

Research article

A Trend in Applied Theatre Programs: The Case of Seoul Metropolitan Government

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Abstracts

Applied Theatre first started in the United States, Britain, and France as a ‘paradigm shift in the drama scene’ which operates beyond the conventional theatre forms. Its scope is growing. In the United States, Britain, Australia, and other countries, many major academic journals and universities tend to change the name of relevant discipline.

In Korea, drama works are moving beyond a simple act of appreciation and taking a diversified approach, becoming social, educational, participatory, and therapeutic in many ways. However, the new drama works are yet to materialize in physical theatres. Korean municipalities tend to call the new theatrical form as Citizen’s Theatre instead of Applied Theatre, limiting the new theatre’s scope to the participation of a particular municipality’s residents. The practice illustrates not so much the abuse or misuse of the term Applied Theatre as the application of the new drama form without a thorough understanding. There are problems in how Applied Theatre is introduced in Korea as well as certain limitations in the technical application of it. Also, support systems and administrations based on public policy are unable to extend Applied Theatre programs. As the Korean production of Applied Theatre is mainly led by citizens currently, it is necessary to clearly understand the new theatre form and resolve issues that emerge in its production process.

Keyword: Seoul Metropolitan Government | Applied (Citizen’s) Theatre | Applied (Citizen’s) Theatre Class | Applied Theatre | Educational Theatre | Practical Theatre

I. Introduction

In our modernized society, the progress of urbanization presents us with many social problems, and one of them is the increasing lack of understanding about the community. In the present circumstances, city governments use arts and culture programs to various social prejudices and build a community among the members of society. Seeking measures to revitalize the city, each municipality strives to harmonize people into each local community by way of arts and culture.

In some cases of the present drama scene, we see programs managed in a very limited sense of citizen's participation, as opposed to the real sense of the term Applied Theatre and the progress of technical progress.

This study aims to understand Applied Theatre programs based on the case of the Seoul Metropolitan Government, identify issues, and present some ideas to solve them. The scope of this study encompasses the status analysis of Applied Theatre in Korea, an academic discussion based on the analysis, and systems improvement suggestions for better institutional support programs and better use of Applied Theatre by the professional circle, to enable sustainable experience in the field.

1. The Paradigm of Applied Theatre

The birth of the European Applied Theatre is an integral part of the history of theatre. With the success of the French Revolution, the class society collapsed to be replaced by the bourgeoisie. The new bourgeoisie society led to greater participation of people in economic and political areas, thus increasing the importance of the new class.[1]

More importantly, plays now featured middle-class, petit bourgeois citizen as the main character.[2] Applied Theatre in this sense indicates works that predicate a sense of criticism from civil society, with certain tragic subject matters involving the middle class. In these plays, citizen's lives appear to deliver social and political communications with either tragic or comic subject matters, with realistic rendition of natural human nature.[3]

Applied Theatre that originated in Britain and France shifted the paradigm of the drama scene in opposition to the existing theatrical forms. In countries such as the United States, Britain, and Australia, major academic journals and universities are changing the name of the discipline.[4]

In Korean theatres and universities, dramatic works are moving beyond the audience's appreciation to take a diversified approach, becoming social, educational, participatory, and therapeutic in many ways.[5] Since these works follow the social issues involving a citizen's everyday life, they are likely to turn the theatre into a form of documentary, and hence there is an increasing interest in drama as a therapeutic program.

In the past, the Korean theatre seemed to insist on purely professional creative works, which made it difficult for ordinary people to participate in stage works. Thus it was virtually impossible for amateurs and professionals to produce anything together. It was difficult for ordinary people to perform on stage together with professionals, or to work on a theatrical production with independence and autonomy.

In current amateur and professional performances, it is a nationwide trend that actors and Applied Theatre groups join hands to induce the participation of and theatrical production by citizens. Actors are working either under local theatre groups or resident arts and culture organizations.

