

# KAMSA CHRONICLE

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A. YANGWON JACKSON, EDITOR

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Kee H. Kim, M.D.



Full season of the Millennium Year is already upon us. As Thanksgiving draws near members of the KAMSA family have many things for which to be thankful.

We enjoy much more visibility in and support from the S.F. Bay Area than ever before. Our growing Youth Orchestra is the pride and joy of the entire Korean community. The firmly established annual Gala Benefit Dinner Concert is already proving to be a key to our ongoing success. Our commitment to excellence is exemplified by the Herbst Theatre Recitals.

Plans are being developed for expansion of the KAMSA Youth Orchestra concert venues, start of an orchestra tour of Korea, and resumption of competitions for the Herbst Theatre Debut Recitals. We want to invite you to attend the upcoming West Coast Debut Recital of Pianist Minyoung Lee in November.

With your assistance KAMSA will continue to gain in stature and fulfill our mission of promoting the careers of young Korean-American musicians.

Again, as President of KAMSA, and on behalf of the entire organization, I thank you for your special contribution. All the best to you and yours in the coming season.

## PIANIST MINYOUNG LEE'S WEST COAST DEBUT CONCERT AT HERBST THEATRE

KAMSA presents the West Coast debut of piano virtuoso Minyoung Lee at 5:00 p.m. Sunday, November 12 at Herbst Theatre in San Francisco.

Minyoung Lee has performed with leading orchestras in Asia and Europe including George Enescu Philharmonic Orchestra, the KBS Symphony Orchestra, the Su-won Philharmonic Orchestra, the Korea Symphony Festival Orchestra and Seoul National University Orchestra. In 1996 Lee appeared as a soloist with Jeunesses Musicales World Orchestra Asia Tour and in addition has given solo performances in the U.S., Canada, Europe and Korea.

### PROGRAM

Mozart	Sonata in F Major, K.332
Ravel	Le Tombeau de Couperin
Chopin	Mazurka Op. 59 No. 1 in A Minor Mazurka Op. 59 No. 2 in A-flat Major
Brahms	Variations on a theme by Robert Schumann, Op.9
Bartok	Sonata (1926)

Tickets for the performance are \$20.00, available through City Box Office, located at 180 Redwood Street, Suite 100 (off Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco's Civic Center) or by calling Key T. Kim at (415) 861-7371 or Sung Cho at (408)566-0632.

An active chamber musician, Lee has performed in venues including the International Young Artist

Festival in Japan and the Korea Festival Ensemble Concert Series. Lee also has performed at Aspen Music Festival, Sarasota Chamber Music Festival, Banff Keyboard Festival and London's Piano Festival. Currently, Lee is pursuing her Doctoral degree in Musical Arts at Rice University; she is a graduate of Seoul National University and Yale University. This winter she will appear with the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra.



## 11TH ANNUAL KAMSA YOUTH ORCHESTRA CONCERT

The just completed 11th annual KAMSA Youth Orchestra concert at Spangenberg Theatre in Palo Alto captured the hearts and imagination of the 700 who attended September 9th.



Sooyoun Kwon

Sooyoun “Kathy” Kwon, violin soloist, and Heesoo Kim, flute soloist, exuded impressive confidence and displayed exceptional musicality during their respective performances. The whole youth orchestra gave a compelling interpretation of the original composition by Sung-Ki Kim. They concluded the evening with a stirring rendition of “Gohyang eu Bom” (Hometown Spring).



Heesoo Kim



Sung-Ki Kim

A tradition of excellence in musicianship under the skillful direction of Maestro Lawrence Kohl was evident once again. These young people are undoubtedly the pride of our entire Korean community.

The following students are recipients of this year’s **Korean-American Young Musician Scholarship**: Eugene Baik, Jason Cho, Elizabeth Jackson, Helen Jo, Jin-Young Kim, Yein Kim, Ted Kim, Sooyoun “Kathy” Kwon, Jennifer Lee, Christopher Lin, Sophie Sung.

## SECOND ANNUAL GALA BENEFIT DINNER CONCERT

The second annual Gala Benefit Dinner Concert, held June 23rd at Stanford University Faculty Center proved a complete success.

Over 160 members of the Korean and American business and music communities attended. They experienced the exceptional night’s festivities, memorable music and fine food. Donations reached an impressive figure of over \$25,000. These funds, minus expenses, will enable us to continue our mission.

The sensitive performance of pianist Minyoung Lee moved all in attendance. Her mastery of the pieces thrilled the audience. Plainly, their appetite was whetted for more and the sumptuous dinner that followed satisfied until her next concert on November 12th.

Congratulations on a great event!



Korea Times S.F.

