

Local Recycling and Cultural Events :Cheongju International Craft Biennale 2011

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Introduction

The Cheongju International Craft Biennale, established in 1999, has provided chance to consider of the worth of Craft that has been vanished and to recover its value. Especially, we not only have suggested the future and vision of craft through international craft trends, but also have contributed to provide craft artists with a field to share current craft trends and to interact with themselves. By holding the Cheongju International Craft Biennale, craft artists around the world, artists, crafts'fans paid attention to Cheongju and thus, now, Cheongju is positioned as a representative city of crafts. The Cheongju International Craft Biennale has actually brought many craft artists into Cheongju about 1,500 applicants took a big interest in Cheongju International Craft Competition in 2011.

The Cheongju International Craft Biennale 2011, started its 7th project, enhanced international status by strengthening its position as a mecca of craft and design. It was a biennale, in an attempt to keep pace with the times of craft, to represent specific crafts needed for the daily lives and combined with lives. Moreover it showed the substance of craft that unites with individuals as well as balances between quality and formality of lives. In this biennale, facing useless things to another good for nothing with no relation of was able to create new and useful crafts and arts. With crafts, the Cheongju International Craft Biennale 2011 hoped to make enjoyable lives through discussion on the crafts, consideration and reinforcement of the value of the Biennale's formality.

Where is place?

Cheongju Old KT&G Tobacco Processing Plant Building

- The biggest, the best art factory in Korea

The Cheongju International Craft Biennale has been held around in Cheongju Arts Center so far. This year, however, the Biennale took place in the old KT&G Tobacco Processing Plant Building.

Having been left alone for more than ten years, the factory is now significantly expected to set a desirable precedent in establishing a basis of municipal reconstruction in addition to the transform of an unemployed space into a cultural space. It was also remarkable that this plan aims for the Cheongju Tobacco Factory to take root as the representative art factory in Asia. After being culturally advanced in this process, therefore, Cheongju City is expected to be reborn as a representative cultural city of Korea. The city will gain both citizens' pride and a new role of the center for local development. As the 'Green Capital,' Cheongju will reject any deconstructive and wasting rebuilt but create an admirable exemplary on the basis of art and culture.

What is the theme ?

유용지물 有用之物 - Not just new, But necessary

The Cheongju International Craft Biennale 2011 aims, through the subject "Yuyongjimul (not just new, but necessary)," to retrospect the meaning and function of arts and crafts in terms of 'today' and 'human.' During the past 100 years, the flood of transitional circumstances has transformed human being and its life pattern. Such flow of change has been an irresistible premise or an absolute condition of everything that exists today, with no exception in arts and crafts. This phenomenon has driven an aware of crisis that the traditional meaning and value of arts and crafts should keep up with such transition or lag behind, or extinct at worst.

We have no choice under such circumstances but to contemplate thoroughly on which picture the 21st Century arts and crafts must bear in the matter of topology as well as the political and economical surroundings in Korea, and on how they become valuable existence in human life. The Cheongju International Craft Biennale 2011 aims that arts and crafts contribute to the human life. In other words, arts and crafts should become 'active' and 'enthusiastic' so as to provide changes to the daily life of human being.

Human being is on the earth the unique existence that makes tools and uses them. Human history is the history of tools, and its common tool is 'hand.' The notion of arts and crafts so far has mistaken by missing the human subject who operates the tools made by human hand. With this point of view, The Cheongju International Craft Biennale 2011 brings in 'Human' as the center concept of alteration in order to identify the 21st Century's arts and crafts. 'not just new, but necessary' is a phrase that Russian Constructivists first used in the 19th Century, by advocating Russian pragmatism. The phrase speaks for a pragmatic

thinking that arts and crafts should practically serve to daily life and emotion most of all as much as innovation is significant.

Beyond the artistic value of crafts, 2011 Biennale put its emphasis on some points : restoring the identity of arts and crafts which refreshes dailiness and instrument, justification of arts and crafts' existence and purpose, and the belief of 'human' as their common denominator whatever they are.