In the changing situation, it is necessary to have an academic discussion and identify policy support systems of Applied Theatre. In the current arts and culture support system, the 'experience for citizens' programs are likely to stay here for quite some time.

In 2013, the Seoul Metropolitan Government had support programs for citizen's arts and culture under the theme of 'harmony of citizens.' In 2014, the municipal programs called We Love It—The Clubs divided the

areas of participation by individuals into detailed sub-categories and created fields of exchange.[6] In the drama sector, citizen's programs played a central part.

2. The Concept and Characteristics of Applied Theatre

With its origin in educational theatre, one Korean translation of the term Applied Theatre has the meaning of 'theatre of application or practical use (*eungyong yeonguk*).' Since it has a basis in educational theatre, Applied Theatre often appears in the form of a short-term academy in academic discussions and application.

A Google search shows that local governments in Korea are using the term Applied Theatre as 'citizen's theatre (*simin yeonguk*)' because environment and level of citizen's awareness are different from those of other countries. Thus the Korean trend shows Applied Theatre used as an element of experience, initiated and participated by citizens and applied to cultural industry.

At present, citizen's programs of various genres are in the making nationwide, and they are developed into one 'customized' citizen's theatre program. The primary purpose here is to drive active participation from the parties involved in the program.[7] Most of the relevant projects take the form of either a local community program or a club. The beneficiaries have expanded to include individuals as well as groups.

The United States is a relative late-runner in the development of Applied Theatre, and the Center for Applied Theatre Arts is playing a pivotal role. The Center examines the issues of each local community and establishes phased Applied Theatre techniques for the people.[8]

The five phased techniques established by the Center are switching roles, thought bubble, screen image, lightning forum, and three wishes.

Each phase of the Applied Theatre techniques takes account of communication among individuals of the community as well as between individuals and groups. The ultimate purpose is to understand and heal any wounds of self and/or others.[9] and collaboration of various genres is encouraged while individual competencies are developed.

3. Main Thesis

At present, in addition to Seoul, many city governments including Incheon, Chuncheon, Daejeon, and Daegu are either offering Applied Theatre classes or recruit citizen-actors to produce a performance.

Compared to other municipalities, Seoul has been relatively slow in incorporating the Applied Theatre programs in policy. In early 2009, Sejong Center for the Performing Arts under the Seoul Metropolitan Government launched the Applied Theatre Class. In 2013, the Seoul Metropolitan Theatre took the responsibilities of managing the same program. By 2014, the fifth class entered the program. In 2013, the Sejong Center hosted the first Applied Theatre Arts Festival, striving to include the applied theatre groups' activities in the official agenda. In the same year, Seoul launched a course called Community Drama Class: Jobs and Arts.[10] The course trained citizens as activists and made efforts to create jobs.

By 2013, many parties including the Seoul Metropolitan Theatre, the Seoul Metropolitan Government, and the Dongdaemun Solidarity to Share Culture strove to promote citizen's rights to enjoy culture and offered professional support through their programs. The Dongdaemun Solidarity to Share Culture implemented Applied Theatre as a therapeutic program in its Cultural Community Project. While the Seoul Metropolitan Government had offered professional support for local theatre groups in the past, its focus became support for amateur clubs by 2014, with programs operated accordingly.

1. Status of Applied Theatre Programs and Groups

Currently, Seoul and other municipalities tend to highlight popular elements in their Applied Theatre programs, with strong characteristics of cultural contents. Festivals are organized at outdoor spaces, which allow multi-purpose activities (therapy, performance, exhibition, festival, markets, research, and so on) to happen, overcoming the physical limitation imposed by a performance theatre. Public policies generally foster town communities. The number of Applied Theatre groups, citizen-actors, Applied Theatre activists is on the rise.

We will briefly review the status of Applied Theatre by managing entities and relevant works produced. We will look at municipalities including Seoul, Incheon, Chuncheon, Daejeon, and Daegu. Lastly, Praxis, the Institute for Drama/Theatre in Education is included as it has maintained the characteristics of Applied Theatre faithfully. The case of Praxis will show us the target of Korean Applied Theatre as well as how the performances are inclined. The insight will help Applied Theatre to be established as a differentiated therapeutic program.

