

ACC, a Cultural Complex Visited by 15.2 Million

GWANGJU, REPUBLIC OF KOREA,
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-- The Asia Culture Center (ACC,
President Lee Kang-hyun) operating
under the Ministry of Culture, Sports
and Tourism, has welcomed a total of
15.2 million visitors ahead of its eighth
anniversary on November 25.

- November 25 marked the eighth anniversary of the opening of the ACC, where three exhibitions held this year received more than 100,000 visitors
- An emerging hub of culture and the arts that created and produced 68% of the content it presented
- The uniqueness, excellence, and competitiveness of its content have been proven with domestic and international awards
- Showcasing Asia-centered culture, arts and lifestyles in one place
- Establishing itself as an open space and local attraction with increased accessibility and convenience for the public

This year (as of October), the number of visitors to the ACC surpassed the 2-million mark. In particular, the exhibition Aesthetic Immersion: Nature and Humanity Through the Looking Digitalizing (May to October 2023), recorded 100,000 visitors in the shortest period of time in the history of the ACC, with a total of 140,000 people visiting by the end of the exhibition period. Scenery of the



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Emptiness, and Asia (Dec. 2022 to Aug. 2023) attracted 190,000 visitors, and To Rewind Is Divine (Nov. 2022 to June 2023) 105,000 visitors. Therefore, three exhibitions at the ACC this year received more than 100,000 visitors each.

As the one and only multidisciplinary cultural and art space in Korea with Asia as its main theme, the ACC has set itself apart from other cultural institutions by orienting itself toward original works and production, covering cultural and artistic content without boundaries, placing “Asianness” at the base of all content, and focusing on the values of democracy, human rights, and peace.



The ACC established the 2023-2027 Mid- to Long-Term Development Plan last year after a merger with the organization that was separated as the Asia Culture Institute. This year, the organization was reorganized with a dedicated body for each function, such as exhibitions, performances, research, and exchanges, for enhanced professional expertise, and an organizational management system was established to achieve long-term and sustainable growth by implementing sustainable management strategies and projects.

As it celebrates its eighth anniversary, the ACC is committed to becoming a culture and arts institution that leads the creation of new values for Asian culture and arts, as well as an open art hall for the local community. The following are the achievements and plans of the ACC:

□ An emerging hub of culture and the arts that created and produced 68% of the content presented this year

The ACC has created and produced 1,120 works, or 68% of the 1,650 works presented in the past eight years, thereby breaking new ground as a contemporary cultural and artistic development center.

To create and produce new content, the center has been actively supporting domestic and foreign artists in expressing their creativity and expanding the scope of culture and the arts through research and experimentation.

It also operates a lab for research and development (R&D) of interdisciplinary content, a production studio, a residency program for artists to immerse themselves in creation and production, and professional training programs for artists and other professionals in the

industry.

These programs gave rise to the interactive art content Remembering/Sensing: A Community of Experience (Oct. 2023), which explores the boundaries and intersections between “record” and “memory” and “individual memory” and “community record” with artistic imagination.

Also, the ACT Festival 2023 - Future Legends (Nov. 2023), an interdisciplinary art festival, showcased future-oriented content that combined art and technology with performances and interactive games using VR, AR, robotics, and other cutting-edge technologies.

□ The uniqueness, excellence, and competitiveness of its content have been proven with domestic and international awards

This year, the ACC's content received awards with accolades from domestic and foreign experts, which has proven not only the uniqueness of the content created and produced by the ACC but also its excellence and competitiveness as works of art.

First, in the exhibition category, Scenery of the Emptiness, and Asia (Dec. 2022 to Aug. 2023) won the Merit Award in the exhibition category at the 2023 SEG D Global Design Awards in Washington, D.C. in August.

The SEG D Global Design Awards is a prestigious world-class design competition that has been organized since 1987 by the Society for Experiential Graphic Design (SEG D) based in the United States. The ACC's win is significant because it was the first win for Korea in the exhibition category.

As for performances, the ACC's original productions for children, Red Oni who Cried (July 2022) and A Non-collapsible Home (May 2023), won the Art Direction Award and the Best Production, respectively, at the 35th Puppet Festival Chuncheon, Asia's largest puppet festival, in September.

□ Showcasing Asia-centered culture, arts and lifestyles in one place

The ACC showcases culture, arts, and lifestyles centered on Asia. The “Asianness” pursued by the center is to eliminate the Western-centered thinking that is ingrained in every aspect of our lives and showcase Asian-centered and Asian-driven culture, philosophy, and daily life.

Asia Culture Week was held for 10 days in September with the slogan, “Asia Going Forward Together.” During Asia Culture Week, the ACC hosted the Asian Literature Forum and the Asian Dance Symposium as venues for various cultural exchanges among Asians. It also provided opportunities for citizens to experience a variety of Asian cultures with the Asian Art Market and Asia Traditional Orchestra performances.

The International Conference on Asian Culture Research International Academic Symposium, Rediscovering Southwest Asia: Urban Culture and Lifestyle held on November 14 is said to have helped raise understanding of the cultural, social, and artistic characteristics of Southwest Asia and also helped to promote exchanges and drive the development of Asian cultural studies.

The ACC Asia Culture Museum introduces unfamiliar Asian artifacts such as Wayang (Indonesian shadow puppetry), Ala-kiyiz (a type of traditional Kyrgyz carpet), and Vishnu (a mythological deity of Hinduism), which are traditional cultural and living artifacts of Asia.