To sum up, 'Yuyongjimul' aims the realization of unifying aesthetics and of integrating field where the useless or the irrelevant encounters each other and transforms into the being of necessity. Arts and crafts are required to possess both values to keep and evolutionary attitude under new circumstances and conditions. The main subject of 2011 Biennale is, in other words, an expression of a will to become a useful being each other through encountering and mixing as well as a request of arts and crafts so as to adapt itself in the changing era.

Main Exhibition

Contemporary Craft, HERE&NOW - "Craft is an ORGAN."

The evolution of mankind has been constructed by design and craft in which humans created instruments out of necessities. As a medium to make human life convenient and abundant, the art of crafts is a fruitful crystalloid of not only beauty but also the development of many techniques. The 2011 Cheongju International Craft Biennale with the subject heading, "Yuyongjimul: not just new, but necessary," is aimed at searching for the essence of craft. It tries to provoke the recollection of craft's fundamental values based on its utility in daily life, not only on its artistic aspects. This ideology is what William Morris tried to convey to the public more than a hundred years ago. Furthermore, you can also position the pragmatic spirit of Russian Constructivists who advocated "not just new, but necessary" within the same context.

Looking at everyday tools, craft has experienced diverse forms and conversions as living conditions and surroundings have evolved. In other words, craft is a substance that contains the vivid reality of life and human ambition by transforming materials, functions, and values in parallel with the momentum of environment, civilization, and techniques. Throughout history, traditional handicraft from the industrial age to the revolutionary age of information, has not only embraced the zeitgeist (the spirit of the period) and social changes but also accepted future goals to date. In this respect, becoming aware of craft's current movement

is important to note as we observe the present layers of mankind, since it is craft's ability to adapt itself to 'time' as 'here' and 'surroundings' as 'here.'

The main exhibition attempts to look straight at the phenomenon of modern day international craft. Instead of rash judgments that is defined or regulated, it proposes to regard craft as a polyhedron which reflects various properties on the present phenomena and as an organic living being. "Craft is an Organ." This statement refers to the diverse tracks that it follows. Craft respects traditional skills and spirits as well as strengthens modern materials. On the contrary, it can also set itself free from any sort of materials or forms. Recently, its interests have been directed towards environment. Observing such a heterogeneous coexistence of its properties and phenomenon, the exhibition considers today's craft as an organic body that is still evolving.

While the introductory section exhibits William Morris' spirit of the craft within daily life, the main exhibition with current craft works consists of five sections: O(ld) / R(oyal) / G(enuine) / A(rtistic) / N(atural). In the introduction, "Craft in everyday life: William Morris," the exhibition displays eighty-seven different items. Exhibiting the organic harmonies of stained glasses, lamps, tapestries, wallpapers, tiles, and book designs, it provides an opportunity to observe Morris' genuine gifts.

"Craft with everyday life : William Morris"

Throughout the twentieth century and till today, William Morris is remembered as the first crafts movement activist and the founder of modern design from his practice of usefulness in daily life as the fundamental value of crafts. Looking at Morris' work, he was a poet, a thinker as well as a craftsman. His productions were design and craft which contained the aesthetic attitudes and zeitgeist (spirit of a period) of his views toward the society. Under epochal circumstances of the "Machine Ages advent," after the Industrial Revolution, William Morris advocated the Arts and Crafts Movement and strived for a more abundant life his delicate movement and craftsmanship. Although his attempts were not successful, he has aroused the interests in the values of craft and design in our daily lives in the twenty-first century.

Morris' restrained but refined aesthetics and craftsmanship convey profound thoughts and understanding of craft's values and design with boundaries in terms of "here & now" with 87 pieces of work consisting of stained glasses, tiles, tapestries, wallpapers, and table stands.

The Main Exhibition "Contemporary Craft" is divided into five sections, each with the initials of a word "organ": O,R,G,A,N.

