

# Asian Arts & Culture

## Sanjo Ecstasy: Korean Music Takes a A New Form

*"In the Sanjo form, the time sense is riveting, hypnotic, and almost trance-like in its manner of rhythmic repetition."*  
— Jin Hi Kim

The Asian Arts & Culture Center is delighted to welcome the performers of **Sanjo Ecstasy** for a one-show only performance on April 17. Combining the essence of traditional Sanjo with the technology of modern music, Sanjo Ecstasy features six pieces performed without breaks over 90 minutes. Each piece evokes its own energy and feeling that link to the next piece. A single dancer accompanies the music doing a shaman trance dance, which applies all parts of the body in a liquid motion that makes it seem like the body has no will of its own.

Sanjo is a genre of traditional Korean music that is entirely instrumental. It took its form in the late 19th century and is played with traditional musical instruments. The word "sanjo" means "useless melody." It is a free melody that a player improvises according to a beat or rhythm. Two people playing the exact same piece may play it in entirely different ways. It is similar to the American jazz movement because of the improvisation and mood. Like jazz, Sanjo evokes energy and feelings. Sanjo has its philosophical roots in Buddhism as evidenced by its reverence for the "life" of a tone.

The performers use traditional Korean and

modern instruments, including a traditional kayagum, a lap-held stringed instrument; a traditional *haegum*, a one-stringed lap fiddle that produces a high-pitched wavering sound; a traditional changgo, a wood and rawhide drum; an electric komungo, which is like a large lap-held electric guitar; and a Western drumset. Artists include Ji Ari, Kang Unil, Park Gun-young, Jin Hi Kim, Gerry

Hemmingway and Kim Mae-mul.

Sanjo Ecstasy was created by Jin Hi Kim, who possesses the world's only electric komungo that blends acoustic and computer-processed sounds using switches and foot pedals. This unique instrument inspired her to revisit and "reinvent" Sanjo. She is world-renowned for her innovation. Through her compositions and music, she has brought a higher understanding and appreciation of Korean

music and culture to the world.

Join us for a night to remember. Prepare to be mesmerized by the sights and sounds of Sanjo Ecstasy! **Stephens Hall Theatre, Towson University, Saturday, April 17, 2004 at 8 p.m.** See Calendar of Events for ticket information.

Where: Stephens Hall  
When: Sat., April 17  
8 p.m.  
Tickets: \$15, \$12, \$10  
Call: 410-704-2807

## From the Director

*Suewhei Shieh*

Happy New Year from the Asian Arts & Culture Center! Falling under the Chinese Zodiac sign of the Monkey, the symbol of open-mindedness, tolerance and innovation, 2004 promises great and beneficial changes. In history, monkey years have been noted as historical turning points. The Year of the Monkey is believed to be a year of "transformations."

This is a very good sign for the Asian Arts & Culture Center, as it befits our time of change. Renovations in the Center for the Arts have begun and our office has been relocated. Our gallery is temporarily closed, but we remain active in the community and continue to present live performances and sponsor cultural excursions. As our "transformation" continues this year, we will remain a strong, quality program.

This spring marks the 10th anniversary of publication of our newsletter. It has become a powerful avenue connecting the Center and you. I hope you have found it informative and fun to read, and I welcome any ideas you may have regarding content. Feel free to contact me at the Center with your comments.

I would like to thank the university and the community for their continued support. Now more than ever the future of the Asian Arts & Culture Center is dependent on your passion and commitment to bringing the best of Asia to the region. I hope you will enjoy the fine events we are holding this year, and I look forward to seeing you soon.



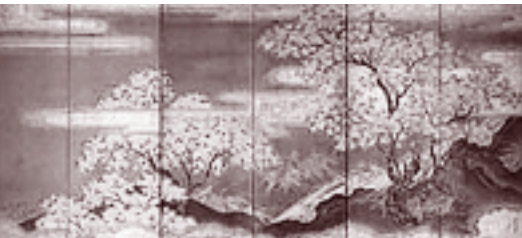
*Jin Hi Kim*

# Calendar of Events

## Cultural Excursion: Asian Art in New York

**Saturday, March 27, 7 a.m.-10 p.m.**

Join the Asian Arts & Culture Center for an exciting day trip to the Big Apple! The chartered coach departs from Towson University at 7 a.m. Our Asian Art in New York excursion begins with a guided tour at Asia Society to see *Golden Fantasies: Japanese Screens from New York Collections*, an exhibit of Japanese folding screens from six private collections, many of which are on public display for the first time. After lunch on your own, we will ride the coach to the **13th annual Arts of Pacific Asia Show** at the Gramercy Park Armory, where a full array of arts of Asia provided by 75 international antiques and Asian art dealers will fill your eyes and senses with exquisite pleasure. To top off the day you will be treated to dinner at a buffet restaurant to savor authentic Asian cuisines. Our coach will bring us back to Towson University at approximately 10 p.m. Tickets: \$92 members, \$112 non-members (Price includes transportation, admission to two shows and buffet dinner.) Registration deadline is **Mar. 10**. Call 410-704-2807 for registration form.



