



unseen

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PROJECT VISION

The project explores social issues in South Korea through the lens of how people use and perceive interior space. Starting from the concept of space as a consumable resource linked to supply chains, it examines the connections between urban dynamics, nature, social interactions, and human behaviour.

The project aims to uncover hidden cultural norms and provoke critical reflection on spatial practices by questioning the boundaries between inside and outside.

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Editing

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Treatment



It all begins with the idea of linking supply chains directly to space—treating indoor space as something that is both supplied and consumed.

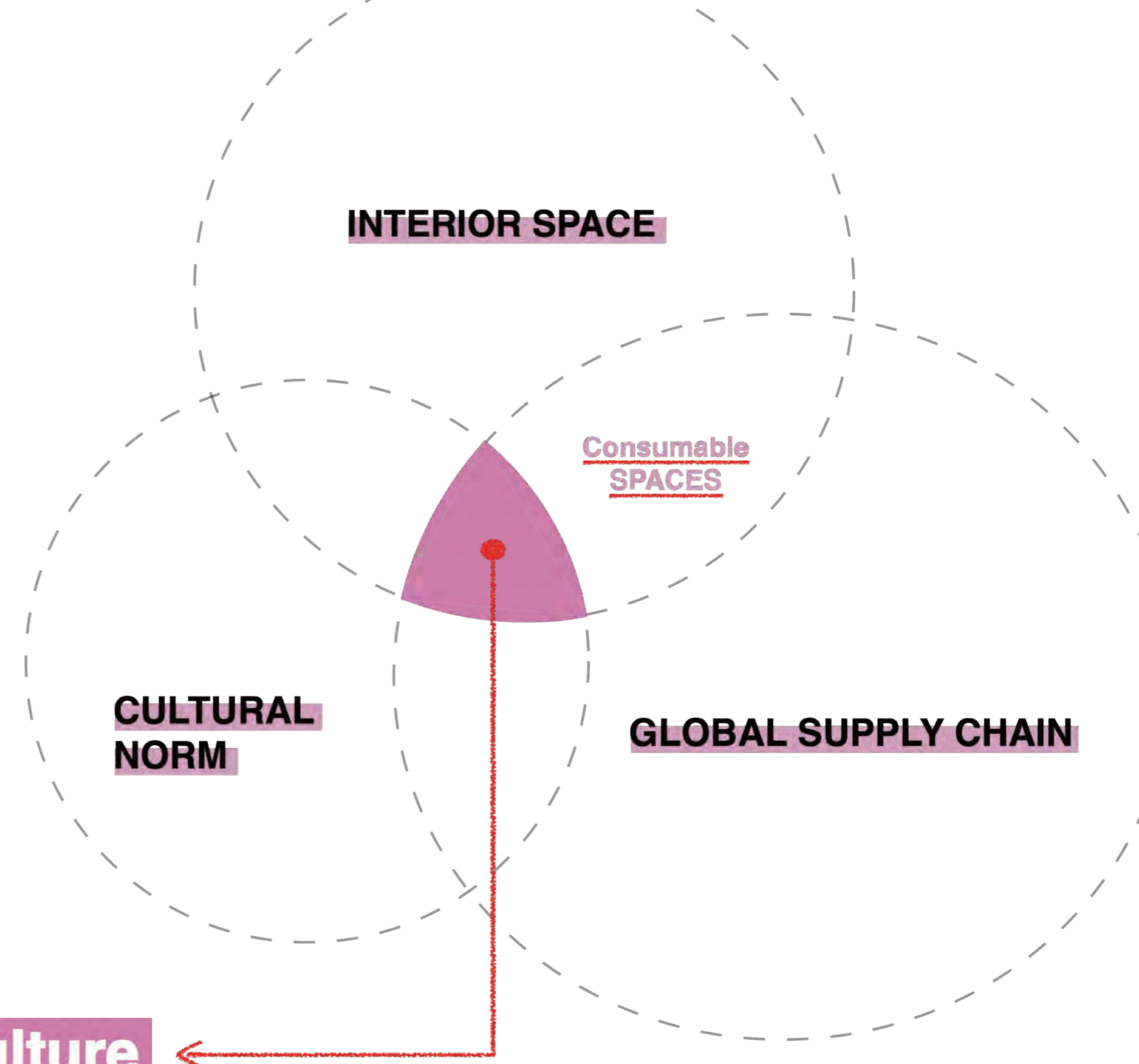
In Korea, there's a long-standing culture of renting rooms. The concept is simple: those in need of space can rent it for a set period, making indoor space a kind of commodity.

This phenomenon is common in densely populated cities like Seoul, Tokyo, and Hong Kong, where rapid urbanization has shaped housing norms. Geographic, historical, and environmental factors all contribute to the widespread reliance on rented spaces.

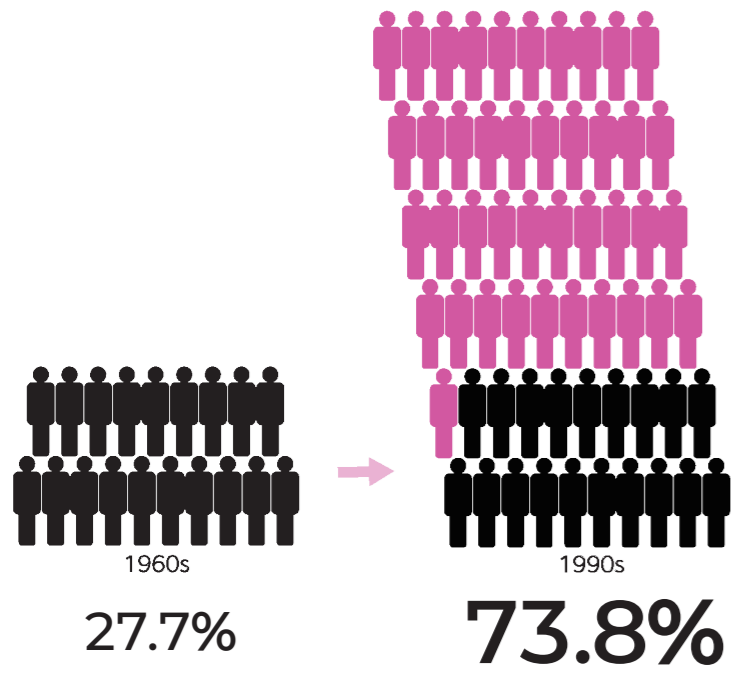


ROOM Culture

: Room Rental Service

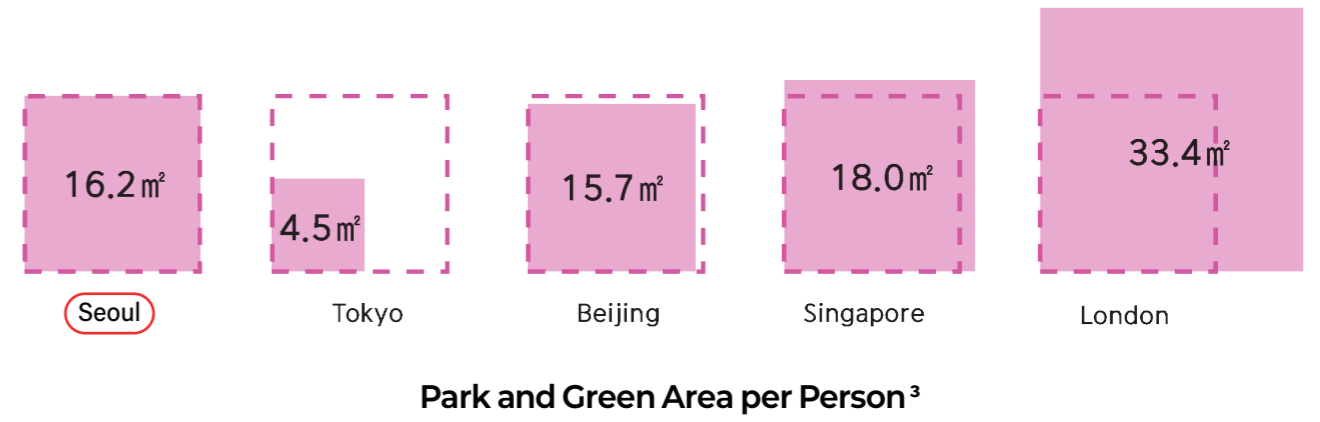


As a result, high-density apartment complexes became the standard housing model in Korea. In these compact homes, personal space is limited, prompting people to rent extra rooms when privacy is needed.

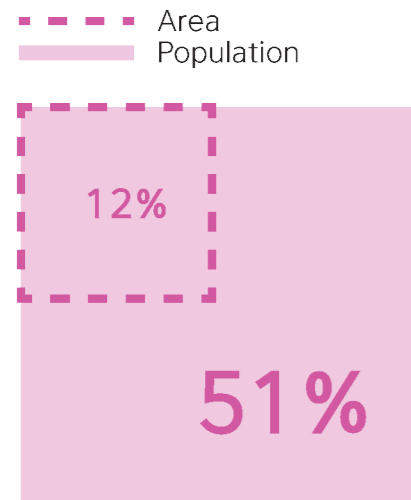


Urban Population Percentage in South Korea¹

Urbanisation in Korea accelerated from the 1960s. Within just 30 years, the urban population grew from 27.7% to 73.8%.