Old - Craft within History and Tradition

Craft is the substance of mankind's longest instruments and techniques which have existed long before the classification of its concept or category. Devised out of necessity, craft was developed in a peculiar sphere of materials and utilities added with wisdom and aesthetic senses. In the "Old" section of the Main Exhibition, craft works are exhibited with historical and classical viewpoints. Both branches are seeded in tradition; one branch accompanied with natural changes according to historical conditions and environment, and another branch made of spiritual or technical inheritance. Meaning, they do not cling to an old custom, but follow wise principles and apprehend the process of grounding and embracing their epochal traditions and functions of history. This section consists of 47 works that exhibit traditional and historical viewpoints from the craftsmanship of Intangible Cultural Properties to contemporary designs with traditional grammars.

Royal - Lofty Crafts by Artists

Craft originate in the direction of instrumental property which is the closely related to daily life. When tracing back to the history of mankind, art was formed synthetically by architecture and craft, which was later separated from one another and built its own field passing through the Modern era where autonomy and professionalism grew in each independent genre. Craft today expands its boundaries by crossing over these divided areas. In addition to work created by craft masters, artists and architects or designers with marked individuality frequently adopt their own artistic motifs or characteristics to produce crafts in utility. The "Royal" section is a field where you can observe specific works on such trends. In this section, the limited numbers of special craft works by prominent artists are exhibited. They are 147 pieces in total.

Genuine - "Craft-like" Craft by Craft Masters

While craft itself was born initially from its use, the expression "craft-like" lies dependent on attitude. We use such an expression for its uncommon, emotional attitude created by hand, meaning tasting, thinking, and making figures by hands. The "Genuine" section focuses on such "craft-like" works of present day. The definition of "craft-like" bears the journey that craft has taken which is materialistic and technical, and has gained autonomy from the Middle Ages to Modern Age. The works which have accepted such a historical process are considered "craft-like" and today can be seen in genres of ceramics, glass, wood, metals, textiles, papers, acres and so on.

Furthermore, design products as universal instruments can be included in this classification regarding their fundamental functions. This section is filled with such "craft-like" works, made up of 515 pieces by 78 artisans show their strength and power.

Artistic - Craft as Art

Craft takes its position as a useful object in daily life, but historically looking at it as an object of appreciation also holds true. Artistic works with the material property of craft or technical uniqueness acquired their position through the formation of exhibitions as their theatrical stage. On one side, this generates a contemplation on each sphere's autonomy by crossing over the disparate boundaries of craft and art. If so, is the value of craft in its usefulness contrary to its value as an object for appreciation? As a matter of fact, the two aspects coexist. Craft's aesthetic value is not ignored by its useful assets, as its usefulness is not dismissed by artistic expressions. As a significant part of today's phenomenon, artistic craft works are positioned in this section, as is made up of 113 pieces by 47 artists.

Natural - Craft melting within Nature

The origin of craft comes from nature. As human beings are a part of nature, their instrumental objects also evolve within their environment as does the name of industries over time. Although the development of industrial materials has been instrumental in providing variety and convenience, it has also presented harmful circumstances for humans and nature by producing cracks existed with the two. Now diverse acts with nature are attempted as alternatives from the reconsideration on the imposing appearance and the harm of excessive industrial materials transplanted into the field of life. The "Natural" section focuses on the works from such acts, and its primary aim is to rediscover the life of crafts in nature and humans and to share the value of restoration and circulation. In this section, 42 works by 16 designers are exhibited.

The Main Exhibition "Contemporary Craft" is made up of an introductory section called "Craft with everyday life" by William Morris and other five sections of O/R/G/A/N which show craft's identity from various angles instead of a dividing materials like wood, ceramic, metal, or fiber. By combining craft with mass production systems and by covering the whole range of masters' craft works, this exhibition is expected to show the variety of today's craft based on its inherited wisdom from tradition and ultimately to provide hopeful imagination on future crafts.

As a result, approximately 40million people visited in the Cheongju International Craft Biennale 2011. In addition, the mayor of Cheongju city as a president of Committee in Biennale got award from Prime Minister as to biennale.