

URBANGATEWAYS

THE HARMONY OF KOREAN DRUMMING & DANCING KOREAN PERFORMING ARTS INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO



ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Captivating artists illuminate the grace and power of traditional Korean drumming and dancing by demonstrating intricate performances. Harmony and its role in nature and the Korean arts is featured throughout. This dynamic performance will showcase four traditional styles including: (1) samulnori, a piece showcasing the four core instruments of Korean percussion music, (2) seoljanggu, a piece showcasing the janggu, the representative Korean traditional drum, (3) lion mask dance, and (4) sangmo pangut, a piece played while dancing and spinning sangmo (a ribbon hat). The artists explain how samulnori uses the philosophy of yin and yang and sounds from nature to create harmony in its performances, encouraging the audience to become a part of the performance.

MEET THE ARTIST

Korean Performing Arts Institute of Chicago (KPAC) is a 501(c)3, community-based cultural and educational organization. Primarily serving Chicago and the surrounding region, KPAC is dedicated to developing and promoting traditional Korean cultural and performing arts. To meet its mission, KPAC presents an array of programming, including classes for youth, workshops, educational presentations, and concert productions that highlight the traditional Korean percussion form of pungmul. KPAC is committed to presenting high-quality work and invests in ensuring that instruction and performances are provided by highly skilled and trained master artists. In addition to preserving the traditional aspects of pungmul, KPAC also drives collaborative projects with a diverse range of artistic disciplines in order to expand the creative domain of pungmul, raise awareness for the Korean traditional arts, and to foster collaboration between different communities.

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

A Korean folk music tradition, pungmul is the musical expression of an indigenous Korean cosmology that situates people within the natural world and revolves around the harmony between nature and people. The roots of pungmul come from the dure (collective labor) farming culture that was very common in Korea in the early 20th century. Like many folk traditions, in its early years, pungmul was not necessarily seen as a type of performance but more of a collective activity that was “played.” Pungmul was originally played as part of farm work, on rural holidays, to accompany shamanistic rituals, and other types community-gathering events. In the late 1960s and 1970s, pungmul expanded outside of rural communities and was used in political protest during the pro-democracy movement and overtime became known as more of a performing art.

Scholars classify pungmul under the larger umbrella of nongak which means farmers music which includes many different regional styles of Korean music and dance.

Pungmul involves four main instruments: kkwaenggwari (small gong), jing (large gong), janggu (hourglass drum), and buk (barrel drum). The two gongs signify the heavens, while the two drums signify earth. The kwenggari symbolizes thunder and lightning. The jing symbolizes the wind. The janggu drum represents rain, and the barrel drum is the clouds. Playing these four instruments together signifies the harmony of nature and people.

The traditional costume worn when performing pungmul features five colors based on the Five Elements which represents the universe. White means East, Fall, Metal; Blue – West, Spring, Wood; Red – South, Summer, Fire; Black – North, Winter, Water; and Yellow – Center, Soil.

Pungmul has been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

RESOURCES

Samgo-Mu demonstration: another style of traditional Korean drumming and dancing

<https://goo.gl/Bd6tGT>

Information on instruments used in pungmul

<https://goo.gl/LPhF5c>

Korean History for Kids: A Kid Explains History (video best for grades 1st 6th)

<https://goo.gl/zuk1z5>

National Geographic Kids: South Korean

<https://goo.gl/c7DHwi>

Learn Korean in 20 Minutes- tutorial for basic conversation phrases

<https://goo.gl/Dz9Bg7>



Traditional Pungmul Instruments (left to right): janggu, buk, kkwaenggwari, and jing.

Chicago Guide for Teaching and Learning in Arts: Scope and Sequence

Music Interpretation & Evaluation:

Listen and Describe (IL 25A, 26A, 27A; Nat’l 6)

- Analyze the uses of elements of music in musical selections representing diverse genres and cultures.
- Analyze the tempo and dynamics in songs that represent diverse cultures and styles.

Music Making Connections

Cultural (IL 26B,27A; Nat’l 9)

- Distinguish styles of music in various cultures and periods and identify unique features.
- Identify and describe music from other cultures of the world, using the elements of music.

Dance Literacy:

History and Culture (IL 27B; Nat’l 5)

- Discuss and explore the role of dance in celebrations or events.
- Investigate aspects of dance in various cultures or historical periods.

VOCABULARY

BUK

A large low pitched barrel drum that is played using a wooden mallet and represents the clouds.

HARMONY

A pleasant agreement among different people or things.

JANGGU

An hourglass shaped drum with each side covered in a different material to produce two distinct pitches ; one side is played using a thin bamboo reed and the other is struck using a wooden mallet ; symbolizes rain in pungmul.

JING

A large iron gong that is played with a soft padded mallet and represents the wind.

JOH-TA

A joyful exclamation, meaning “good”.

KKWAENGGWARI

A small gong often made of brass and played using a small wooden stick ; this instrument is often the leader of the group and is used to note transitions in the music ; symbolizes thunder and lightning.

NONGAK

Another term used to describe pungmul, translates to mean farmers music.

PUNGMUL

A Korean folk music tradition that includes drumming, dancing, and singing.

SAJA CHUN

A Korean traditional lion mask dance.

SAMUL-NORI

A modernized genre of Korean drumming music originating from pungmul ; the word ‘samul’ means ‘four objects’ and ‘nori’ means ‘play’.

SANGMO

A hat with a long ribbon attached to the top that that pungmul players can spin and flip in intricate patterns.

UL-SSI-GU

A joyful exclamation that the players or audience call out as they enjoy pungmul.

PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

1. Have a classroom discussion about the role and importance of music and dance in society. Nearly every culture has its own music and dance traditions. Why do they think this is? What types of dance and music do students see within their family or community?
2. Play snippets of traditional Korean music. Ask students to write words that comes to mind as they listen. For younger students, have them draw a picture based on how the music makes them feel.

POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES

1. Create a collage! Ask students to think about what images, colors, patterns came to mind during the show. Use newspaper, magazine, scrap paper, etc. to create a collage based on how the show made students feel.
2. Have students create a short dance that is based on an element of nature (rain, fire, wind, etc.). Encourage students to think about how to embody the element, is it fast or slow? Smooth or rapid movements?