

KOREA TOWN

Curated by Richard Layzell



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Exhibition Dates

19 January - 10 February 2017

Opening Event

Thursday 19 January, 5 - 8pm

Korea Town focuses on the nearby community of North and South Koreans living in New Malden.

29,000 people live in New Malden and more than 10,000 of these are Korean. This may be because the original South Korean embassy was here, along with Samsung's first European headquarters, but nobody really knows.

Immersion in this unique neighbourhood has involved meetings with streets, people, shops, cafes, hairdressers and Karaoke bars. Noraebang (karaoke) is a national obsession in Korea, and is a more private experience than in the UK, taking place in small rooms hired out by the hour, singing to friends rather than the public. At New Malden's epicentre, on either side of the station, lie the HAN and Sing Sing karaoke bars, important sites of research for this project.

This exhibition, and related events, is a journey between cultures and geographies. There is a link to the traditional Korean Sijo poetic form, older than the Japanese haiku, and usually three lines long:

'You ask how many friends I have? Water and stone, bamboo and pine.
The moon rising over the eastern hill is a joyful comrade. Besides these
five companions, what other pleasure should I ask?'

And there is, of course, a nod to K-pop, corn tea (oksusu cha) and the chance to be part of a Korean DJ set.

Richard Layzell is an internationally exhibiting artist and the Pathway Leader for Print and Time Based Media at Wimbledon College of Arts.

Image: Sing Sing Karaoke Bar, courtesy of Richard Layzell

Monday to Friday, 10am–5pm

Closed weekends and bank holidays

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