## ALUMNI CORNER

We salute these alumni and wish them continued success in their educational endeavors. Please send any news on our alumni for future publication, email address: [jare1@juno.com](mailto:jare1@juno.com) or [Admin@kamsa.org](mailto:Admin@kamsa.org)

Edward Cho  
James Cho  
Jinsue Choi  
Jamie Choy  
Jake Hong  
Gilbert Hwang  
Rebecca Jackson  
Ian Jang  
Christie Jeon  
Heesoo Kim  
Irene Kim  
Sun Chin Kim  
Yong Kim  
Gene Kwon  
Jenny Kwon  
Miriam Pak  
Austin Park  
Sharon Park  
Virginia Park  
John Song  
Michael Song  
Thomas Song

UCSD/ Soph/ Biochemical Engineering  
De Anza College/ Graphic Design  
UC Berkeley/ Soph/ Molecular Cell Biology  
Barnard College (Columbia)/ Soph/ Undecided  
Cal Poly San Luis Obispo/ Fresh/ Engineering  
Stanford/ Fresh/ Premed or Engineering  
Juilliard/ Soph/ Violin Performance  
Cal Poly San Luis Obispo/ Fresh/ Computer Science  
UC Berkeley/ Fresh/ Genetics as a Regents’ Scholar  
Stanford/ Fresh/ Computer Science  
UC Berkeley/ Fresh/ Premed  
UC Berkeley / Fresh/ Molecular Cell Biology (premed)  
UCSD/ Soph/ Undecided  
UC Berkeley/ Senior/ Molecular Cell Biology (premed)  
UC Berkeley/ Soph/ Social Science, Music Minor  
UC Berkeley/ Junior/ History and Music/ Jr. yr. in Germany  
UC Berkeley/ Fresh/ Premed  
UCLA/ Fresh/ Undecided  
UC Davis/ Junior/ Psychology  
UC Irvine/ Junior/ Civil Engineering (Architecture)  
UC Davis/ Fresh/ Environmental Science and Music  
Otis Art College, L.A./ Soph/ Graphic Design

## INTERVIEW WITH PIANIST MINYOUNG LEE by Annette Yangwon Jackson

**I**mpeccably polite, respectful and soft-spoken, pianist Minyoung Lee appears strikingly younger in person. So slight of build that seemingly just one stiff breeze would blow her over, she embodies the personal characteristics which justify the pride we feel in the accomplishments of such young Korean-American musicians. Though physically light, her inner strength is obvious. In the interview her level-headed answers reveal both a purity of heart and a truly humble spirit.

**WERE YOUR PARENTS OR GRANDPARENTS MUSICIANS?**  
None of my immediate family members are musicians although my parents love listening to classical music. I think that is why my parents had all of their children take music lessons, so that we could at least appreciate it. Both my sister and brother took piano and clarinet lessons but they were never serious. However, I have relatives who are active musicians. For example, my aunt is a well-known composer and she used to teach at Ewha University. A couple of my cousins are also professional musicians.

**WHEN AND HOW DID YOU START PIANO LESSONS?**  
I started playing the piano when I was seven. I attended a private music institute (hak-won) with my sister and other childhood friends. It was fun because a bunch of us did it together.

**PLEASE TELL US ABOUT YOUR FIRST TEACHER AND WHAT YOU REMEMBER ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE.**  
As it is in many private music institutes, the place had many rooms in which we could all practice the piano individually. The teachers would go from one room to the next to teach us. Although I don't remember much about the actual teaching style, I remember going to the music institute almost everyday. Even though the amount of time per session was not very much, I was able to practice consistently.

**THAT'S WONDERFUL! IN THE BEGINNING, A CONSISTENT PRACTICE HABIT MUST BE ESTABLISHED, THOUGH IT MIGHT BE VERY SHORT. HOW DID YOUR PARENTS HELP WITH PRACTICE WHEN YOU WERE SMALL?**  
When I first started taking piano lessons, I don't think my parents ever expected me to pursue a career as a professional musician. Perhaps that is why my parents never forced or told me to practice. When I showed an interest in playing the piano, they were just very supportive. They gave a lot of positive feedback, support and showed a genuine interest. I think that enabled me to grow at my own pace. I was also one of those rare kids who actually enjoyed playing and practicing the piano even at a pretty young age.

**YES, IT IS TRULY RARE! PARENTS MUST REALIZE THAT PRACTICALLY NOBODY REALLY LIKES TO PRACTICE, AT LEAST WHEN THEY ARE LITTLE. ANY WORTHWHILE ENDEAVOR REQUIRES DISCIPLINE AND HARD WORK. WHY DO YOU THINK YOUR PARENTS ARE SUPPORTIVE OF YOUR MUSICAL CAREER?**  
They are supportive of my musical career because they know that music is what I really like. I don't think that they are supportive of my musical career because my career is in music. My parents would have wholeheartedly supported me to pursue a career in any field, if I clearly knew what it was and if I showed a talent in that

particular field. Nowadays, my mother sometimes tells me that she wishes that I had not pursued a career in music, fully knowing how much devotion the career requires.



