adult fiction. Because when I was a teenager, there was no young adult genre in Korea. It was only in 2008 that the young adult genre started to take root in Korea. When I was in my 20s, I was submitting my work to various contests, and I came across a new award for young adult literature. I didn't know exactly what young adult literature was, but I thought it could be anything with a teenager as the main character. And, as you said, I won the award with my story, *Hiking Girls*. I love teenage characters. It is because a story can change when the characters change, and teenage characters are very volatile. They have a big, dynamic



emotional spectrum, and I think that is why they fit so well into different genres, such as science fiction and fantasy.

The book *Fifteen Years Old For 500 Years*, published in 2022, is often referred to as a “K-Fantasy” because of its Korean settings, including the myth of Dangun and the tale of Gumiho. Although the settings are very familiar to Koreans, they might be somewhat unfamiliar to international readers. Can you give us a brief description of the book and what international readers should keep in mind when reading these stories?

The idea of immortality has always been a favorite subject in both the East and the West. There are already many stories in movies and dramas about people who live forever without aging, but the main characters are usually “adults” in their 30s. The 30s are the best years of your life - you can do whatever you want, make money, and be physically the healthiest you can be. In the book *Fifteen Years Old For 500 Years*, the main character, Gaeul, a member of the “Yaho” tribe, is fifteen years old and has lived for five hundred years, just like it says in the title. I think “fifteen” is the most difficult and challenging age in life, the point where you wish it would just be over already.

Actually, when I told my teenage readers before the book came out that I was writing a novel about a fifteen-year-old kid living for five hundred years, they got very upset with me because they thought I was being too cruel - the character would have to go to

school over and over again, take tests repeatedly, and go through puberty forever. I thought, “What if the life of a fifteen-year-old were to repeat itself forever?” The battle between the immortals, the Yaho and the Horang, would be a fun part of the fantasy world, and the comparison between the Yaho and human life would remind readers of the preciousness of finite time.

The Dangun myth, which inspired the novel, is one of the most powerful myths in Korea. But I was disappointed that it was rarely adapted into other stories - so I intentionally borrowed elements from the myth. The Gumiho story is a legend of a monstrous fox that eats human livers, and Gumiho is seen as a charming but evil image. I renamed the Gumiho as the Yaho tribe, and drew them as beings who can stop time and live forever because they have a bead and that the liver-eating rumor is a myth.

There are so many interesting legends and folk tales in Korea. K-dramas and movies are becoming very popular these days, and they have their roots in Korean folk tales and legends. I think the power of K-stories is that they are passed down from generation to generation with many variations. In *Fifteen Years Old For 500 Years*, you will learn about various interesting Korean folk tales such as “Magpie Returns the Favor,” “The Tiger Brother,” “The Sun and the Moon,” and more.



*Fifteen Years Old for 500 Years and Fifteen Years Old for 500 Years 2: The Weight of the Bead*

*Fifteen Years Old for 500 Years* has sold 100,000 copies, and readers have been so enthusiastic that you recently released a sequel, *Fifteen Years Old for 500 Years 2: The Weight of the Bead*. Did you write it with a sequel in mind from the beginning? How did you come up with the story for the second volume?

I didn't think of a sequel when I was writing the first book. Though the trend is different nowadays, fantasy was not welcomed in young adult literature two or three years ago. Before publishing *Fifteen Years Old for 500 Years*, I received feedback such as, "Korean teenagers don't read fantasy," "Write something that can be used for education," and "I would rather change the age of the main character to elementary school students and write it as a fairy tale." So I had a lot of doubts about whether the book would ever see the light of day, but after all the twists and turns, it came out, and it has been really well received by

children and young adult readers. It has been my most popular book to date.

Within a few months of the first book's release, I had a lot of readers requesting a second book. I ended the first book with an open ending, introducing a new transfer student, and readers responded to that. Even I felt disappointed that I couldn't show more of Gaeul's story in the first book. I was able to write the second book pretty quickly, thanks to reader requests. And because the first book was about the foxes, the Yaho, I didn't get to tell much about the tigers, the Horang. But I got to write more about the tigers when I wrote the second book. After the second book came out, I had a lot of readers who wanted to know about the third book - and now I'm writing the third book!

One of the major keywords of young adult fiction is "growth." How do you hope readers of your work will grow?

I have been a teenager, been in my 20s, and 30s, and now I'm in my 40s. No matter how much I think about it, I think the hardest period of a person's life is the teenage years. Growing up is an amazing thing, and I think it's a miracle, but people who have grown up think it is easy. They say that you don't have any responsibilities, you don't have to earn money, your parents do everything for you, so there is nothing to worry about. But I think adults who say that have a "bad memory." It takes a lot of energy to make soft clay hard. And because teenagers have a soft heart,

they are bound to get hurt a lot. Although teenage life is hard and difficult, I want them to endure it, to hang in there, and to grow up in peace. I want them to grow up without hating themselves, and instead to be kind.

I want my books to be a “room to breathe” for teenage readers. I want to create a world where they can relate to the main character and take a moment to think, “Huh? There’s a world like this?” I don’t want them to finish my book and say, “Wow, that was really well written!” Instead, I want them to finish it and feel like, “Yeah, maybe life is worth living.”

It seems like a lot of adult readers are looking to young adult literature lately because it’s entertaining, but there are also parts of it that touch their hearts. Have you noticed a stronger adult readership than in the past?

When I write, my biggest goal is to write something that a fifteen-year-old Kim Hye-Jung would enjoy reading. I think that fifteen-year-old Kim Hye-Jung might exist in a parallel universe, or maybe inside of me. I love novels, dramas, and movies that feature teenagers, and it is not just because I write young adult literature. I really love stories where the protagonist goes through an event and becomes a different version of oneself a day after. Those stories still make my heart flutter. Even if I hadn’t become a writer of young adult literature, I think I would still love stories with teenagers as the protagonists. If you are an adult, but you

still have that adolescent “me” in your heart, and if you still get excited about reading coming-of-age stories, I think you are a reader of young adult literature.

Writing about teenagers seems to require a great deal of knowledge and understanding of the culture of that generation. How do you do research on teen culture, and where do you find inspiration for your work?

I give a lot of middle school and high school talks - probably about 100 a year - and that is where I get a lot of my research and inspiration for the characters in my novels. Because I’m already an adult, and there are a lot of adults around me, I can’t help but have adult conversations. But when I go to a school talk, I get to think, “Oh, the fifteen-year-old in my novel must be like this kid,” with the character automatically popping up in my brain. And when I give a talk, I don’t just sit there and give a lecture, but I get to talk to teenagers about this and that. I get to learn about episodes that happened in class, things that happened after school, conflicts with friends, school festivals and events, and quite a few scenes are actually based on things I have heard and seen at school. I think if you live with the same kids every day, there is less room for imagination. So, it’s nice to see different kids every time, and to be able to make up my own little stories about them.



The interaction between you and your readers must have been very meaningful for them as well. What kind of stories do you usually tell in your talks, and do you have any memorable moments with young readers?

