University of Maryland School of Music Presents

KOREAN PERCUSSION AT MARYLAND!

UMD Korean Percussion Ensemble with Washington Samulnori and New York Korean Traditional Marching Band

Monday, November 25, 2019 • 7:30PM
DEKELBOUM CONCERT HALL
at The Clarice
KOREAN PERCUSSION AT MARYLAND!

UMD Korean Percussion Ensemble

Sebastian Wang
Director

INTRODUCTION

Moon Goot

Washington Samulnori

MAIN PROGRAM

Utdari Samulnori

UMD Korean Percussion Ensemble

SPECIAL GUEST PERFORMANCES

Samdo Sul Changgo

Washington Samulnori & New York Korean Traditional Marching Band
Sebastian Wang, Sanghyuk Park, Robin Ghertner, Chunseung Lee

Samdo Nongak Garak

Washington Samulnori & New York Korean Traditional Marching Band
Sebastian Wang, Sanghyuk Park, Robin Ghertner, Chunseung Lee

Modeum Buk

New York Korean Traditional Marching Band
Steve Yoon, Joshua Yoon

Pan Goot

Washington Samulnori

PROGRAM NOTES

Moon Goot
Moon Goot can be loosely translated as “Gate Ritual.” In the old days, traveling troupes of farmers’ bands would bless a village before entering the village gates. They would do so by chanting a short blessing wishing for good fortune and blessings for the village and its people. Then the performers would enter the gates in a parade and bring joy to all with their music and talents.

Utdari Samulnori
Utdari Samulnori features the styles and rhythms unique to the Kyeonggi and Chungcheon provinces. The rhythms originate from the different farmers’ band music from these two areas. This piece features very colorful and dynamic use of the lead brass instrument, the kweanggwarri. In the middle of the piece, two kweanggwarri are played at the same time, interacting with each other as well as the rest of the group.

Samdo Sul Changgo
This piece highlights the hourglass-shaped drum, the changgo. All players are playing this instrument and are playing rhythms from all three major provincial areas in Korea. Each style is unique and is featured in different movements in the piece. The piece starts with the slow rhythm, gutgeori, and ends with the fast and exciting rhythm, hwimori!

Samdo Nongak Garak
One of the most popular staple repertoire pieces of the samulnori genre, this piece’s title can be translated as “Farmers’ Band Rhythms of the Three Provincial Areas.” It showcases the various styles and movements unique to the different types of farmers’ band music from the three major provincial areas in Korea. These various rhythms are performed on all four traditional instruments. The final section features two kweanggwarri players performing together while interacting with the other instruments.

Modeum Buk
This piece features the modeum buk, or barrel drums of various sizes. They are performed with each player using multiple drums simultaneously. The rhythms include Korean traditional rhythms as well as western rhythms. The performance is very dynamic and is played standing up with energy and excitement.

Pan Goot
This piece draws from samulnori’s origins: farmers’ band music, also known as nongak. All performers wear a special spinning hat called a sangmo and play standing up with some instruments strapped to their bodies. Performers dance, play and spin the sangmo simultaneously. Many different formations are performed together as an ensemble, and the piece concludes by featuring individual solos by some performers.
The UMD KOREAN PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE was formed in 2009 under the leadership of Dr. Robert Provine, a specialist in Korean music who is now professor emeritus in ethnomusicology at UMD. The newest of the School of Music’s three world music ensembles, this group has received a great amount of support from the public as well as the UMD community. As part of the ensemble classes, students learn to play the Korean samulnori instruments: the changgo, buk, kweangggwarri and jing. This ensemble is the first of its kind in Maryland and one of few in the United States.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS
Joseph Koenig
William Robert Love
Jessica Rhoades
Niklas Schnake

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS
Mariangel Villalobos Benavides

Director SEBASTIAN WANG was born in Washington, D.C., and has lived in Maryland most of his life. He encountered samulnori when he was six years old and started taking private lessons when he was nine. He started to perform with a group when he was 14, performing at various local universities as well as the Kennedy Center. After graduating from high school, he continued his study at The Korea National University of Arts in Seoul, Korea, under renowned samulnori founder and master, Kim Duk Soo. After graduating from the university, Sebastian returned to the States and began teaching and performing in the local Washington, D.C. area. He is also the executive director of Washington Samulnori, a local professional samulnori group based in the Washington, D.C. area.