**THERE ARE ALWAYS GREAT PARENTS BEHIND WONDERFUL CHILDREN. AT WHAT AGE DID YOU KNOW YOU'D BECOME A MUSICIAN?**

I always loved music and enjoyed playing the piano, and I am not sure when the exact moment was. However, by the time I graduated from middle school I was pretty sure that I wanted to become a professional musician. My decision to attend the Seoul High School for Music and Arts as a piano major reflects this.

**HOW IS YOUR DAILY PRACTICE NOW DIFFERENT FROM WHEN YOU WERE LITTLE?**

I don't think I practiced very much when I was young. As I grew older and became more serious about music, I started to practice much more. I liked the fact that I could immerse myself in creating something so beautiful and meaningful. I also liked the sense of achievement when I was able to overcome a challenge, and many times practicing is just that. Nowadays, I enjoy practicing because in that process I always discover new things even in the pieces that I have known for a very long time. Learning new aspects, such as the music theory or the historical background, informed practice really helps me to see a piece of music in a whole different light.

**WHAT ARE SOME PRACTICE SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN?**

I think it is important that children acquire good practice habits. Even though the amount may not be very much, have them practice daily. It is also important that they are free of any distractions when they are practicing. Consistency and concentration are the key points. Having a short-term goal also helps. Organize student recitals two or three times a year. The parents must show a genuine interest in their children's progress as well. It would be great if the entire family can attend these recitals to celebrate each step of the child's progress and achievements.

**WHEN AND WHY DID YOU COME TO THE U.S.?**

I came to the United States after I had graduated from Seoul National University. While still in college I had a chance to tour Europe and America. As winner of the KBS Symphony Soloist Competition I visited various music institutions. I considered Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore and Yale University for my master of music degree. I decided to go to Yale because I liked the intimacy of the school. The student body of Yale's School of Music

was much smaller than that of Peabody. Moreover, I also wanted to go to the school from which my father received his Ph.D. It was a great experience to be at Yale. Not only did I learn a great deal from the world-renowned piano faculty, the intimate setting of the school allowed me to really get to know and learn from my fellow students. Yale also provided a rich cultural and intellectual environment from the other departments and professional schools.

**WAS IT DIFFICULT TO ADJUST WHEN YOU FIRST ARRIVED?**

My first year at Yale was difficult. It was my first time to leave home. I also had to overcome the language barrier as well as cultural differences. Moreover, I was also musically challenged by my piano teacher, Professor Boris Berman. He expected me to be more than an accomplished pianist and a performer, to be an artist who creates something completely new that is only his or hers. I think my years at Yale were also stressful in that I had important concert engagements. For example, while I was still at Yale, I had an Asia Tour with the Jeunesses Musicales World Orchestra which led to performances in Malaysia, the Philippines and in Seoul. Preparing such a tour obviously took a lot out of me.

**PLEASE TELL US SOME DIFFERENCES BETWEEN KOREAN AND AMERICAN METHODS OF MUSIC INSTRUCTION.**

Most of the piano teachers in Korea I studied with were trained in the United States and Europe. Their method of instruction was very much like the teachers in the States. However, in Korea the educational system forces the students to learn a very small amount of repertoire that is often too difficult for the students both musically and technically. Moreover, in Korea, because of the college entrance exam and other contingencies, one places more emphasis on the technical aspects. From what I understand, in the United States at an entrance audition one considers the talent and potential rather than just the accomplishments as an instrumentalist.

**HOW ARE STUDENTS DIFFERENT FROM THE TWO CULTURES? WHAT ARE SOME POSITIVE POINTS FROM EACH CULTURE FROM WHICH WE SHOULD LEARN?**

I think the strength of Korean students is the discipline and the hard work. In contrast, I find the students from America to be more creative and imaginative. I also admire the confident attitude.

**WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION? WHEN DID YOU FIRST HEAR ABOUT IT?**

I really didn't know much about the organization until recently. I first heard of KAMSA through my current teacher Professor John Perry. I had the privilege of working with him mostly at Rice University where I am pursuing my Doctor of Musical Arts degree. I also had worked with him at Aspen Music Festival in Colorado and Sarasota Music Festival in Florida. It was at his recommendation that I looked further into the events sponsored by KAMSA. I think it is just wonderful that such an organization as KAMSA exists because often the minorities in America neglect their social and cultural roots. I believe that KAMSA is serving as a cultural ambassador for the Korean community and feel very honored that I can take part in KAMSA events.

**WE, AT KAMSA, ARE HONORED TO WORK WITH SUCH A WONDERFUL ARTIST BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY SUCH A BEAUTIFUL HUMAN BEING AS YOURSELF. WHAT ARE YOUR CAREER GOALS? WHAT ARE YOUR LIFE GOALS?**

I would like to continue to grow as an artist and musician, and would like to share that with others. More specifically, I would like to be active as a performer and also would like to instruct the future generation of musicians.

**MAY ALL YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE. KAMSA WISHES TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO OUR ORGANIZATION.**

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