I talk a lot about going through adolescence when I was a teenager, and when I was a teenager, I submitted a novel to a publisher and got a novel published called *Runaway Diary* (Munhak Soochup) - I think that's the funniest thing for teenagers to hear. I tell them that I became a writer not because I was good at it, but because I loved it. And I also tell them the things that I wanted to hear when I was a teenager. I tell them not to let adults in their lives who say things like, "If you live like this, you will be screwed," or "If you don't do what adults tell you to do, you will be in trouble." It's not the adults of today who will know more about the world in 20 years, it is the teenagers of today. I don't want the adults of today, who can paint with 24 colors, to stand in the way of the teenagers who can paint with 100 colors.

It has been 15 years since I became an author and started giving talks. So, I often meet readers who have grown from teenagers to adults nowadays. Recently, I met a woman in her 20s at one of my talks. Since my talks are mostly for teenagers, I wondered, "Why did she come?" When I was signing autographs, she said, "Hey, I attended your talk in Cheongju six years ago. I happened to be on the Internet and saw that you were giving a talk, so I came." It was a middle school girl who had become a college

student, and I was really touched by that. Since then, whenever I go to a lecture, I think of middle school students, and I think, “Oh, these kids are going to be in their 20s in six years.” In fact, I have met several readers who read my novels as teenagers and are now in their 20s, and because of that, I wrote my first novel with a character in their 20s. It will be published next year as a novel titled *The Lost Thing is Back*.

Can you recommend any of your books that you think young readers abroad would enjoy?

I would recommend *Hunter Girl 1-5*, *Fantastic Girl*, and *Diet School*.

*Hunter Girl* is a story that started with the idea of “What if the Pied Piper was alive and well?” Hunter Girl and Hunter Boy were born to catch the Pied Piper, and they do their usual job of punishing bad adults. I hope this book will encourage young readers to not be afraid of bad adults when they encounter them, because adults aren’t always right, and adults aren’t always well.

*Fantastic Girl* is a novel about a 17-year-old Oh Ye-Seul who is accidentally transported 10 years into the future by an airplane crash and meets a 27-year-old Oh Ye-Seul, who is living a messed-up life that she doesn’t even want to imagine. So, 17-year-old Oh Ye-Seul tries to change 27-year-old Oh Ye-Seul’s life somehow, and while time travel stories usually involve going to the past and

changing it, this one involves going to the future and changing the future. It is a novel based on a KBS drama called “Hello, It’s Me!” and is also available on Netflix.

*Diet School* is about 15-year-old Ju Hong-Hee, who goes to a diet school during her vacation to lose weight. She thinks that once she reaches her desired weight, she will never want for anything else, but the abusive environment in the diet school makes her question, “What is dieting? Why am I dieting?” And she makes a plan to escape from the diet school. I had a weight complex when I was a teenager, so that is why I wrote this story. I think a lot of teenagers liked it because they could relate to it.



*Hunter Girl 1, Fantastic Girl, and Diet School*

Since you love to write so much, we are eager to hear what you will write about in the future. Do you have any plans or goals for your future writing?

My goal is to write something that I wouldn't have written five years ago. When I first started writing, I had no idea I was going to write fantasy, because all the fiction I had been taught and read up until then was all about real life. But as the characters got younger, I was able to tell science fiction and fantasy stories. I'm often asked if I find writing difficult or boring. I don't think I ever get bored because every story I write is different. With series, it might be a few years, but it's three years at the most, and it is fresh because I'm always telling a different story with different characters and events. It can be challenging if I can't think of a story or if the story isn't working out, but it is like playing a game. Eventually, you end up with a story, and it is fun.

I want to write new genres, and I have recently gotten interested in the mystery genre, which is something I wouldn't have written five years ago. So, that is my goal now - to write mystery novels.

## PUBLISHING INDUSTRY

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# Marketing in Korean Bookstores: Recovered Editions & Book-funding

**Faster and unlike anyone else**

Written by Son Min-Gyu  
(In charge of humanities and society books at Yes24)

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Recovered books  
that make you  
want to own them



The value of  
the book itself  
matters in funding



Collaboration  
between publishers  
and bookstores

“Faster and unlike anyone else” - this is a phrase from a popular Korean song. No item is exempt from this rule, but it is a hot topic in the Korean publishing and distribution market. Because of the fixed book price system, price competition among retailers is impossible in Korea. Shipping competition, which was fierce in the early days of online bookstores, has also faded. This is because

there is not much difference in the delivery speed between bookstores. Competition for merchandise is still fierce but less so than before for various reasons, including readers' fatigue with merchandise and rising production costs. So, how can bookstores promote their books "faster and unlike anyone else"?

There are two ways that stand out - recovered limited editions and book funding. However, it is hard to say that these are recent trends. Bookstore-led recovers of books have been active since 2017. Funding has been around for over a decade with Aladin's Bookfund. At this point, recovered limited editions and funding have taken root as part of many different book sales strategies.

First, let's talk about recovers. Publishers have been changing book covers for a long time for reasons such as revisions. Yet, recovers at bookstores are not only done by publishers, but also by bookstores. Examples include Yes24's "Yes Recover," Aladin's "Another Cover," and Kyobo Book Centre's "Recover:K." The names are different, but the workflow is similar. Since limited edition marketing is the essence of recovers, there has to be a demand for the limited edition. Books that are already loved are a priority. Recovered books are created at the request of a bookstore and are a one-time supply. Due to the inventory burden on the bookseller's end, they are produced in quantities that can be sold out in 2-3 months at most. The number of copies a publisher produces at a time varies, but it is usually between 1,000 and 2,000, meaning the book must be in high demand to sell that many copies in two to three months.



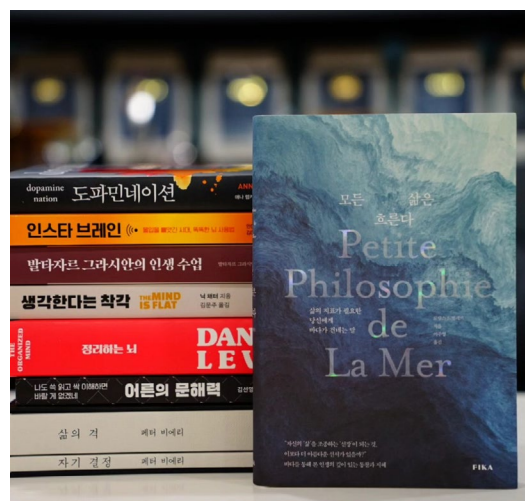
In the course of producing and selling recovers, sometimes the initially anticipated demand suddenly drops off, and you end up with an unintentionally long run of limited editions. This can be a bit embarrassing for both the publisher and the bookstore. To avoid this, there are at least two requirements when printing recovers. The first is a “good reason.” My latest “Yes Recover” project, the book *Career and Family*, had a clear motive. The writer was the winner of the 2023 Nobel Prize in Economics. Another common element in recovery marketing is numbers. Examples include *Use of History* (Dasan Books) by Choi Tae-Sung, which celebrated 200,000 copies sold, and *If We Cannot Move at the Speed of Light* (East-Asia Publishing) by Kim Cho-Yeop, which also celebrated selling 200,000 copies.



