



Chrysalis

: Poetic narration and identity
An exploration of Sijo poetry and the filmic voice



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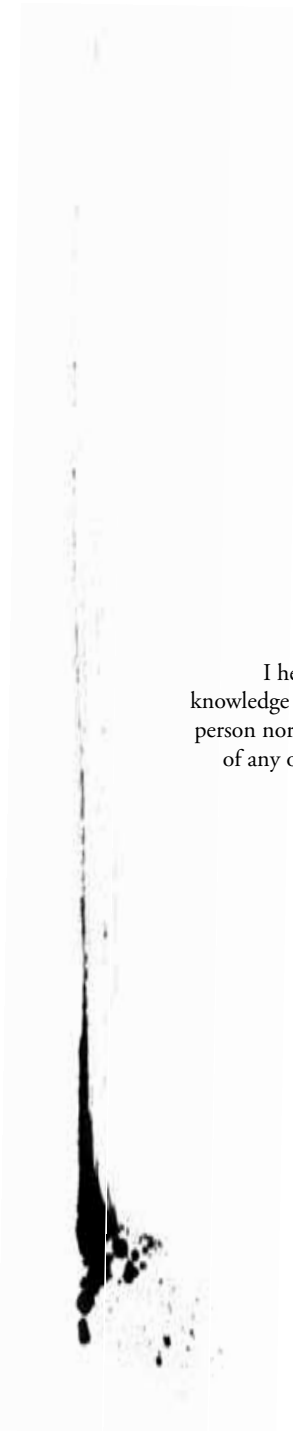
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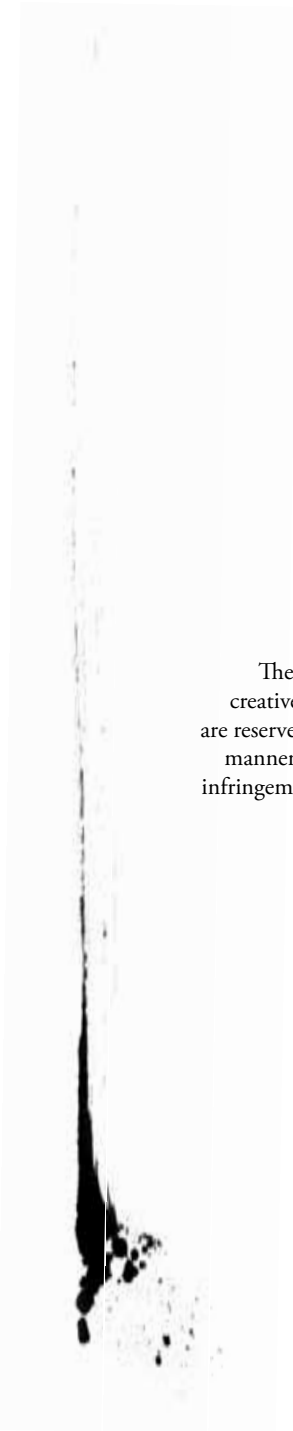


Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement is made in the acknowledgements.

Paul Kim

October 2010



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Paul Kim

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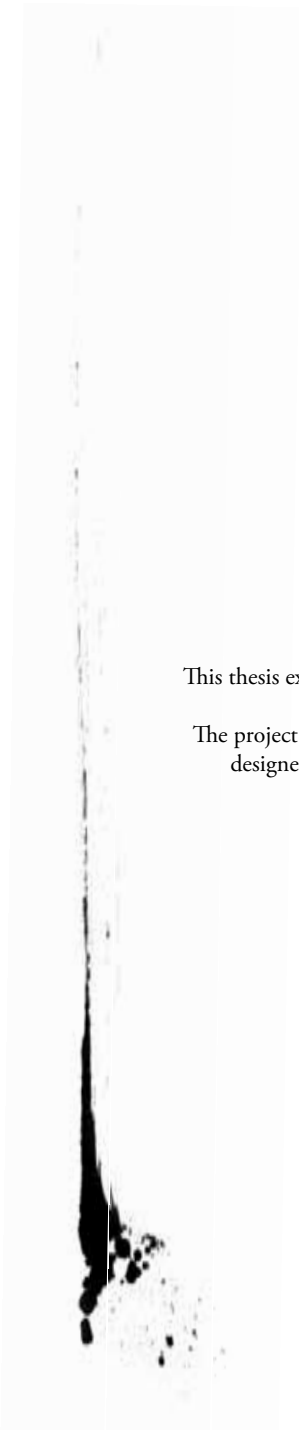
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Abstract

This thesis explores the potential of film poetry as a media form that engages with conventions of the traditional Korean poetic genre, Sijo. The project does not propose a definitive approach to inter-media translation but offers the visualisation of one designer's poetic voice. The resulting film *Chrysalis*, in creatively exploring the potentials of this synergy, is interested in communicating an enigmatic impression of lost identity.

Introduction

This thesis is constituted as a film accompanied by an exegesis. The film notionally represents 70% of the thesis and the exegesis the remaining 30% of the submission.

The exegesis is divided into three chapters.

The first chapter deals with the critical framework of the project.

At the outset it offers a brief description of the structure and nature of both film poetry and the Korean literary form Sijo. The chapter then discusses the influence of Zen Painting, Han [한], rhythm and metaphor in the creation of the film. In closing, the chapter also offers a consideration of specific aesthetic approaches taken in the resolution of the work.

The second chapter considers the research paradigm, methodology and methods employed in the design, development and resolution of the project. In doing this, the chapter discusses the concept of reflection on practice (Schön, 1983). This refers to a reflective cycle that encourages a clear description of the situation, analysis of feelings, evaluation of the experience and, finally, systems of analysis to make sense of emerging work.

The third chapter offers a commentary on the film *Chrysalis*. The commentary considers relationships between imagery, structure and the tenets of Sijo poetry. It also provides a discussion of the nature of the typographic voice in the film.

Chapter One: consideration of related theory and knowledge

Part one: Film poetry as a media form

The desire to exploit the potential of meaning as it is played out between moving image and written text is at the heart of film poetry's potential and provides fertile ground for this proposed thesis project.

Practically speaking, film poetry has generally been categorized as experimental film or as a poetic art form that uses film as its primary medium. Since the avant-garde work of Deren, Brakhage and Vertov¹ there has been ongoing debate surrounding the relationship between film and poetry.

However, the 'film poem' has generally been poorly defined. Film is essentially visual language and film festival directors like Thomas Zandegiacomo of the Berlin Film Poetry Festival argue that if there is any influence of poetry within film, then it must be on the actual picture. He also believes that poetics should be incorporated into the visual nature of the film and must make direct reference to the written text of a poetic work (personal communication, June 30, 2009). However film poetry may also be understood as a discourse between text as word or image, and spoken voice as words or sound.

Leropoulos (2009, para.9) believed,

Despite the differences between viewpoints, what connected most of them was the fact that their writers shared the belief that film should be a primarily visual language and that if there is any influence of poetry within it, then this must be on the actual picture. In other words, poetics should be incorporated into the very visual nature of the film (Leropoulos, 2009).

However, the film theorist Maya Deren believes that poetry in film should not be part of the projected image. She states, however, that "if they were brought it on a different level, not issuing from the image which should be complete in itself, but as another dimension relating to it, then it is the two things that make a poem" (Deren, 1963, p.59).

In contrast, Gance argues, "the marriage of image, text, and sound is so magical that it is impossible to disassociate them in order to explain the favourable reactions of one's unconscious" (1952, p.14).

¹ Deren, Brakhage and Vertov were most active filmmakers and theorists who participated in the parallel between film and poetry in avant-garde period. They shared the idea that poetic should be adapted in the visual nature of films.

As far back as 1984, Wees, in his influential essay 'The Poetry Film', noted that many poets had increasingly become interested in film. It is from this interest that the hybrid art form emerged.

He argued,

poetry film expands upon specific denotation of words and limited iconic references of images to produce a much broader range of connotations, associations, metaphor. At the same time, it puts limits on the potentially limitless possibilities of the meaning of words and images, and directs our responses toward some concretely communicable experience... (as cited in Leropoulos, 2009 para 19).

In an interview with Speranza in 2001 Todd suggested, "Film Poems are driven by poets themselves, wishing to explore new areas and ideas, or alternatively they might be looking for an area which is somewhere between the poetry they are writing and visual material" (as cited in Leropoulos, 2009 para 24).

While these views tend to suggest a certain openness to potential, British filmmaker Ian Cottage, in his manifesto of 1999, lists 14 characteristics/rules of the film poem. He argues somewhat prescriptively that the film and poem should employ "a minimal crew" (No. 6). He also states, "the poem film must be shot on film" (No. 5), and "the film and poem should be created in no more than three days" (No. 3), (Cottage, 1999, p.11). The polemic language used in Cottage's manifesto tends not to create discussion but rather offers a somewhat limiting 'dogma' that I would argue may have been developed to draw the media form into parallels with emerging discussion in Danish cinema.²

In opposition to Cottage, Todd (2001) argues that the film poem is a very broad concept and might simply "be dealing more with trying to conjure up a mood rather than a narrative" (p. 119).