## Lecture and Demonstration: Three Excellences and Beyond Sunday, April 4, 2-4 p.m. (tentative)

Ji-liang Hou is a versatile artist who is widely known for his achievements in the three arts known as the "Three Excellences": writing, calligraphy and painting. Hou will give a slide-lecture on the aesthetics and cultural significance of these three arts. The talk will be followed by a demonstration employing the classical methods of painting and writing in his highly individual, contemporary style. Admission: free; call the Center at 410-704-2807 for details.

## Sanjo Ecstasy: A new Sanjo Ensemble from Korea

**Saturday, April 17, 8 p.m.  
Stephens Hall Theatre**



*Lee Jong-Ho*

The highly acclaimed musician and composer Jin Hi Kim brings her new work, **Sanjo Ecstasy** to Towson. To accurately capture the aesthetics and energy of Sanjo, Jin Hi Kim developed a new Sanjo ensemble that retains traditional dynamics of the musical genre in a contemporary context. The improvising legacy in Sanjo is similar to early American jazz. Featuring some of Korea's leading musicians and a shaman dancer, this concert was performed before an audience of 5,000 in Korea and was widely praised. This the six-part Sanjo composition is immersed with tension and release, revolving into a highly stylized rhythmic cycle that gradually accelerates and mesmerizes.

This program is organized in cooperation with the Korea Society.

Admission: \$15 general, \$12 seniors and TU faculty and staff, \$10 AA&CC members and students.



## APPRECIATION

Our Annual Donors Recognition Dinner will be held **Saturday, April 17 at 6 p.m.** Special guests, including current members of the Crane Club, Tiger Society, Phoenix Circle, and Dragon Circle, are invited to enjoy a festive evening savoring Asian cuisine and watching the live performance of **Sanjo Ecstasy at 8 p.m. in Stephens Hall Theatre**. This is one of our ways to thank all of our distinguished benefactors for their outstanding contributions to the Center.

**For information:**  
**Asian Arts & Culture Center**  
**410-704-2807**  
**www.towson.edu/asianarts**  
**For tickets:**  
**Center for the Arts Box Office**  
**410-704-2787**

## China Tour: Art of China Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

**October 27-November 7, 2004**

Join the Asian Arts & Culture Center for the ultimate cultural excursion! What better way to learn about, appreciate and celebrate Asian art and culture than to actually go there and experience it firsthand! This 12-day tour will focus on the art of China. The cities you visit will give you a trip through time. It is said that Xi'an is the City of Yesterday, Beijing the City of Today, and Shanghai is the City of Tomorrow. Your package price of \$2,295 includes U.S. to China roundtrip airfare, all air flights within China, admission to all events and tours in the itinerary, an experienced tour-guide,



luxury hotels in all cities, air-conditioned motor coaches, a Regent Tour travel bag, and three meals daily. For more details and itinerary, visit <http://regenttour.com/towson>.

*This programming is made possible through the support of Asian Arts & Culture Center members, Mrs. Ro Johnson, McCormick & Co., Inc; the TU International Education Office; TU Office of University Marketing; TU Foundation, Inc., and by program grants from the Maryland State Arts Council, an agency funded by the state of Maryland and the National Endowment for the Arts; and the Baltimore County Commission on Arts & Sciences.*

# Many Moons Festival was Fun for Everyone

Back by popular demand, the Asian Arts & Culture Center hosted its second **Many Moons Festival** in September. More than 800 people participated in the festival despite the devastating impact of Hurricane Isabel the same week.