Park and Green Area per Person³



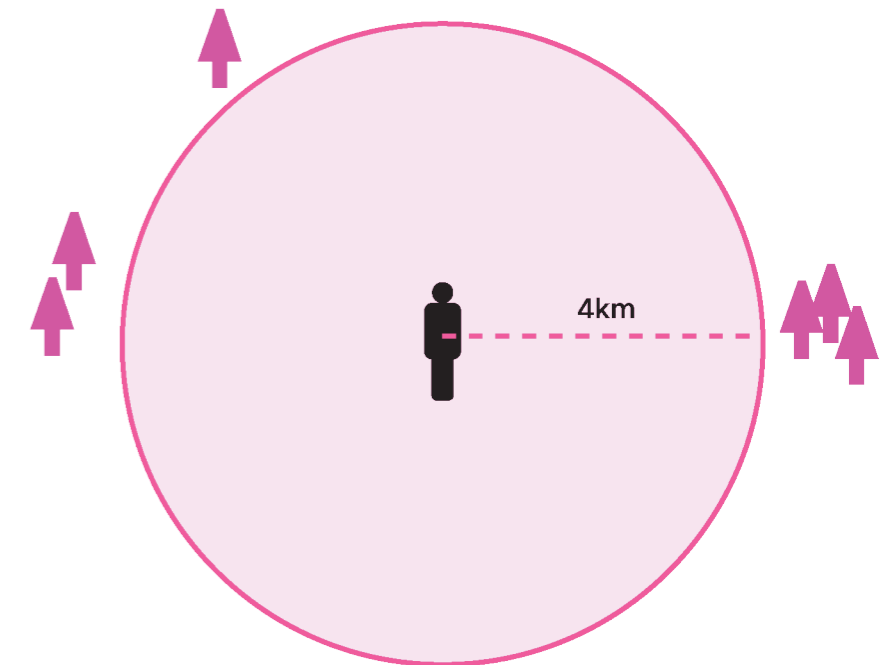
Imbalanced Population Density of the Seoul Metropolitan Area²

As of 2025, the Seoul metropolitan area occupies only 12% of the country's land but houses over 51% of the population.

This imbalance has led to fierce competition for space and soaring real estate prices.

A major factor keeping people indoors is the lack of accessible green space.

While Seoul has around 3,000 parks, with a per capita park area of 16.2m² (exceeding the OECD average), most parks are over 4km from where people actually live—making them feel remote and disconnected from daily life.



The Average Distance to the Parks in Seoul⁴



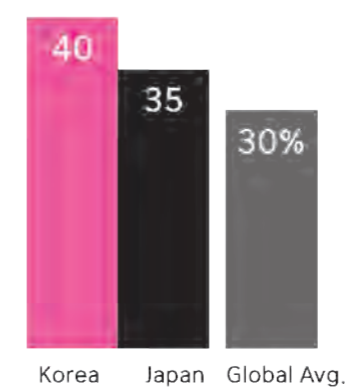
引き籠もり

Borrowed from Japanese, the term HIKIKOMORI means “to shut oneself in.”

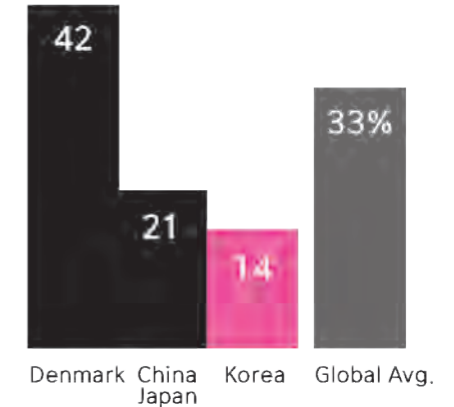
It refers to people who isolate themselves for over six months, avoiding social interaction. Often financially dependent on family, they don't attend school or work, and withdraw completely from society.

HIKIKOMORI is a complex problem caused by both environmental and psychological factors—tied to rising social isolation, economic strain, and even solitary deaths.

This sense of disconnection also relates to a growing issue in Korea : **HIKIKOMORI**.

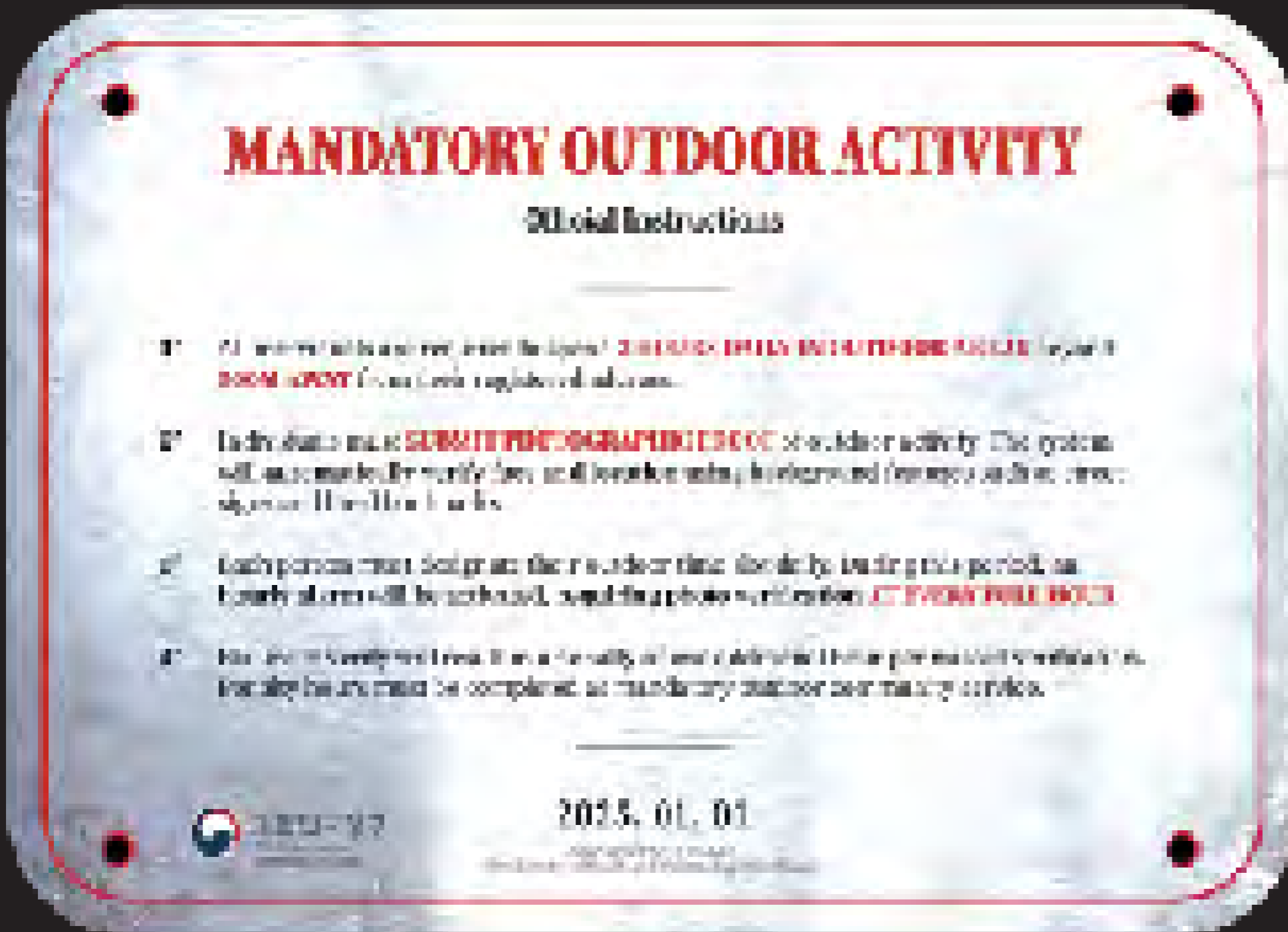


People Who Enjoy Being Alone at Home⁵



People Who Enjoy Spending Time at Home with Their Families⁶

¹ Mundi. (n.d.). Urban population (% of total) - Korea, Republic.
² Suhyeon Park, Co-Living in Seoul: Addressing Housing Needs and Redefining Rental Market Trends (Master's Thesis, MIT, 2025).
³ 서울연구데이터베이스 The Seoul Research Data Service
⁴ Youtube 설록현준, Housing prices and Car camping's Popularity | Hyun Joon Yoo's Korean Society Analysis23
⁵ IKEA Report Life At Home 2023
⁶ IKEA Report Life At Home 2023



In 2025, to address rising concerns over social isolation and mental health, the Korean government introduced a "Mandatory Outdoor Activity Regulation".

The policy requires all citizens to spend at least 2 hours a day in outdoor areas located over 500 meters from their registered address.

Compliance is enforced through daily scheduled photo verification, using automated facial and location recognition systems.

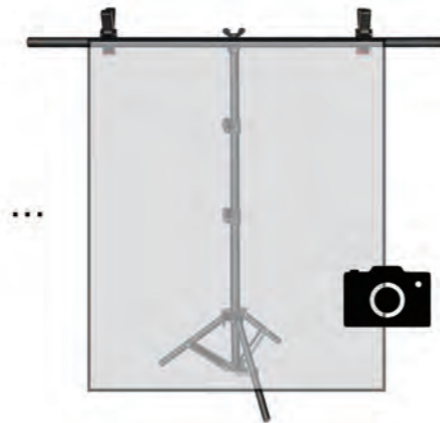
Mandatory Outdoor Activity Regulation Board

Unsurprisingly, the policy sparked significant public backlash. It was criticised for imposing outdoor activity and infringing on personal freedoms. Critics argued that it relied on an overly simplistic assumption—that staying indoors was the primary cause of complex social and mental health issues.

: The idea that simply going outside would resolve these challenges was seen as both naive and frustrating.

Despite the criticism, authorities moved forward, citing statistics on Korea's green infrastructure and promoting outdoor time as a path to improved well-being.

In practice, however, they overlooked deeper, systemic problems. Efforts focused on superficial improvements rather than addressing accessibility, equity, or the root causes of isolation.



In response to the policy, people began finding creative ways to bypass the system, leading to the rise of a fake verification industry.

These underground services provide high-quality printed backdrops—resembling scenic landscapes or city streets—that individuals use to fabricate their outdoor activity photos. Think of it as a physical version of a green screen, offering a range of environments to simulate compliance.

Room Culture & HIKIKOMORI in Korea and Japan

2015

Mandatory Outdoor Activity Policy

2025

Policy Mandate

2026

Backlash and Criticism

2029

Additional Measures



Illegal Markets Emergence

2030



Counterfeit Simulator Boom

2035



Hikikomori Comfort Zone

2045

2050+

The film is set in 2030 and explores the impact of a new government policy introduced in 2025.