In Chuncheon, the Chuncheon Theatre Festival started an Applied Theatre project. In Incheon, the Incheon Waltz Team under the Incheon Foundation for Arts and Culture launched an arts program for citizens in 2012 to present *A Journey*, a musical performance created by people. In Daejeon, Theatre Association of Daejeon Metropolitan City has been hosting the annual Daejeon Citizen's Theatre Festival since 2006. The Applied Theatre festival with the longest history takes place outdoors. Flea market events are also offered for citizen's participation.[11] In 2011, the Daegu Metropolitan Theatre Company presented *The Seven Deadly Sins of Urban Women*, in its 12th Drama Class.[12] In Gwacheon, the city's resident arts company Modle Theatre recruited citizen-actors whom they had trained before, producing *Happy News for the Maeng Family*. [13]

Praxis, the Institute for Drama/Theatre in Education (TIE) faithfully implements the techniques and characteristics of Applied Theatre, and it is the only entity that presents drama as a mechanism for social communications. The list of their productions include: *The Dream of a Blue Whale* (2005, 2006), a TIE performance for the inclusive education of children with disabilities; *Butterfly Effect* (2008), a forum theatre performance on the future of teenagers and family issues; *Mom, I'm Having Baby Number Three* (2009), a forum theatre performance on the issue of low birth and childcare; *Wait, Please Help Mrs. Baek!* (2010), a forum theatre performance on senior citizens falling victim to fraud and struggling with their roles in society; *Mother, Would You Like to Live with Us?* (Sept. 2010), a forum theatre performance on parents and grown-up children living together; and *Under the Sky of Seoul* (Oct. 2010), an Applied Theatre performance made with shantytown residents. [14]

In the municipalities mentioned above, resident groups under the city government manage Applied Theatre programs and produce performances. After completing the program, some participants become citizen-actors. Seoul helped the foundation of some theater groups (such as Applied Theatre 2010, Applied Theatre Company Siyeon, and Odangchum) and helped the participants work as actors or Applied Theatre activists. Although the use of actors trained by Applied Theatre programs usually goes unnoticed, Seoul is a critical case that shows how a current issue of job creation was incorporated in public policy. With that policy goal, the city's Community Drama Class: Jobs and Arts fostered Applied Theatre professionals.

Then what elements of cultural contents should be added for the Applied Theatre to be sustainable? The actual cases of individuals and groups that completed Applied Theatre programs may give us some answers.

The first case is the Applied Theatre Class initiated by the Sejong Center. Since the first class in 2009, a total of five classes graduated the program by 2014. Non-profit organizations (including clubs) in Applied Theatre usually produce a performance with their members, with some professional help (from production crew). Applied Theatre 2010 (first class) and Applied Theatre Company Siyeon (second class) each became a theatre

company by establishing a non-profit organization. The other three classes are still preparing to establish a theatre company respectively. The groups usually work for one annual performance. Since most of the members have other jobs, it is difficult for them to commit themselves entirely to the performance. As registered non-profit organizations, Applied Theatre 2010 and Applied Theatre Company Siyeon funded some of the budgets through the Seoul Foundation for Arts and Culture's subsidy for citizen's arts and culture project. Since the other three classes were not registered as a non-profit organization yet, they had to get help from the city's support for general club activities.

As Applied Theatre groups tend to follow the same production patterns, one of their biggest issues is that they are unable to streamline production procedures or cut budgets. Membership fees are not enough to provide sustainable budgets. In reality, it is difficult to produce a performance without sponsorship. Thus these groups fail to make the most of Applied Theatre's characteristics, to present and find a solution for social issues: they end up choosing well-known plays instead of creating something new.

Meanwhile, Applied Theatre programs increased with an emphasis on the citizen-actors' active participation. It is also a general trend in performing arts.