Todd's statement encompasses a very broad definition of how film poem might be conceptualised. A film poem may adopt a very experimental approach to exploring relationships between visual language and literature. Poetry film might explore the possibilities of word meaning, visual image, sound, rhythm, repetition and timbre, rather than structures of narrative (evident in traditional cinema). As a genre it normally employs a non-linear, sequential style of editing to produce a flow of images and spoken or written words.

² I locate this discussion in reference to the Danish Dogma 95 (1995). This was an avant-garde movement initiated by Lars von Trier and Thomas Vinterberg. Dogma 95 sparked an interest in unknown filmmakers by suggesting that one might 'purify' filmmaking by refusing additional special effects and postproduction modifications. Its ten rules included an assertion that filming must be completely realised on location (No.1), the camera must be hand-held (No.3), and the director must not be named (No. 10). American film critic Armond White (2004), heavily criticised the movement arguing that the manifesto would be rejected by film historians (para.3). In addition, Richards criticised the movement in his Remodernist Film Manifesto (2008), suggesting that the Dogma could be understood simply as "a pretentious checklist that must be followed precisely" (para. 10).

Leropoulos (2009) argues that the conflicting discourse around film poetry “in a sense showcases how chaotic the notion of the film poem has been in the last 80 years and how difficult it is to talk about a specific definition of its characteristics” (para. 29).

He suggests,

Perhaps it is time to rethink the concepts of film and poetry taking into account all the different approaches that have been put forth by various filmmakers and critics without dismissing any possible perspective, but also with a critical and informed approach that would be useful to the research of the moving image (ibid.).

It is this assertion that forms the substrate for my investigation. I believe that film poetry as a media form might provide a potential vehicle for a deep and effective communication of cross-cultural consideration that might lead to a method of portraying both mood and deeper layers of consciousness.

Part two: Sijo, its Nature and Interfaces

The nature of Sijo

Sijo is an ancient form of Korean poetry³ in which bucolic, metaphysical and cosmological themes are often explored (Rutt, 1998, p. 12). Its history is considerable, although much writing around it remains in the Korean language.⁴ Sijo consists of two Sino-Korean characters[시조] meaning, “time” or “period” and “rhythm” or “harmony”, and the poetry form is normally divided into a mental, figurative, and finally, symbolic image.⁵ Sijo is similar to the Japanese poetic form Haiku. However, it may be differentiated in a number of ways.

First, traditional Sijo, [*a song lyric*], was intended to be sung or chanted so the musical nature of its rhythm and rhyme is apparent.

Second, Sijo is culturally specific. Lee (2007), suggests Sijo is situated between the lived experience of ancient Korean people and their thoughts. As a poetic form it can be either narrative or lyrical, and within these approaches it distinctively employs metaphor and alliteration. Gendrano describes the form as “delicate and compact” (2006, para. 4). He states, “Sijo covers a wide range of subjects such as politics, love, life, music, nature, loneliness, and even personal mundane matters like drinking and aging. It embodies the complex and unique concept of sadness and hope called Han, the very Korean life” (ibid.).

³ Sijo may be traced as far back as King Yuri's *Song of Yellow Birds* (17 BC). This text provides the earliest written evidence of Korean poetry. However, because Sijo began as an oral tradition, its origin is much older. Its lyric pattern gained popularity in royal courts amongst the yangban (upper class or nobles), where it was employed as a vehicle for religious or philosophical expression. However, among commoners Sijo were sung or chanted with musical accompaniment. The word Sijo originally referred only to the music, but eventually it came to be identified with lyrics.

⁴ That, said in 1986 the Western *Journal Poet* dedicated an issue to classical form where Korean Sijo was translated into English by Kim Unsong (William Kim).

⁵ By symbolic I mean joining or combining. Consequently, something once so joined or combined may stand for or represent, when seen alone, the entire or complex.

The structure of Sijo

Sijo has a prescribed and consistent structure. Its three lines average 14-16 syllables, producing a total of 44-46 syllables in the complete work. These, Rutt (1998, p. 10) notes, are divided in the following manner: theme (3,4,4,4); elaboration (3,4,4,4); counter-theme (3,5) and completion (4,3).

Rutt also suggests that Sijo is often more lyrical and personal than other East Asian poetic forms (ibid.).

Sijo normally introduces a situation in line one, develops this in line two, and offers a twist and conclusion in line three. The first half of the final line often takes a profound turn, presented as a surprise of meaning, sound, or other device.

Indicative of this structure is Kim Tongnyon⁶ subtle and susceptible Sijo [1596]

Untitled

The springtime mountain is on fire;
buds are burning unopened.
Enough water is at hand
to vanquish the headland blaze.
But smokeless embers in my heart
rage beyond all water.

This lyric verse shows a situation or problem in line one, development (called a turn) in line two, and a strong conclusion beginning with a surprise (a twist) in line three. This device resolves tensions or questions raised by the other lines and provides a memorable ending.

Sijo by Yun Tsuo⁷ (1668) demonstrates the strategic use of metaphoric language.

Untouched

Untouched at the edge of the path,
a jewel covered with mud.

How many have passed it by,
seeing nothing but its surface?

Stay there, gem, look like dirt
till someone sees with a loving eye.

⁶ Kim Tongnyon (1567 – 1596) was a courageous young volunteer soldier who raised an army and was appointed a general to repel the Japanese army in the Hideyoshi invasion (1592-1598). King Sonjo named him the “Lord of Patriotism.” However, in 1596 he was erroneously accused of treason and was imprisoned until his death at 28. This verse is said to have been written during his imprisonment.

⁷ Yun Tsuo was a highly regarded Korean calligrapher and painter. He was the great-grandson of Yun Sondo, the leading Sijo poet of the Choson Dynasty. It is unknown how many Sijo Yun Tsuo wrote, for only *Untouched* has survived.

In this work there is a consistent rhythm. The space between each line is very similar and it is this regular attentiveness to the relationship between image and rhythm that gives the work its distinctive prosody. The last verse contains the distinctive tension and pressure indicative of Sijo poetry and this is relieved or alleviated by the concluding image.

The distinctive tension in the line, “Stay there, gem, look like dirt”, exemplifies the traditional ‘twist’ of the third stanza. This twist, Gin Jang[긴 정] and Jo Im[조 임] (Lee, 2006, para.10) suggest, serves not only the meaning of the poem but also affects the tone of the work. Its disruption unsettles the reader prior to the climactic resolve of the poem.

Zen⁸ Painting

In this research project I have considered certain tenets of Zen painting as a means of suggesting ways in which the poetic and the ‘painted/filmed’ might be brought into synergetic discourse.

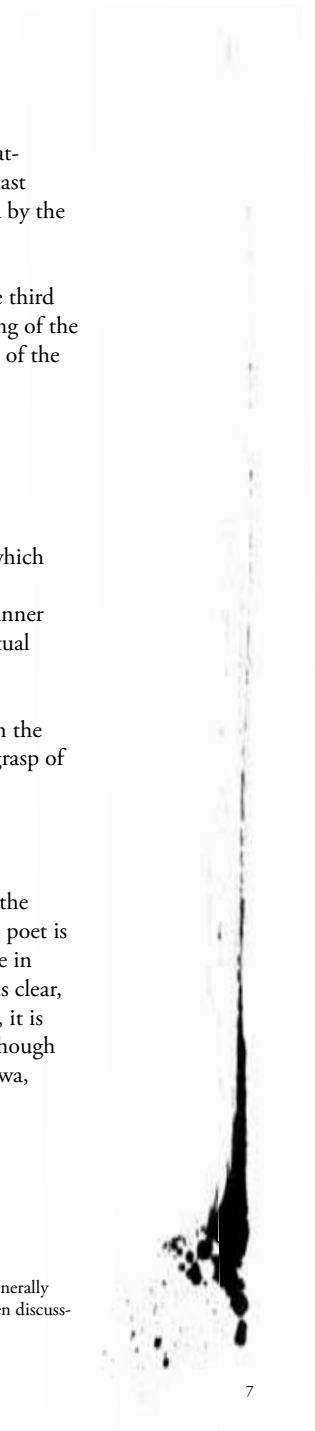
Originally Zen painting engaged with the practice of Buddhist meditation as a means of awakening one’s inner nature, compassion and wisdom. In this approach, spiritual truth is transmitted not by words but by spiritual enlightenment. Thus Zen poetry, painting and calligraphy are considered to be vehicles to enlightenment.

Awakawa (1977) suggests that the artist maintains an appropriate balance between two views; accepting on the one hand the phenomenon of relative values of the ordinary world, while on the other maintaining one’s grasp of the essential meaninglessness of the relative. This dynamic creates a form of provisional dualism.

Zen painting is normally a translation into images from a literary form. Wei Ch’ing-chin of Sung suggests,

The art of poetry has its own kind of atmosphere. It does not follow the kind of reasoning common in the world of scholarship. From olden times, the poet has neither read books nor studied theories. The ideal poet is he who has no truck with theory or playing with words. The aim of poetry is to celebrate human nature in verse. The poetry has something subtle that cannot be expressed in ordinary words. This subtlety gleams clear, like a beautiful jewel, and is only attainable with the greatest difficulty. To express it in different similes, it is like sound in the air, the colour of things, the moon reflected in the water, the image in the mirror. Although the words in the poem may have their limitations, their meaning extends illimitably (as cited in Awakawa, 1977, p.10).