FILM TITLE:

unseen

RUNNING TIME:

7-8 mins, Short Film

GENRE:

Fiction / Drama

SETTING:

Seoul, 2030 – in the aftermath of a failed government policy.

LOCATION:

An apartment building in Seoul, specifically the 2nd and 3rd floors.

PROTAGONIST:

- 1) Kim, a reclusive woman (HIKIKOMORI)
- 2) Kim's neighbours living above her

THEME:

Isolation and Connection, and the Beginning of Voluntary Change

PLOT BRIEF:

Kim relies on an illegal underground business run by her upstairs neighbours.

LOGLINE:

In a near-future Seoul apartment complex, a reclusive woman survives the government's failed outdoor policy by faking compliance with the help of an underground business—run by her upstairs neighbors—only to find herself unexpectedly drawn toward the world outside.

unseen

07'30"

Fiction/Drama

In South Korea, the number of reclusive individuals is on the rise—those who withdraw from society, remain confined to their rooms, and depend on familial support. Furthermore, a deeply rooted '**room culture**' exists, in which people who are called as **HIKIKOMORI** rent external spaces to socialise due to the limited room available in their homes. This trend has led to social isolation and economic losses, as these individuals do not participate in the workforce, thereby contributing to a significant societal issue.

In response, the South Korean government introduced the "**Mandatory Outdoor Activity Policy**" in 2025, targeting such individuals with the aim of promoting both personal and public health.

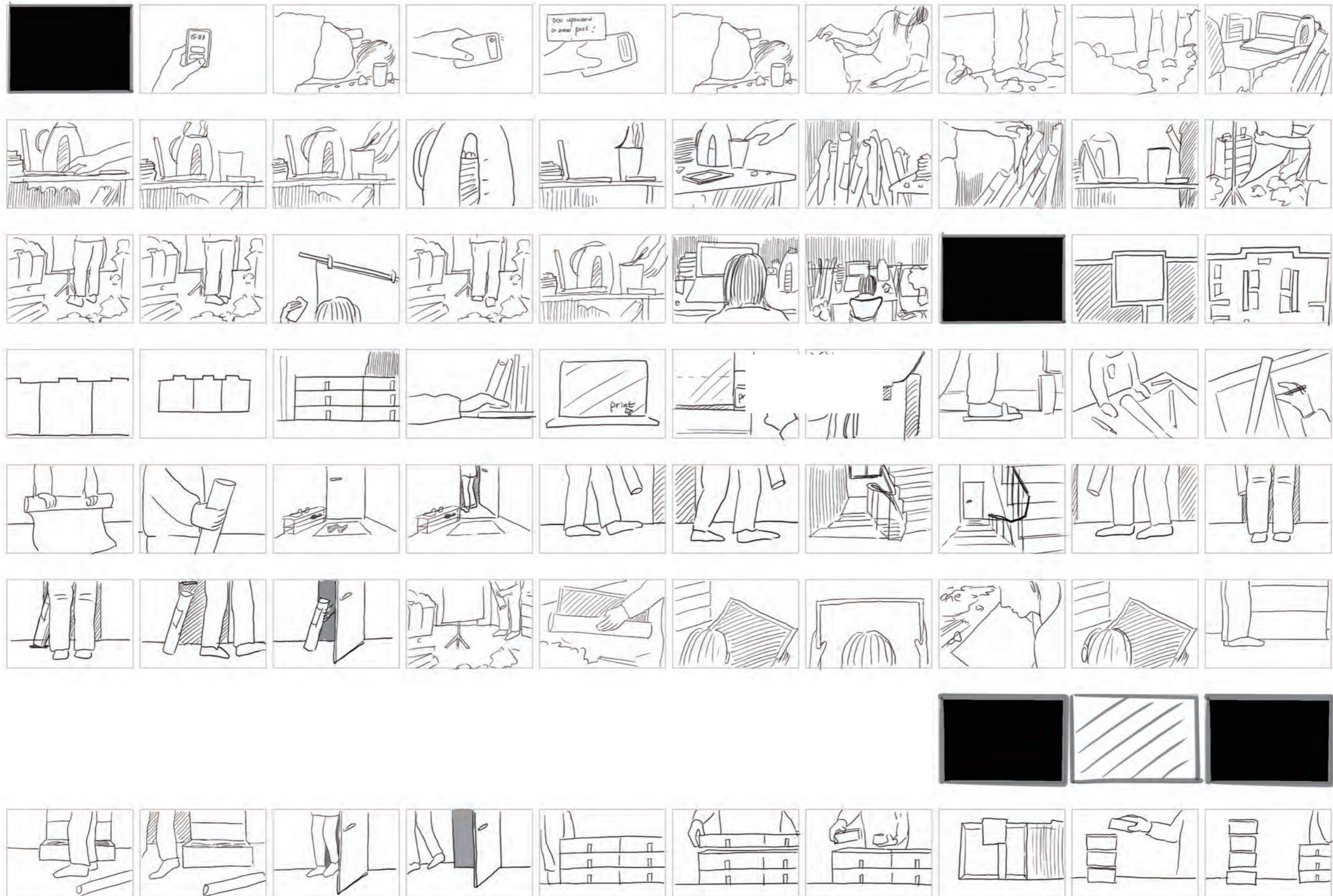
Now, in **2030**, the policy has been widely criticised as a half-hearted solution that failed to consider the complex realities of the issue, leading to unforeseen loopholes. In defiance of the policy, an underground business began to flourish, selling a product called the '**Fake Verification Service**'. This subscription-based item consists of **a large printed backdrop depicting an outdoor scene**, which users can make it stands and photograph themselves in front of—as if they are outside—without actually leaving their room.

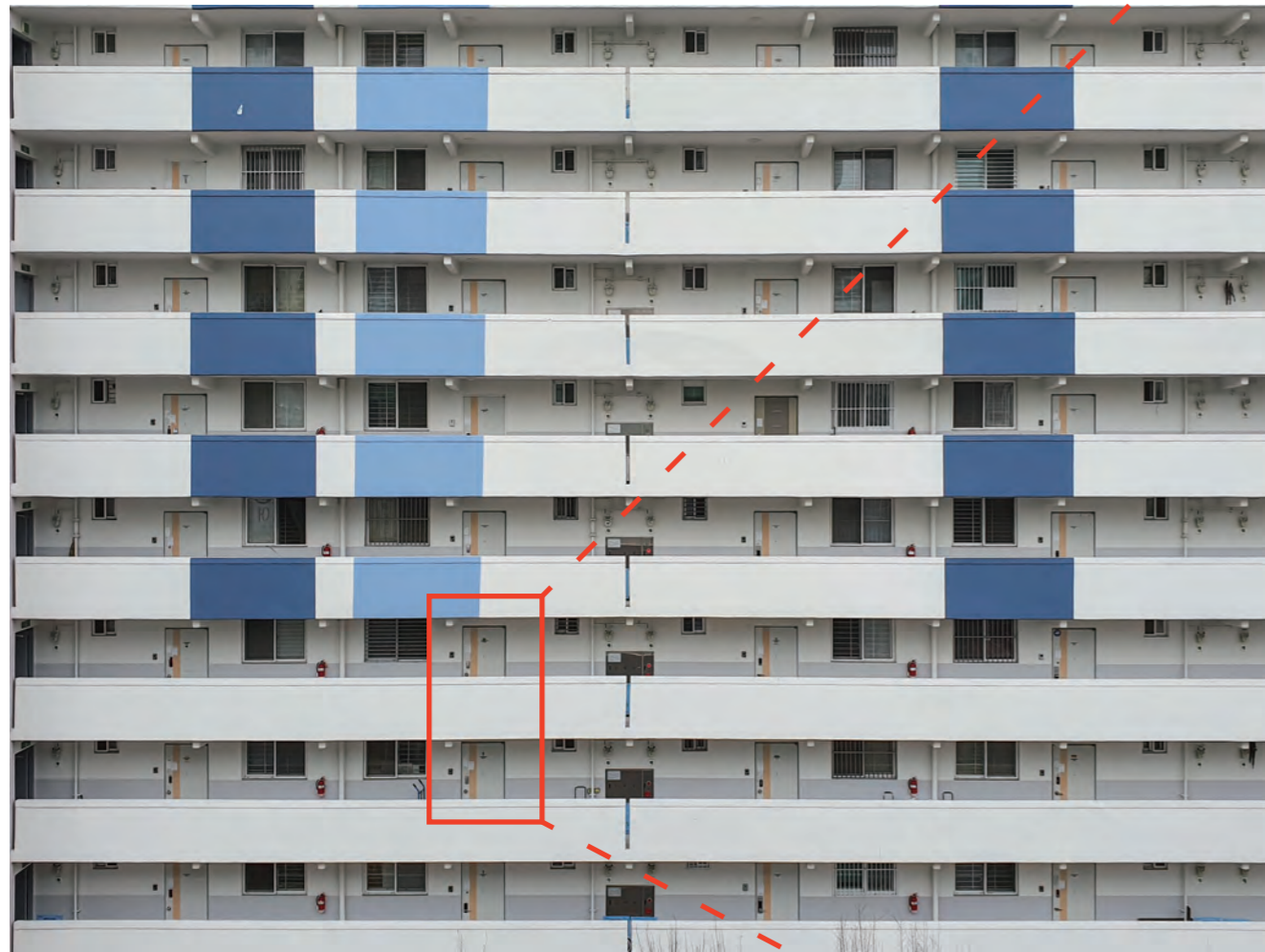
One of their main customers, **Kim** lives in a dark and cluttered room 201 in an apartment in Seoul. Since the government announced the policy in 2025 and this underground business flourished, she has been **relying on their products for the past five years**, up to the present year 2030.