The second case involves how citizen-actors work. In 2013, the Sejong Center organized the Citizen's Arts Festival. As the Center presented an opera performance of *Aida* to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Verdi and hosted the Korean Traditional Folk Song Festival, 280 citizens (98 choir members, 20 dancers, and 40 citizen-actors) participated in the events. As ordinary people play an active part in various performances, programs that allow citizen's participation expand into diverse genres. In 2014 when *Aida* was produced again, the engagement of citizen-actors became official as a way to reduce the budget for a large-scale performance.

The performing arts circle has mixed views about citizen's participation. Some receive the trend positively because of financial benefits including budget cut and a boost in ticket sales. Others see it negatively because the use of citizen-actors may take opportunities from aspiring professional actors, and because the poor handling of training and control of citizen-actors may lead to poor quality in performance.

As stated above, many municipalities allowed citizen-actors to be engaged in Applied Theatre programs. They may belong to one group but still can participate in another group's project.

The third case is Applied Theatre in public policy. The Dongdaemun Solidarity to Share Culture (DSSC) had help from the Seoul Metropolitan Government's Community Support project. The DSSC offered professional support through many programs and incorporated Applied Theatre as a therapeutic program in its Cultural Community Project. The purpose was to make residents of Dongdaemun-gu (district) experience the production of performance and to improve their rights to enjoy culture.

In some cases, Applied Theatre programs may undergo a change direction according to the inclination of subsidy offered by a particular institution. It is necessary to re-examine the Applied Theatre programs in the system of public policy support because even resident theatre companies under subsidy often focus on one outcome that is citizen's participation, instead of implementing the real techniques and characteristics of Applied Theatre.

2. Academic and Policy Discussions on Applied Theatre in Korea

Since the launch of Applied Theatre Class in 2009, the Seoul Metropolitan Government executed relevant policy as well. In this case, some keywords of Applied Theatre included community, arts education, creative, philosophical, participation, experience, transformation, theatre, and drama.

The GyeongGi Cultural Foundation (GGCF) and the Korea Arts & Culture Education Service invited Philip Taylor, professor of NYU Steinhardt and the author of *Applied Theatre: Creating Transformative Encounters in*

the Community in 2010 and 2011.

In 2010, the GGCF hosted workshops and a symposium, with themes such as Talking Applied Theatre: Community, Participation, and Transformation Through Drama and Drama out of Theatre: What to Do Now? On this occasion, Philip Taylor explained the three purposes of Applied Theatre: first, to promote the understanding of Applied Theatre; second, to build a community through theatre; third, to discuss participation and build experiences for local activists in arts and culture.

The workshops and symposium aimed to connect the art worlds in Korea and abroad and to re-establish the concept and forms of Applied Theatre, at the same time arousing public interest. It was an opportunity to identify the status of diverse theatre forms in arts and culture education.[15] Discussions covered “various issues, events, and questions regarding the public and private matters that spectators or participants face in facilities other than theatre, or diverse spaces.” [16] The 2010 symposium had discussions on communities and their activities.

In 2011, the Seoul International Symposium for Arts in education and Creativity (SISAC) opened under the theme of Leading Creative Education with Arts Education. The discussions took both philosophical and policy approach for creative arts education. The focus of community in this symposium became “the field of networks interested in education and future through the experts’ examples of creative arts education in Korea and abroad.” [17]

Meanwhile, Paulo Freire’s praxis theory is about communicating with people through participant- and process-centric theatre. The theory forms the basis of Korea’s Praxis, the Institute for Drama/Theatre in Education. While Praxis performs Applied Theatre, it does education and visiting performances to use as a means of social communication including rather than limiting. The activities of Praxis are based on action, research, and reflection. [18]

Performing groups may go against the characteristics of Applied Theatre following the inclination of the person in charge of planning or leaders. The groups in this field cannot easily self-supply people and usually have to liaise with professionals (crew for theatre production) for whom it is difficult to make rigorous demands to be faithful to the characteristics of Applied Theatre. Also, using professionals at a low cost can be harmful to the development of performing arts in general, as it can create an obstacle in the new trend of the cultural industry. It is not good enough to just follow the existing conventions of performing arts. What is important is to find measures to manage budgets and train crew for the future.

