

# Preservation is Future

Moodeung Museum of Contemporary Art\*

Gwangju

3rd September - 16th September 2013



**Notes on the exhibition and the works of the Nine Dragon Heads artists and artists invited by the museum for this specific exhibition**

Annelise Zwez

According to the spirit of Nine Dragon Heads the title "Preservation is Future" is above all to be understood under environmental aspects. Although it could - in the Asia of today especially - be interpreted in an urbanistic sense just as well. In the works presented by the artists we find a wide range of associations to the title. It could be shortened to: "Be conscious of the roots of what you see and experience - be it nature, history, society, philosophy and so on.

This "being conscious" gives many artists the possibility of creating works that are at the same time a homage to the beauty and never-ending miracle of the world's visual richness and a critical or sorrowful position on behalf of it at the same time.

There are however also works that do not really fit in the topic - which does not have to do with the quality of the works. The reason can be that they come out of the NDH-collection or - as to the Gwanju-artists - that they brought works out of their actual work.

We also have to have in mind that most works were brought by the artists from their ateliers. Some of them refer to Nomadic Parties of the last years such as China, Biel/Bienne, Usbekistan which is -

for the insiders - especially enriching.

**Jessy Rahman:** His contribution brings in a welcome humorous aspect: In the object hanging from the ceiling as well as in the performance he gave together with the Gwangju based photographer Shin, Jang Yong. The object - a tunnel made with pink foam fabric, strong yellow paper wrapped with some sort of sleeping bag open on both ends - has in its inside (what a surprise!) a comic scenery with little clay figures, made by



the staff of the museum. "Cave talk" is the official title of the work, but I prefer the unofficial (told me by the artist): "Love tunnel". What does he want with it in the context: The artist is not a superficial thinker, so there must be a subversive aspect. Maybe it is just his love of Korea (the figures resemble to the little girls and boys on thousands of posters all over the country). Love that gives the subliminal hope that we can understand each other better than we allow on the surface.



This aspect could also be felt in a spontaneously developed performance for the vernissage: A Korean (representing Asia) and a Surinamese (representing the African and the American continent) meet each other in Gwangju, slip in a soft carpet tunnel and sing in a precious dialogue traditional songs of their countries. Touching how much more music can

communicate in such a situation compared to language.