

the substance of style

surface

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Linda V. the
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INTERIORS

Seoul Survivors

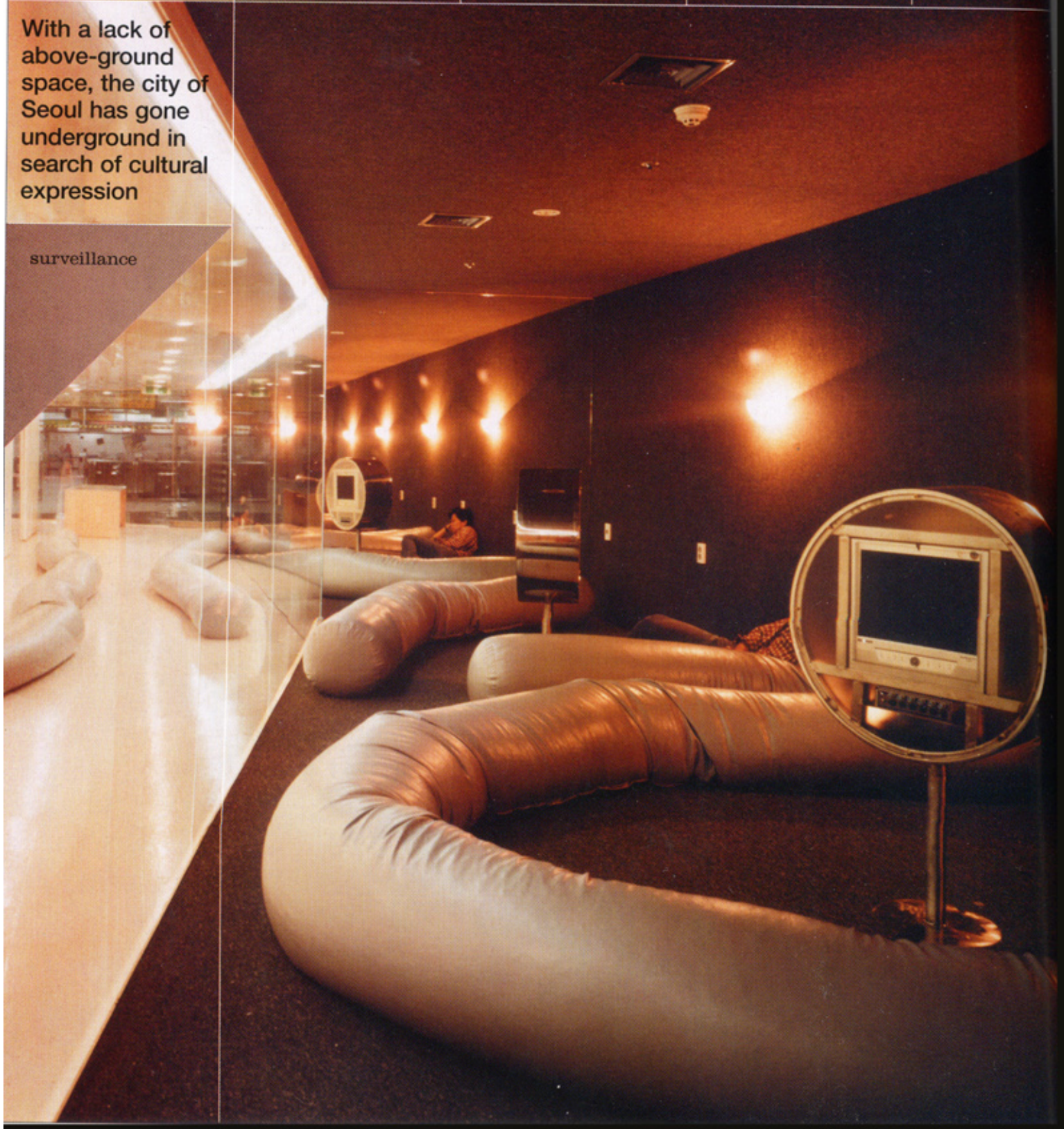
↙ ↘ Located just immediately south of one point on the so-called "axis of evil," artists in Seoul face the unusual task of going about business as usual while their northern neighbors dominate international headlines. One exam-

ple of their success in doing so is Seoul's new Intermedia Playground, a media complex set within the bowels of the Chungmu-ro subway station. Chungmu-ro happens to be the center of the country's film industry — a fact reflected by the collab-

oration between New York-based Cho Slade Architects and the Independent Filmmakers Association of Korea. The architects created a narrow, 210-foot-long space enclosed with glass and mirrors, leaving a five-foot-wide passage for >>

With a lack of above-ground space, the city of Seoul has gone underground in search of cultural expression

surveillance



> commuters. Inside, the red and black triangularly-shaped rooms fit together like wedges. At one end is a brightly lit lounge, complete with slithery, custom-designed seating cushions that snake their way around the space to form a romper

room, dotted with personal computer screens. At the other end of the space is a theater for film screenings. Fashion shows and dance performances have also been staged in the subway stations and on the trains themselves, but the

Intermedia Playground has been the most popular, and spectacular, subterranean cultural attraction to date. "Even the bureaucrats didn't expect the program to be so ambitious," claims architect James Slade. The complex has had less

expected results as well: According to Slade's partner, architect Minsuk Cho, "You can often see people in there, taking off their shoes, and falling asleep on the cushions." ANDREW YANG



Cinema scope: (opposite) Custom-designed couches slither through the Intermedia Playground, where visitors can view films on individual screens

Notes from the underground: Smaller lounge spaces (above) lead up to the larger screening room