⁸ The Korean form of Zen is called Seon. Zen was transmitted into Korea during the late Silla period (7th through 9th centuries). It is generally believed that Seon developed in Korea following the establishment of the nine mountain schools. In this exegesis I use the term Zen when discussing broader notions of thought that are transferable across Seon, Chán (Chinese Zen) and Zen.



Accordingly Zen painting has tended to appear as work in ink on paper since the simplicity and directness of these materials can express the immediacy of heightened perceptions. In adopting this method of approaching image making, I was concerned less with systematic method and more with opening myself up to what Munsterberg (1993, p.198) calls “momentary vision”.⁹



Figure 1. Paul Kim. *Zen Painting*. Digital Photograph. 2010. The researcher is using ink on thin Japanese calligraphy paper (as in Zen painting). A series of experiments using this medium helped to build up spiritual enlightenment and act as a method of awakening the designer’s inner nature.

Han [한]

Han[한] is a concept in Korean culture that denotes a collective feeling of isolation in the face of overwhelming odds. In combination with Sijo as a poetic form Han is useful to this study because it forms the philosophical and emotional substrate from which the film *Chrysalis* is developed.

Theologian Suh Nam-Dong describes Han as a “ feeling of unsolved resentment against injustices, a sense of acute pain in one’s guts and bowels, making the whole body writhe and squirm” (in cited in Yoo, 1988, p.221).

⁹ Munsterberg (1993) suggests, “ To them (monks) inspiration was not the result of hard work and careful planning, but something which came suddenly, like a flash of lighting. . . . The style of painting used to record this momentary vision is called the *i-pin* method, and the technique is known as *p'o mo*, or broken or splashed ink technique (*hatsuboku* or *haboku* in Japanese). It is a very informal manner, resembling, in its spontaneity and boldness, certain types of modern painting.”

Ahn (1987) argues,

Han is frequently translated as sorrow, spite, rancor, regret, resentment or grief, among many other attempts to explain a concept that has no English equivalent. Han is an inherent characteristic of the Korean character and as such finds expression, implied or explicit, in nearly every aspect of Korean life and culture.

Han is sorrow caused by heavy suffering, injustice or persecution, a dull lingering ache in the soul. It is a blend of lifelong sorrow and resentment, neither more powerful than the other. Han is imbued with resignation, bitter acceptance and a grim determination to wait until vengeance can at last be achieved.

Han is passive. It yearns for vengeance, but does not seek it. Han is held close to the heart, hoping and patient but never aggressive. It becomes part of the blood and breath of a person. There is a sense of lamentation and even of reproach toward the destiny that led to such misery (p.96).

Han enables one to express forms of sentiment that cannot be easily portrayed or explained solely by the use of words. In relation to Sijo, as an essentially Korean cultural form, Han operates as a subjective foundation for the subject of my work. By this, I mean the film poem cannot simply be conceived as written text over images; instead it might be conceptualised as exposing the intangible nature of thought.

William Wees (2005, p. 109) in describing ‘poetry film’ as a genre recognises this feature when he suggests that this media form “...expands upon the specific denotations of words and the limited iconic references of images to produce a much broader range of connotations, associations, metaphors.”

In reaching beyond words written across film, I am seeking to provide a glimpse into a protagonist’s submerged thoughts. Poetry exists both in the form of the work and in the unresolved resentment situated in the centre of protagonist’s being.

The structure may be Sijo but the spirit is Han.

Rhythm in poetry

Rhythm comes from the Greek, meaning ‘measured motion’. In spoken poetry it is a musical quality produced by the repetition of stressed and unstressed syllables.¹⁰ Thus, rhythm engages certain words or intervals more forcefully than others. The repetition of a pattern of such emphases produces a ‘rhythmic effect’. Having as it does a physiological basis, in spoken form rhythm is discriminated by the ear and the mind. In film poetry it may be arguably discerned by the ear, mind and eye.

¹⁰ It should be noted however, that although classic Sijo holds closely to the syllabic pattern, it doesn’t simply count syllables. This is because by its nature it is more phrasal (musical) than syllabic.

Because rhythm can alter or build up significant messages it can provoke both the precise and the atmospheric.

In *Chrysalis*, rhythm is located in both the formal structure of Sijo and in the editing and image emphasis of filmed sequences.

Aviram (1994) suggests,

In poetry, music, and dance, the physical sensation of rhythm is an insistent manifestation of the physical world. Words as meaningful signs can describe rhythm or define it, but cannot replace it- that is be it. This relation between words and the world holds true for instance of physical reality, but rhythm is special insofar as it continues to draw our attention and to recruit our participation, through its catchiness, so that, so long as we perceive it at all, it does not disappear into its “meaning” that is, its significant as constructed by the representational work of language (p. 21).

Since this project combines poetry and film, it is essential to preserve and extend the distinctive features of both. Accordingly, in the film, rhythm is a consideration not only of literary pace and emphasis, but also of editing, typographical movement, image length and density, and atmospheric design.

By extending the dimensions in which rhythm operates we come closer to what Aviram (1994, p.21) suggests when he notes,

There is an effect of rhythm that goes beyond signs, beyond meaning in a semiotic sense. That effect is what makes it possible for rhythm to appeal to the body first rather than to the imagination or the intellect. And it is the play of tension between that appeal to the body and the intellect's efforts to put it into images and ideas that will work for us as a fairly inclusive and yet subtle definition of poetry.

Metaphoric content

The Oxford Companion to the English Language (1992) defines a metaphor as “an analogy between two objects or ideas. This is conveyed by the use of a metaphoric word in place of some other word. Metaphoric Language denotes rhetoric figures that achieve their effects via association, comparison, or resemblance” (p. 653).

Although Sijo may be either narrative or thematic, it is generally more lyrical and personal than other East Asian poetic forms. Like much poetry from this region it employs metaphors, symbols, puns, allusions and similar word play as an integral part of its system of disclosure. However, unlike the haiku or tanka, it tends to use these quite explicitly.

The following untitled¹¹ Sijo provides an example of this employment.

Where pure snowflakes melt
Dark clouds gather threatening.
Where are the spring flowers bloom?
A lonely figure lost in the shadow
of sinking sun, I have no place to go.

Here the atmosphere is both a physical manifestation of the environment and an expression of personal alienation and loss. We hear a single voice telling us two concurrent stories. In these stories the images created are the same but they reference different things.

The power of metaphoric language is its ability to create both a system of visualisation and a duality. It exploits the potential of nuance. Its duality exists in spoken (or written words) but, in film poetry, it can be extended so it leaks into the often more nebulous realm of physical imagery. Here associations may be made between narrative, emotion, subject and suggestion.

Dürsteler (2002) defines a visual metaphor “as the representation of a new system by means of visual attributes corresponding to a different system, familiar to the user, that behaves in a similar way” (para.3). However, one must take into account that visual metaphors and their use are culturally determined and their systems of encodement and decodement are not necessarily the same.

St Clair (2000, p. 85) notes,

After thousands of years of following the Western European tradition of rhetoric (the art of using language), we have finally come to accept the fact that this scholarly tradition is culture bound... This realization of culture boundness of thinking on the subject of rhetoric brings with it a sincere effort among rhetoricians to develop some insight into how a non-Western system of communication, or discourse, works. They have found that non-Western systems of rhetoric tend to use visual instead of verbal metaphors.

The challenge this presents to the researcher, although Korean by birth, is how he might construct a film poem that bridges metaphorically a contemporary Western world and the ancient rhythms of his indigenous culture. Although I have written the Sijo for *Chrysalis*, it is the film poem's use of visual metaphor that specifically locates the work outside of tradition. As film poetry it stands on a bridge that negotiates distinct bodies of cultural knowledge. In this regard it is useful to note that St Clair (2000, p.85) argues that visual language, “allows knowledge to be seen in a new perspective. Visual metaphor is a term that designates how visual space is organized as a means of sharing cultural and social knowledge.”

It is the sharing of the cultural and social through the medium of film poetry that is the central concern of this work.

¹¹ Most Sijo in the classic tradition have no titles.

Chapter Two: methodology and practice

The Zen Poetic as a System of Inquiry

In approaching a research project that is concerned with both poetry and the negotiation of the 'poetic', one is drawn to writers like Bullough & Pinnegar (2001) who assert "methods must not prescribe problems; rather problems must prescribe methods" (p. 14). In addition, Gibbs (2006) notes, "Methodological appropriateness is more important than whether the research methods selected can be classified within one paradigm or another" (p. 233).

Poetic approaches to creative thinking are not easy to classify within a traditional academic research paradigm. Poetic thought does not operate conventionally as systematic approach to data collection and processing but, in trying to remain honest to the process and research design of this project, the 'poetic' is in fact the most appropriate way of conceptualising the approach I have taken.

As already noted, Zen painting is a method I have used for approaching thinking in this project. Essentially Zen teaches the importance of being conscious of the 'here and now'. One dwells in the moment of contemplation, not thinking about the past or the future. Shakya (2010) notes, "When one is engaged with Zen painting, there is no painter and no thing being painted; the painter and the painted are one" (para. 1). He also notes, "By its nature Zen painting dictates no content, not even the famous Zen content of no-content" (ibid. para. 2). This is not an easy concept to understand. Essentially he suggests one remains open and immersed in the 'moment of making'. One's thoughts surface and are applied in the moment, and through this the poetic nature of one's being becomes manifest.