Recovers of *Use of History* and *If We Cannot Move at the Speed of Light* published as a part of the “Yes Recover” project, marking 200,000 copies sold

The rest of what you need, along with a good reason, is the “physicality.” This is the characteristic of recover marketing, which is to create a sense of ownership in readers by changing

the physical appearance of the book with the same content. It would be great if the fanbase of an existing book would purchase it for the mere fact that it is a limited edition with a different cover, but not many books have such a fanbase. Inevitably, you also need to try to stimulate the desire of non-fans to buy the book. It is obviously better to have a new cover that looks better than the old one. A beautiful cover is also a great way to create merchandise for the book. However, this is easier said than done. Covers are a matter of personal preference, and the quality of cover design in Korean publications is high - so it is not always easy to make a cover better than the existing one. Therefore, other methods are used to stimulate the desire to collect the recovered book. A typical example is hardcover books that add a sense of luxury. However, due to the overall increase in production costs, hardcover covers are becoming increasingly difficult to produce unless the book has a large production run. Adding a personalized message or signature from the writer could increase the value of the cover.



Books with new covers from the "Yes Recover" project of Yes24

Next is funding. Book funding, which used to be mainly conducted by crowdfunding platforms such as Tumblbug and Wadiz, is also being actively carried out by bookstores. For example, Yes24 introduces books under the name of “Grae Bindery” and Aladin presents books under the name of “Book Fund.” Funding is a way to introduce meaningful books for the first time. As a reader, you can get the book with your name written on it, as well as limited edition merchandise. The difference between funding on a crowdfunding platform and a bookstore is membership. Whereas the average user of a crowdfunding platform is a casual reader (who reads an average of 4-5 books a year), members of a bookstore are book lovers. While the books that perform well on crowdfunding platforms tend to be those with high-end physical properties, in bookstores, even ordinary paperbacks can raise a lot of funds. As such, many readers are interested in funding in bookstores if the book itself has excellent value, even if its physical properties are not fancy, such as poetry, fiction, non-fiction, humanities, history, and so on.

Yes24’s Grae Bindery has been introducing a number of books since 2021, starting with *The Story of Scottish History*. The idea behind Grae Bindery was to reprint out-of-print and out-of-stock books that readers were frustrated about not being able to find. However, it is not easy to find books in this condition. Books that sell well don’t go out of print or out of stock. And even if there is demand, publishers are reluctant to reprint them if they have

to renew their contracts. However, classics whose copyrights have already expired are relatively easy to reprint. Plus, the topic of “Scottish history” was rare enough. These elements raised nearly 9 million won for the reprint of the book through funding. Bookstores are actively promoting book funding for various reasons, including not only books that are out of print, but also writers who are being introduced to Korea for the first time, books that are necessary for our current society, and sets that require expensive production costs.

What I noticed during the funding process is that expensive brick books perform well. For example, *Daily Liberal Arts* (UU Press) by Jeon Sung-Won, which has 1,112 pages with a list price of 38,000 won, raised more than 17 million won with over 500 contributors. Similar to brick books, high-priced series sets also performed well. For example, this year’s limited edition series set commemorating the 30th anniversary of the *Toemarok* (Elixir) series raised over 120 million won. Series sets that focused on the physicality of the book appealed successfully to the existing fanbase. Another case where bookstore funding worked well was for local writers. While it has become mandatory for writers to have a social media account, the first readers tend to be fans and acquaintances of the writer. Here, funding can help them reach out to fans and acquaintances more quickly. Meanwhile, online bookstores have been around for a long time and have more members than newer crowdfunding platforms. Yes24, for example, has more than 21 million members, so if a bookstore

is running a fundraiser, there is no excuse for not being able to participate in the fundraiser because you did not sign up.



*Daily Liberal Arts and Toemarak, funded by Grae Bindery, run by Yes24*

For these reasons, recovers and funding run by bookstores will continue for the foreseeable future. However, as not all covers and funding are successful, the hunt for the jade stone will continue. Recovers will be a collaboration between publishers and bookstores focusing on improving the physical properties of the book, including the cover. Since funding is centered on books that are being introduced for the first time, publishers and booksellers are expected to come up with ideas for promotional materials such as card news and copies that can intuitively convey the appeals of the book to readers.

## Publishing Policy

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# 2020-2022 Bestsellers: Korean Self-help Books



### 2020

1	<i>Secret of the Top 1% in Harvard</i>
1	<i>Reboot</i>
3	<i>The Having</i>
4	<i>Eight</i>
4	<i>I Start My Day at 4:30 AM</i>
6	<i>This One Phrase Saved My Life</i>
7	<i>I Only Study That Wins</i>
8	<i>Vocabulary of Adults</i>
9	<i>A Vessel of Humanity That Fills Up Endlessly</i>
10	<i>Practice to Love Myself</i>
10	<i>Talking About How to Talk</i>

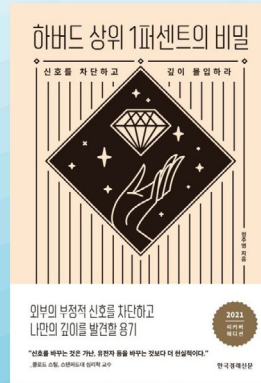


#1

## Secret of the Top 1% in Harvard

Chung Joo-Young,  
Korea Economics Daily

A book that suggests a new formula for success by observing Harvard's most secretive group of investors, the "Black Diamonds"!

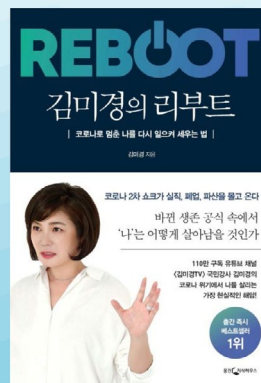


#1

## Reboot

Kim Mi-Kyung,  
Woongjin Jisik House

A book about preparing for post-COVID-19 - giving us courage for a future where everything will change with realistic solutions.



#3

## The Having

Lee Seo-Yoon and  
Hong Joo-Yeon,  
Suo Books

Incredible teachings on creating your own mindset and getting what you want! It is a must-read in challenging times.



## 2021

1	<i>Reconciliation by Oh Eun-Young</i>
2	<i>Lucky</i>
3	<i>I Start My Day at 4:30 AM</i>
3	<i>Speak Like a Grown-up by Kang Won-Guk</i>
3	<i>The Algorithm of Luck</i>
6	<i>Wealthinking</i>
7	<i>The Having</i>
8	<i>Story of Department Head Kim, Who Has a House in Seoul and Works at a Large Company 1</i>
9	<i>How To Draw Without Being Afraid</i>
10	<i>To Those in Their 30s That Think Too Much</i>
10	<i>The Studying Technique That Never Betrays</i>
10	<i>Story of Department Head Kim, Who Has a House in Seoul and Works at a Large Company 2</i>

#1

### *Reconciliation by Oh Eun-Young*

Oh Eun-Young,  
Korea.com

It is a book that offers warm words of compassion and straightforward advice for those of you who need to face the pain you have been trying to turn away from.

