Un-Splitting 비-분열증

Young In Hong

Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul, Korea, 2019

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Performance Outline

Splitting, in psychology, is a symptom of Borderline Personality Disorder, defined as polarisation of other persons into good and bad by focusing selectively on their positive or negative attributes. Splitting symptoms appear through a tendency of thinking of another person’s disagreement with oneself as something evil or wrong, thus it functions as a very common ego defence mechanism.

Splitting reminds us of the recent prevailing return to extreme nationalism; where citizens,left and right, are constantly divided on the grounds of what separates them.

**Un-Splitting**, one of 3 works created for **Sadang B** aims to undo the tendency of splitting toward extreme objectification, to view ‘otherness’ as something that is rooted in symptoms of illness in society.

**Un-Splitting** sees history as a subconsciously formed, collective memory; a ‘virtual’ state that can be changed or re-interpreted.

For this performance, Young In Hong collaborated with choreographer Stephanie Scheulbeck, and focused on the body-poses found in archive photographs of post war South Korean female textile workers at the Museum of History in Seoul. These collected photographs reflect the inferiority of women’s labour in the domestic space, as well as in factories, particularly those in the textile industry, where low waged female workers formed 90% of the workforce, hired and controlled by men. They also highlight the socially formed conception of young women as being non-political subjects.

The performance consisted of 15 participants who required no experience, and were selected on a first come first serve basis, via an online open call. For the performance of **Un-Splitting** the participants combined the body poses of the South Korean women in the archival photographs, with patterns from the irregular movement of birds, that Young In had collected from the zoo and online. These combined movements developed a unique choreography that addressed the boundaries between animal and human.

There were 4 performances of **Un-Splitting** during the **Sadang B** exhibition, taking place in unannounced spots on the first floor of the MMCA and maintaining a minimal physical distance between audience and performers.