**Call for Papers**

**Focused Issue Theme:**

**Newtrospection: Reverse-Engineering Modernity in South Korean Speculative Fiction**

Focused Issue planned for early 2023

Proposal submission deadline: May 31, 2022

Paper submission deadline: August 31, 2022

*The Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* (*JFA*), published since 1988, is an interdisciplinary journal devoted to the study of the fantastic in literature, art, drama, film, and popular media. Published three times per year by the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts, *JFA*’s articles are fully refereed, indexed in the MLA International Bibliography, and searchable in JSTOR. The editorial collective of *JFA* is currently working to make the journal indexed in SCOPUS and A&HCI as well. In early 2023 JFA plans to publish its first focused issue dedicated to South Korean science fiction and fantasy.

South Korean speculative fiction has a long and rich yet also conflicted history that spans over a century. Building on the legacy of the fantastic in premodern literature while also struggling with colonial drives toward the inculcation of science-technology (*kwahak kisul* – a compound term devised and systematically promoted as a state-led initiative on industrial development and lifestyle management), creators and readers of Korean science fiction have sought diverse pathways to negotiate the anxiety of influence through critical reappropriation. *Taeguek Hakbo*’s publication of Jules Verne’s *20,000 Leagues under the Sea* (trans. 1907) for instance introduced and framed modern technology as the momentum of progress, whereas Kim Dong-yin’s short story “Dr. K’s Research” (1929) highlighted the limits of a scientific frame of reference through irony. Despite pressures to focus on the problems of the here and now in the form of critical realism, speculative narratives persisted across the mediasphere throughout the turmoil of the Korean War and compressed development; creature/cult/horror films served as an outlet for quirky imaginaries in the ‘60s~’70s, while the comics magazine culture offered a fertile ground for science fiction narratives throughout the ‘80s~early ’90s. The film industry has also embraced speculative tropes as inspiration for hybrid aesthetics after an initial period of struggle (marked by a slew of unsuccessful blockbusters in the early 2000s); television dramas, streaming media, and webtoons are actively embracing the genre as the source of creative momentum; and videogames, in particular, are thriving in the land of the fantastic. In the domain of written literature, fantasy spearheaded the break from the longstanding tradition of critical realism in pace with South Korea’s economic and political stabilization in the ‘90s, and science fiction has become the nursery of feminist breakthroughs to attract global attention over the past decade – an ever-peculiar (yet all the more welcome) state of affairs given the predominantly masculine vector of the genre’s history, paired with the patriarchic underpinning of the *kwahak kisul* paradigm.

Even as megahit productions such as *Snowpiercer* (2013), *Train to Busan* (2016), *Space Sweepers* (2021), *The Silent Sea* (2021), and *All of Us Are Dead* (2022) continue to draw a global viewership, scholarship on South Korean speculative fiction within anglophone academia has been extremely sparse. To address this gap, the editors of this focused *JFA* issue shed timely and much-needed light on the subject across diverse media. The goal is not to catalogue the genre’s history in South Korea; rather, focus will be laid upon how South Korean speculative fiction writers and creators reverse-engineer the Western concept of modernity through reappropriative maneuvers, taking a deep-dive into the socio-cultural and historical frameworks as innovative aesthetic and discursive ventures. Hence the title, *Newtrospection*. *Newtro* refers to a new aesthetic trend in South Korea, which involves reviving and appreciating aesthetic trends from the past. The distinction between *retro* and *newtro* lies in that whereas the former veers toward nostalgia in its texture of appreciation, and as such signals contextual significance, the latter is more about challenging existing notions of the hip and/or good in its reconfiguration of trendiness, subverting the idea that the old is passé while disavowing associations between futurity and newness with sleek technicity. Identifying such tendencies in South Korean speculative fiction, the editors believe that the manner in which recent works *own* and thereby recontextualize longstanding metrics of desirability effectively demonstrate a drive to reverse-engineer the core tenets of anthropocentric, patriarchic, racialized, and colonial paradigms of science and technology.

In addition to scholarly essays on literary texts, the editors also welcome papers about all forms of creative work, including translations, films, television dramas, and new media in the genre of speculative fiction created by South Korean artists or written in Korean. Themes of interest include, but are not limited to:

* Comparative definitions, conceptualizations, and historicizations of science, technology, and sociotechnical imaginaries
* Modernity, premodernity, and postmodernity
* Humanism, posthumanism, and transhumanism
* Retrospection, memory, and the newtro
* Nationalism, coloniality, Orientalism, Occidentalism, and Techno-Orientalism
* Viruses, microorganisms, zombies, monsters, animals, plants, nonhumans, and sentient beings
* Robots, artificial intelligence, cyborgs, genetics, and bioengineering
* Ghosts, goblins, gods, demigods, myth, folklore, and supernatural beings.

The length of articles generally varies from 5,000 to 9,000 words and ranges from 20 to 30 pages. Please send a title and a 400-word abstract to guest editors Haerin Shin, Korea University (helenshin@stanford.kr) and Sang-Keun Yoo, UC Riverside (syoo015@ucr.edu) by May 31, 2022. Authors of accepted proposals will be contacted soon thereafter and asked to submit full papers by August 31, 2022. All papers will be subject to blind peer review.

**Call for Book Reviews**

We also have several books available for review for *The Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*. These reviews would be due August 31, 2022. If you have a completed Master's degree or higher, one of these books is in your field of study, and you are committed to writing a review for us, please contact the guest editors at the above email addresses, noting your preferred title and your mailing address. The reviews need to be between 500 and 1,000 words and documented in MLA style.

**Available Titles**

1. *Readymade Bodhisattva: The Kaya Anthology of South Korean Science Fiction*. Kaya Press.
2. *I'm Waiting for You: And Other Stories*. Bo-Young Kim. HarperCollins.
3. *On the Origin of Species and Other Stories*. Bo-Young Kim. Kaya Press.
4. *Everything Good Dies Here: Tales from the Linker Universe and Beyond*. Djuna. Kaya Press.
5. *The Hole: A Novel*. Hye-young Pyun. Arcade
6. *City of Ash and Red: A Novel*. Hye-young Pyun. Arcade