3. Seoul Metropolitan Government’s Support Programs for Applied Theatre

Since Applied Theatre “guides and encourages people to build local and cultural communities as the region’s independent and active participants,” [19] using citizens in performing arts production will have a considerable effect. Positive results are expected as citizens can actively participate in attracting the audience and expanding publicity. That is why it has become a general trend to have ordinary people’s participation in both non-commercial and commercial productions.

There are four institutions offering support programs for theatre, which are the Arts Council Korea (ARKO), the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism (MCST), the Seoul Foundation for Arts and Culture (SFAC), and the Paradise Cultural Foundation (PCF). In 2014, most of their programs were open for application in from the October to March period. Although PCF temporarily stopped its support program in 2014, we will briefly review the other institutions and have a detailed look on the SFAC’s support for Applied Theatre.

The ARKO focused on non-profit experiments in the cultural industry based on the public policy on arts and culture. Its projects aimed to establish infrastructures that would develop a virtuous cycle of creation, mediation,

and enjoyment of arts. The Council mainly offered residency programs.[20]

The MCST implemented different policies in various areas covering culture, arts, sports, tourism, religion, media, and public relations. Its ultimate goal is to enable a life with culture for the people.

The SFAC's goal is to make citizens and artists meet Seoul, a happy city of culture. The Foundation ran support programs to create and spread arts, arts education, and people's arts and culture activities.

According to the 2013 Seoul Comprehensive Plan for Theatre Development, a new project was to "support arts activities using local theatre companies," which was to happen in 2014. The purpose of this project was to use local theatre companies to "provide citizens with arts programs so that they can discover hidden desires of artistic expression."

The Seoul Metropolitan Government launched a plan to foster citizen-artists (cultural activists) through the 2013 Seoul Citizen's School for Arts and Culture and offered diverse arts and culture education programs in individual communities.

Seoul encouraged programs for private organizations running either a small theatre or a theatre company to manage creative studio using small private theatres. To reinforce the self-sustaining ability of theatre arts organizations by supporting resident organizations, the city subsidized operating expenses for performing venues, production and operating expenses for collaboration projects, and operating expenses of arts organizations. The city used to grant subsidies for large-scale public theatres but decided to expand the scope to include small- and medium scale private performing venues. According to a 2013 plan, the ratio of small- and medium scale performing venues and resident organizations under subsidy was going to increase from 33% in 2013 to 50% by 2015. [21]

There are performing venues for arts and culture used by resident organizations and for the arts education of citizens. Some creative spaces in Seoul are Seoul Art Space Geumcheon, Seoul Art Space Gwanak, Seoul Art Space Mullae, Seogyo Art Center, Seongbuk Art Creativity Center, Seoul Art Space Sindang, Seoul Art Space Yeonhui, Seoul Art Space Jamsil, and Seoul Art Space Hongeun. These spaces offer culture-related news and run programs that allow citizen's experience and participation. Spaces for rental include Garden 5, Seoul Forest Cluster Project, Namsan Arts Center, Daehakro Practice Room, Seoul Theatre Center, and Seoul Citizens Hall. Seoul Street Arts Creation Center is about to open.

According to the 2013 Seoul Comprehensive Plan for Theatre Development, the SFAC's 2013 projects to support applied theatre were all transformed into We Love It—The Clubs projects.

4. Identifying Issues in Korean Applied Theatre and Some Solutions

4.1 Applied Theatre: The Term and Technical Implications

Recent years have seen fast growth of Applied Theatre, which is related to performance production and cultural contents industry on different levels of the city. Given the circumstances, the GyeongGi Cultural Foundation (GGCF) focused on the needs to conduct policy research from diverse aspects.

