Renowned Korean Musicians Captivate Bloomington Audiences

In late October, a select group of Korea's most outstanding traditional musicians performed at the Indiana School of Music.

It was a rare chance for Midwestern audiences to see and hear traditional Korean music performed by a group which has made only eight stops in the United States this year, including the Smithsonian Institution, New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Cleveland Museum of Art.

The program, held in Sweeney Lecture Hall to a capacity audience, was performed by five instrumentalists and one vocalist. The musicians played many types of traditional music ranging from folk songs to military and even children's music. The artists played on the *changge* (hourglass drum), the *taegum* (reed pipe), and the 12-stringed *kayagum* (zither).

To introduce the performance, the renowned Korean professor Byung-ki Hwang lectured on the differences between Korean music and that of its neighbors, China and Japan, and discussed the characteristics of Korean meter in music.

The performance was received with a standing ovation, and followed with a reception and dinner for the musicians, members of the Society of Friends of Korean Studies (an Indianapolis-based group which sponsors some IU scholarships), and the Korean Studies faculty at IU.

This unique program was jointly sponsored by IU Bloomington's East Asian Studies Center (EASC); the Washington, D.C.-based Korea Society, a nonprofit organization in the United States devoted to promoting awareness and cooperation between the U.S. and Korea; and The Korea Foundation, an organization in Seoul which seeks to promote better friendship and understanding between Korea and other countries in the world.

When asked how the Korea Society came to offer the program at IU, tour escort Julie Park credited the East Asian Studies Center's newsletters with keeping her in touch with the Korean Studies program at Bloomington and with helping her to realize how appropriate a venue Bloomington would be for the musical program.

A Korean musician plays a traditional melody on the 12-stringed *kayagum* (zither) for a capacity audience in Sweeney Hall. The performance of Korean music was sponsored by Bloomington’s East Asian Center, the Washington D.C.-based Korea Society, and the Korea Foundation.