

WAVE KOREA WAVE

Asialink Arts Annual Forum 2009

For immediate release

Asialink shines a light on the curious and dynamic world of Korean pop culture with a full-day forum on **Friday, 17 July**, introducing to an Australian audience the contemporary culture of a country that is often lost in the shadows.

Located physically - and emotionally - between Japan and China, Korea was once known as the "Hermit Kingdom". Today, it is a fascinating contender for Asia's leading trendsetter. From eye-popping visual art to hugely successful TV soap operas and "K-pop" music, South Korea's contemporary culture now permeates the rest of Asia.

Leading Korean arts practitioners covering visual arts, music and performance, including one of the country's most recent Venice Biennale commissioners, are coming especially to Melbourne for the Forum. They join Korean and Australian artists, performers and commentators in a unique, open to all, free day of insights.

"Most of us in Australia don't realise the extent of Korean cultural dynamism today - though many young artists do," says Alison Carroll, Director of Asialink Arts. "Asialink applications for arts residencies to Korea for example are very high: it is a surprisingly rich and feisty arts scene and really worth getting to know.

"This is a place that was the second poorest country in the world after the Korean War. Now the standard of living, with 50 million people, is equal to ours. This has happened in a generation - testament to the drive and energy that also permeates Korean culture today."

The spread of Korean pop culture, including music and television drama, throughout Asia - known as "Hallyu" or the Korean Wave - has contributed substantially to the country's recent GDP growth, making it one of the world's largest cultural exporters.

Asialink's Annual Arts Forums are the leading public event in Australia, open to all, offering a deep insight into contemporary Asian culture today. Past forums have focused on Japan and Indonesia, as well as arts residencies and issues of community.

program

Friday, 17 July 2009

9 a.m. registration

Carrillo Gantner Lecture Theatre

Sidney Myer Asia Centre,

University of Melbourne

registration

Register online by 13 July

www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/artsforum2009

The Forum is free but registration is requested

For interviews, please call Jennifer Conley 0406 857 856

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