A rousing dance of a 55-foot long dragon kicked off the festivities at noon. On two different stages, performances

were scheduled back-to-back showcasing a variety of music and dance. Audiences of all ages were enchanted by the enduring sounds of singing from South India, the storytelling by local artist/author Melissa Bunce, and the Pan Asian hand drums demonstration. Crowd pleasers also included the delightful drumming and dance from Korea, the authentic costumes and vivacious rhythms of Malaysian folk and court dances, gorgeous Indian dances, a spirited aboriginal dance performance of Taiwan, and the

*(continued on next page)*



## Welcome Aboard

The Asian Arts & Culture Center Advisory Board has been empowered by the recruitment of two new members who joined the board in September 2003.

**Dr. Sue Song**, president of the Howard County Korean American Association of Maryland, is the founder of Delmarva Family Resources, a provider of intensive outpatient services in support of the public mental health system. She joined us by invitation of Young Hee Shin.

**Nestor Sabundayo** came aboard by the recommendation of Priscilla Caasi who retired from the board after eight years of service. Nestor Sabundayo is former president of the Katipunan-Filipino American Association of Maryland, and is currently a member of the Baltimore County Minority Council.

Both **Mr. Sabundayo** and **Dr. Song** play an active role in community outreach for the Center. New members to the board bring new energy and expertise to our foundation. We welcome Mr. Sabundayo and Dr. Song and thank the whole Advisory Board for their long-term commitment and dedication. They are truly the inspiration and driving force behind our growth and success.

## Board Spotlight: Ro Johnson



*Ro Johnson*

**Ro Johnson** became a member of the Asian Arts & Culture Center at its inception in 1971, thanks to a passion for Asian art and friendships with Towson University President Emeritus James Fisher and Frank Roberts, whose donation of Chinese and Japanese ivory sculpture forms the base of the Center's

permanent collection. Through the years, her dedication to the Center's development has grown into a keen interest and involvement in all of the Center's activities, culminating in an invitation to join the Advisory Board in 1999.

Besides contributing her time and talent on the board, Ms. Johnson generously supports the Center financially. She has pledged to sponsor a public program each year (starting in 2004) and included the Center in her will.

Ms. Johnson is enthusiastic about the current renovation of the Center for the Arts, which will mean a new location for the gallery and increased opportunities to include the community in Center endeavors. "I can hardly wait for our re-opening on the main level," she says. "We will be so much more visible and accessible—the public won't be able to miss us!"

## Contributors (September 2003-February 15, 2004)

### DRAGON CIRCLE

Chi-Shiang Chen  
Wan-Yu Chen  
Bud Cornell  
Lu Beth Cornell  
Maggie Faulkner  
Robert Alain Louis Meyer  
Ro Johnson

Mien Kioune  
Kenneth Lew  
Carol J. Lew  
Donna Mayer  
Anthony Montcalmo  
Bonnie Montcalmo  
Gary Rubin  
Nancy Rubin  
Joseph Seeberger  
Debra Seeberger

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Mei-Jung Shen  
Ron Shieh  
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Young Hee Shin  
Albert and Chen-Chi Sun

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Lois Boyer  
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Christina Y. Chien  
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Young Cho

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Susanna Craine  
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Avishai Ben-David  
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Ann Deng  
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Berthe Ford  
Frances Klaphor

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Lily Lee  
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Mary Ellen Reno  
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Dan Broadwater  
Priscilla Caasi  
Steve Coutinho  
Jocelyn Curtis  
Rod DeAngelis

## Many Moons Festival (continued)

animated Filipino Bamboo dance. The children's all-time favorite activities of the day were the arts and crafts—Japanese woodcraft and doll-making, Chinese finger painting, dough sculpture, Korean box making, etc. Both children and adults were decked out with their own colorful creations.

Besides a selection of Asian fare, the free moon cake sampling and tea tasting gave participants an experience both tangible and cultural. Ten Asian community organizations participated in "Information Sharing," where they set up tables to introduce their mission and services to the public.

**The Many Moons Festival** enjoyed a smashing success. Participants gave highest marks in the survey: "Bravo!!!" "Well organized, well done!" "I will definitely come back the next time." "I



hope this event can be held at least once a year."

The Asian Arts & Culture Center is grateful for support from both public and private sectors. Generous donations and sponsorships, along with the hard work and dedication of the Advisory Board and many volunteers, were the key to the success of the **Many Moons Festival**.

### AA&CC Advisory Board

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Sandra Esslinger, *Vice President*  
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**Ex Officio**  
Christopher (Kit) Spicer, *Dean, College of Fine Arts and Communication*  
Suewei Shieh, *Director*  
Vanessa Quinn, *Editor*

For more information, call 410-704-2807 or visit our Web site [www.towson.edu/asianarts](http://www.towson.edu/asianarts).

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