One way of approaching this state of 'discovery' is to dwell inside the idea of Sijo and in the rhythm of mark making; what is hidden surfaces through gateways that might normally remain guarded by reason or anxieties about appropriateness.

Susanne Gannon in her essay "A Poetic Approach to a Methodological Dilemma" (2001) notes that poetry being "relatively free of the corset of written textual convention, is less linear than other texts and in the pauses and gaps can leave moments where audiences can insert our own lived experience and our various selves to create embodied knowledge" (p.791). Although she is speaking here about the audience's response to hearing poetry, I suggest that in thinking poetically the poet also inserts his 'own lived experience' through pauses and gaps, enabling his self' 'to create embodied knowledge'.

Richardson (1997), in discussing poetry, indicates its difference from other written methods of expressing thought. He argues that poetic thinking manifested in poetic texts employs "literary devices such as sound patterns, rhythms, imagery, and page layout" to create texts that are "emotionally and morally charged"; that "concretize emotions, feelings and moods" (p.180). He also suggests that poetry represents "lived, embodied experience more effectively than other modes of writing" (p. 143).

If we extend this thinking backwards into the actual creative process of poetic thinking it might suggest that the poetic thinker may employ 'patterns, rhythms, imagery' to... 'concretize emotions, feelings and moods'. Thus the poetic thinker, instead of relying on data as something collected and analysed, draws instead on certain patterns and rhythms in the process of creating work.

As Douglass and Moustakas suggest, when approaching research via a system of self-immersion, one is "sifting and sorting, moving rhythmically in and out of appearance, looking, listening carefully for the meanings within meanings" (1985a, p. 52).

What is of interest here is the writers' use of the word 'rhythmically'. When developing poetry that speaks in a fusion of written form and imagery, it is rhythm that becomes a factor in understanding relationships between ideas and the composition of elements.

'Inter-data validity' is assessed through its ability to create patterns and rhythms that 'feel' right. One seeks concordances and homologies, and in the patterns of image and word, certain relationships surface and settle into place. The success of the procedure is generally measured by the richness of the result, its cohesive patterns and inter-subject harmonies.

Accordingly, the Sijo for this work was not actually written until the film poem was in a state of development. Imagery surfaced before words, although the concept of structure, rhythm and the ethos of Sijo underpinned the inquiry from the outset.

The poem sought its form not as a written text that was then translated into a film. Instead the poem was the composition of an idea into image and text. As I contemplated the idea of Sijo, notions of the self and loss of identity surfaced. At times this thinking appeared as images and textures, at others it formed itself into simple narratives where an individual reaches a point of discovery. Accordingly texture, imagery and narrative elements all contribute to the final form of the work.

The Chrysalis Opens: the practice of reflection

Although Zen de-emphasises theoretical knowledge in favour of direct realisation through meditation, in developing this work I also drew into my process some external approaches. These allowed me to move from indwelling to a state where I could reflect on emerging ideas. This was done because it was necessary for me to assess whether I was communicating emotional resonance.

In instigating the research I sought the essence of the film poem as a chrysalis. I was internal and external at the same time. I dwelt with ink and paper in a region of suspended thought as a means of locating certain emotional catalysts to the generation of images, episodes and textural/rhythmic devices.

As I emerged from this state of contemplation the project began to change its form. The subject of identity and the loss of identity emerged, as did the idea of unravelling. Nuances of textured fabric, unstable type, restrained colour palettes, unstable focus, and unravelling all offered themselves for consideration.

Word phrases like:

“I close my eyes to silence the roar”, and, “The mirror is blind”, although not carrying the syllabic structure of the Sijo, suggested images ideas that touched against Sijo’s sense of twist and unstable simplicity.

What was significant was that at this point I knew that I was creating a work about the loss of identity.

Accordingly I found myself considering an ending to the film poem that contained a Sijo structured thus:

If you should ever seek me, I would tell you I have forgotten [16 syllables]

Timeless beauty, consciousness, truth, and justice break me [13 syllables]

I do not exist. [5 syllables]

In this unrefined draft of a Sijo, the situation or problem is evident in line one. A development (or turn) appears in line two, and a strong conclusion containing a twist appears in line three. The work contains three lines, averaging 11 syllables, producing a total of 34 syllables.

However, the rhythm was not quite right. It was close, but both my sense of harmony and the conventions of Sijo structure suggested further refinement.

In discourse with this development in writing, my film work had begun to engage with footage of bandaging, disconnecting typography and a sense of unravelling. The substrate of the film poem was there, but the process required a system of reflection on and in refinement. Accordingly I employed the assistance of three specific methods.

The first was a Visual Journal, the second was the use of Miksang photography as a method of contemplative practice, and the third was a process of reflection on external (independent) review.

The Visual Diary

This project employed a visual diary as vital tool as a means of expanding thought and exploring creative potential. As such it combined two processes. First it archived ideas about momentary emotions and sketched thinking. In addition it became a site of self-reflection. As such, it became a vehicle for refining and reconsidering ideas.

In the project I employed two different sized Visual diaries. One was a portable A6 notebook. The other was an A4 document that I tended to keep in my studio. These two physical formats afforded me a certain level of flexibility. This was important because I tend to think about a project all of the time. Ideas come to me not just when I am seated at a desk; they appear on journeys, when I am eating dinner, and in quieter contemplations on the physical environment that surrounds me on a day-to-day basis.

Neither of these diaries can be adequately described as a compendium of field notes. Instead they were working repositories of poetic thought, recorded and developed both as images and words. By generating images and writing, I was able to reflect upon possible ways of visualising aspects of film, for which there was no existing iconography. This poetic approach enabled me to ask myself questions and answer them in metaphoric ways. Because the film poem was a discourse between images and words, it was useful to develop a method of working that adopted the same belief in a synergy that might be born from a discourse between forms of recorded thinking (sketches and written poetic thoughts).

Rainer, in describing such documents describes them as,

...a practical psychological tool that enables you to express feelings without inhibition, recognize and alter self defeating habits of mind, and come to know and accept that self which is you. It is sanctuary where all the disparate elements of a life—feelings, thoughts, dreams, hopes, fears, fantasies, practicalities, worries, facts, and intuitions can merge to give you a sense of wholeness and coherence (1978, p.18).

Despite the need for wholeness and coherence, in developing the journals as a method I initially sketched and wrote in different sections of the books. This was so I could consider the essence of each form of thinking more closely.¹² I didn't want to lose the unique cognitive processes inherent in visual and written thinking through a process of merging.

Sketching allows me three distinct types of thinking.

Rapid sketching

Rapid sketching is a form of visual short hand that enables me to quickly record sometimes subtle ideas in very rapid ways. Sketching is not limited by the constraints of written language (in quickly expressing ideas like weight, rhythm and multiple levels of connectivity). Quick sketching offers a flexible and convenient way for a designer to develop ideas that are semi-resolved and open to further development.

Contemplative sketching

The second form of sketching I use is closer to drawing. By this I mean the process of visualisation is not rapid but more contemplative. I draw slowly and rhythmically. In this process I am attentive to detail and rhythm. I dwell inside the drawing and its process. This allows ideas to filter out onto the paper from my imagination; ideas that are often quiet, poetic and lingering. The slow process of this kind of drawing means that one is immersed in the imagination as one is consciously making an idea physically manifest.

¹² In this regard, I began developing and recording written thoughts at the back of the journals and archiving and refining visual thinking at the front.

Pallasmaa (2009) notes,

“The pencil... is a bridge between the imagining mind and the image that appears on the sheet of paper; in the ecstasy of work, the draftsman forgets both his hand and the pencil, and the image emerges as if it were an automatic projection of the imagining mind” (p. 17).

Doodling

Doodling may be defined as a process of mark making driven not by the desire to make an idea manifest but as an unfocused contemplation on the process of mark making. Because this project is based on poetry, I sought to develop poetic ways of ‘thinking’ about its ‘voice’ that transcended the limitations of storyboarded narrative structuring.

When doodling the simplicity and directness of mark making is used in the nature of Zen painting where one expresses the immediacy of heightened perceptions. In adopting this method one is concerned with opening oneself up to Munsterberg’s “momentary vision” (1993, p.198).

