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Panel 2.6: The Global Village Soundscape: A Matrix of Cultural Encounters

Bring the Lads by and Let's Play: Irish Sessions in Korea

Strains of Irish traditional music percolate in the local coffee houses of South Korea. Koreans who returned from study abroad plumped with musical inspiration and members of the expat community have nurtured the rise of Irish music performance which has heavily influenced the identities of those playing an active role in its propagation, evidenced by popular 'fusion' bands such as Second Moon (Tubönjje tal). Based on field research on Seoul Irish music sessions, the presentation examines Irish music's role in the reconstitution of Korea's global imaginary, focusing on the session as the core context for Seoul's Irish music community and as the heart of Irish musical culture's sustainability in Korea. The Irish music teams, all-Korean or a mixture of Korean and expat, and the frequency of sessions signifies a deeper impact on the local community. This paper uncovers Irish music's role as an index of the Korean global experience.