



Weatherhead
East Asian Institute

SOUNDINGS

East Asia Monthly

A Newsletter for Undergraduates

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 3

FEB/MARCH 2008

SPECIAL
ISSUE

KOREA IN NEW YORK CITY

INSIDE
THIS ISSUE

- Hoheup: P.2
a Traditional
Korean Drum
Troupe
- Korea-Town P.3
Restaurant
Review
- “Surge”: KSA P.3
Cultural Show
- Recipe: P.4
“Haemool
Pajeon”
- Korea in New P.4
York City

A Nation’s History Through Its Toys

The Korea Society is located in an impressive office building of modern architecture, its stainless steel and frosted glass façade the only one of its kind among the other, more classically designed buildings in its bustling Midtown location. Once inside though, the lighting is warm and homey, and the atmosphere is tranquil. The space is small – public exhibitions are only given one or two rooms for display, and the rest are used as classrooms for language instruction or movie screenings. However, one room seemed just perfect for the exhibit currently on display – *Toy Stories: Souvenirs from Korean Childhood*.



The exhibit features a collection of toys that are markers of the development of Korean cultural and societal values from the start of the Korean War to the push for economic development in the 1970s and 1980s. In today’s

world, where South Korea boasts the highest rate of Internet connectivity in the world, and its younger generation demonstrates a growing obsession with high-tech electronic gadgets and computer games, it is easy to overlook the humble beginnings that the country has built itself up from.



On display are items such as action and military figures, race cars, robots, girls’ toys, games, and children’s magazines. The toys provide a pleasant, yet telling perspective into times of economic and political hardship. Simply-constructed to keep costs low, the toys nonetheless sought to inspire, entertain, educate, and upkeep societal and cultural values. The evolution in their appearance tracks the gradual shift from the nation’s reliance on Japan and the U.S. to creating a more patriotic and uniquely Korean

identity in the younger generations. Replicas of Superman and Ultraman figures, iconic of American and Japanese pop culture in the 1950s and 60s, were eventually replaced by more Korean figures, such as *Robot Tae Kwon V*, a popular movie that featured a robot that practiced the Korean martial art of taekwondo to fend off evildoers.

Toy Stories provides an interesting and refreshing glimpse into modern Korean history. If you happen to find yourself in Midtown with half an hour to spare, do yourself a favor – take a break from the adult life and revisit your inner child in this cultural toy chest.



Korea Society
950 Third Avenue, 8th Floor
New York, NY 10022
212-759-7525

By Meghan Wu (Barnard '08)

The Rain, the Wind, and the Thunder.

Oh yes, and the Clouds too.

Hoheup is a traditional Korean drum troupe at Columbia University. A multiethnic and multigenerational group comprised of students, alumni, and other members of the Columbia community, our mission is to promote awareness and appreciation of Korean culture through teaching, learning, and performing *poongmul* (Korean folk drumming). The troupe was founded by a group of Korean American students in 2003, and since its inception, *Hoheup* has grown to a membership of over 20 active students in addition to an extensive alumni base, and has expanded its repertoire to include *samulnori* (sit-down stage performance) pieces such as *suljanggoo* and *youngnam* which we continue to play to this day.



The name of the group, *Hoheup*, originates from the Korean word to *breathe* or *breathing*. However, the literal meaning possesses another dimension: the rhythmic harmony that emerges when our drums beat together in unison. Our troupe aims to achieve this unity of body, music, and movement through traditional Korean percussion. The cadences of our motions from our bodies and strokes strive to illustrate this principle of *Hoheup* as well as a sense of order and continuity.

Within our *poongmul* troupe, the

instruments themselves possess unique meanings that are derived from the pastoral folk tradition. Namely, the four instruments, *Kwaengghari*, *Janggoo*, *Bhuk*, and *Jing* resemble the elements found in nature. *Kwaengghari*, resembling thunder, is a leading instrument making the highest pitch percussion sound. The hourglass drum is known as a *Janggoo*, and consists of two heads made from animal skins. The two heads produce sounds of different pitch and timbre, which when played together are believed to represent the harmony of man and woman, as well as the force of rain in the nature metaphor. The barrel drum, known as a *Bhuk*, produces a steady and constant beat, providing a rhythmic foundation, representing the clouds. The large gong is known as the *Jing*, represents the wind, and when struck, provides a deep resonating pulse to accompany the other instruments.