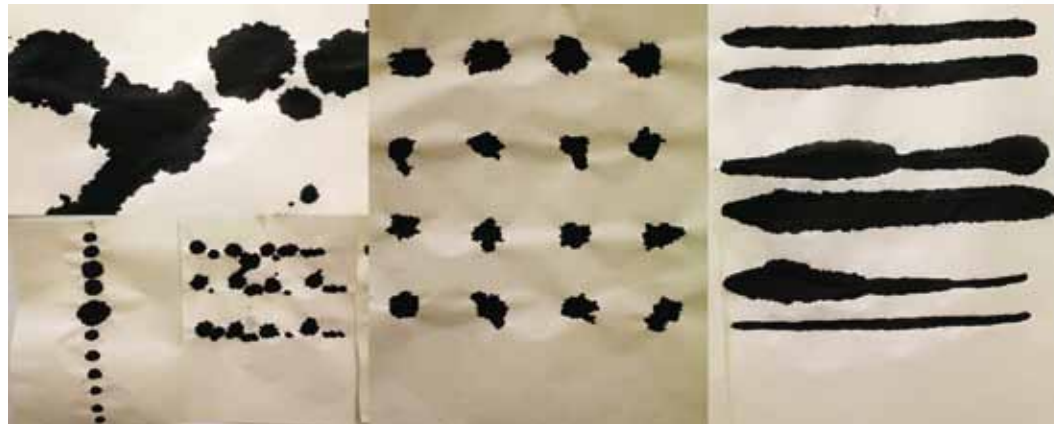


Figure 2. Paul Kim. *Experiments using a brush*. Digital Photograph. 2010. Experiments of brushwork on Japanese calligraphy paper. This experiments sought to consider how the rhythm of poetry might transfer visually through a process of pressuring and releasing.

Painting rhythm

When I draw or write I externalise thoughts on to the paper. The process of drawing using an ink brush (figure 2) can produce effects that correspond closely to the designer’s physical engagement with rhythm. The movement of my hand can produce ‘fast’ or ‘slow’ marks. In addition, certain strokes formed by the level of physical pressure and release become a means of expressing rhythm in a visual manner.

Although the brush is a traditional Korean tool for performing movement, I have also tried to be flexible. In this regard I have experimented with a range of other media including paint, coloured pencil, and brush pens. In using these materials I have constantly sought a state of reflective immersion where as Schön (1983) suggests, the designer thinks “what they are doing while they are doing it” (p.50).

The visual diary as a form of indulgence

The visual diary is rich with sketches, ideas, monologue and poetry. It acts as a site of sustenance and reflection. As such it recoups my sensual thoughts and experiences. Across its pages I search out the film’s atmosphere and spirit.

In this regard, the visual diary may be seen as an indulgence. However, I use the term here as more than the seeking of sensual gratification. Indulgence may be seen as a form of immersion. As such it may gratify the potential of an idea and through this gratify the designer.

Thus, the visual diary is not a form of organised book but a tool for sensual and imaginative immersion and reflection. It is a site in which the designer seeks harmony and gratification.

When working in a visual diary, each minuscule decision may offer a nuance of possibility. Its totality however, becomes the space in which a network of relationships plays out as an orchestration of enigmatic and moody possibilities.

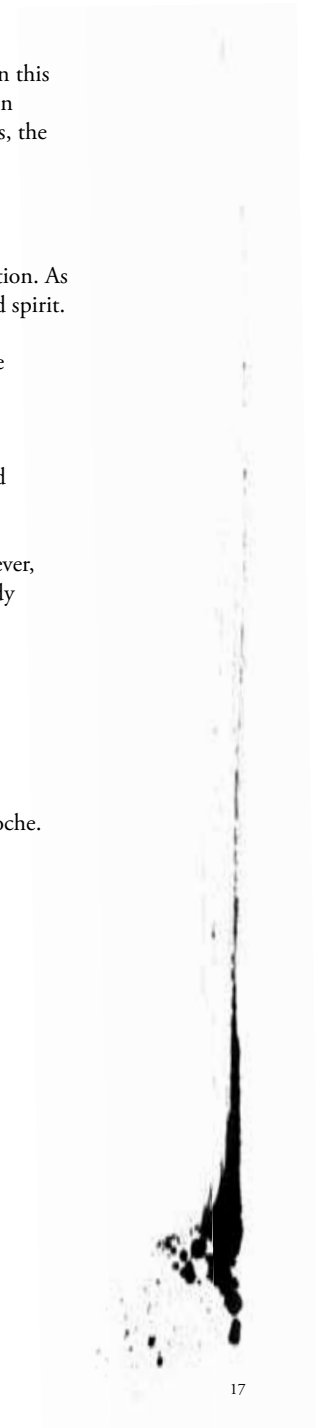
As a consequence, the visual diary becomes a means to locate the voice and tone of my film.

Photography (Miksang) as contemplative practice

Miksang is a form of contemplative photography that is based on the thinking of Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche. The Tibetan word, Miksang may be translated as ‘good eye’. ‘Good’ in this definition means a mind that is relaxed, open and uncluttered by preoccupation.



Figure 3. Dubose, J. (2010) *Untitled works*. Retrieved from http://miksang.com/Julie%20DuBose/Miksang%20Gallery/index_2.html May 2nd 2010



Dubose (2009) says,

When we synchronize eye and mind, we abandon all concepts and predispositions and become completely present in the moment. The world becomes a magical display of vivid perception. Miksang, at its most basic level, is concerned with uncovering the truth of pure perception. We see something vivid and penetrating, and in that moment we can express our perception without making anything up nothing added, nothing missing.

Miksang contemplative photography seeks to share experiences of uncertainty, doubt, deep pleasure, and inspiration as the 'good eye' is used to re-present the visual world. It encourages one to perceive things without significant conceptual overlay. This is not easy to do. To assist this process I normally take some time to contemplate an idea, then I use Miksang photography as a tool for reminding myself of the thought. By doing this I can sometimes capture a momentary or enigmatic image that comes close to recording a relatively uncompromised emotion. In my work, these images often provide a visual manifestation of the atmospheric or enigmatic poetic metaphor.



Figure 4. Paul Kim. *Appropriating Miksang photography*. Digital Photograph. 2010. The series of photographs demonstrate examples of this form of contemplative recording.

The images (Figure 4) are momentary and have been taken without adjusting lenses or thinking too deeply about framing and focus. This process looks uncluttered and involves a conscious process of clearing the mind and dwelling in a state of contemplation, rather than seeking to compose a didactic recording of subject.

Unlike the visual journal, Miksang engages a unique photographic method where one does not seek to compose, process and critique a 'complete form'. Miksang is not a system of conscious reflection, and refinement, but rather it enables one to contemplate ideas beneath the surface. Atmosphere and enigma become more important than refining the absolute. Miksang opens one's eyes to explorations beyond preconception and fixed ideas. Instead, one discovers through a process of gentle visual contemplation.



Figure 5. Paul Kim. *Production stills for Chrysalis*. Digital Photograph. 2010. Series of screen shots from film *Chrysalis* that demonstrate the influence of Miksang practice.



When it comes to employing Miksang as a photographic method in the generation of film poetry, the approach lends itself to a consideration of the senses. Although one is dealing in film with movement as well as static contemplations, there is a certain approach that is transferable. Accordingly most of my photography comprises close up shots as I am contemplating ideas beyond objective description (Figure 5). Texture, atmosphere and light become more significant than form and fixed meaning. The resulting imagery opens spaces for enigma and intimacy. Because Miksang doesn't seek to proscribe/describe meaning, it opens meaning to wider levels of contemplation. In a film poem like *Chrysalis* this is important because the work is lyrical in nature.

Imagery constructed using Miksang is assembled as a rhythm that flows within the harmonious structure of Sijo poetry. Here one encounters a subtle regularity that brings the contemplative image into harmony with the balance and grace of the Sijo structure.

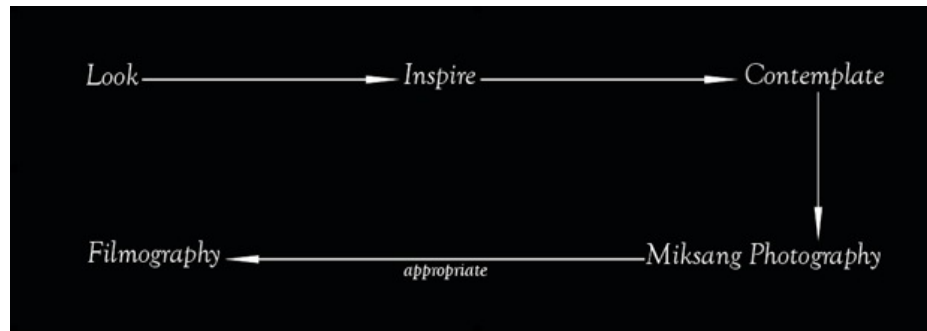


Figure 6. Paul Kim. *Graphic diagram of appropriating Misang as contemplation*. 2010. Diagram that shows how I integrate Miksang photography with film. The diagram demonstrates my personal process. One seeks in this process to preserve both the visual essence of the image and its emotive atmosphere.

External review in contents

Essentially poetry requires a certain level of understanding because it seeks to provide a form of metaphorical communication. Because of this use of metaphor, it is rarely the intention of poetry to be didactic. Instead it often seeks to suggest through nuance and association. One speaks with substance and the spaces between substance. However, in order to achieve such an orchestration of the poetic, one must produce finely tuned work. Accordingly, because the final text is communicative, I sought feedback at strategic points to ascertain the effectiveness of the film poem in transferring ideas to others.

Although the initial foray into the work involved an interior journey, during the production¹³ of the film, I sought feedback from others. This feedback came from fellow graphic designers, the broader public, and my supervisors. This meant that new experiments were informed by levels of criticality beyond my own interior readings of the text.

¹³ By production I do not mean only work generated during and immediately following filming. I also present for feedback sketches, still photos, films, poetry and experimental sound designs.