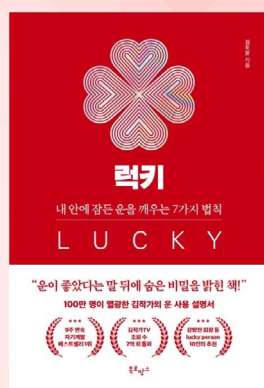


#2

### *Lucky*

Kim Do-Yoon,  
Book Romance

Everything you need to know about luck and success - all discovered by the writer who spent 10 years interviewing 1,000 successful people! A book with 7 rules to open the door to good luck.



#3

### *I Start My Day at 4:30 AM*

Kim Yoo-Jin, Tornado

The bestselling writer behind the early morning wake-up craze! The power of the morning hours is revealed by a lawyer who has been starting her day at 4:30 for many years.



## 2022

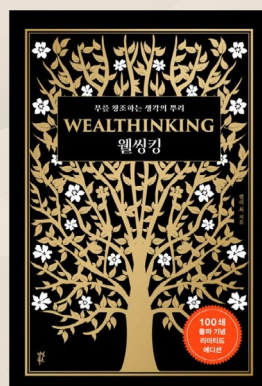
1	<i>Wealththinking</i>
2	<i>Reconciliation by Oh Eun-Young</i>
3	<i>Counter Your Life</i>
4	<i>Change Your Mindset to Change Your Life</i>
5	<i>Live Well, It is the Best Revenge</i>
6	<i>Lucky Draw</i>
7	<i>Lucky</i>
8	<i>Choi Jae-Cheon's Tips to Studying</i>
8	<i>Why Don't We Talk Casually</i>
10	<i>If I Were to Re-live My Life</i>

#1

### *Wealththinking*

Kelly Choi,  
Dasan Books

The book where super-rich Kelly Choi talks all about wealth, going from being a poor girl to being the CEO of a global company.



#3

### *Counter Your Life*

Jachung,  
Woongjin Jisik House

The #1 bestseller upon its release! It shares the secrets to breaking free from the dominance of fate and instinct and achieving financial freedom and happiness!

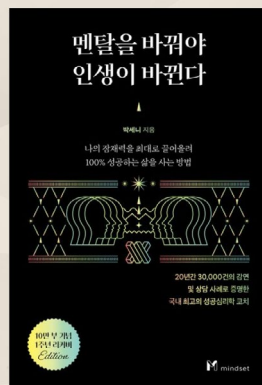


#4

### *Change Your Mindset to Change Your Life*

Park Seni, Mindset

It is a book that received enthusiastic responses from many readers for its firm grip on their wavering mentality, which led them to robust achievements!



What books gave readers  
consolation and courage in 2023?

**Prepare for the new year with  
Korean self-help books!**



The data above is based on the integrated list of bestsellers in the self-help category in Korea from 2020 to 2022 from the four largest bookstores in Korea: Kyobo Book Center, Aladin, YES24, and Interpark.

## Let's Try

# Bake Delicious Bread that's Just Right for Your Taste

### Event

Let's Try introduces various useful, practical books  
published in Korea every month.

Also, don't miss gift events related to the introduced books!

Simply click on the link below and make an entry to the event! Let's Try!

### *A Small Bakery at Home: SOFT BREAD*

- Written by HOYA (Kim Jin-Ho), published by THETABLE





Flavorful, soft, and savory bread made at home.  
Follow the book and make one at a time, and your house will become  
a famous bakery even before you notice!

23.  
**VANILLA CREAM DONUT**  
 바닐라 크림 도넛  
 바닐라아몬드 가루, 부드러운 커스타드, 크림을 풍성한 도넛. 바닐라 크림 도넛은 부드러운 커스타드, 크림을 풍성한 도넛. 바닐라아몬드 가루, 부드러운 커스타드, 크림을 풍성한 도넛. 바닐라 크림 도넛은 부드러운 커스타드, 크림을 풍성한 도넛.

50g

10g

100°C

15분

**PROCESS**  
 → 재료: 커스타드 크림 200g, 100°C  
 → 1차 발효: 25°C/70%RH 40분  
 → 분할: 50g  
 → 2차 발효: 35°C/70%RH 30분  
 → 굽기: 150°C 15분

192
193

37.  
**SALTED MILK CREAM PRETZEL**  
 소금 우유 크림 프레젤  
 짭짤한 치즈, 부드러운 밀, 바삭한 빵. 소금 우유 크림 프레젤은 짭짤한 치즈, 부드러운 밀, 바삭한 빵. 소금 우유 크림 프레젤은 짭짤한 치즈, 부드러운 밀, 바삭한 빵.

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**PROCESS**  
 → 재료: 커스타드 크림 200g, 100°C  
 → 분할: 100g  
 → 2차 발효: 35°C/70%RH 30분  
 → 굽기: 150°C 15분

278
279

K-desserts are all the rage! Stopping by a famous bakery is an essential part of any trip to Korea. Even if you can't try them in person, you may have seen them on TV or YouTube and thought they looked delicious. For those of you who do, Korean bakery master Chef Kim Jin-Ho has released his first recipe book!



*A Small Bakery at Home: SOFT BREAD* is a collection of the most popular items in the bakery market today, upgraded to Korean-style versions. From the most basic white bread to salt bread, croquettes, and other breads that make your mouth water just by looking at the pictures! Are you new to baking? Don't worry! The book explains the basics of baking, including how to shape and mold the bread, which can be difficult for beginners. You can also watch videos and follow along using the QR code in the book. If your mouth has ever watered at the sight of delicious Korean bread and you wanted to try recreating the flavors of famous bakeries at home, this book is for you! The book *A Small Bakery at Home: SOFT BREAD* is the perfect guide to making easy and delicious bread.

[Go To Article](#)

[www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/info.php?ptype=view&idx=1315&code=info&category=92](http://www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/info.php?ptype=view&idx=1315&code=info&category=92)

## NEW BOOKS

## My Time Does Not Flow Like Yours

Professor Kim Chan-Ju's Solitary Physics:  
Special Relativity

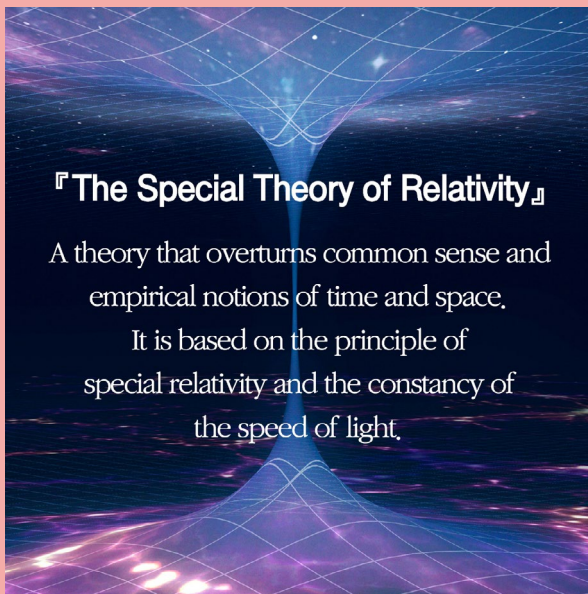
*My Time Does Not Flow  
Like Yours*



『The Special Theory of Relativity』

A theory that overturns common sense and  
empirical notions of time and space.

It is based on the principle of  
special relativity and the constancy of  
the speed of light.



