

East Asia PhoNographic Mornings #16/25

Each Morning of the World #08

Jungang-daero 195beon-gi ~ Choryang-dong ~ Dong-gu ~ Busan ~ South Korea

35°06'54.2"N 129°02'19.6"E

« **8 hour day** »

Simon Whetham

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'Stephane invited me to contribute to his extensive and impressive series "Each Morning of the World", asking me to send a soundscape response from Busan, South Korea, where I was based in February 2019. While there I was staying in a very cheap hotel room in a street parallel to the main street Chungangdaero and close to Busan Station.

It soon transpired I was in the meeting place of "Chinatown" and "Texas Street" which are essentially streets of bars that are closed during the day and open all night, where men go to meet women, or you can also meet them on the street. I think you can guess what the situation is. So as you pass by a bar, as a man, you will have girls calling to you to come in, or they will actually leave the bar to come and talk to you, offering company for the night, or a shorter time period...

Initially humourous, however ultimately quite sad and uncomfortable, I decided to record a walk around this area at around 1am to capture any situation that arose - and understand that what you hear will happen to any man who happens to walk in this area at this time, unaware of what awaits. This work is not condoning the practices that go on in this area, nor is it condemning, it is simply acknowledging it exists.

Conversely, the latter part of the piece was recorded at around 8am, which for many people is the time to travel to or begin their working day. Walking the same route, the streets were starkly quiet, empty, calm.

The "8 hour day" in this area is significantly different from that experienced by most...'

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Simon Whetham

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I work with sound as I enjoy the exploration of a location, discovering its characteristic and hidden sounds, and the patience this takes. The process acquaints me with many aspects of a place; physical, social, psychological.

I explore the fact that sound is energy, and I use recordings or live action to trigger motion in objects or transform a sound by playing it through various materials, resonating them. I work unpredictable systems or actions, such as weather conditions or malfunctioning devices as I enjoy the lack of complete control over my work.

I also investigate how other energy forms, such as light, wind and water can produce or trigger sound, and vice versa how sound be used to create light and movement, at times resulting in a physical trace.

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