Ironically, the enterprise is operated by neighbours and close acquaintances of those in seclusion—people who genuinely wish for their recovery. The workers discreetly transformed areas of their own homes into makeshift studios to produce the backdrops. Once created, the products were secretly delivered directly to clients' rooms. **The business was established with the hope that these individuals might develop an interest in the outside world and, eventually, in community life, thereby moving beyond their former lifestyle.**

Among many hikikomori affected by the policy and various forms of underground businesses, the film unfolds by focusing on Kim and the company located upstairs. It shows her daily life while simultaneously revealing what is happening in the same building just above her.

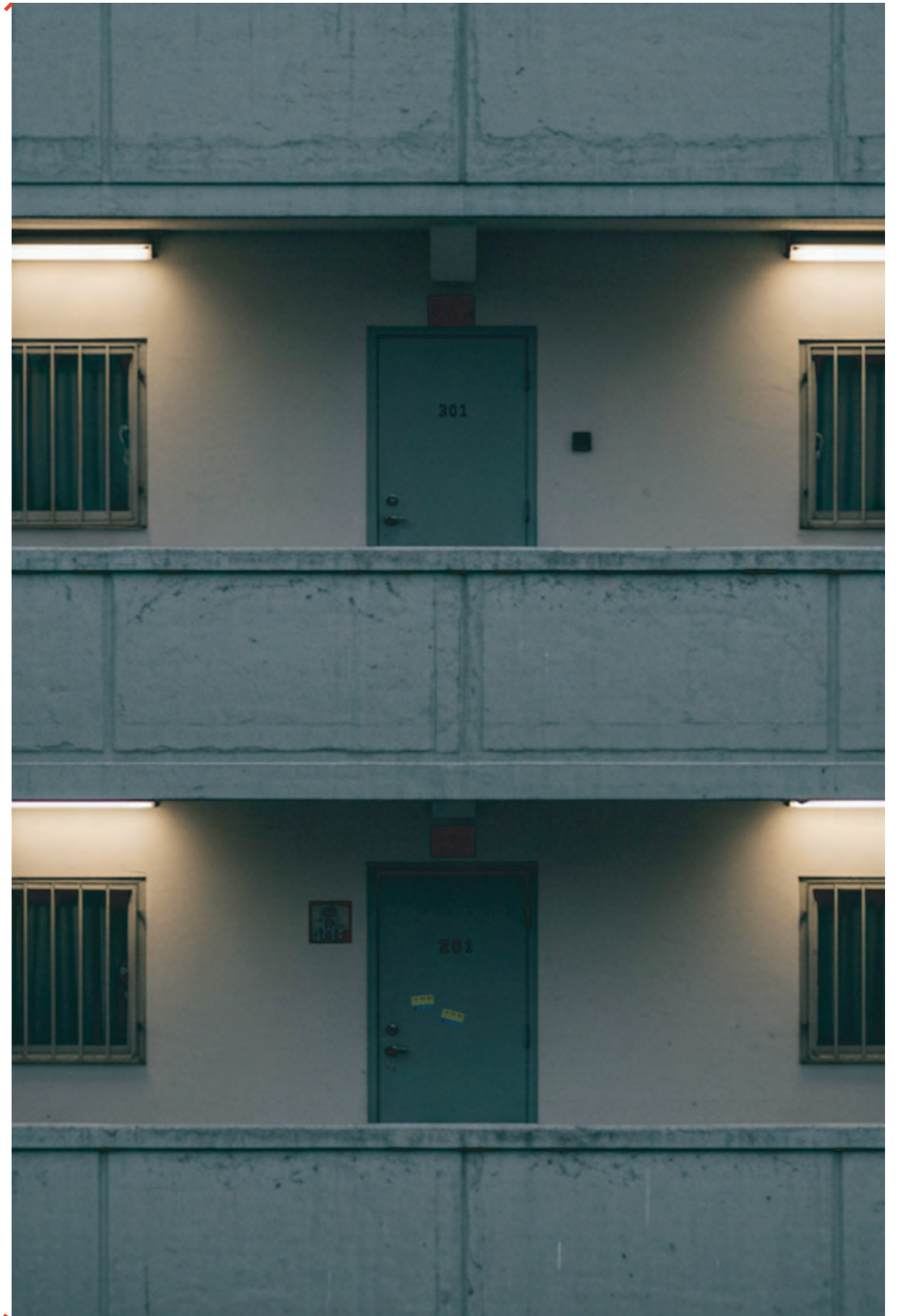
As the business's original purpose gradually bore fruit, Kim began to voluntarily open their doors—taking their first steps out...





Poster Image Reference (Adobe Stock, Free Image)

The poster features a side view of the apartment building where all the events of the film take place.



AI Generated Image + Partially Edited (Google Image FX, Adobe Photoshop)

unseen explores the hidden lives beyond the walls, shaped by isolation and urban space, urging us to confront the deeper social disconnects we often choose not to see.

TAGLINE:
2030 Seoul, a quiet passage built above her

Movement Mandated,
stillness delivered.



PRE-PRODUCTION

Virtualisation

- 3x3 Images

Pre-Production: Virtualising

This phase explores the project by constructing imagined spaces through AI generation. Starting from creating three different landscapes: **Macro/Meso/Micro**, it seeks to expand the understanding of invisible environments and how they shape reality.

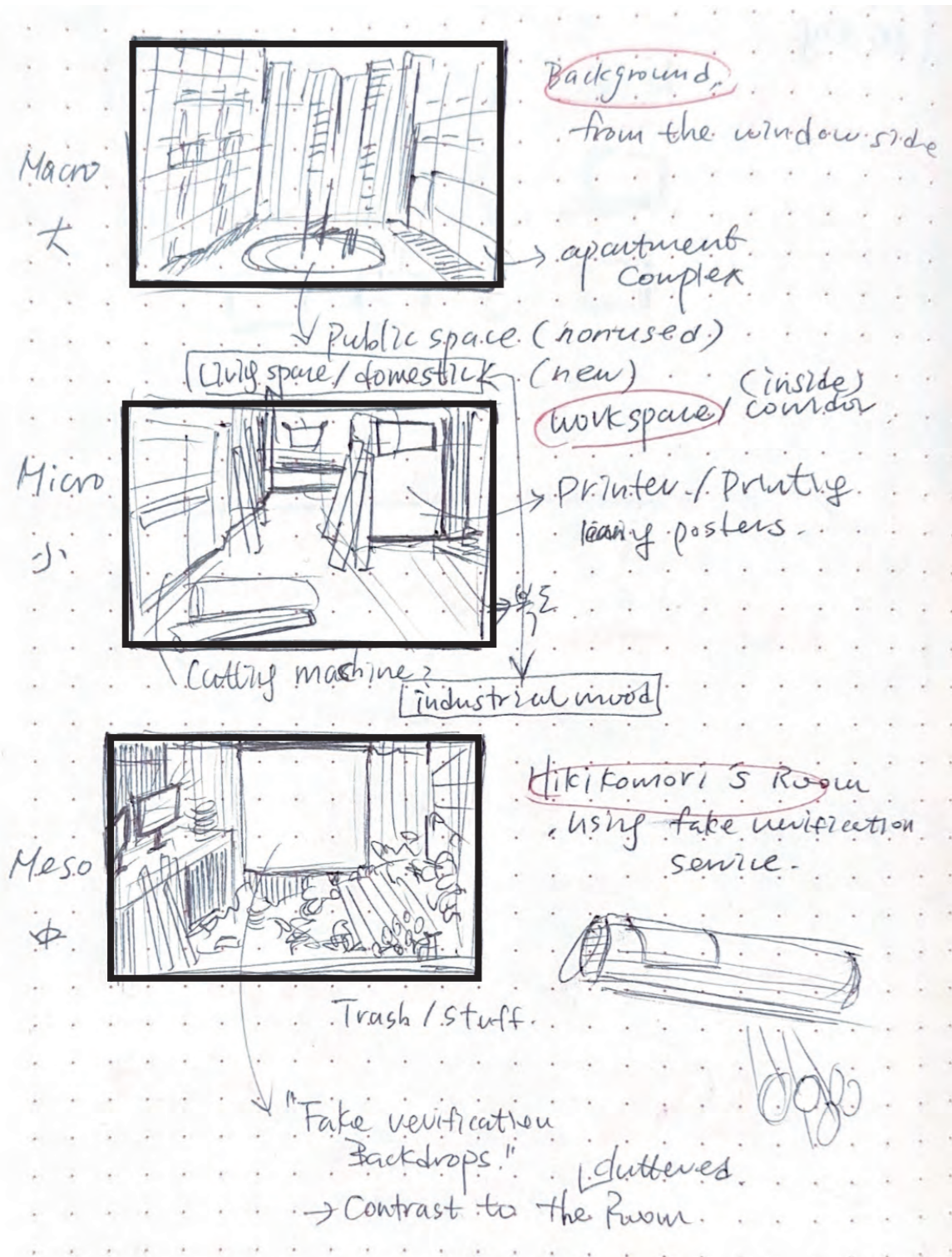


Initial Visual Concept: Real Photo Taken from My Room



AI Generated Image (Alease)

PROPMT : A cinematic still of view from inside a typical South Korean apartment building, looking out at a cluster of identical gray high-rise apartment buildings surrounding a central courtyard. In the middle, sparse trees are planted and a public playground is visible. The playground has new, unused equipment — clean but eerily untouched. No people in sight, creating a quiet, dystopian atmosphere. The overall tone is slightly bluish, evoking a cold, detached feeling. Captured in a 35mm film photography style, with realistic lighting and subtle grain.



MACRO



MICRO



MESO



Draft Images

MACRO

Public spaces provided by the government fail to address their real needs. While facilities have been expanded, they are often designed without a clear understanding of who they're for. For example, public playgrounds are centrally located, but older, reclusive individuals rarely leave their apartment buildings. These spaces remain unused by those who need them most.



MICRO

One project visualizes this by transforming a typical Korean apartment into a hybrid workshop. Household items like kitchen utensils and sofas coexist with tools and printing machines, blending domestic life with production. This space stands in contrast to the formal atmosphere of a traditional office, embodying both home and workplace.



