



School: Bath School of Art
Researcher: Young In Hong
Project Title: 5100:Pentagon
UOA: 32

300-Word Statement

5100:Pentagon was commissioned and performed for the 10th *Gwangju Biennale* in 2014, and restaged in 2017 as part of *Block Universe Festival*, at the Royal Academy in London. The performance focuses on the violent Gwangju uprising on 18 May 1980, a pivotal moment in South Korea's democracy movement. Exploring collective memory, modes of memorialisation and the potential of group subjectivity to challenge socio political hierarchies through performance, Hongs research asks 4 questions:

1. How can the principle of flash mob be utilized as a means of performance operating as both commemoration and resistance towards prevailing social norms? 2. How can a seminal moment in history be reinterpreted as an embodied experience in the present through collective performance ? 3.Can social media function as a means of challenging notions of authorship and facilitating wider autonomy in art making? 4. Can each iteration of the same performance but by different groups of participants, be witnessed as a series of unique events rather than repetitions?

5100: Pentagon was a ritualistic, flash mob performance, self-organised through an open call on social media for citizens to participate by accessing a web tutorial of gestural movements, inspired by photographs in the May 18 Democratic Archive, and then developed by Hong in collaboration with 2 choreographers. Repeating the same gestures, each iteration was performed differently by separate groups of participants, with no restrictions in age, gender or experience, accompanied by Hong's adapted version of a popular protest song 'A Song of May'.

The project sheds new light on an unexplored moment in history, inscribing it, through repeated, interpretive re-enactments, into an embodied affective experience in the present. Hongs methods uncover the mobilising potential of charged collective encounter, enabling a performance model that can be repeatedly restaged by successive generations to challenge existing power structures.