Various other types of content that shed light on the sentiments and cultures unique to Asian countries have also been presented, such as Wharf of Widows (Ben Khong Chong, Sept. 2023), a performance jointly created and produced by Korea and Vietnam, Gamelan, Music of the Indonesian Soul (Oct. 2023), an exhibition to mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Korea and Indonesia, and Suluusuu (July 2021), a collaborative musical by a Korean-Kyrgyz orchestra.

□ Exploring the relationships between art, technology, and humanity and predicting the future with culture and the arts

The ACC presents themes that people of today want to express and share. It also explores the relationships among art, technology, and humanity and predicts the future with culture and the arts.

The ACC Residency, which explores themes that should be considered together every year, such as Biophilia (2020-21) and Posthumanism (2022), was organized this year under the theme of Futures of Listening (2023), and the exhibition, Planetary Pulse (Nov. 2023) provided an opportunity to ruminate on the act of listening from an Asian perspective rather than Western philosophy.

Self-Designation (2021, 2023), a play created and produced by the ACC, captured what will become of the relationship between advanced technology and human desire and arts in the near future.

Faith in Green (2022), a collaborative exhibition with the Vietnamese Women's Museum to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Korea and Vietnam, depicted the organic relationship between humans and between humans and nature with the theme of solidarity in the era of climate change.

□ Sharing and spreading the values of democracy, human rights, and peace through culture and the arts

The ACC strives to share and spread the values of democracy, human rights, and peace, which are universal values of humanity and have an even greater meaning for Asian countries that

have experienced imperialism and dictatorship, through culture and the arts.

By holding the Webtoon Contest (2020), UCC Video Contest (2021), Illustration and Drawing Diary Contest (2022), and Character Contest (2023), the ACC has provided an opportunity to revisit the values of democracy, human rights, and peace, which can often seem like complex and weighty subjects, with content that seems familiar and easy to understand.

The ACC organizes the May Culture Week every May to spread the values of democracy, human rights, and peace. This year, the ACC held a wide range of cultural events and participatory programs, including exhibitions and performances that highlighted the spirit of democracy, human rights, and peace through art, over the course of ten days. The event kicked off with the performances *The Voices of Mothers in May* and *A Time Painter*, and the ACC Wednesday Theater: *I Wasn't There in Gwangju* was presented, through which the dark times were remembered anew. The audiences were brought together as one in the end with Traditional Arts Performance: *Daedong Chum III*.

In particular, *The Voices of Mothers in May* is a production with songs serving as records of the tragic stories of mothers who lost their families during the Gwangju Uprising, also known as the May 18th Democratic Uprising, about four decades ago. The work has been continuously developed in phases since 2018, and it has contributed to disseminating the values of democracy, human rights, and peace through citizen participation and collaboration with local artists.

□ The ACC is establishing itself as an open space and local attraction with increased accessibility and convenience for the public

The biggest achievement made by the ACC this year is that it established itself as an open cultural space and a local attraction where people can enjoy pleasant strolls and visit with ease.

Efforts were made to provide citizens with opportunities to relax and enjoy culture in the heart of the city and to shape a new public square culture, in line with the main theme of this year's programs, which was "Urban Culture."

The ACC Yoga Festival (June 2023), Book Reading ACC (Oct. 2023), Autumn Night Picnic (Sept. to Nov. 2023), Green, Green ACC (June 2023), Colorful ACC (Oct. 2023), and many other events were held in Asia Plaza this year. In addition, the Hanul Madang escalator (2021) and Sangsang Madang (Imagination Garden) escalator (2023) were installed to improve accessibility and convenience for citizens.

The ACC was even selected as one of the 52 Korea Unique Venues 2023 in July. This is the third time for the ACC to be selected as a Korea Unique Venue, with the first selection in the 30 Korea Unique Venues 2019. The ACC was chosen due to its characteristics and appeal that capture the beauty of Korea and has spaces and facilities suitable for Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and

Exhibitions (MICE) that can provide a unique and memorable venue experience.

The ACC has also been selected as one of the 100 Must-visit Tourist Spots in Korea 2023-2024. Every two years, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST) and the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) select and announce Korea's top tourist destinations that domestic and international tourists should visit. This is the ACC's second consecutive appearance on the list, having been selected for the 2021-2022 period. In addition to being chosen as one of the 100 Must-Visit Nighttime Tourist Spots in 2020, the ACC was also featured in Korean Architecture Tour, a guidebook featuring 56 buildings that present both the traditional and modern beauty of Korea.

The ACC has made various efforts to transform into a familiar and essential space for the general public, and It has successfully established itself as a cultural complex that everyone can enjoy.

□ Efforts to create a barrier-free viewing environment

The ACC is dedicated to allowing everyone to experience culture and the arts without discrimination.

It provides sign language interpretation services for the ACC Humanities Lectures held on a monthly basis to provide cultural education for all. The ACC in Sign Language video series, in which videos produced in sign language feature voiceovers and subtitles, has been produced since 2018.

Not only that, the ACC is also creating a barrier-free environment for people with disabilities to enjoy culture and the arts by installing electric desks for wheelchair users, tactile exhibition models for the visually impaired, and screening barrier-free (BF) movies at the Big Door Cinema.

"Over the past eight years, the ACC has grown continuously and remarkably amid the changing external environment. [...] It brings me even greater pleasure that such intangible growth can be confirmed by the number of visitors and the reviews given by experts," ACC President Lee Kang-hyun said.

He added, "On the one hand, I am under great pressure because we have just started to take off and it is now time for us to establish and implement a strategy to leap forward as a hub for Asian culture. [...] We will make every effort to be recognized as a world-class cultural institution in the region and as a platform for exchanges of Asian cultures and arts by our 10th anniversary."

Attachment: Photographs related to the eighth anniversary of the opening of the ACC. End.

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