MESO

The room of a Hikikomori is chaotic and dim. Items are scattered across the floor. A large printed paper hangs from the curtain rod, blocking sunlight. Used posters pile up in the corner. The air is thick with isolation and loneliness.



PRE-PRODUCTION

Magnification

- Prop Making

Pre-Production : Magnification

The focus shifts to grounding the narrative through detailed worldbuilding. This phase changes **from intangible to tangible**, addressing the challenges of turning abstract concepts into viable, real-world outcomes.

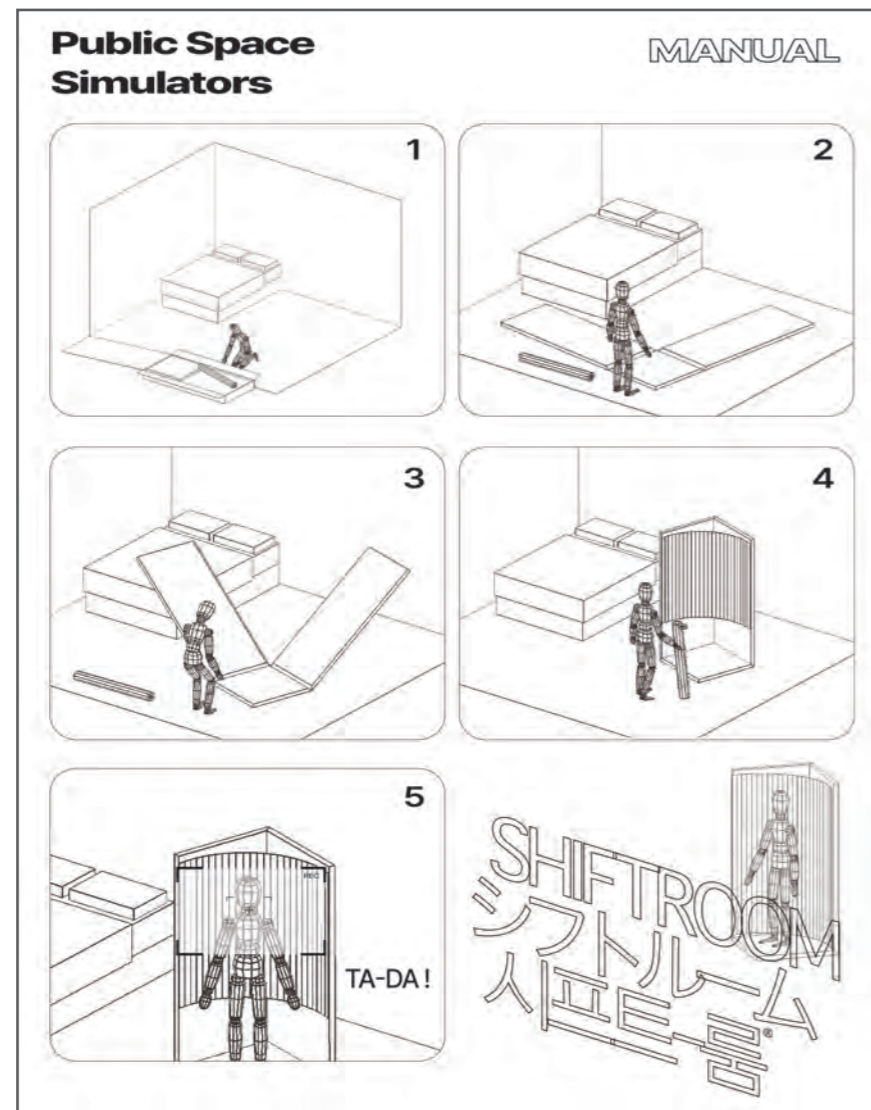
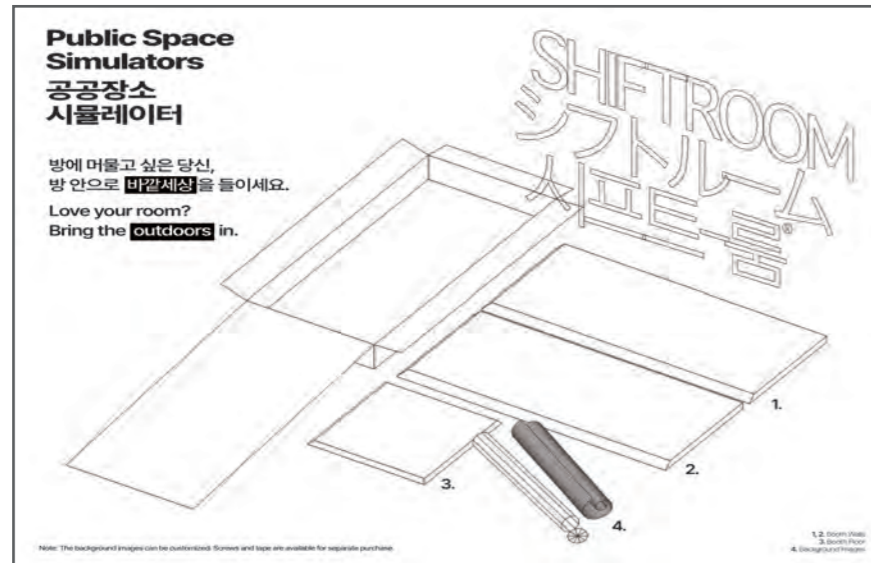
In response, a market for fake verification services emerged, offering high-resolution, custom-printed backdrops — from natural landscapes to city streets — allowing users to simulate outdoor activity photos.



Backdrop Parcel



Stand & Backdrop



Initial Design of Artefact / Promotion

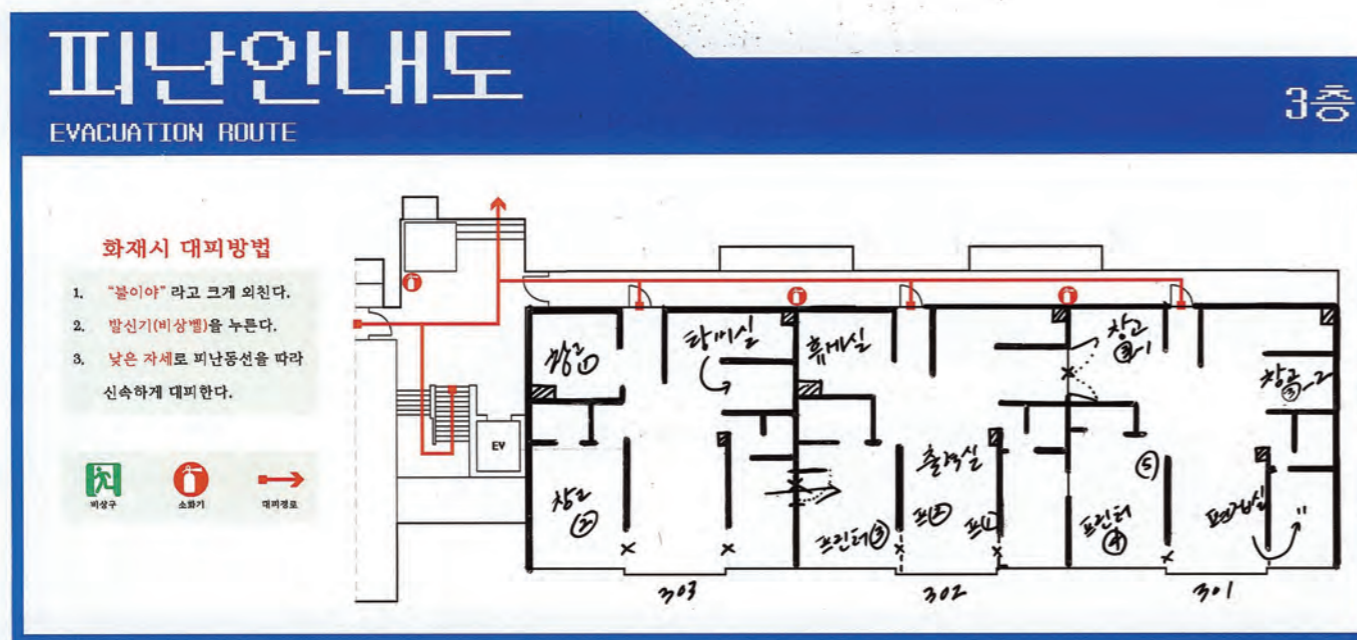


Final Design of Artefact / Promotion
95 x 58mm, Printed on Gloss Paper



To reflect the company's illegal operations within the story, the design was reimagined in the style of a typical Korean underground flyer—rough, bold, and deliberately unrefined.

This aesthetic choice evokes the raw, improvised nature of illicit advertising commonly seen in urban backstreets.