### “Why should I know this?”

It is what we all think when we confront  
Einstein’s “Special Theory of Relativity,”  
which makes our heads ache  
just thinking about it!



But did you know that the theory is  
the “**core theory**” that enabled  
modern material civilization?

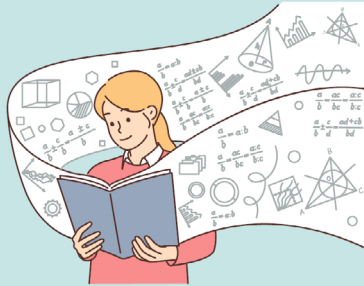


It was this special relativity that  
influenced much of  
**the philosophy, literature, and art**  
that we encounter in our daily lives!



If special relativity is still a bit of a mystery to you, you should definitely read this book,

It is written in a simple and friendly way so that anyone without special knowledge can understand it!



“

Special relativity is a magical theory.

(...)

If you ever have a moment where you get even a 1% glimpse of what it means, you will never forget that feeling.

”

- from the book -

It is a book that walks you through the whole experience of thinking like a physicist.

Understand special relativity, and you will never see the world the way you used to!



Understanding the world through science

## *My Time Does Not Flow Like Yours*

Written by Kim Chan-Ju, published by Serobooks



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## BEST SELLERS

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### 2nd Week, November 2023

Best Seller Trends in the Four Biggest Online Bookstores in Korea

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For the second week of November, books that have been the center of attention dominated the list of bestsellers. The book *Reading Schopenhauer at Forty* quickly rose to the top of the list after being recommended by actor Ha Seok-Jin on the popular Korean TV show “I Live Alone.” On the show, he was shown to be very dedicated to self-management - exercising, studying, and enjoying his hobbies - which likely inspired viewers to purchase the book. The book features 30 pieces of advice from philosopher Schopenhauer, who has inspired countless people. It offers wisdom for those entering their 40s with mixed feelings to realize the true meaning of life.

Han Kang’s *I Do Not Bid Farewell*, published in 2021, won this year’s Medici Prize in France, again ranking 7th on the overall bestseller list. The Korean publishing industry is rejoicing at the news of yet another honor for Han, who became the first Korean

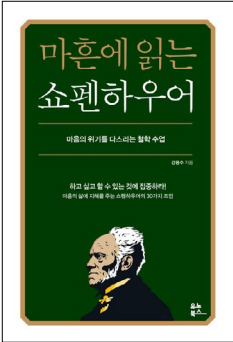
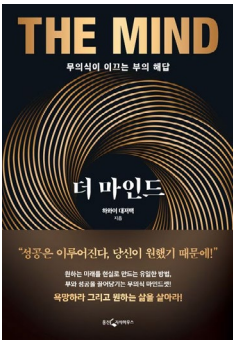
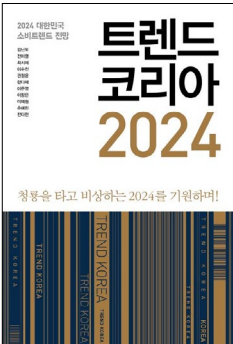
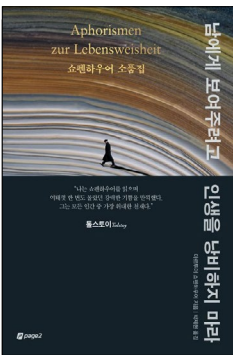


author to win the International Booker Prize in 2016 for her previous book, *The Vegetarian* (Changbi). The Medici Prize is a literary award that recognizes fresh and experimental works - and this time, Han was the first Korean writer to win in the Foreign Literature category. The book tells the story of a desperate love that makes us human after all, and is beautifully depicted in the writer's eloquent sentences. Come and experience the touching story of Han Kang's new book, which has been widely recognized around the world.

The top five in the non-fiction category were books that kept up with trends in Korea and met reader demand. Two photo essays about Fu Bao, the panda at Everland Zoo who has been sweeping Korea with love for the Bao family for months, made the top five. The first place was taken by *Omniscient Fu Bao Perspective*, and the fifth place was taken by *Fu Bao, Hope You Are Happy Every Day*, both of which feature cute photos of the panda and heartwarming texts that make readers feel touched and chuckle. Meanwhile, *Let's Shout Out for Victory* chronicles LG Twins' long road to victory, as the team won the Korean Baseball Series finals for the first time in 29 years. Even if you are not a fan of LG Twins, the story is one that any baseball fan can relate to.

\* 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.

Top 10 bestsellers for the 2nd week of November

1		<p><i><u>Reading Schopenhauer at Forty</u></i></p> <p>Author   Kang Yong-Soo Publisher   Uknowbooks Genre   Humanities</p>
2		<p><i><u>The Mind</u></i></p> <p>Author   Hawaii's Palace Publisher   Woongjin Jisik House Genre   Self-help</p>
3		<p><i><u>Trend Korea 2024</u></i></p> <p>Author   Kim Nando and others Publisher   Mirae Books Genre   Business</p>
4		<p><i><u>Aphorismen zur Lebensweisheit</u></i></p> <p>Author   Schopenhauer Publisher   Page 2 Books Genre   Humanities</p>

Top 10 bestsellers for the 2nd week of November

4



***Be Your Future Self Now***

Author | Benjamin Hardy  
Publisher | Sangsang Square  
Genre | Self-help

6



***Omniscient Fu Bao Perspective***

Author | Song Young-Kwan  
Publisher | Wisdom House  
Genre | Non-fiction

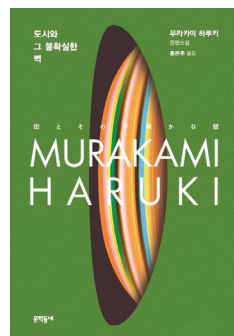
7



***I Do Not Bid Farewell***

Author | Han Kang  
Publisher | Munhakdongne  
Genre | Fiction

8



***The City and Its Uncertain Walls***

Author | Haruki Murakami  
Publisher | Munhakdongne  
Genre | Fiction

Top 10 bestsellers for the 2nd week of November

9



**Chainsaw Man 14**

Author | Tatsuki Fujimoto  
 Publisher | Haksan Publishing  
 Genre | Comics  
 Author | Tatsuki Fujimoto  
 Publisher | Haksan Publishing  
 Genre | Comics

