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Song of Felt is an exhibition held at the Asia Culture Center in Gwangju, Korea in celebration of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Korea and Central Asia. It looks into the identity of Central Asia that brings together the past and the present through the intangible heritages and contemporary art of the region. The words “felt” and “song” in its name are the keywords of the exhibition. These two words symbolize Central Asia.

Ancient nomads in Central Asia used felt to make homes, bedclothes, and clothes. Felt was inseparable from their lives as it protected them from the harshness of nomadic life, healed them, and became an indispensable part of their survival. Their songs consoled them when life was difficult, and provided the vessels for them to convey their stories and histories. This exhibition showcases Central Asia’s intangible heritages and contemporary artworks that focus on these symbolic elements.

As for contemporary artworks, those from various genres are brought together under the key word, “felt.” Central Asia consists of many countries that contain the word “stan,” which means “a vast land,” in their names such as Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan. These nations have gone through a turbulent time after their independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. Central Asian artists have been searching for their own identities through their experiences with their traditions, the socialist art, and contemporary art. The Central Asian contemporary artists featured in this exhibition express their traditional cultures and life experiences through a wide range of themes, from felt, *korpeshe* (a type of traditional textile), *kokpar* (a traditional form of horse race), and Islam in concept artworks, videos, costume designs, and other formats.

The exhibition features work by Kazakhstan-based artists: *Yelena and Viktor Vorobv*’s *Red*

Carpet (image), a performance video of the orteke traditional musical instrument, produced by the Kazakhstan Intangible Heritage Committee; as well as Said Atabekov's *Korpeshe Flags* and *Steppe Wolves*; Aida Sulova's *Taxi, Taxi*; Smail Bayaliev's *The Book of Change* and *Simurg Bird*; and Aidai Asangulova's *Cloud*.

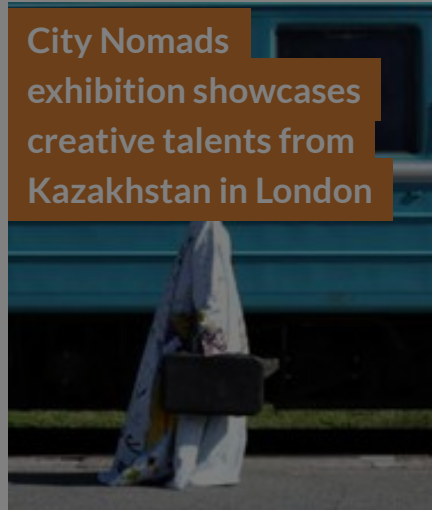
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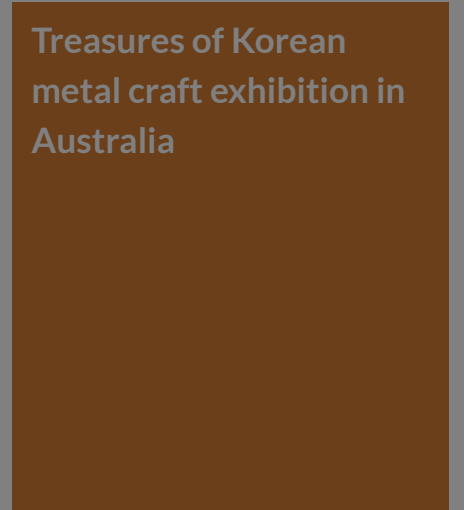
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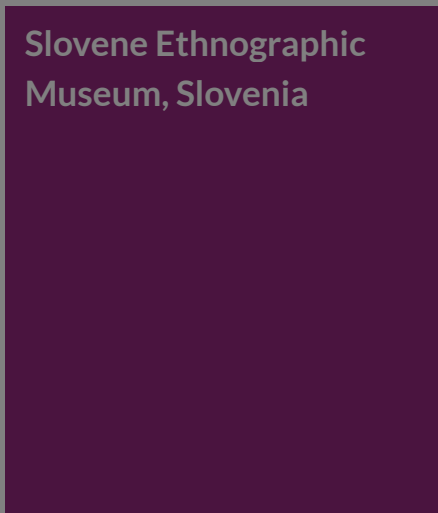
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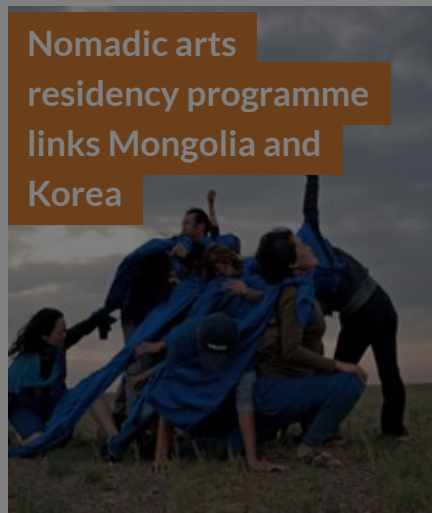
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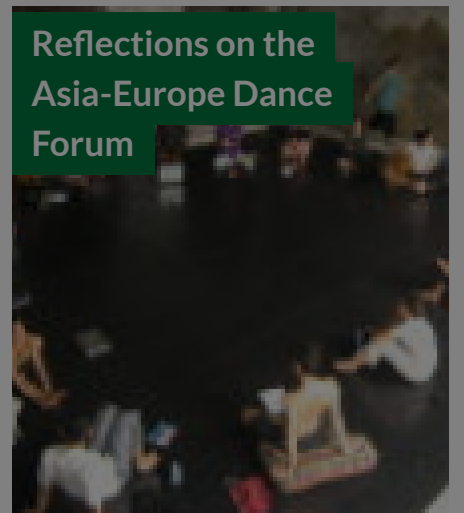
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