Evacuation Route / Floor Plan of the Workspace
186 x 410 mm, Printed on the Acrylic Sheet

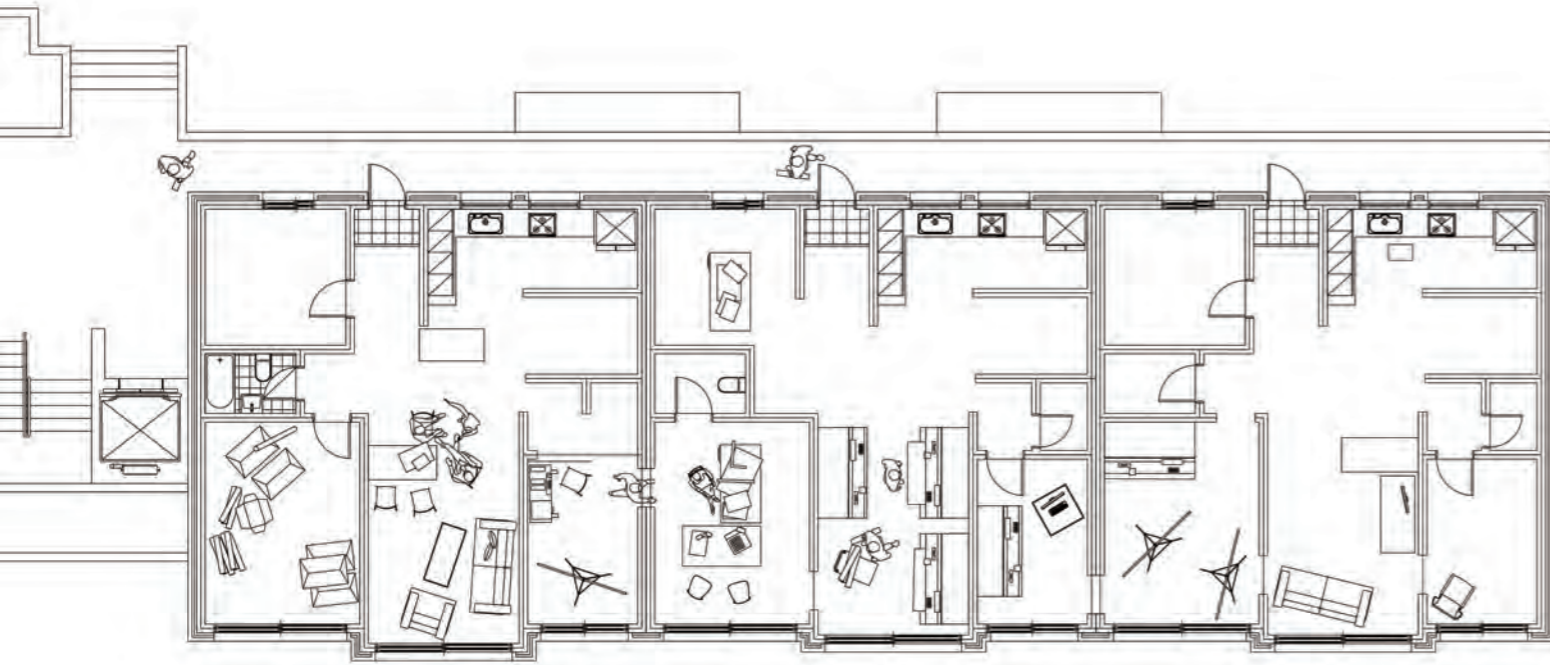
The residents of flats 301–303 altered the internal fire evacuation map to reflect a reconfiguration of their units.

This indicates that the units were transformed into a unified workspace through extensive renovations, including wall removals, added doorways, and structural expansion.

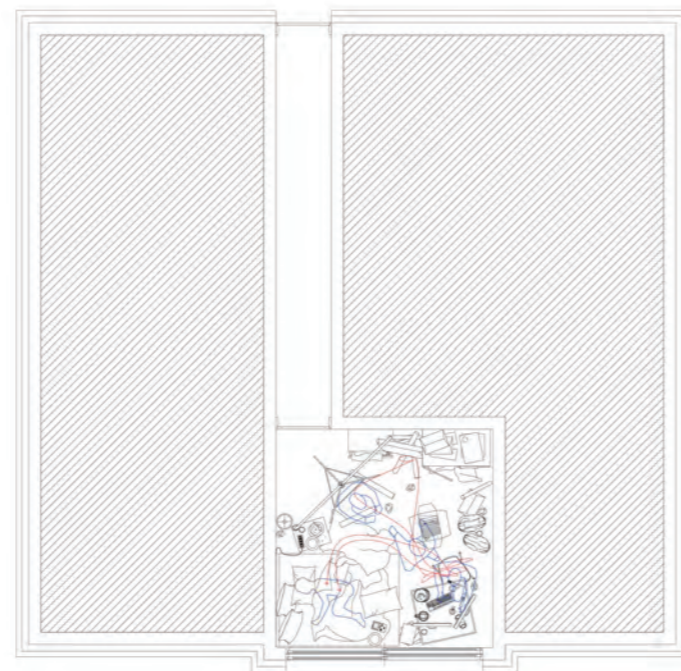


2020 Calendar at Kim's Room, in 2030

It implies that Kim's life has been suspended since the summer of 2020, when their hikikomori lifestyle began.



Blueprint, Workspace (3rd Floor)



Kim's Flat(2nd Floor)

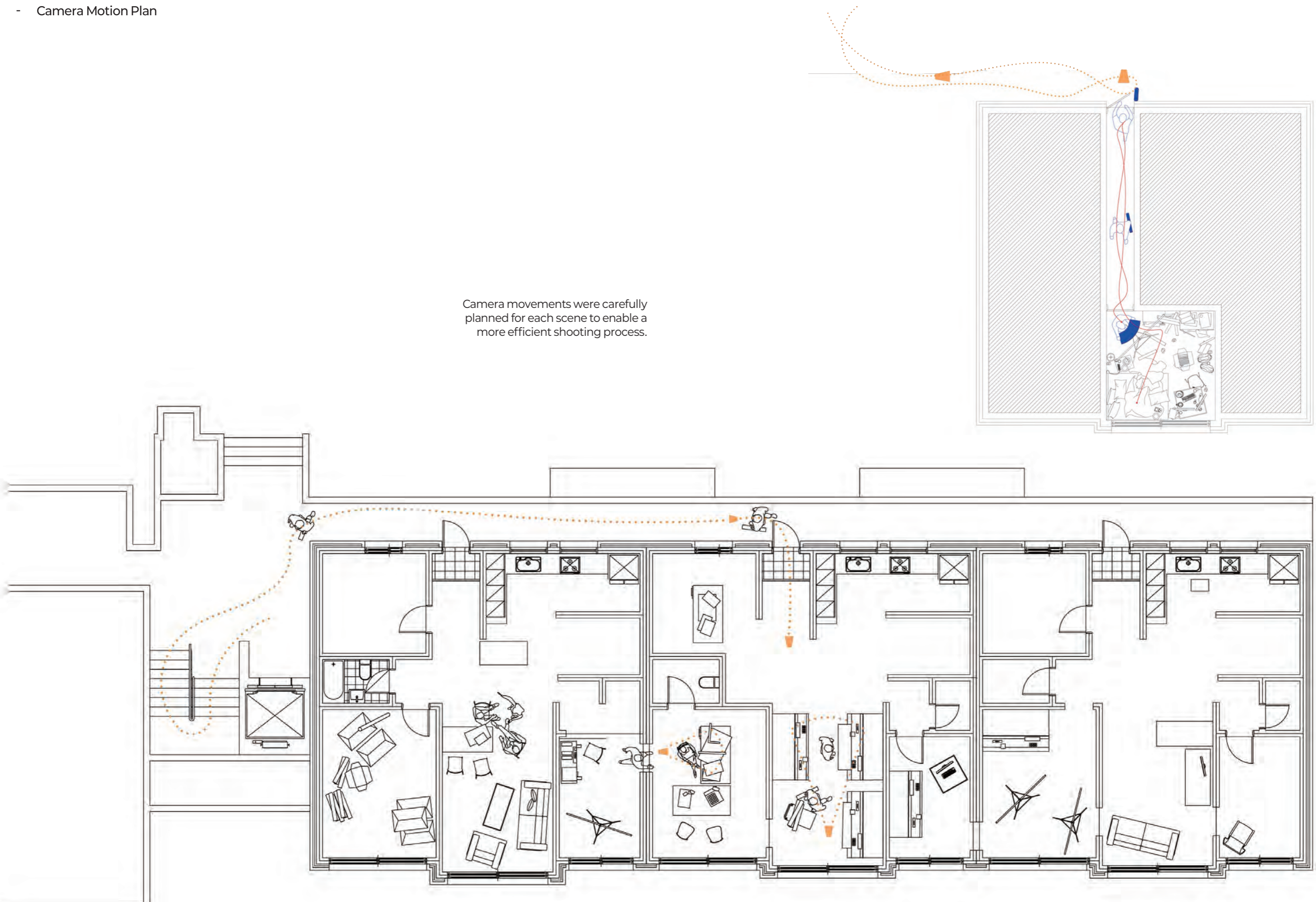


Miniature Model





Camera movements were carefully planned for each scene to enable a more efficient shooting process.





Reference, AI Generated (Midjourney)

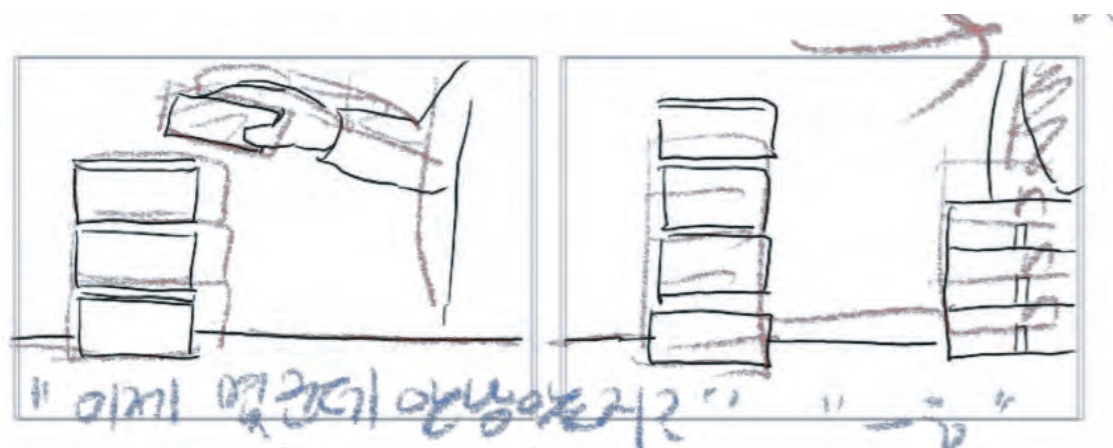


Setting Up the Set





SCENE 66-67 : STACKING THE MINIATURE ROOMS



INITIAL SKETCHS

CHANGES

Spreading the models inside the drawer/cabinet instead of putting them vertically.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

- Miniature Room Models
- Drawer/Cabinet
- Typical Korean Apartment Interior
- Natural Light Through Window
- Long Cylindrical Posters Standing Against Wall
- Remove Person + Put Sound implying the action of someone placing the model in.



