

Foreword



2013 is a meaningful year as it is the tenth anniversary of the *UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* and the ninth of the *ICOM Seoul Resolutions on Intangible Cultural Heritage* which were passed at the 2004 General Conference of the International Council of Museums (ICOM). Under the influence of these initiatives, cultural institutions have been promoting ways to redefine our understanding of intangible heritage, as well as methods for its preservation and practice. The *International Journal of Intangible Heritage*, published annually by the National Folk Museum of Korea since 2006, is one of the results.

The Editorial Board of the *International Journal of Intangible Heritage*, composed of prominent scholars and museum professionals, meets every February to evaluate all submissions. The Board has a strict selection process for articles and members are committed to ensuring the quality of the *Journal* which is improving year by year. This year, for the first time, the secretariat invited board members who were not able to attend the meeting to join in by video-conference. Patrick Boylan, Professor Emeritus of City University, London and An Laishun, General Director of the International Friendship Museum actively participated in the video-conference, offering their opinions and ideas. I greatly appreciate the leadership of Ms. Alissandra Cummins, the Chairperson of the UNESCO Executive Board and the Director of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society. She led the whole meeting successfully by suggesting directions for the development of the *Journal*, as well as organising the video-conference.

The *International Journal of Intangible Heritage* is the first international academic journal of its kind in the field, and its popularity is increasing. The *Journal* was indexed by the International Bibliography of Social Sciences (IBSS), the Arts and Humanities Citation Index (A & HCI) and the Korean Citation Index (KCI) in 2010, and by Scopus, the Modern Language Association International Bibliography (MLAIB) and the Bibliography of Asian Studies (BAS) in 2011, as a result of various people's efforts and of the quality of the articles. As one of the people closely involved in producing the *Journal*, I am very pleased and proud of its growing success.

Volume 8 of the *International Journal of Intangible Heritage* contains eleven articles by professionals working with ICH from nine different countries. Readers will be stimulated by such interesting subjects related to intangible heritage as policy, climate, ecology, textiles and Intellectual Property law. Personally, I find it exciting to see the way the *Journal* prompts active discussion as well as the advent of new themes related to intangible heritage. Moreover, we expect that it will develop the safeguarding and practical use of intangible heritage as these themes provide fresh ideas to audiences and the vigorous discussion of them spreads worldwide.

Museums have traditionally focused on the generic characteristics of objects such as their creation, material and artistic value, as well as their historic origins and the changes that have taken place. For example, the National Folk Museum of Korea has mainly worked on exhibitions and education that focus on delivering

knowledge and information about the objects on display. Museum visitors, however, have become dissatisfied with just seeing the objects. They tend to be interested in the background story about how and why objects were used, and in customs, expressions, traditional knowledge and ideology, and so on. They want to experience human culture through exploring the objects.

In this context, the National Folk Museum of Korea publishes this academic journal to promote the research, study, safeguarding and transmission of intangible heritage, both in Korea and elsewhere. In addition, the Museum organised the International Conference on *Museums and Intangible Heritage* and plans creative exhibitions which combine both tangible and intangible heritage. Following the *Arirang* exhibition last year, which was well-received by visitors, the Museum has opened another special exhibition entitled the *Unremitting Cycle of Life and Joy: Gyeongsangnamdo* with which to celebrate 2013 as the Gyeongnam Folk Culture Year. In the exhibition, visitors will be able to watch video clips of the *Ogwangdae Talchum* (a mask dance in Gyeongnam province) and imagine how the masks on display looked when they were used in real performances.

Dyed Nature, another special exhibition drawn from a donated collection, is a good example of the link between tangible and intangible heritage. The donor, Lee Byeongchan, gives demonstrations of natural dyeing processes and visitors can learn how to dye through the education programmes. Traditionally, intangible heritage, which shapes the identity of communities, can be preserved by the efforts, enthusiasm and participation of previous generations who wish to transmit their knowledge and customs. In this sense, the Museum is devoted to safeguarding intangible heritage.

In conclusion, as publisher of the 8th Volume of this *Journal*, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to all those who have committed to this great project: first of all, the authors who contributed to the *Journal* by submitting valuable articles; the Advisory Committee and the Editorial Board members, including text editor, Dr Pamela Inder, who carefully edited all the articles despite her recent eye operation; and last but not least, Ms. Alissandra Cummins as the Editor-in-Chief, who read and revised all the articles, and was meticulous about keeping the authors informed at all stages of the editing process. I look forward to your generous support and continued advice on the publication of future issues of the *Journal*.

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