When considering feedback I remained aware of what was said and the physical way that people responded to the work. Responses to emerging outcomes generally enabled me to ascertain what elements in the work were communicative, and on what level.

Initially I asked peers to respond to emerging versions of my written Sijo poetry. In these early drafts they were asked to provide me with their personal visualisations. While I was not intending to translate their responses into film, the process reinforced for me the variety of ways that people respond to poetic description. In addition the feedback showed how clearly people respond to poetic work on an emotive level. This observation is in concord with Scholten's belief that "the wisdom of poetry must come out of the felt experience" (1952, p.316).

The felt experience is not something one can 'secure' as an absolute. However, one can check that there are certain resonances in the work and consider the comparative effectiveness of subtly differing approaches. In critiques with experienced filmmakers I was able to also gain feedback on issues of rhythm and continuity. This led to reconsiderations of colour, pace and the breadth of imagery explored in the work.

Conclusion

The research design in this project was primarily concerned with systems of contemplation that open the designer up to a consideration of ideas that might be brought into harmony with the structure and nature of Sijo poetry. Because the project uses a Zen poetic system of inquiry, its most distinctive methods have a similar resonance. Contemplative sketching, rhythmic painting, and Miksang photography all operate inside a paradigm quite divorced from Western methodological approaches that concern themselves with refinement through high levels of analysis and deduction. The approaches I have used are underpinned by a belief that it is in the process of an 'open' contemplation that the artist might reach levels of nuance and poetic thinking that allow him to touch thought and the spaces between thought.

These approaches to image making and 'feeling' the way through rhythmic, poetic work are processed inside diaries and journals. These locations may be broadly understood as sites for reflection that serve to recoup sensual thoughts and experiences. Inside these documents the film's atmosphere and spirit is processed, contemplated and refined.

Having outlined the distinctive approach taken to creating this project, I will now present a commentary on key features of the film poem *Chrysalis*.

Chapter Three: commentary on the completed work

The film poem *Chrysalis* is a unique work that orchestrates many elements. It is distinctive in its poetic treatment of emotion and suggestion. Within its construction however typography, colour, sound, and structure are worthy of specific consideration.

Spatio-temporal typography

Typography plays a vital role in visual communication. Although traditionally type has been presented as letterforms on paper, since the advent of spatio-temporal environments, typography has become the concern of a number of graphic designers. Significant among these are film title designers like Kyle Cooper,¹⁴ Saul Bass,¹⁵ Krystian Morgan,¹⁶ Stephen Faustina¹⁷ and Kevin Chandoo.¹⁸ In addition filmmakers like Peter Greenaway; music video directors like Simon Milne,²⁰ Jean-Baptiste Mondino,²¹ Marcus Nispel,²² and Jake Scott,²³ and typographers working in advertising like Johnathon Branbrook,²⁴ Revista C'Pacas,²⁵ and Len Cheeseman,²⁶ have impacted significantly on how we 'read' type as a 'voice' on the screen.

In this project, the written word is a significant communication tool as well as being a pictorial element. Typography is not just used for delivering narrative ideas or single concepts, it also contributes to the visual tone of the film poem. The relationship between typography and image is integrated.

¹⁴ Significant works include: *Se7en* (1995), *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1996), *Mimic* (1997), *The Mummy* (1999), *Spider-Man* (2002), *Across the Universe* (2007), *Tropic Thunder* (2008), and *The Orphan* (2009)

¹⁵ Significant works include: *Carmen Jones* (1954), *The Man with the Golden Arm* (1955), *The Seven Year Itch* (1955), *Vertigo* (1958), *Anatomy of a Murder* (1958), *North by Northwest* (1959), *Psycho* (1960), *Spartacus* (1960), *West Side Story* (1961), *Walk on the Wild Side* (1962), and *The Cardinal* (1963).

¹⁶ Significant works include: *The Woods* (2008), *The Thing* (2009)

¹⁷ Significant works include: *Tetro* (2009)

¹⁸ Significant works include: *Durham County* (2007)

¹⁹ Significant works include: *The Belly of an Architect* (1987), *Drowning by Numbers* (1988), *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover* (1989), *Prospero's Books* (1991), and *The Pillow Book* (1996).

²⁰ *Union of the Snake* (1983).

²¹ *I've Got You Under My Skin* (1990).

²² *Killer/ Papa was a Rolling Stone* (1993).

²³ *Everybody Hurts* (1993).

²⁴ *True Romance/Tartan Toyboys/ Foggie Bummer/ Nae Hope*, (1995) for Tony Kaye films. Faulds Advertising.

²⁵ EPOCA. (2001) for Brazille.

²⁶ *The Riot of Spring* (1998).

I see typography not as a binary element but as part of a rhythmic flow of emerging meaning. This is why sometimes words sometimes become inseparable from imagery. This approach allows type to whisper and fade; it is found and lost, and found again in the rhythm and structure of the Sijo.

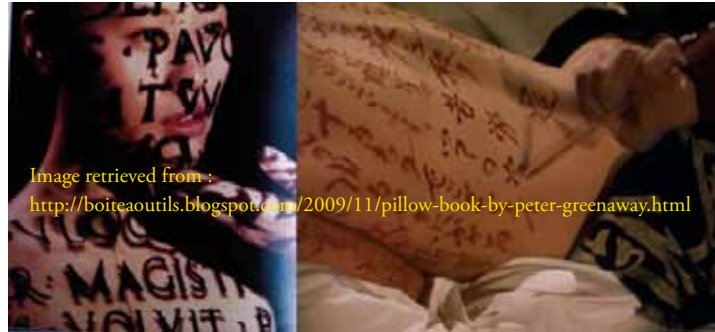


Figure 7. Greenaway, P. (1996). *The Pillow Book*. Motion Picture. Use of typography in Greenaway's film.

A related use of typography can be seen in Peter Greenaway's film *The Pillow Book* (Figure 7). Here type is an emotive element that develops nuances beyond simply 'presenting words'. In his film, typography becomes a character that communicates connections between thoughts. The text becomes part of protagonist's skin. Its relationship is intimate and sensual. We feel the caress of its touch, the subtlety of its breath, and the grace of its movement. As in Greenaway's film, my use of type in *Chrysalis* is designed to be 'felt'.

Stone, Alenquer and Borisch (2004) say,

Typographic messages can be analysed through three different dimensions: semantic denotative representation, colour and texture, and shape. These dimensions, when presented to subjects as stimuli, activate a variety of thoughts, images and meanings that are both semantic and episodic memory systems.

Type in *Chrysalis* engages all of these dimensions. We read words from the Sijo. The semantic denotative representation informs us on one level about the content of the written work. The type used in the film also has colour, texture and shape.

However, it also reaches beyond these dimensions. Type in my work negotiates space and time. By this I mean it moves in harmony with the temporal nature of the film. It speaks and dissolves across time. In the film much of the type is handcrafted. The letterforms are made from Letraset as physical objects that engage in the physical world of bandages and light. They move on the same material planes and become co-performers in the film poem's mode of 'telling'.



Image retrieved from :
<http://www.artguide.com.au/features/primavera-07/>

Figure 8. Smith, M. (2007). *After finishing High School*, photograph, The Queensland Centre for Photograph(QCP). Brisbane

Bunyan (2009), in discussing the performative use of typography in Australian photographer Martin Smith's work (Figure 8), describes the approach I have taken in my work.

He says,

Image and text are performative, playing off each other to provide a transgressive textuality that becomes a mode of agential resistance capable of fragmenting and releasing the subject. In this engagement between image and text the work becomes intertextual, the ritual of production engaging a network of texts, a discursive multiplicity that traverses the entire scope of social, cultural, and institutional production (Bunyan, 2009).

I believe that handcrafted typography can enhance the integrity of this intertextual, performative relationship. Because it is part of the image that is filmed, its movements remain inextricably tied to the movement of materials in the film. It reacts to light and dark in the same way other elements do. In doing this, it lessens the traditional gap between image and text.

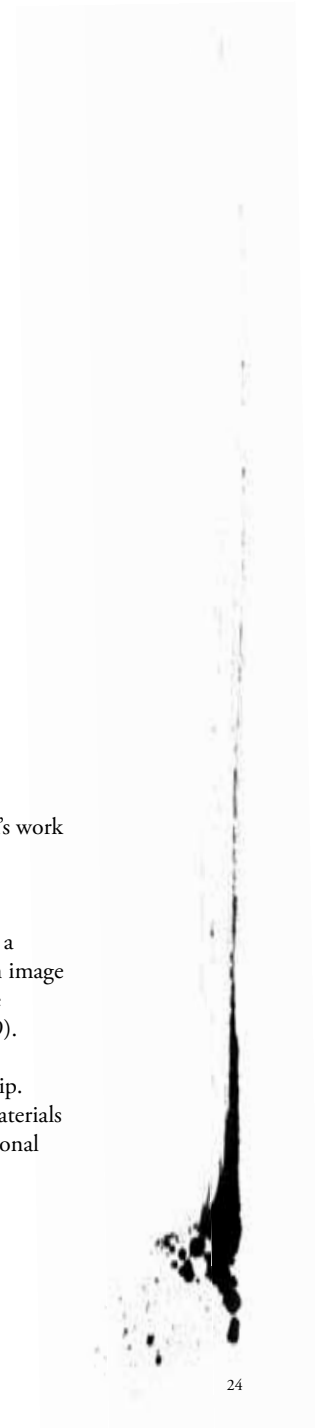




Figure 9. Paul Kim. *Experiments involving the transfer of Letraset on to a fabric bandage*. Digital Photograph. 2010. Physical typography experiment on a fabric bandage.

