

## UKCHUK-GA: Pansori Mother Courage

AUSTRALIAN EXCLUSIVE

South Korea

A provocative retelling of Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children*



Photo: UKCHUK-GA: Pansori Mother Courage © JD Woo

*"The audience echoed the approval with a standing ovation for the pansori prodigy now pioneering her way."* **Korea Times**

*"When the performance is completed, audiences have tears in their eyes and cannot help giving her a standing ovation."* **LG Arts Centre**

Little known outside its native Korea, Pansori is a genre of musical storytelling that showcases the ethereal vocal gymnastics of dedicated and highly trained singers. For Pansori performers, music is life.

Providing its own modern take on the Pansori tradition, *UKCHUK-GA: Pansori Mother Courage* is a provocative retelling of **Bertolt Brecht's** *Mother Courage and Her Children*. Written, composed and performed by Pansori superstar **Jaram Lee**, directed by **In Woo Nam** and accompanied by a three-piece band, Lee shapeshifts between 15 characters in Brecht's enduring parable of war and suffering.

After acclaimed performances of this and other works at Théâtre National Populaire (France), Interferences International Theatre Festival (Romania), and festivals in Brazil and Uruguay, Sydney Festival and Sydney Opera House bring Pansori Project ZA to Australia for the first time.

*Mother Courage and Her Children* is considered by many to be the greatest play of the 20th century and widely accepted to be one of the greatest anti-war plays of all time. It was written in 1939 by the German dramatist and poet in response to Hitler's invasion of Poland. Brecht wrote the literary classic in just one month with almost no drafts in a "white heat" of inspiration as a counterpoint to the rise of Nazism. The classic has been powerfully adapted in a unique Pansori take on the modern day masterpiece.

Pansori singers undergo long and rigorous training to master the wide range of distinct vocal timbres and to memorize the complex repertoires. It is hugely popular in Korea and was officially designated as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2003, recognised as a 17th century genre of musical storytelling (musical drama) performed by only one vocalist (sorrikun) and a drummer. This dynamic and impassioned musical tradition, characterized by heavily vibrato singing, dramatic beating of a single barrel drum, and poetic narration, embraces both elite and folk culture and is used to maintain Korean story telling traditions.

## MEDIA RELEASE

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# SYDNEY FESTIVAL 2015

8-26 JAN

Directed by **In Woo Nam**

Written, composed and performed by **Jaram Lee**

Where Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House

When 19 & 20 January at 7.30pm

Duration 145 minutes including interval

Price Premium \$65  
A Reserve \$55/\$50

Bookings Sydney Festival 1300 856 876  
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