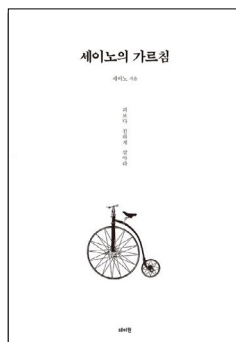
10



**Psychology for Grown-ups that Think Too Much**

Author | Kim Hye-Nam  
 Publisher | Maven  
 Genre | Humanities

10



**Sayno Love**

Author | Sayno  
 Publisher | Day One  
 Genre | Self-help

Top 5 non-fiction for the 2nd week of November

1



*Omniscient Fu Bao Perspective*

Author | Song Young-Kwan  
Publisher | Wisdom House

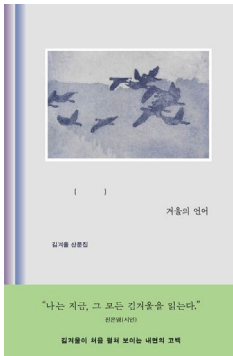
2



*Dike's Tears*

Author | Cho Kuk  
Publisher | Dasan Books

3



*Language of Winter*

Author | Winter Gyeoul Kim  
Publisher | Woongjin Jisik House

3

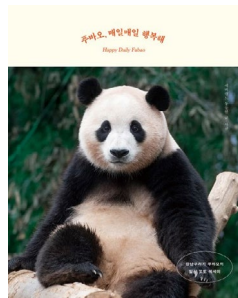


*Psychology for Grown-ups that Think Too Much*

Author | Kim Hye-Nam  
Publisher | Maven

Top 5 non-fiction for the 2nd week of November

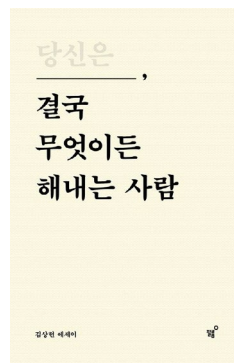
5



*Fu Bao, Hope You Are Happy Every Day*

Author | Everland Zoo  
Publisher | Sigongsa Junior

5



*You are, After All,  
Someone That Can Do Anything*

Author | Kim Sang-Hyeon  
Publisher | Feelm

5



*Let's Shout Out for Victory*

Author | Yoon Se-Ho  
Publisher | Creta



## I READ

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*Concerning My Daughter*  
by Kim Hye-jin

Written by Günsenin Miray Dirlik (Reader of *K-Book Trends*)

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This article is a review written by a Turkish reader of  
*K-Book Trends* after reading a Korean book.

If you want to share your wonderful experience of reading Korean books  
with other overseas readers, please send us an email!

[kbooktrends@gmail.com](mailto:kbooktrends@gmail.com)

Kim Hye-Jin's award-winning book *Concerning My Daughter* (Minumsa). The book's main characters are a mother in her sixties who works as a nurse and leads a quiet life, her daughter 'Green,' and her daughter's girlfriend 'Rain.' The author describes the mother's collision with her daughter Green's different lifestyle and relationship in a fluent, gripping language.



English and Korean covers of *Concerning My Daughter*

The term gender refers to physical, morphological, and anatomical differences (biological differences). However, gender/being a woman is culturally constructed. Simone de Beauvoir, one of the gender theorists, expressed this situation by saying, “one is not born a woman, one becomes a woman.” Everyone is born as a baby into a certain social structure. This social formation into which the baby is born also contains social and cultural codes. And throughout its entire development, the baby is educated with the value judgements of the society into which it is born. This education also determines what kind of a man or woman the baby will be in the future by adopting the value judgements and role models prevailing in the society.

As a result of this, girls are generally emphasised for their gentleness and beauty. At the same time, they are expected not to immediately express their thoughts out loud in public, not to be assertive, to take care of the house they live in, to learn

household chores, to be a good wife and mother, to develop an implicit skill in human relations, and to establish relationship networks that can be sustained for their close environment. That's what Green's mum expects from her daughter. Green is her only daughter, and as a mother, she wants her only daughter to lead a "normal" life, striving for her to have a good education. However, Green is outside the "normal," and the mother cannot accept this, nor does she deny it. However, Green is a woman who raises her voice against injustice, regardless of language, religion, colour, or gender, who does not remain insensitive to wrongs, who adds strength to the voice of the minority, and who is interested in women. Green does not play the role that society assigns to her.

The book is read in one breath, but in a slightly long breath. While reading the book, you think about your own family relationships, your friends, what is happening first in your own country and then in the world on gender issues similar to those in the book, the future, death...

## KOREAN TRANSLATOR

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**Konishi Naoko**

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### Profile

- Korean-Japanese translator
- Email: naoko21@hanmail.net

### Education

- B.A., Rikkyo University College of Arts
- M.A. in Korean-Japanese interpretation, HUFS Graduate School of Interpretation and Translation

### Courses

- Completed a special course at the Literature Translation Institute of Korea (LTI) Translation Academy
- Completed Translation Atelier at the Literature Translation Institute of Korea (LTI)

## Published Translations



Japanese covers of *Zombies*, *Sister*, *A World History of Second Sons*, and *United We War*

- Kim Joong-Hyuk, *Zombies* (Changbi) / Japanese version: ゾンビたち (論創社)
- Lee Duon, *Sister* (Gozknock Ent.) / Japanese version: あの子はもういない (文藝春秋)
- Lee Ki-Ho, *A World History of Second Sons* (Minumsa) / Japanese version: 舎弟たちの世界史 (新泉社)
- Chang Kang-Myong, *United We War* (Wisdom House) / Japanese version: 我らが願いは戦争 (新泉社)

## Other Co-translated Works

- Park Young-Joon, *The Best Farmer*, Park Tae-Won, *Master of Fang Lan Chuang* (included in Vol. 2 of *The Origin of Korean Literature* series) / Japanese version: オリオンと林檎 (書肆侃侃房)
- Ken Liu and others, *Seventh Day of the Seventh Moon* (Alma) / Japanese version: 七月七日 (東京創元社)
- Kim Kak-Joon, *Studying Dokdo Island* (Northeast Asian History Foundation) / Japanese version: 独島研究 (論創社)



Japanese covers of Vol. 2 of the series *The Origin of Korean Literature*, *Seventh Day of the Seventh Moon*, and *Studying Dokdo Island*

## Other Translations

- Translated subtitles for the movie “The Barefooted Young” (included in the Kim Ki-Deok collection DVD at Korean Film Archive)
- 2020 Bilingual Literary Reading “Translating Poems (譯:詩)” hosted by LTI - Discover the poetry of Cheon Soo-Ho in Japanese ([youtu.be/2KYF39mZsS4?si=LABPrB8E-b85p77X](https://youtu.be/2KYF39mZsS4?si=LABPrB8E-b85p77X))

## Awards

- Winner of the 24th BABEL TRANSLATION AWARD for Korean-Japanese Translation, organized by BABEL, a Japanese translation publisher (2001)



## #K-BOOK

## #Flower

## KPIPA Introduces K-Books for Global Publishing Markets through K-Book Platform

*A Flower, You Are as I am*

## 1. Publication Details

Title | A Flower, You Are as I am

Subtitle | A Song of Flowers that think about Philosophy

Author | Dae-Youn, Cho

Publisher | BOBBOOK

Publication Date | 021-06-23

ISBN | 9791158587888

No. of pages | 143

Dimensions | 140 \* 225

## 2. Book Intro

This book titled *A Flower, You are as I Am* is a beautiful collection of poems containing philosophical thinking of the poet for flowers. He wrote the poems with poetic words easy to read through a lyrical flower song by breaking the prejudice that philosophy can be regarded as difficult. The poet begins to draw his poems thinking 'why did flowers come to us?' When he sees grass flowers blooming that make the world beautiful and fragrant, he thinks that flowers tell us to resemble them so that we can bloom our life with good fragrance. If I resemble flowers and become flowers, everything could be clearly flowers and the philosophical thinking for life can be also a song of wind when a flower blooms and falls. When a poem is transcribed, the poet hopes that it resembles flowers, revealing the first light of flower, and like a song about a flower's poem, seeing the world beautifully, even if weak and poor, and eventually becomes a flower for happiness to someone and gives comfort to themselves. He thinks that even if Western philosophy as



flowers bloomed in the West, and Oriental philosophy as flowers bloomed in the East have a different color of each flower, the meaning of poetry songs cannot be different as it reaches the blooming of one ultimate sublime flower. Therefore, the poetry of this collection can share emotions with people anywhere in the global village regardless of language. This collection of poems shows his philosophical thinking that the meaning of the existence of flowers and the meaning of my existence in the lives of all people on Earth is the same.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=5855](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=5855)