For our performing members, *poongmul* is a medium through which one can experience the cultural heritage of Korea. We dedicate a considerable portion of our efforts to educating the Columbia community about the history of Korean drumming, its role in contemporary society, and broader topics related to Korean culture. It is a means of understanding identi-

ties and roots in Korean folk music, and the rich history and tradition surrounding it. Furthermore, it is a source of joy and pride for members of *Hoheup* to be able to raise awareness about Korea, whilst also giving people the opportunity to learn about aspects of Korean culture that are completely foreign to them. Indeed, while there is no question that *Hoheup* is centered upon the Korean folk tradition, *Hoheup* prides itself on the diversity of its members. Regardless of one's ethnicity, age, or socioeconomic background, the desire to learn, share, and take part in this endeavor is truly a unique and cherished experience that fosters memories and friendships under the beat of one drum (or several in this case!)



For those interested in learning more about *Hoheup*, please notify our secretary, Janet Lee (jl2883@columbia.edu) to be placed on the mailing list. With our annual performance for the Korean Students Association Culture Show steadily approaching (4/2), as well as our very first Annual Performance as part of our new student initiative, please come out and watch *Hoheup* in all its *poongmul* glory!

By Sungbo Daniel Shim
(CC'10) President of *Hoheup*

Korea-town Restaurant Highlight: Step it Up to Fried Chicken at Baden Baden

Don't let appearances fool you: finding Baden Baden's entrance may be an elusive adventure for a first-timer, but once inside, the food and atmosphere are tangibly pleasing. The ground floor of 28 W 32nd Street is home to a tiny convenience store and a Korean barber shop; Baden Baden is located on the 2nd floor, behind an unmarked door and up two flights of stairs. If you wander in looking lost, as I must have done when I nearly entered the barber shop on the ground floor, the friendly convenience store cashier will be happy to guide you to the appropriate staircase.

Fried chicken and beer are the main attractions at Baden Baden's bar setting, also known as a *hof*, or a Korean beer hall. Pitchers are priced at \$20-\$22 each, and the extensive drink

menu even out-lengthens the food choices. The go-to choice of Baden Baden Chicken was \$13.95 for a rotisserie-fried half-chicken and \$18.95 for a whole chicken, with a side of onion rings or fries. Although the breast meat was especially dry, the meat and fry batter were full of flavor. Try dipping the chicken in hot sauce and ketchup to add moisture. Or try out the mozzarella sticks for a juicy appetizer with fresh marinara sauce. The sticks are spiced with Korean hot sauce for a surprisingly nice contrast with the sweet marinara.

Unfortunately, Baden Baden was a splurge for a college student looking for good fried chicken. The whole fried chicken was \$18.95 - enough, perhaps, for a late-night, post-karaoke K-town snack, but unfulfilling for a

balanced dinner. Eating out of KFC's buckets of fried chicken may feel cruder, but the satisfaction of fried chicken and beer is ultimately the same no matter how dolled up. Baden Baden's music choices also left something to be desired: Norah Jones is not bar music, no matter how high the volume or intoxicated the clientele.

A warning: be wary going down the stairs as you leave - the combination of beer and a whole fried chicken tends to result in an overstuffed, dizzy stumble to the street.

Baden Baden
28 West 32nd St, New York 10001
212-714-2266

By Wei Wei Hsing (CC'08)

“Surge”: KSA Culture Show 2008

Where can one find Korean culture in New York? Most people naturally think of 32nd Street between 5th and 6th Avenues, so-called Korea Town, full of Korean food, drinking spots, and karaoke bars. Truly, these are essential elements of Korean social life, yet this area does not reveal everything about Korea, such as its remarkable tradition and its contemporary facets. However, these aspects of Korea come alive every year through Columbia University's Korean Students Association's Culture Show.

The theme for the 28th Annual KSA Culture Show is “Surge,” the flow of Korean culture to the rest of the world through Korea's dramatic technological and economic growth. On

Wednesday, April 2nd, 2008, Roone Arledge Auditorium will be filled with various performances which will showcase Korean traditional and popular culture: TaeKwonDo (Korean Martial Arts), Fan Dance, Gayo (K-pop dance), Songs of Seoul (band music), Spoken Words, and a Fashion Show. This year, the production team has created an original intro scene, which reinterprets Korean tradition through the perspective of Western culture.

Every year, the Culture Show attracts an audience of over 700 people, not only from Columbia University but also from the larger New York metro area. This year there will be food catered from one of the greatest Korean restaurants in the city. KSA is

also hosting an after-party on Thursday (April 3rd) for all of the crewmembers and for the audience. If you want to experience the cultural surge of Korea in every aspect, the KSA Culture Show is the place to be on April 2nd, 2008. See you there!