In the first place, Korea's use of Applied Theatre is different from that of other countries. As mentioned before, the most widely used Korean term for Applied Theatre (*simin yeonguk*) literally means 'citizen's theatre,' and in reality, the Applied Theatre projects tend to be used as experience programs for citizens under a municipality. Detailed practices are different by the municipality in charge. The Korean case is the one that shows the use of Applied Theatre as Citizen's Theatre without proper understanding.

In performing arts circle, there is a growing tendency to stress the element of experience inviting a group of citizens, with a commercial purpose in mind for production. It is deeply related to the support system, including

subsidies, the selection of play or performing venue, and support for resident theatre company to help local artists. Two amateur theatre companies working at Daehakro since 2005, Theatre Action Masks [22] and Theatre Holics show clear examples of such tendency.

Cities emphasize the role of community played by amateurs who show citizen's cultural needs and produce performances accordingly. Meanwhile, Seongmisan Village is creating a new trend as a town of arts and culture, establishing itself as a neighborhood where education and creative productivity coexist.

Now is the time to review the Korean term for Applied Theatre as well as the approach to technical issues. It is also necessary to come up with communication alternatives for individual villages so that the town communities of arts and culture may not exist in exclusion but interact with other villages.

In Waldorf education, it is believed that various experiences that cannot be obtained from educational theories will expand knowledge and social networks significantly.[23] According to Freud, although cultural desires may grow autonomously by society's members, the social institution of the state will create a status of tension to restrain such cultural desires.[24]

The GGCF actively discussed Applied Theatre from policy and academic perspectives between 2010 and 2011. The discussions must be applied and studied not only in the field of Applied Theatre but also in many other fields involving citizen's participation. The activities of Applied Theatre organizations must be re-defined.

First, Applied Theatre needs to have an improved self-sustaining ability. When an organization does not have enough competencies to be independent, a system is necessary to help it with subsidy after appropriate budget discussions, or with professional human resources including production crew. A supervisor must manage the whole process for the sustainability of the organization.

When Applied Theatre techniques are employed at the Korean scene, arts professionals and general participants have quite distinct desires, and the two parties have different awareness regarding the issues they need to cover. The local community members and the professionals (actors, director, and production crew) often have different goals since they have different desires in displaying their competencies.

In such collaboration with professionals, citizens who have been trained in Applied Theatre and founded an organization get to produce a performance instead of sharing social issues. In selecting an annual performance, or in working with professionals, the organization will highlight the level of expertise to improve overall performance quality. In this process, the emphasis is on hardware, not software, meaning that the understanding of Applied Theatre or the group itself remain fragmentary. Everything becomes about showing and hence securing a bigger and better performing space. To resolve such fundamental problems, both amateurs and professionals should build shared and changed awareness in this field.

Second, Applied Theatre projects need differentiation. In executing participatory programs with citizens, it is not easy to address all practical issues on stage. What matters, in this case, is not so much the outcome of production or performance but the community members' consent and voluntary participation. The approach to Applied Theatre programs must be different from that to therapeutic programs.

4.2. Introducing a System through Popular Culture Contents

Today, popular interest and participation are essential to "induce creativity, productivity, motivation, and interest in planning cultural contents." [25]

Kim Yu-mi sees Applied Theatre as a "popular theatre with artistic quality." In August 1997, the Seoul Metropolitan Theatre presented *Father* as its inaugural performance. It was a theatrical activity that took place in a small theatre where "citizens (residents) could comfortably enjoy a piece of drama with which they could sympathize." [26]

A system of educational theatre to produce citizen-actors may be desirable in securing the general audience's interest in performing contents as well as the future audience. It is possible to induce voluntary participation from citizens or residents. What is important is that people can produce and participate in performance through various performing contents and fulfill their desire to enjoy culture.