The SAMULNORI GENRE evolved from the rural folk genre pungmul (“wind things”), previously known as nongak (“farmers’ music”), which is played for village entertainment and ritually marking the passing of seasons in an agricultural cycle. It is loud, spirited music and dance, often played outdoors. The four core instruments are (1) the changgo, an hourglass-shaped drum, (2) the buk, a lower-pitched barrel-shaped drum, (3) the kweangggwarri, a small, hand-help gong, and (4) the jing, a lower-pitched hanging gong. A group’s leader usually plays the kweangggwarri, providing a rhythmic foundation along with the jing. The buk provides the bass sounds and helps to emphasize strong beats, and the changgo, whose two sides produce different pitches, elaborates on the other parts.

An ensemble named SamulNori (“four things playing”) was formed in 1978 under the directorship of Kim Duk Soo to play a virtuosic stage version of pungmul, and their music became so popular that the genre samulnori was named after the group. Samulnori is now taught and played in universities and performing arts schools in Korea and around the world and has been featured in events such as opening ceremonies for the Olympics and World Cup.
An interview with Director Sebastian Wang:

When & where did you first hear samulnori?
I first heard samulnori at a Korean film festival at American University. My mother was helping with the festival and brought me along. A samulnori team performed for the festival and I was mesmerized by the concert. I was 6.

Why did you want to learn this musical tradition?
After being introduced to samulnori, I was very interested in the changgo (the hour-glass drum). I thought it was so fascinating and every time I heard it, I was overly energized by the sound and the rhythms.

How is samulnori taught?
Samulnori is taught by speaking and moving to the rhythms. Students learn by saying the rhythms and moving their bodies at the same time. There are musical notations that can be sometimes used, but mainly through memorization and repetition.

What is performing samulnori like?
It is very fun and rejuvenating to perform samulnori. It requires the body to move in harmony with the rhythms and to work together to create some great music. The motions help keep the group together. There are sometimes signal rhythms or sounds that are used to communicate during a performance. Sometimes, there are also some improvised parts that are done during the piece. Generally, samulnori requires a good amount of energy that is transferred to the audience through the instruments, rhythms, and body motions. Overall, performing samulnori is a very exhilarating experience for performer and audience.

What is your favorite thing about performing? teaching?
I love seeing people’s reaction to my performances…especially, when people are energized and happy though my music. I love it when students who knew nothing about it, start to understand and really create something from these instruments, especially when the students start to really enjoy playing and working together to create something exciting together.
UPCOMING WORLD MUSIC PERFORMANCES

GAMELAN AND KOTO
UMD GAMELAN SARASWATI ENSEMBLE AND UMD JAPANESE KOTO ENSEMBLE
FRI, DEC 6 • 8PM
FREE, NO TICKETS REQUIRED
The UMD Gamelan Saraswati Ensemble presents traditional Balinese gamelan music played in the angklung style. This percussion music from the Indonesian island of Bali showcases complex interlocking rhythms often performed in tandem with the delicate motions and multifaceted expressions of Balinese dance. The UMD Japanese Koto Ensemble features music played on the koto, a traditional Japanese 13-string instrument. Koto music reflects the quiet beauty, simplicity and harmonizing effect of Japanese nature.

UMD KOREAN PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE
SAT, APR 18 • 7:30PM
FREE, NO TICKETS REQUIRED
Experience the vibrant beat of samulnori. This modern incarnation of traditional Korean folk music celebrates harvest time and provides a lively soundtrack to dancing. The ensemble is comprised of four types of percussion instruments—an hourglass drum, a barrel drum, a small gong and a large gong—each representing a natural element: rain, clouds, lightning and wind, respectively.

BALINESE GAMELAN
UMD GAMELAN SARASWATI ENSEMBLE AND PERFORMERS FROM THE INDONESIAN EMBASSY
FRI, APR 24 • 8PM
FREE, NO TICKETS REQUIRED
Joined by musicians and dancers from the Indonesian Embassy, the UMD Gamelan Saraswati Ensemble presents traditional and contemporary Balinese music and dance. This shimmering percussion music from the Indonesian island of Bali showcases complex interlocking rhythms.

JAPANESE KOTO
UMD JAPANESE KOTO ENSEMBLE AND WASHINGTON TOHO KOTO SOCIETY
SUN, APR 26 • 2PM
FREE, NO TICKETS REQUIRED
Directed by Kyoko Okamoto, the UMD Japanese Koto Ensemble features elegant music played on the koto, a traditional Japanese 13-string instrument. Koto music reflects the quiet beauty, simplicity and harmonizing effect of Japanese nature. This concert is a joint venture with the Washington Toho Koto Society, also directed and founded by Kyoko Okamoto. This is a local nonprofit group of koto players and friends, primarily from the DC metro area.