Sejong culture class
Online Korean Culture beginner courses
Samulnori
King Sejong Institute
Samulnori

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What is samulnori

Hello, students of Sejong Institute. In this lecture, we will learn and discuss the history of Samulnori and the concept of its rhythm.

Samulnori are a traditional Korean performance, playing music using kkwaenggwari, janggu, drum, and Jing as main instruments.

History of Samulnori

Samulnori have adopted a melody from ‘Pungmul’ and developed its own characteristics. The first Samulnori was performed in ‘Gonggan-Sarang Theater’ next to Changdeokgung Palace, Seoul, in 1978, by Duk-Soo Kim, Yong-Bae Kim, Tae-Hyun Choi, and Jong-Dae Lee. In later days folklorist, Woo-Sung Shim named the performance as Samulnori. For reference, Deok-Soo Kim, Yong-Bae Kim, Jong-Sil Choi, and Kwang-Soo Lee were performers using the name, “Samulnori Troupe” in later days.

A samulnori instrument

The musical instruments of samulnori are called the “UnWoo-PungNoe.” “UnWoo-PungNoe” means clouds, rain, wind, and thunder.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Buk</th>
<th>Janngu</th>
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<td>The center of music</td>
<td>Make up the overall music</td>
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<td><img src="Un.png" alt="Un" /></td>
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<tr>
<th>Jing</th>
<th>Kkwaenggwari</th>
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<td>Standard role</td>
<td>The role of directing the entire music</td>
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<td><img src="Pung.png" alt="Pung" /></td>
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Learn to basic Jangdan (rhythm) and Kueum

「Chibae*」 are gathering and performing the 「Hapju*」.

* Chibae : A musician playing an instrument in a nong band.
* Hapju (=Ensemble) : Playing with two or more instruments at the same time.

「Kueum*」 is a play in our Jangdan expressed in words. Let’s play Kueum with instruments.

* Kueum : A sound made by letting air through only the mouth.

Janggu

Dung, Kung, Tak, Ta, Kidoek, Duh, Duhrhuhrhuhr

Kkaenggware

Keng, geng, geh, gehn, geg, geh r r r

Buk

Kung, Ku, Tak, Ku r r r

Jing

Jing, Ji, Jit

* Jing has a long echo, so we pronounce the Kueum long.
How can I play Janggu?

Janggu uses both sides to make sounds, so we often hit the other side of Janggu with Gunglechae. One thing you should keep in mind is that we don’t hit the other side with Yulchea.

Structure and name of Janggu

「Hwimori Jangdan*」 means raging as a storm is raging. Hwimori Jangdan is named because the rhythm sounds like it is raging.

* Hwimori Jangdan : A rhythm that sings or plays in a hurry from the beginning at the fastest pace in pansori or Sanjo Jangdan.

Let’s listen to Hwimori Jangdan together

Shall we do it together?

Slowly and accurately, play Kueum with the knee rhythm while singing 「Dung Dung Kung Tak Kung」
Learning Samulnori instruments

Buk, Kkaenggwari, Jing of Jangdan

Follow the Hwimoli Jangdan Kueum for each instrument

Listen to Hapju (=Ensemble)
Let’s learn the Kueum of the Beoldalgeori Jangdan

Beoldalgeori Jangdan is originated from Youngnam Pungmul. It’s one Jangdan is consists of 4 Hwimori Jangdan.

Let’s look at the table below and play in the following order.  
A–A–Ga–B–Na–B–Da–B–Ra

A

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Ga

하늘 보고 별을 따고 땅을 보고 농사 짓고

Na

울해도 대풍이요 나년에도풍년일세

Da

달아 달아 밤은 달아 대낮같이 밤은 달아

Ra

어둠 속의 별빛이 우리네를 비춰주네

B