## *Mrs. Flower and the Room of Secrets*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Mrs. Flower and the Room of Secrets  
Subtitle | A Unique Way to Look at Paintings  
Author | Kim Jisun, Lee Haejeong  
Publisher | Green Spinach Publishing  
Publication Date | 2021-12-15  
ISBN | 9788992371872  
No. of pages | 160  
Dimensions | 175 \* 240



### 2. Book Intro

This is a children's book and a general art book that shows readers how artists view this world and how we should understand their paintings, while at the same time presenting a unique way to "see" art and "see" the world. The hidden stories behind the masterpieces and artworks of famous artists like Matisse, Picasso, Chagall and Rembrandt are the topic of conversation in the delightful encounter of Mrs. Flower and Blossom.

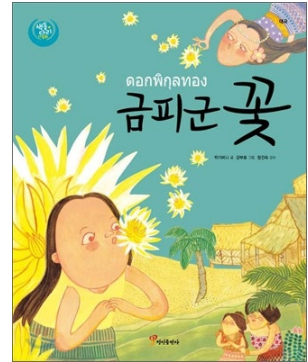
As readers follow the fresh and in-depth interpretations of Mrs. Flower in the story, they will come to understand the artist's original way of looking at and expressing the world, and reflect on the various perspectives in approaching life. Before they know it, not only will they acquire a deeper understanding of art, but they will see familiar paintings in a fresh light. When you stand before a masterpiece again after reading this book, the once distant painting will seem like it is speaking to you, and you will feel much closer to it.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=7108](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=7108)

## *A Gold-Skinned Flower*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | A Gold-Skinned Flower  
Author | Kavinee Park  
Publisher | Jungin book  
Publication Date | 2023-03-02  
ISBN | 9791198132314



### 2. Book Intro

*A Gold-Skinned Flower*, the 6th volume of the children's fairy tale *Saekdong Bridge Multicultural* series for a multicultural society living together. It contains what happens when a golden pea flower falls from the mouth every time under the mysterious magic. A Thai mother from a multicultural family participated as a writer, and it was recorded in a bilingual language of Korean and Thai. How children can understand each other's culture It helps to realize that they are the same and different, and to understand the culture of each country with an open mind.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=7319](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=7319)

## *Not All Flowers Bloom in Spring*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Not All Flowers Bloom in Spring  
Subtitle | Cheering on your shining future, by Daji Lee  
Author | Lee Daji  
Publisher | Sam & Parkers  
Publication Date | 2023-01-30  
ISBN | 9791165346751  
No. of pages | 340  
Dimensions | 131 \* 195



### 2. Book Intro

Lee Daji, Megastudy's top-grossing teacher in the subject of history, has penned her first-ever self-help book where she discusses the topics of life and dreams. Her signature lecture, "Not All Flowers Bloom in Spring" has resonated with millions of people, from teenagers to middle-aged listeners in their fifties. She writes about her difficult childhood, the words of courage that buttressed her,

strategies for studying that begin from zero, tips on how to stay mentally strong, as well as advice on scheduling concerns. This book offers hope that's not just for young students but for any adult in pursuit of their dreams late in life, telling them not to compare themselves to others and find the courage to rid themselves of anxiety about the future, guilt, and despair.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=7290](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=7290)

## *Worrying about Stepping on a Flower*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Worrying about Stepping on a Flower

Author | Jang Seoknam

Publisher | Changbi Publishers, Inc.

Publication Date | 2017-12-08

ISBN | 9788936424176

No. of pages | 110

Dimensions | 128 \* 188



### 2. Book Intro

*Worrying about Stepping on a Flower* is Jang Seoknam's poetry collection that has been published five years after the publication of *Tranquility, Do Not Run Away* (Munhakdongne, 2012), which won her the 2012 Kim Daljin Literary Award. In this collection, Jang unfolds the world of lyrical poetry, asking the question "What does the most fundamental human being, the most humane human being, or the most beautiful human being look like?" (from the commentary by literary critic Shin Hyeongcheol).

Simple and clear words along with finely captured images create sophisticated poems that show the essence of lyrical poetry and send a gentle shudder down the spines of readers.

"I walked, letting butterflies fly onto my sleeves / I returned, requesting naturalization on the rocks / The reply was delayed / The green on every inch of my clothes was heavy, impeding my pace / I returned, being starved by the green rocks / The reply was delayed" (from *Picnic*).

Jang appeals to the readers' senses by portraying the hidden backsides of objects with moderate poetic language and narrates deep philosophical thoughts. He seeks a poor but honest life in which he strolls around a secluded world separated from worldly desires, contemplating nature and communing with "a Bible that resembles a long shadow at nightfall" (from *Memo from Travel*).

After going through digging up and uncovering the breath of life from a grief-filled life that had only "a piece of a rag throughout its entire lifetime" (from *Singing*

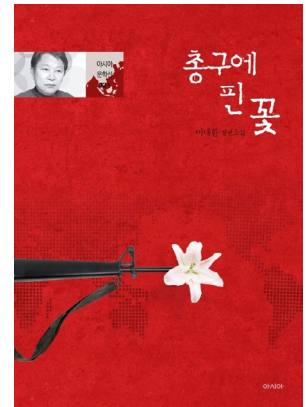
*Deodeok*) and enduring “life without fabrics, feces and urine, and sperm” (from *The Pillow I Picked Up*) and the “days of dealing with despair, lying on my back” (from *Dazzling*), the poet comes to a wise conclusion, as though achieving a form of Zen enlightenment, that “managing the rising fire / will teach you a lifetime lesson” (from *Bonfire*) and gains an existential insight into finite life and infinite death.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=492](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=492)

## ***Bloom from a Muzzle***

### **1. Publication Details**

Title | Bloom from a Muzzle  
Author | Yi Daehwan  
Publisher | ASIA Publishers  
Publication Date | 2019-04-03  
ISBN | 79115662406604800  
No. of pages | 360  
Dimensions | 146 \* 206



### **2. Book Intro**

Son Jinho was a war orphan who was adopted by an American family where he experienced the hippie culture. He later had to take part in the Vietnam War as a US soldier and tried to infiltrate the Cuban embassy in Japan during a vacation there, but his attempts to become a refugee failed. His life, full of ups and downs, was a life of struggling to refuse the fate of war that was forced upon him and seeking for peace. *Bloom from a Muzzle*, the story of a “small man,” is a controversial piece that opens a new, difficult passage toward denuclearization and peace.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=1308](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=1308)

## *Luck Is On Its Way*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Luck Is On Its Way

Author | Lee kkochnim

Publisher | Munhakdongne Publishing Group

Publication Date | 2020-10-19

ISBN | 9788954675314

No. of pages | 200

Dimensions | 140 \* 205



### 2. Book Intro

It is the winner of the 8th Munhakdongne Literature Award for Young Adults, written by the same author of *I'll come over to you across the world*.