By Franchesca JungAh Hwang (SEAS '09) and TaekGyu TK Lee (CC'09) KSA Culture Show Production Co-Coordinator

Recipe for “Haemool Pajeon” (Korean Pancakes)

Pajeon is a variety of *jeon*, the traditional Korean pancake made originally from a base of water, flour, and scallions. The ingredients in the *pajeon* vary. Some variations include *kimchi* (spicy pickled cabbage) *pajeon*, *gogi* (meat) *pajeon*, and what I am providing the recipe for here, *haemool* (seafood) *pajeon*.

The *pajeon* can be served as a side dish or *banchan* in a traditional Korean meal, but it is often the main dish, especially as accompaniment to another popular Korean dish, the *nengmyun* or cold buckwheat noodles frequently eaten during hot Korean summers. The *pajeon* is served with a special dipping sauce, a combination of soy sauce, vinegar, and Korean chili powder.

The *pajeon* is always a crowd pleaser—appealing to all generations. The cooking of *pajeon* is often a family affair. It is often made in large batches and because of its relatively simple instructions, children love to get involved. Often, more

is consumed while cooking than during the actual meal, for there is nothing more delicious than picking hot *pajeon* straight from the pan!

Ingredients: 1 pack of Korean Pancake Mix, Scallions, 1 Onion, 1 pack of imitation crab, 1 Squid, 1 Red Bell Pepper, Water, Vegetable Oil, Paper Towels, 1 Large Tray, 1 Large Bowl, 1 Spatula

Instructions: Dice the scallions, onion, imitation crab, squid, and red bell pepper into small pieces. In a large bowl, add pancake mix and diced ingredients. Add water to the bowl, one cup at a time and mix, folding in ingredients with a spatula. The consistency of the mix is very important. Add water until the mix is smooth, but not watery. It is better for the mix to be a little on the chunkier side than on the watery side. Line a tray with paper towels for placement of *pajeon* when they are done. Pour vegetable oil in a pan over medium/ high heat. Scoop mix with a ladle and carefully

pour on hot, oiled pan. The circular mix should take up most of the pan but make sure that there is enough room to comfortably flip (the thickness of the pancake should equate to a thick, fluffily American pancake). After about 30-45 seconds with a spatula, flip the *pajeon*. When each side is a golden, the *pajeon* is ready to be taken off the heat and placed onto the lined tray. Repeat until mix is gone. Once cooled, the *pajeon* can be sliced into pizza-like wedges and served with rice or eaten by itself.

Dipping Sauce:

Ingredients: 2 tbsp soy sauce, 1 tsp vinegar, 1 tsp Korean chili powder, 1 small bowl, Spicy green peppers.

Instructions: In a small bowl, mix all ingredients. Slice spicy green peppers and add to sauce (optional). Dip *pajeon* and ENJOY!

By Young Yoo (CC'09)

Korea in New York City



Weatherhead East Asian Institute

Off-Campus Ongoing Events

- Brooklyn Museum of Art: **“Arts of Asia and the Islamic World.”** The museum’s installation emphasizes Korea’s unique traditions, culture, and aesthetics. 200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11238
- Lee Young Hee Korean Museum of Culture: **“Korean Traditional Costumes, Furnishings and more.”** 2 West 32nd Street, Suite 301, NY 10001

Off-Campus Current Events

- New Museum of Contemporary Art: **“Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries: Black on White, Gray Ascending.”** Through March 23, 2008. 235 Bowery, NY 10002
- Metropolitan Museum of Art: **“Asian Lacquer: Masterpieces from the Florence and Herbert Irving Collection.”** Through May 11, 2008. 1000 Fifth Avenue, NY 10028

About SOUNDINGS: East Asia Monthly

Published monthly by the Weatherhead Undergraduate Council, SOUNDINGS aims to help better incorporate undergraduates into the broader East Asian Studies community at Columbia by providing increased access to information about East Asia-related groups, activities, and events. Incorporating academic as well as non-academic news and listings, it seeks to help interested undergraduates further pursue their interest in East Asia, whatever form it may take.

SOUNDINGS is edited by Rachele Meyer (rdm2110@columbia.edu).

About the Weatherhead East Asian Institute

Since its establishment in 1949, Columbia University’s Weatherhead East Asian Institute has been a major center for research, teaching, and publishing on modern and contemporary Asia. The Institute’s mission is to train new generations of Asian experts in the humanities, social sciences, and the professions and to enhance understanding of East Asia in the wider community.

Visit us online:
<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/weai/>