

Brought together in the Republic of Korea (or South Korea), *Coreyah* made a debut as a band in 2010. The musicians started to play on music competition television programs such as “Cheonchamanbyeol Concert,” “Tune Up,” and “Top Band II.” They eventually became popular. [1]

Performing live on September 25, 2018 in the Oswego campus, *Coreyah* played their songs in Hewitt Hall Ballroom with listeners filling up many seats. This event was co-sponsored by the ALANA (African, Latino, Asian and Native American) Student Leadership Conference as part of the Institute for Global Engagement’s Year of Korea [7]. The concert had no intermission but a few musicians answered questions from the SUNY Oswego students prior to the start of the show.

The band so far has released an EP (extended play) song collection, two singles, and 3 full-length albums [2].

Their style of music transitioned from traditional to a slightly more modern style. Western listeners would be familiar with the guitar played by Jongmin Kim, and some of the percussion drums played by Kyungyi. But many instruments used by the band were unique to Asia and traditional to Korea [2]. String instruments such as geomungo and yanggneum (with metal strings) would usually be played with sticks or hammers made of bamboo [3]; Eunsun Kim played the Korean string instruments while sitting down. Traditional drums played by Cho-Rong Kim included the janggu (hourglass shaped drum), jing (brass gong), and kkwaenggwari; she was often standing when playing. The woodwind musician, Dong-Kun Kim, had around 6 different woodwind

instruments alongside when performing on stage; his instruments included the daegum, sogeum, and tungso [5]. Much of the vocals were sung by the female singer, Boyoung Ham; the rest of the band joined in to sing. In the performance of *Song of Our Ancestors* (불러온 노래), the audience was invited to sing along with the lyrics “*Iyaho! Iyaaaahoooo!*” [7]

The name of the band *Coreyah* was chosen because it was easy to remember. It was a significant name since it resembled the name of their home country, Korea and the name *Coreyah* was also Korean for *whale* [1].

The musicians did not explore the subject too deeply, but they liked whales; beautiful, large creatures swimming in the blue oceans... They did not mention that whales were on the endangered species list however, they felt happier in a world where whales still exist. The whale is the group’s totem animal and good luck charm [1].

One of their songs was *Whale of a Time*, the title song to their first full-length album released in 2013 [2]. The lyrics imply a traveler’s adventure to worlds untouched and places of uncertainty. “*Even if you have nowhere to venture or return to, have a whale a time! Don’t be afraid in the middle of the sea, but have a whale of a time!*”

The song was made in the beginning of the band’s career path. The music video of the song has images of painted and moving silhouettes in a traditional setting used to tell a story. The animation style in the music video could remind one of the German animator Lotte Reiniger, or *Feather of Fire: A Persian Epic* presented in Oswego State’s Waterman Theater on January 23, 2018 [8]. At the concert, Compact Disks were for sale, but the album with the song *Whale of a Time* was out of stock after the band finished the performance [7].

When it came to politics, the musicians did not feel comfortable with the subject; they like to play music and have fun. However, there was a song reflecting their emotions during a time when a lot of people or politicians were arguing; there may have been some tension between the rich and the poor in the metropolitan cities or the city of Seoul. A song, *Tomorrow Morning* (내일 아침에) expressed some of the writer's feelings and desire for people to be quiet or say nothing until tomorrow. This song was listed on the program, but a translation of the lyrics was not available for this title. With "Google Translate" used on the K-POP Lyrics Song website (allklyrics.com) [12], the lyrics almost translated to:

*I will not say anything.
Too many horses piled up.
Be quiet until tomorrow morning
Stay still.
One day One night One street
When we meet and break up
Do not say anything.
Please be quiet.
Except for each other's voices.*

*Tomorrow morning we will
It'll get a little closer.
One day One night One street
When we meet and break up
When we meet and break up
When the mind becomes different
Do not say anything.
I'll see you tomorrow morning.*

The band in general performs a variety of songs with various messages and feelings.

Let's Make a Feast (전폭적으로 놀아보세) is available on the band's second full-length album along with *Song of Our Ancestors* (불러온 노래) and *Born Wrong* (잘못났어). *Let's Make a Feast* starts out with the first verse lead female singer suggesting "Let's have fun while we're young, 'cause we won't able to when we're old." [7] The men in the band at the end of each verse whisper and crescendo " *Let's have fun! Let's do it; let's have a great time! Let's take a deep breath and have a ball!*"

The chorus is difficult to translate to English but may have a Celtic sound [6, 7]. The second verse suggested that it was impossible have fun when one was married and busy with kids. Also in the second verse one heard,

“You think I can’t have because I’m old? No, I can have more fun, because I’ve got more money, and because I have more time on my hands! Let’s have fun whether we’re young or old!”

Some of the musicians in Coreyah have reached into their thirties. A lot of people in their twenties might be considered young, but not always have money. Some individuals over the age of thirty have worked long enough to make some money. This song might imply that the musicians still have a lot of energy when they are getting older; they might as well enjoy it while it lasts.

Some musicians write their own songs. Some singers do what is popular. A song writer for Coreyah would write songs infused with his own feelings. He would eventually write lyrics in a way so others could connect, relate, or understand. The musicians do their best to connect with the community. Once in a while they would check on recent trends, but in the most part they would play music that fun so anyone could enjoy it.

Citations:

[1] Sori, Coreyah, <http://sori.nyc/coreyah/>

[2] Coreyah, Plankton Music, <http://www.coreyah.kr/>

[3] smahn (writer), String Instruments: Yanggeum (metal-string zither), Korean Traditional Music – GUGAK, k-traditional.com, July 27, 2014, <http://k-traditional.com/board/index.html?id=string&asort=recent&no=5>

[4] *Breaking Musical Barriers, Coreyah To Perform at SUNY Oswego*, Oswego County Today, September 2018, <https://oswegocountytoday.com/breaking-musical-barriers-coreyah-to-perform-at-suny-oswego/entertainment/>

[5] Traditional Instruments, KOREA TOURISM ORGANIZATION, https://english.visitkorea.or.kr/enu/CU/CU_EN_8_1_6_2.jsp

[6] 불러온 노래 (*Song of Our Ancestors* Album), Coreyah, Manufactured by CJ E&M Corp, 2014

[7] Miranda Traudt, *Coreyah* – music program, Artswego, September 25, 2018

[8] Feathers of Fire: A Persian Epic - program, Artswego, January 23, 2018

[9] Feathers of Fire: A Persian Epic, KINGORAMA, 2015, <http://www.kingorama.com/feathersoffire/>

[10] 고래야(Coreyah), *고래야(Coreyah) _ Whale of a Time (Official M/V)*, YouTube, April 23, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5oLDcuV4wV0>

[11] Flashback (user), *Lotte Reiniger makes a silhouette animation*, YouTube, May 16, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fHhpAT1i2tc>

[12] K-POP Lyrics Song, 고래야 - 내일 아침에, <https://allklyrics.com/songs/17j47v/%EA%B3%A0%EB%9E%98%EC%95%BC/%EB%82%B4%EC%9D%BC-%EC%95%84%EC%B9%A8%EC%97%90>

* Lyrics on this website are in Korean; used “Google Translate” to view the lyrics with English words.



CD cover for 불러온 노래 (*Song of Our Ancestors*); Coreyah's Second K-Pop Album