Could I become your lucky star?

It is people who make your life miserable,

But then again it is also people who make your life bearable.

Yi Kkot-nim, the best-seller author has come out after two-and-a-half-year hiatus with a new novel for young adults. Her book, *I'll come over to you across the world*, was the winner of the 8th Munhakdongne Literature for Young Adults Award that moved not only countless readers but the judges as well. It is still considered by many as their life-changing book; it has been published in Taiwan and will soon be available in Japan. The book with its gripping narrative will be turned into a T.V. drama and a movie.

Her new book, *Luck Is on Its Way*, is about the children who are exposed to violence at home, a place where it should be warm and safe, and their story is told by a unique narrator. An entity known as fate, timing, goddess of luck or trickster of fate tells the story. This transcendent being grumbles in a surprisingly cynical tone but watches over the children perpetually with an affectionate gaze. The reassuring words that luck is approaching and that it will undoubtedly help you deliver a heartwarming message for the reader.

But the novel in the end wants to bring the reader's attention not to the omniscient and transcendent being but to the human presence. That is because it is only when you have the will to rescue yourself or someone in need then luck will finally take action. The courage of two fifteen-year-old boys to help their friends in danger, and the child who is so weary that she wants to give up on everything but who finally opens her heart to them make the readers realize that we can all become the bringer of each other's luck.

It is people who make life horrific but it is also the people who make it bearable. It may be difficult to accept that a kind gaze and attention could change someone's life but that in fact is the secret to life. It is once more time to be inspired by the miracle the author offers through her story.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=4589](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=4589)



## Flower Crew

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Flower Crew  
Subtitle | Joseon Marriage Agency  
Author | Kim Irang  
Publisher | KYOBO BOOK Centre  
Publication Date | 2019-09-06  
ISBN | 9791159099724  
No. of pages | 344  
Dimensions | 145 \* 210



### 2. Book Intro

Abandoned by her parents as a child, Gae-ttong dresses and lives as a man to help feed her sick older brother. Central to this novel are the events that unfold as attempts are made to place Gae-ttong on the throne as the queen under the command of the king. Will the Flower Crew, a team of leading male matchmakers in Joseon, be able to succeed in making Gae-ttong the next queen of the country? The original work on which this book is based became the background for the hit JTBC K-drama of the same name in 2019.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=4829](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=4829)

## The Promise of Edelweiss

### 1. Publication Details

Title | The Promise of Edelweiss  
Author | Hwang Seonok, Mo Jiae  
Publisher | BookGoodCome  
Publication Date | 2022-04-21  
ISBN | 9791165881672  
No. of pages | 120  
Dimensions | 168 \* 220



### 2. Book Intro

*The Promise of Edelweiss* is the first short story collection for children by Hwang Sun-ok, who won the Reading Gate Creative Children's Story Contest and the New Writer Award in Children's Literature Criticism. Including the title story "The Promise of Edelweiss," which addresses the pain and wounds of war from the perspective of nature and a boy soldier, the collection contains four stories: "Billy and the Canteen Man," a story about a young orangutan's adaptation to a new zoo; "The Great Operation of Sweet Potatoes" about a delightful rivalry between forest



animals and an elderly farmer over a field; and “The Big Head,” an onerous survival story of feral cats. The stories will comfort the wounded souls around us.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=7125](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=7125)

## *Flowers For a Gift*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Flowers For a Gift  
Author | Kang Gyeong Su  
Publisher | Changbi Publishers, Inc.  
Publication Date | 2018-04-20  
ISBN | 9788936455255  
No. of pages | 52  
Dimensions | 247 \* 304



### 2. Book Intro

One morning, a ladybug got caught in a spider web. The ladybug sees a bear passing by and begs him to save her, but the bear leaves the ladybug, saying that he cannot go against the laws of nature. At lunch, the bear happens to pass by the same place again and once again ignores the ladybug's pleas for help. In the evening, somehow, the bear passes by the same place a third time...

*Flowers For a Gift* divides the day's happenings into breakfast, lunch and dinner. The dialogues and monologues of the characters in a limited space give the unique impression of watching a three-act play. While the same situation is repeated, slight changes bring excitement, and the conversation between the individual characters is humorous. Ladybug tries several tactics to get rescued. She flatters to the bear (morning) and lies to the bear (lunch), but fails both times. Eventually, the ladybug succeeds in the evening by using tact, and this helps us to think about what strategies we might use in the crises of life and which ones might work. The bear does not save the ladybug because he cannot 'go against the laws of nature.' But in fact, he wants to help the spiders because they deal with the nasty, annoying mosquitoes. The bear pretends to be a bystander, but in the end chooses which is better for him, the ladybug or the spider. *Flowers For a Gift* is a creative fable that reveals various human attributes through the character of the ladybug and the bear.

The bear finally decides to save the ladybug. The writer, Kang Gyeong Su, began writing the story with the idea that even a trivial action, such as breaking a web with a fingertip, could make a big difference in the world. Thanks to the surviving ladybug, the following spring is filled with blooming flowers.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2233](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2233)

## INFO

# Wrap-up Summary of the 2023 Sharjah International Book Fair: Korean Pavilion





On the first day of the book fair, members of the publishing industry from both the United Arab Emirates and Korea gathered to kick off and **celebrate the opening of the Korean Pavilion.**



Under the theme of unlimited imagination, the Pavilion showcased various books, including literature, humanities, webtoons, and picture books, **introducing Korea's excellent books.**



Programs such as themed seminars, lectures, and talks were held to deepen the understanding of the works and **expand the reading horizons of participants.**



It was a great time to introduce Korea to the world through art, performances, and workshops through the medium of “books” and meet readers in Sharjah.



**KPIPA will continue to make the best efforts to globalize K-Books and expand copyright exports in addition to participating in international book fairs.**

If you have any questions, please contact the KPIPA K-Book Content Team - [kbook@kpiipa.or.kr](mailto:kbook@kpiipa.or.kr)

## INFO

## 2023 Korea Picture Book Award

Announcement of the winners of  
the 2023 Korea Picture Book Award and the awards ceremony





### Special Prize



**Did You Say I Am Pretty?**  
Hwang In-Chan and Lee Myeon-Ae,  
Springsunshine Publishing



**Mephisto**  
Luly Lee,  
BIR Publishing



**Wind Blowing On Mudeungeewat**  
Kim Young-Hwa,  
Iyagkot Publishing



**Okchun-Dang**  
Go Jung-Soon,  
Gilbut Children Publishing



**Tiger's Party**  
Kang Hyun-Sook,  
Woorschool



### Rookie of the Year



**Gorong Gorong House**  
Jo Shin-Ae  
Sakyejul Publishing Ltd.

## 2023 Korea Picture Book Award

### Awards Ceremony

**Date:** December 5, 2023, 15:00

**Venue:** International Conference Hall  
at Korea Press Foundation

**Content:** 8 awards in 3 categories



Ministry of Culture, Sports  
and Tourism



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