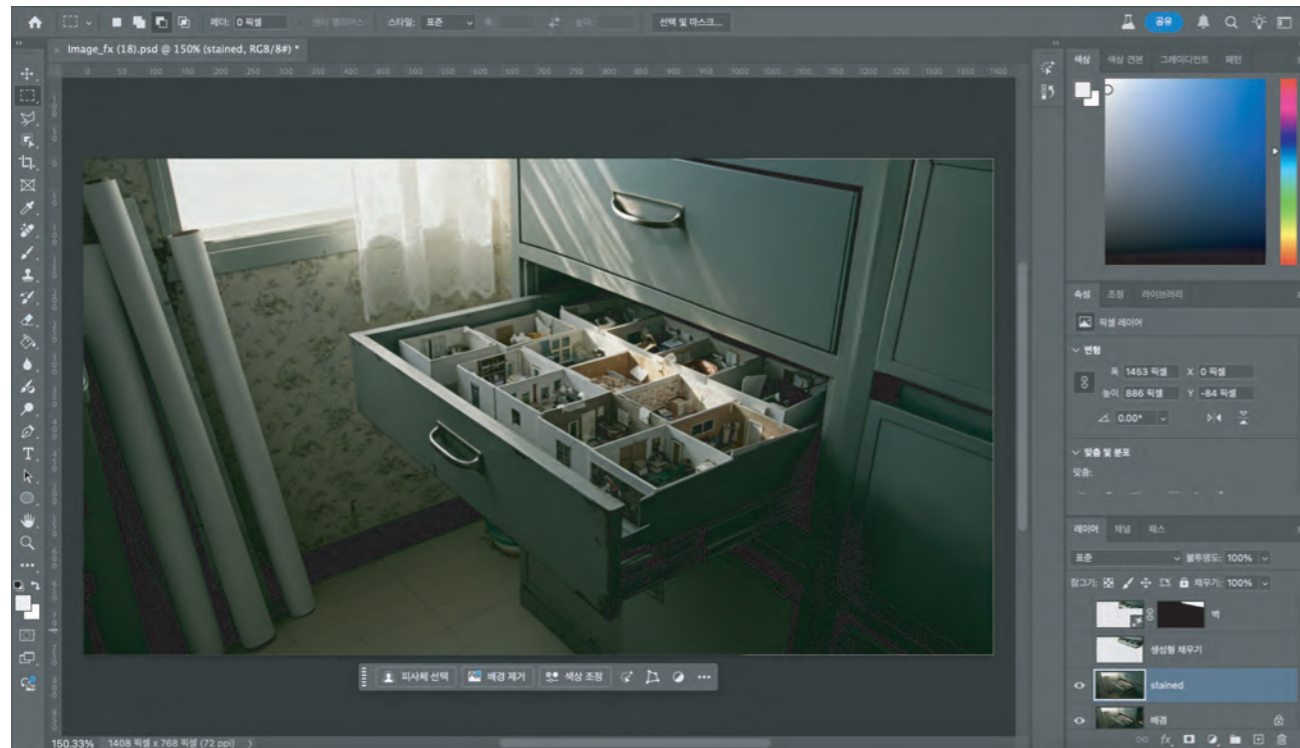
1. Create The First Visual with AI Generator (Googole Image Fx)



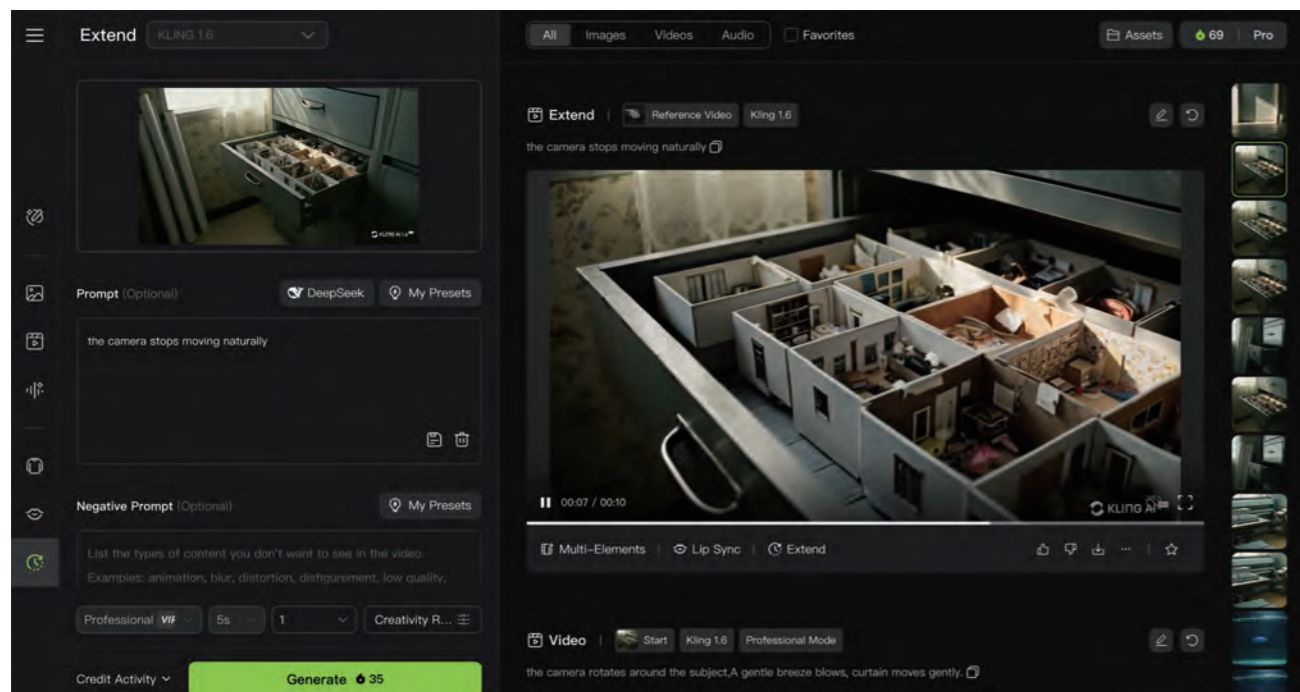
PROPMT :

A cinematic top-down shot inside a clean, slightly industrial old Korean apartment. The room is softly lit by natural light coming through a frosted glass window with a delicate lace curtain. The floor is covered with neat beige linoleum, and the walls are clean with subtle floral wallpaper and aluminum window frames typical of older Korean homes. Drafting tools and tall rolls of white paper are neatly arranged, leaning against tidy baseboards.

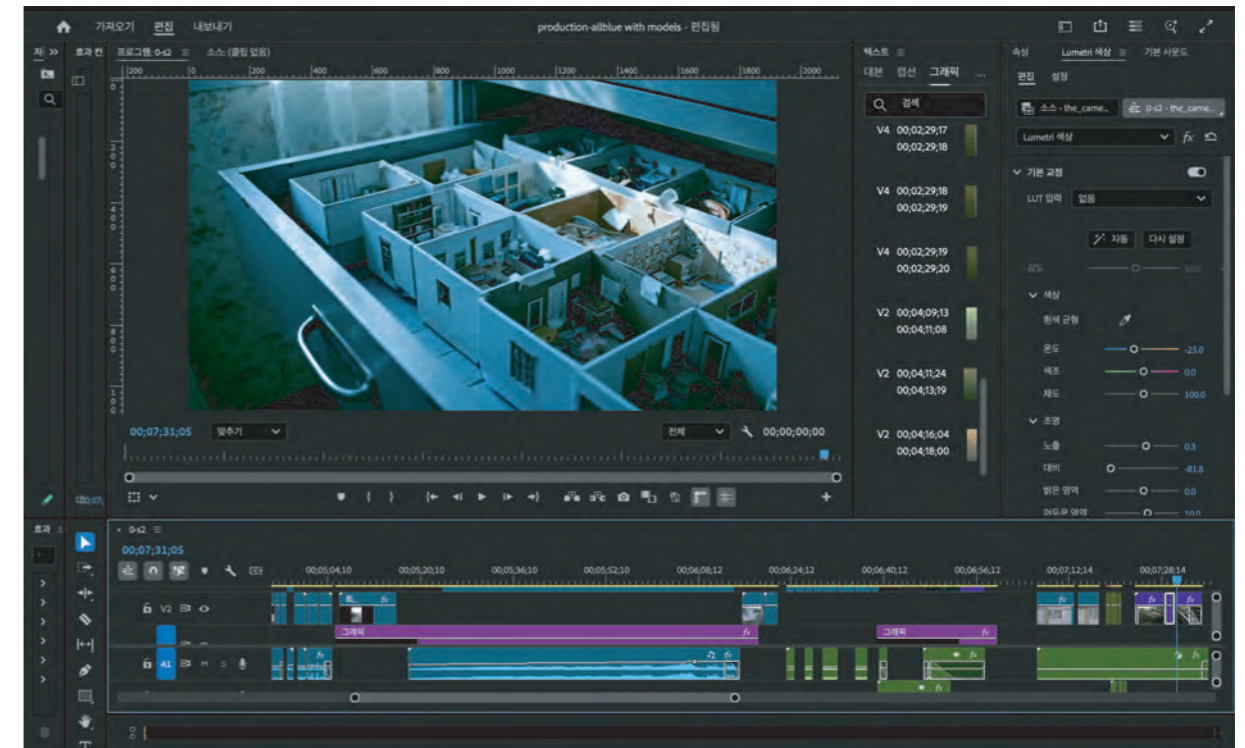
At the center is a partially opened metal drawer—worn but clean—built into a standard Korean storage cabinet. Inside the drawer's top compartment are rows of small, white paper cube models. Each cube is a miniature room interior, but these miniatures are extremely messy, filthy, and chaotic, filled with tiny piles of trash, stains, torn wallpaper, and signs of neglect. The cluttered interiors contrast starkly with the pristine surroundings. The lighting is dramatic and soft, casting cinematic shadows and warm highlights over the cold metal drawer and the fragile paper cubes. The scene is shot with a 35mm film aesthetic, evoking a quiet, introspective, and slightly unsettling mood. 35mm film