According to Lee Yeong-gu, "although planning in cultural contents industry is a commercializing process that encompasses industries that use popular culture as media, the aim should be not only physical productivity and profit-making but also the value of spiritual culture." [27]

To expand the proper performing culture of Applied Theatre, it is necessary to provide a framework for the production process. While supervisor's efforts are critical, the problem in the Korean scene is that there is no support or management for supervisors who can lead the whole process. Another problem is that the interaction with theatre professionals may lead to another conventional production using established plays, without a thorough understanding of Applied Theatre. It is because the professionals simply display their identity in production, instead of understanding and showing the nature of amateurs involved. The intention of a director can dominate the production easily.

The issues in which Applied Theatre is interested must be the theme of the performance, and it has to be the participants' story. That is why the Applied Theatre needs to grow (for instance, to organize a festival of Applied Theatre) and allow independent participation by groups or individual citizens. Policy support is crucial for participating groups if they should be able to do low-cost production, access performing spaces easily, and maintain autonomy in participation. It may be worthwhile to help the groups liaise with companies doing local businesses for sponsorship.

4.3. Communication Method as Town Community or Living Theatre

In the everyday life of a citizen, Applied Theatre is becoming increasingly important as "it changes from teaching to learning together and emphasizes the creation of knowledge and mutual communication instead of the acquisition of knowledge." [28] What matters is to "create living cultural community." [29]

Applied Theatre outside Korea is about "a community of communication among individuals or between individuals and groups to understand and heal any wounds of self and/or others." The basic framework is offered by the "Applied Theatre techniques." [30]

2010 graduates of Applied Theatre Class presented a performance at Seongmisan Village, which brought about positive innovation for the town community. Seongmisan Village has been here since it started as a nursing community in 1994. The Village has diverse small culture groups led by residents such as a book club on humanities, a theatre club, a photography club, Seongmisan Children's Choir, Theatre Company Dried Radish, and a singing group Vibration. Residents and theatre professionals present a performance together at Seongmisan Village Festival. There is a community theatre in the Village. Two residents, Director Hong Hyeong-suk and Producer Kang Seok-pil have made documentaries about Seongmisan Village. In all, the Village's case is frequently benchmarked as showcasing what the town community is about. [31]

5. Conclusion

Applied Theatre pursues a change in that it aims "to go off-theatre from the traditional arts forms, or to refuse conventional theatre forms." [32]

In the case of Seongmisan Village, diverse contents of arts and culture play a crucial part in creating and sustaining the community. Performing spaces can be found in the neighborhood, such as streets, squares, and an auditorium. The Seongmisan Drama Festival uses all the living spaces of the citizens, thus making "theatre an

everyday life” [33] everything ends up being something with a theatrical quality, on the Internet, through other media or cultural events.

As mentioned before, the Korean term for Applied Theatre means citizen’s theatre. Thus the activities in this field often focus on citizen’s activities as a group instead of showing the general characteristics of Applied Theatre. In the entire production process, participants tend to follow the conventions of existing theatre companies, and even the supporting professionals ask the participants to do the same.

While differing opinions between professionals and Applied Theatre groups sometimes lead to discord, the existence of citizen-actors can resuscitate local performance production. The presence of citizen-actors should be highly recognized in that it promotes interest and a sense of pride in the field of local performing arts. On the other hand, some questions need to be asked about citizen-actors. Aren’t they used to take opportunities from aspiring professional actors? Is it the right way to produce a performance with volunteering or low-cost human resources?

To sustain citizen’s participation, it may be worthwhile to consider establishing a citizen’s academy program to establish a professional management system for securing performance space, human resources and planners.

Collaboration between professionals and amateurs is essential for differentiated production of cultural performance for citizens. However, it is crucial to provide support aside from such collaboration so that Applied Theatre groups can produce a performance with autonomy and manage the whole production process independently. What matters is to understand the possibility of using spaces in the local cultural infrastructure and identify any potential issues in the production process, coordinating not only the infrastructure but also the contents to be delivered.

As Korea’s bipolar practice of using the term Applied Theatre suggests, in using the Applied Theatre techniques, it is critical to differentiate Applied Theatre in the true sense of the term and Citizen’s Theatre working under some municipality.

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