The experiment (Figure 9) was undertaken to investigate a sense of anxiety. In this experiment I tried to use typography on top of a fabric bandage used by the protagonist in the film. By positioning typography on the object I was seeking a quality of personification. Because the protagonist uses bandages continuously, an intimate relationship is established between the meaning of written text and the protagonist's character. Typography comes to speak for the protagonist's thoughts.

The use of Letraset transferred on to fabric bandage produces a flexible, floating sensibility. Because the image is not divorced from the fabric it contributes to a sense of interiority and intimacy.



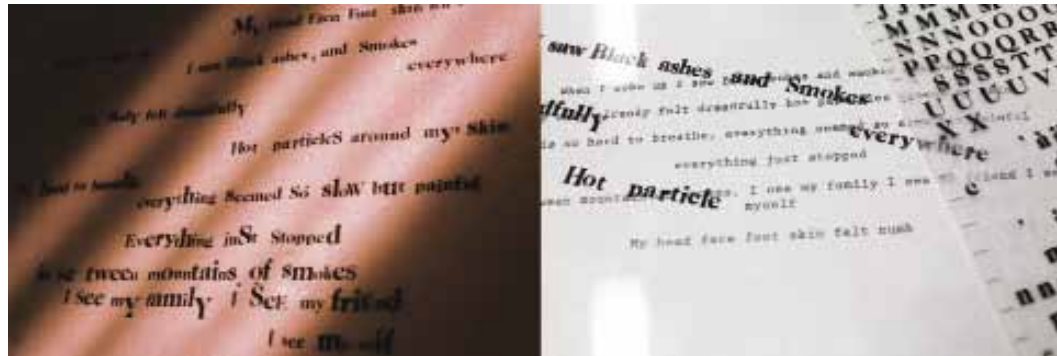


Figure 10. Paul Kim. *Letraset transfer on to clear film*. Digital Photograph. 2010. Letraset transfer used to develop the film poem's flexible typographic voice.

The film, however, uses two other approaches to type. First there is some use of Letraset transferred on to clear film (Figure 10). This enables me to overlap type and imagery and draw attention to the movement of time within the film. In the work this technique provides a sense of flow and momentary dislocation.

everything seemed So slow but painful

Everything just stopped

Between mountains of smokes

I see my family I see my friends

I see myself

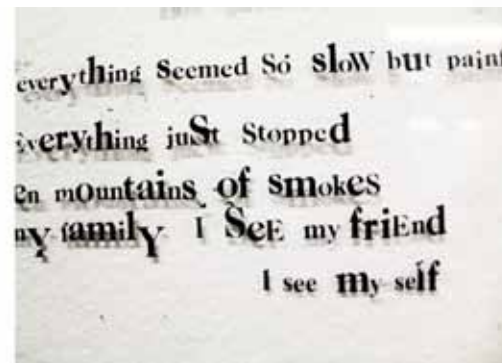


Figure 11. Paul Kim. *Comparison between Letraset and computer generated typography*. Digital Photograph. 2010. An experiment comparing text developed in Photoshop and Letraset transfer on acetate projected on to a wall. Unlike digitally generated text, Letraset on clear film suggests higher levels of potential in relation to flexibility, shadow, perspective and the movement of time.



Figure 12. Paul Kim. *Letraset transfer on to the protagonist's fabric bandage*. Digital Photograph, 2010. Letraset transferred onto the protagonist's fabric bandage as a means of visually communicating emotional resonance and a sense of internal speech.



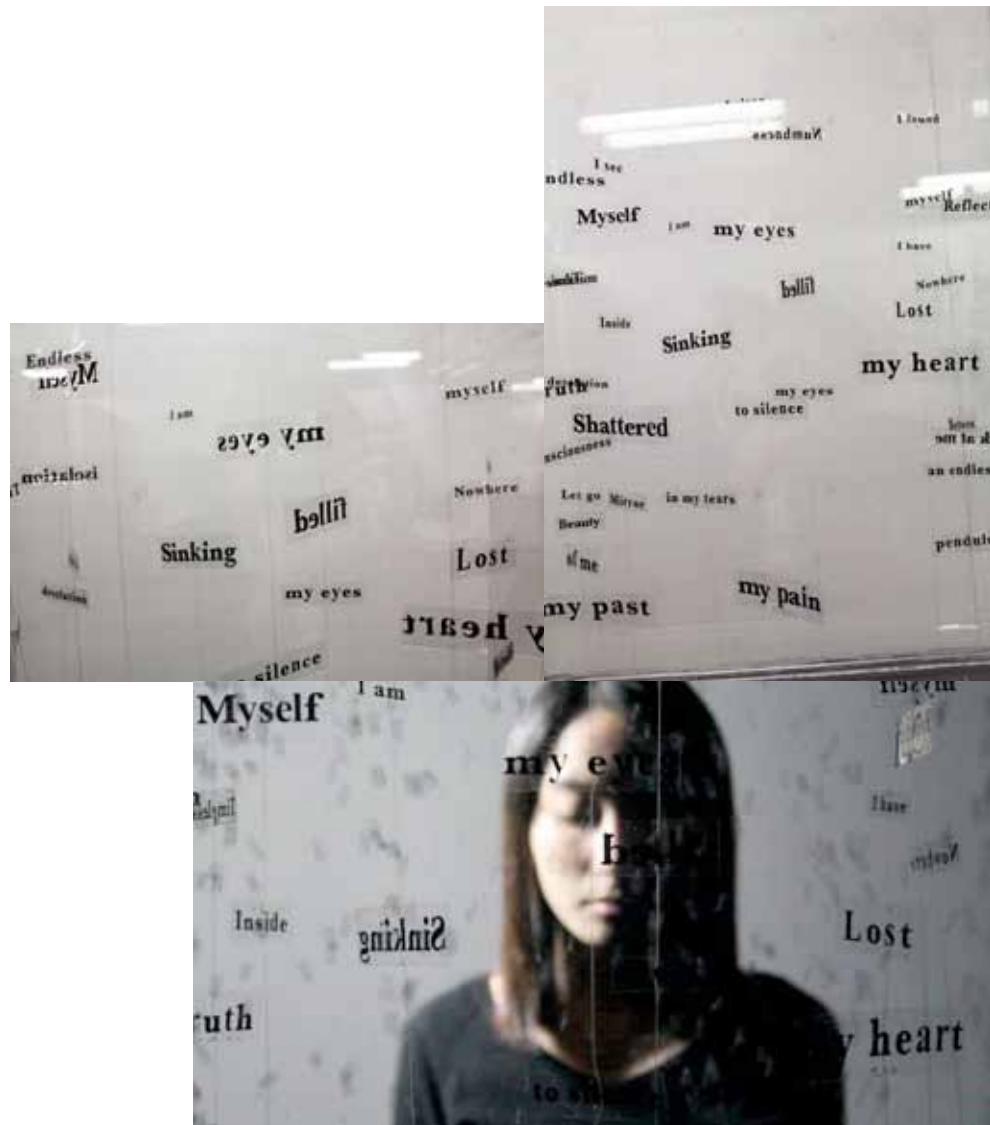


Figure 13. Paul Kim. *Further development of typography on clear film*. Digital Photograph. 2010. Here transparent film is suspended in a glass tank containing water. In this process I experimented with typography's performativity in liquid. The resulting fluid movement produced a sense of dreamlike contemplation that hinted at both interiority and drifting thought.



The film also utilises a limited use of applied type. By this I refer to type that is created in postproduction. This is not used for the film's interior voice but is employed as a means of dislocating poetic phrases from the Sijo while still holding them inside the rhythmic structure of the work. Thus type speaks to us from both inside and outside of the protagonist's thinking. The challenge, of course, is to bring these three approaches to type into a seamless harmonic construction. While they serve different purposes, within the poem they must also operate as a unifying element.

Colour and Sound

When poetry's prosodical aspects are transferred into a film context, prosody may be discriminated as sound. Sound has a multitude of manifestations in film poetry. It may be heard as the rhythm of a poem, or it may be discerned in the pitch or timbre of a reader's voice. Alternatively, sound may be the use of foley²⁷ as an accent, or atmos²⁸ as a contextualising environment. Finally, sound may appear as a musical accompaniment.

Sound is able to create auditory imagery, and it is this imagery, because it is not recorded as a fixed 'picture', that has the potential to take a viewer to deeper levels of imagination.

In this work I dub strategically on to a single audio substrate. This base of music provides a level of aural continuity to the work. Sound punctuates this substrate as ambient noises and suggestions of disorientation and dissonance. These punctuations are used to draw attention to the protagonist's sense of confusion and isolation. Occasionally sound is also used to emphasise movement (whether facial or as an accompaniment to flickering imagery). Where sound is used to punctuate a cut in a sequence, its role is emphasis. This is important because it helps to underscore the movement of time or rhythm in the poem. Thus sound is employed as a device for creating significant moods and rhythmic emphases in the work. Sound is slow and dark. It does not seek to create a melodic texture to the work but instead increases a sense of interiority.