2. Refining Details (AI Tools in Adobe Photoshop)



3. Extracting 5-10 Second Clip Using the Generated AI Image (Kling Video AI)



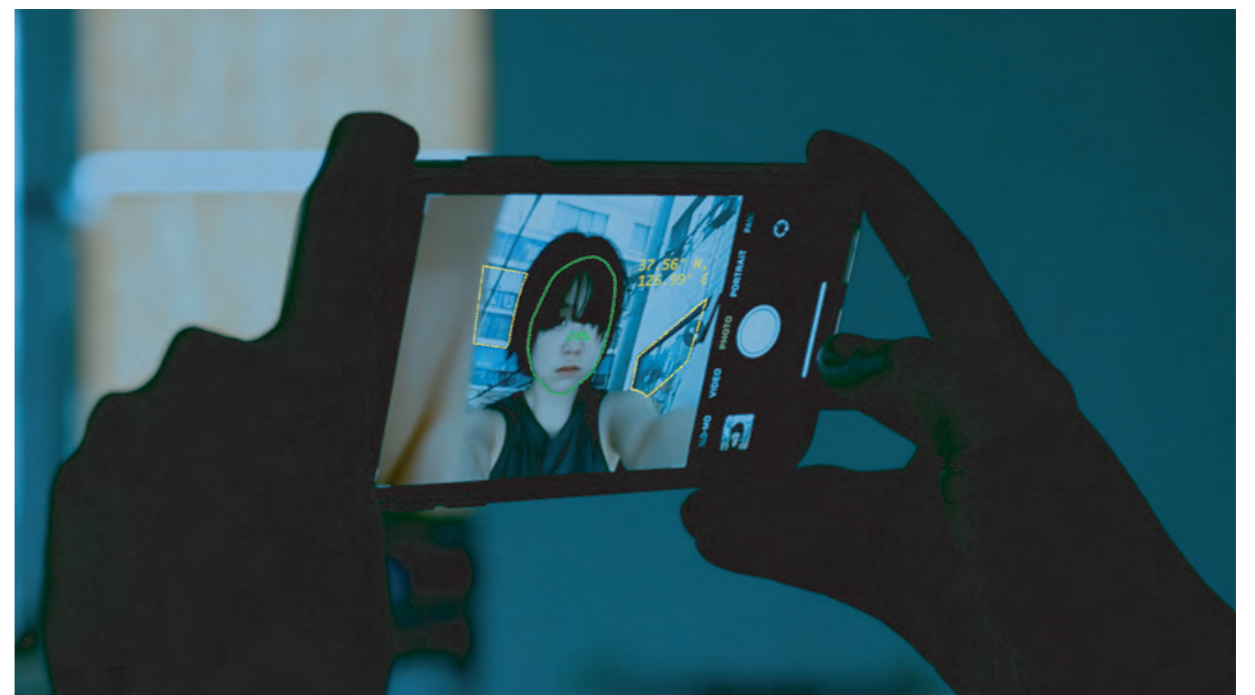
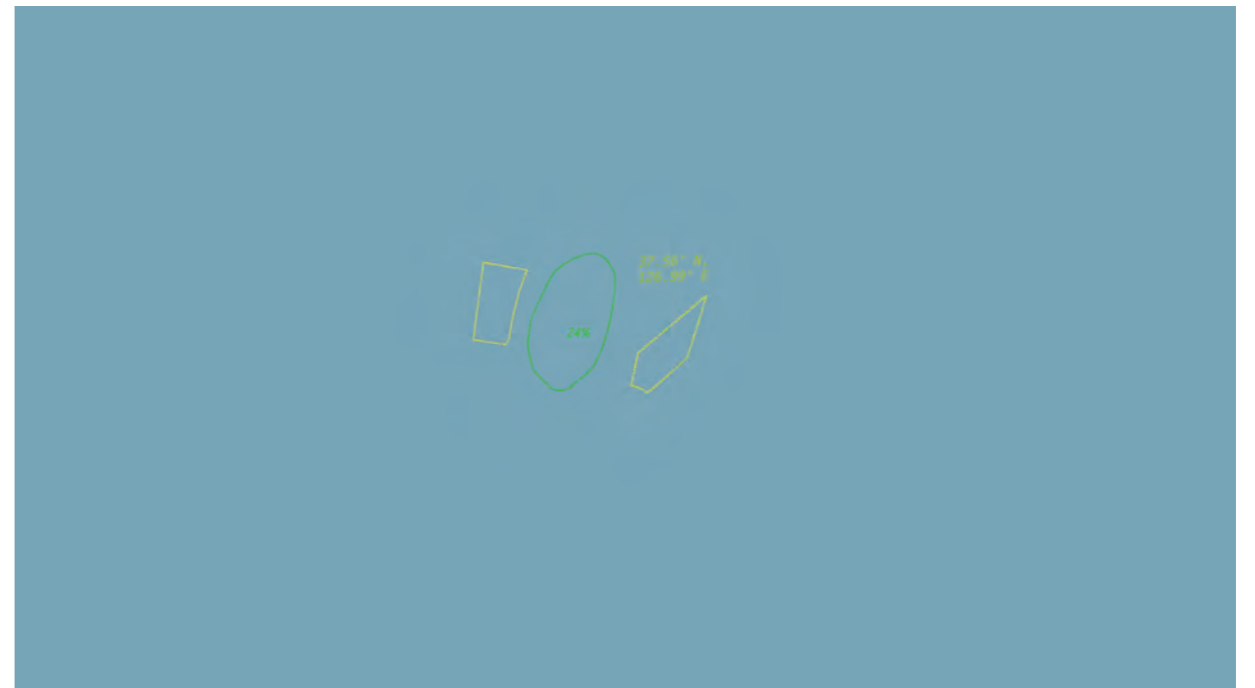
4. Cut-editing & Colour Grading & Sound Effects (Adobe Premiere Pro)



5. Final Look

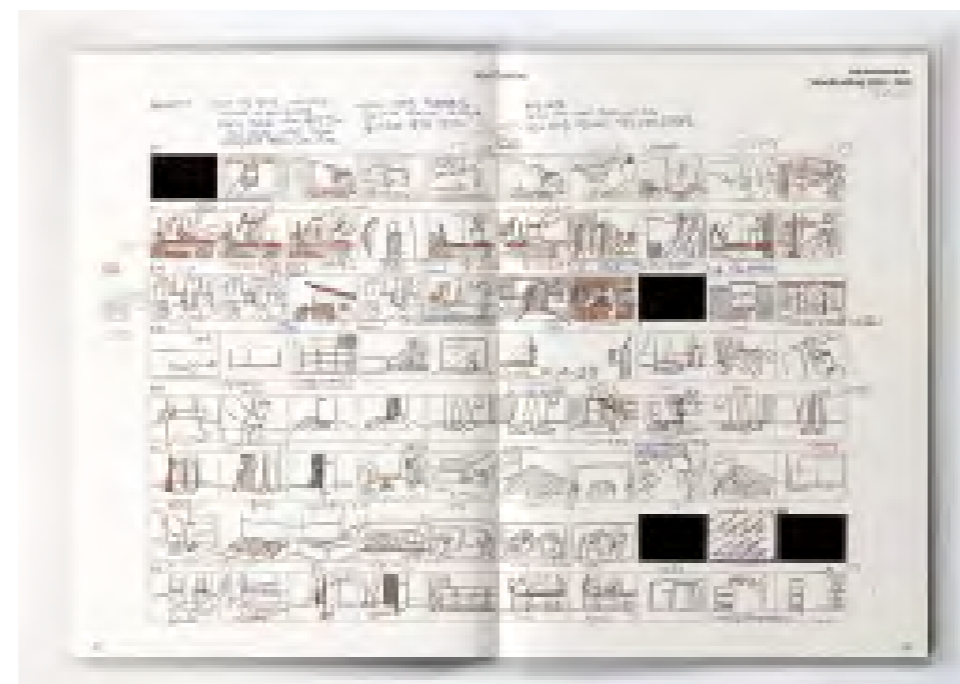
TONE : 

ATMOSPHERE :
The space feels cramped, lacking warmth, and completely devoid of light. Amid the silence, the faint sound of media, like animation or films, softly spreads through the air.



Cut-editing & Colour Grading & Sound Effects (Adobe Premiere Pro)

The treatment, created in Post-Production, was in fact developed in parallel with the Pre-Production and Production phases, serving as a comprehensive archive of all the creative traces produced during the project's preparation. It stands as a booklet encapsulating the overall vision and plan for the film's production



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-WKRHe2CWrk>



MANDATORY OUTDOOR ACTIVITY
Official Instructions

1. All individuals are required to spend 2 HOURS DAILY IN OUTDOOR AREAS beyond 500M AWAY from their registered address.
2. Individuals must SUBMIT PHOTOGRAPHS PROOF of outdoor activity. The system will automatically verify face and location using background features such as street signs and local landmarks.
3. Each person must designate their outdoor time slot daily. During this period, an hourly alarm will be activated, requiring photo verification AT EVERY FULL HOUR.
4. Failure to verify will result in a penalty of one additional hour per missed verification. Penalty hours must be completed as mandatory outdoor community service.

2025. 01. 01

FAKE BACKDROPS
Mandatory Outdoor Activity Evidence

가상 야외 배경
필수 야외 활동 증거

010-6250-6691

ROOM Culture
Room Rental Service

CULTURAL ROOM

INTERIOR SPACE

GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN

Perkins&Will
Award Winner
Best Interpretation of the Brief

Bill Ji
Seung Jung

Nominee
Nominee
Nominee

POST-PRODUCTION

- Installation







POST-PRODUCTION

- Installation