Although sound is imported into the work (I do not record sound while filming), I use AfterEffects, Soundtrack Pro, Soundbooth, and Premiere Pro to situate it and draw attention to elements I wish to highlight. In addition I use sound as a means of heightening colour in the poem.

²⁷ Foley art is a technical term in film for sound that is generated outside of the original filmed environment. It may be used either as a substitute for recorded sound or employed as additional audio for emphasis or clarification.

²⁸ Atmos [phere] is sound often developed in postproduction that suggests the environment of a scene. The nature of atmos will affect the impact and nature of sound placed within it.

Colour

In this project I am interested in the interface between sound and colour. Brewer (2010) notes,

Like emotions, colours also symbolise different things. Colour symbolism can have a powerful effect on human emotion. It contains our response to the stimuli of particular music, it contains the energy and strokes associated with the way we have been moving and the energy created through our individual movement.

Thus variations of colour in response to audio elements may give rise to synergetic and distinctive multi-sensory levels of perception. This effect is also sometimes known as synesthesia.

Over time, artists have used colour to create atmospheric moment in their work. Colour can determine the mood and tone of a sequence and can work with sound to create synergetic resonances in an image.



Figure 14. Tarsem, S. (1991). *Losing my religion*. Motion Picture. These show the diverse palettes employed across the work that eventually become integrated into a cohesive whole

This relationship between sound and colour is a distinctive feature of the music video directed by Tarsem Singh for REM's 1991 release *'Losing My Religion'* (Figure 14). In this work he uses colour as a method of both adding emphasis and demarcating and fusing separate elements within the film. This means he is able to integrate seemingly unrelated episodes into a cohesive whole. While Singh uses music to connect his imagery (across the four minutes of the film), it is the grading (colouring) of the work that allows him to bring into harmonious relationship, seemingly unrelated episodes. As the video moves forward these episodes gather connections to each other and finally are perceived to be part of a connected world. Colour binds the disparate elements together because it expands in incremental steps, fusing worlds that all contain a base palette of desaturated browns punctuated with distinctively different hues. Singh's approach has influenced certain approaches to colour treatment I have employed in *Chrysalis*.

In *Chrysalis*, there are two sets of colour used to demarcate two periods of time. The first period of time is the present. The other relates to the protagonist's flashbacks. This demarcation is deliberately created to visually contrast time so there is no confusion between the moment of unravelling and the narrative episodes that contributed to it.



Figure 15. Paul Kim. *Production stills from Chrysalis*. Digital Photograph. 2010. Production still for colour dissolving between two different scenes.

Although I use colour to depict the protagonist's emotional state, colour also blends elements of the poem together. To do this I often dissolve colour as a means of both emphasising emotion and activating transitions. Thus, although colour is used to demarcate, subtle fusions within the palettes are also used to connect. This means that the film poem does not become internally fractured. In addition, by manipulating contrast and levels of desaturation in both periods of time in the film, I am able to emphasise both texture and atmosphere.

Structure and resonance

The film *Chrysalis* was designed to engage similar structures to those employed in Sijo poetry. Sijo is structured into three distinct phases. The situation is established in phase one; it develops in phase two, and offers a twist and conclusion at the end of phase three. The first half of the final phase takes a profound turn, presenting a surprise meaning.

In designing the film poem *Chrysalis* I worked inside this construct. The film is divided into three distinct phases that move us through the establishing of a situation, the development of a state, and eventually to a twist/revelation. This structure is constructed subtly. The work is not a didactic translation but a poetic response and homage to structure.

The beauty of Sijo lies in the manner in which each line of syllables is elegantly balanced into the rhythm of the poem. When one encounters Sijo one becomes aware that the poem deals with a sense of holding and releasing. What I mean by this is that there are pauses between each word and each line when it is read aloud. Accordingly, in this project I employed a form of breathing in the visual transitions between phases of the film. This was achieved with a fade in/fade out technique. In the work we are suspended for a moment in darkness for three seconds between each phase. When a reader encounters the blackness they pause and reflect while anticipating what might follow. This is a device that allows the film to incrementally build tension while holding sentiment. Thus like written Sijo, the film's structure generates time to contemplate.



Figure 16. Paul Kim. *Production stills Chrysalis*. Digital Photograph. 2010. This images from *Chrysalis* showing fading out.

The Sijo I wrote for *Chrysalis* has no title. The title *Chrysalis* applies to the film text only. Traditionally Sijo has no titles and although some western writers like Carmen Sterba sometimes use them, I have remained true to the classic tradition. My written Sijo was refined through much iteration. Its delicate rhythms and pauses house both the tangible and the spaces between such things. Structurally it conforms to the classical format.

Trapped here in the dark, and endless pendulum in time

I close my eyes to silence the roar; the mirror is blind

If you seek me, I am not here, I do not exist.

The poem's first line contains fourteen syllables, its second line has the same number and the final line that contains both the counter theme and twist has thirteen.

Gross, (2010, para 5) notes,

Although the classic Sijo adheres closely to syllabic restrictions, it doesn't simply count syllables. It is more phrasal than syllabic. Because of its nature and the nature of Hangul, the Korean script, the structure of Sijo resembles Hebrew & biblical verse... To achieve this effect, each long line, once divided, is divided again, into quarters averaging 3-5 syllables. This phrasal quality is a basic feature of the form (Gross, 2010).

Immediacy

Both the written Sijo and its iteration as a film poem have a traditional sense of immediacy. Sijo dwells the reader in the moment. It is attentive to something occurring in the reader's presence and as such rarely positions itself in the past tense. In doing this it helps to suspend us in a contemplation of the living.

Both my film and the written form of the poem do this. We watch as a world unfurls towards meaning. While enigmatic and lyrical we are aware that we are not watching something in retrospect even though we might flicker back to a situation that brought us to this moment.

Compression & tone

As Sijo is delicately compressed, I have also sought to produce visual imagery that is compressed so it is through the minimal that rich metaphorical content is delivered.

In general Sijo employs a form of self-monologue that is immediate but also allows the poet to compress observation by drawing a close focus to specific elements. In *Chrysalis* this monologue is both visual and written and offers a compressed and lyrical narrative of the protagonist's journey through confusion and isolation in relation to the tenets of Han. It is the compressive nature of Sijo and the manifestation of Han that creates the emotional tone of the work.

Integration

Chrysalis is attentive to both rhythm and transition. It does not weave its written form through the fabric of the film but allows a visual and typographical contemplation to precede it. This means we are spoken to through an enigmatic narration of images and type that are edited into subtle rhythmic episodes that are similar to those of Sijo poetry. However, as the visual narrative begins to resolve, we encounter the written form of the poem. In this regard the written poem becomes part of the counter theme and twist of the film poem. We do not expect to see the poem because in the first two thirds of the film, type as imagery has suggested another form of speaking.

Thus, the film poem engages the Sijo in three ways. First its form determines both the film's structure, and rhythmic approach taken to editing in the work. Second, the tone and metaphorical ethos of Sijo is evident in the highly contemplative and attentive 'immediacy' of the film. Third, the film uses the written Sijo as an element of its counter theme. In this regard the (film) poem encounters a (written) poem in its resolution. We are surprised by a twist that is both narrative and stylistic.

This is the nature and manifestation of the twist.

Conclusion

This thesis sought to contextualise the film poem *Chrysalis* by discussing both the methodological approach taken to the design of the film and certain critical ideas that impacted on its form and substance. Because there is no existing methodological process for creatively designing Sijo as film poetry, I employed a Zen poetic system of inquiry because this provided a context for the employment of contemplative methods of development.

The film poem is a unique media form that presents both opportunities and challenges to those who choose to work with it. These become compounded when one seeks to navigate cultural crossings. Accordingly, although one encounters scholarship and critical/creative thinking in this thesis, they often appear to be quite different to traditional western approaches.

In telling the story of this project I have tried to be very true to both the ethos of the inquiry and its explication. This has not been easy because there are few examples of this kind of project existing as creative production theses. The contemplative paradigm is far removed from reductive and analytical approaches taken to much academic research. Moreover, many of the concepts I have dealt with in the research have no Western equivalent. However, I believe that the research demonstrates a clear knowledge of context and the ability to strategically match methods to the nature of the project.

The film poem resulting from this research must stand on its own feet. Its rhythms and harmonies, nuances and cohesion are marks of its internal coherence. It may be sourced from, and processed within, Asian cultural paradigms, but its aim is to communicate across cultures.

Accordingly, this has been a very challenging thesis. It has sought to bring the overlooked into creative contemplation, and through this, to make a contribution to the field of film poetry. Such undertakings may be appreciated or dismissed. In this regard I am reminded again of the ancient Sijo by the Korean calligrapher and painter Yun Tuso. In his seventeenth century poem *Untouched* he says,

Untouched at the edge of the path,
a jewel covered with mud.

How many have passed it by,
seeing nothing but its surface?

Stay there, gem, look like dirt
till someone sees with a loving eye.

This thesis has been the application of a loving eye.

Paul Kim

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