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On the Cover

In traditional Korean architecture, latticework is employed as framework for doors and windows in order to provide an additional aesthetic impact. A wide variety of lattice designs are applied, including a simple square form, ornate floral patterns, and a symbolic tortoise-shell design that represents longevity. On the cover, images from this issue's articles are presented within a frame inspired by just such a tortoise-shell design.

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Homecoming of Five Buddhas after a Half-century

Text by the Cultural Heritage Administration
Photos by the Cultural Heritage Administration and Topicimages

A painting known as *Five Buddhas* was stolen from Songgwangsa Temple in the 1970s but finally returned home late last year after an extended absence of about 50 years, a product of active cooperation between Korea and the United States.



Songgwangsa Temple

Songgwangsa Temple and *Five Buddhas*

Located in the southwestern province of Jeollanam-do, Songgwangsa Temple on Mt. Jogyesan is a historic Seon (known as Zen in Japanese) monastery identified as one of the Three Jewels of Korean Buddhism alongside Tongdosa and Haeinsa Temples. While Tongdosa and Haeinsa respectively represent the Buddha and the Dharma, Songgwangsa stands for the Sangha, or the Buddhist community. It has for centuries lived up to this association as the base of monastic practice for a number of renowned Buddhist monks.

Five Buddhas is an 18th-century work which was long housed at Songgwangsa. It is part of a suite of Buddhist paintings depicting the Fifty-three Buddhas that has been praised as one of the definitive efforts of Monk Ui Gyeum, the foremost painter-monk of the 18th century. Produced in 1725, *Fifty-three Buddhas*, a valuable type of Buddhist painting that can be found at only a few temples, including Songgwangsa, was created as a seven-piece compendium—one painting of the seven Buddhas, two of the nine Buddhas, two of the thirteen Buddhas, and two of the five Buddhas.

Discovery of *Five Buddhas*

Traditionally adorning the interior walls alongside the entrances of Buljojeon Hall of Songgwangsa, the two depictions of the five Buddhas were temporarily transferred to a different room in the temple during the refurbishment of Buljojeon in 1969–70, but disappeared with no clues as to their whereabouts. The *Five Buddhas* that was repatriated to Korea late last year stood at the entrance on the left, but the one to the right remains missing.

It has been revealed that the *Five Buddhas* to the left appeared in an antique shop in Mary's Alley (part of the Insa-dong neighborhood) in central Seoul. Tattered and folded, the painting had been placed in a chest. The American art teacher Robert Mattielli, who was living in Seoul at the time, spotted the painting while browsing through wooden furniture. After purchasing the worn painting, he had it restored and framed as it is seen today. When Mattielli and his wife Sandra returned to the United States in 1985, the *Five Buddhas* traveled with them. The Mattiellis eventually donated the Korean Buddhist artwork to the Portland Art Museum in the United States in 2014.



Five Buddhas returned to Songgwangsa Temple

In the same year the Mattiellis entrusted *Five Buddhas* to the Portland Art Museum, the National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, a research arm of the Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea, happened to be visiting the museum to conduct a survey of the museum's holdings of Korean origin. During this survey and cataloguing, scholars from Korea discovered that this *Five Buddhas* was the version stolen from Songgwangsa. Working in close cooperation with the Jogye Order, the largest denomination of Korean Buddhism, the Cultural Heritage Administration informed the museum of the illegal provenance of the Korean Buddhist painting and

asked it to serve as an intermediary in persuading the Mattiellis to repatriate it. Once informed of the full story behind the work, the Mattiellis gladly supported the cause of returning *Five Buddhas* to its country of origin.

***Five Buddhas* Returned Home**

With the repatriation of *Five Buddhas* fully planned, the Portland Art Museum commemorated the historic occasion by holding a special exhibition and symposium on this Korean Buddhist artwork, during which the Cultural Heritage Administration and the Jogye Order exchanged with the museum a plaque of appreciation and a letter of donation. *Five Buddhas* finally came to rest in its home country in December 2016. It first arrived at the Central Buddhist Museum in central Seoul and was then restored to its original place of collection, Songgwangsa Temple.



The left entrance of Buljojeon Hall where *Five Buddhas* was originally placed

A plan has been made for the Jogye Order and Songgwangsa Temple to organize a conference on the religious and academic significance of the *Five Buddhas* in May 2017. The occasion will be used to express thanks to the Portland Art Museum and the Mattiellis by inviting them to the event.

The Recipe for a Successful Repatriation

The successful return of *Five Buddhas* owes in large part to the deep affection possessed by the Mattiellis toward Korean art. It was they who conserved the *Five Buddhas*, which was extremely worn and deteriorating rapidly when they first found it. Without their conservation efforts, this valuable Korean Buddhist artwork might not have survived to the present.

The Portland Art Museum can also claim a large share of credit. Its genuine appreciation of the significance of the historical Buddhist painting to Korean society and its active role as intermediary were indispensable to the successful homecoming of *Five Buddhas* to Songgwangsa Temple after five decades. 🌀



Robert Mattielli and his wife Sandra



Namhansanseong Fortress



Fortifications in the City of Luxembourg

Namhansanseong Fortress and the City of Luxembourg

Text by An Semina, Researcher, Namhansanseong World Heritage Center of Gyeonggi-do
Photos by Namhansanseong World Heritage Center of Gyeonggi-do and Shutterstock

Due to both their similarities and differences, Namhansanseong Fortress in Gyeonggi-do Province, Korea can be compared with the City of Luxembourg found in the southern portion of the country of the same name.

Namhansanseong Fortress Inscribed on the World Heritage List

At the annual meeting of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee held in Doha, Qatar, in June 2014, Namhansanseong Fortress became the 11th Korean site to join the ranks of heritage sites of global significance collectively known as World Heritage. With mountainous terrain comprising about 70 percent of its landmass, Korea abounds with mountain fortresses constructed to take advantage of local geographic conditions. In fact, it has been historically addressed as “a country of mountain fortresses.” What sets Namhansanseong apart from the throng of other fortresses and led it to merit World Heritage status?

The outstanding significance of Namhansanseong can be confirmed in the existing historical records and archaeological remains. The history of Namhansanseong stretches far back to the Unified Silla period (668–935). In the seventh century, the fortified wall that stood at the current site of Namhansanseong, then known as Jujangseong Fortress, was a place of great strategic importance to Silla's military relations with Tang China (618–907). A recent excavation of Haenggung Palace in Namhansanseong uncovered a military warehouse site with walls about two meters thick and a cluster of roof tiles weighing more than 20 kilograms each, all from the Unified Silla era. These testify eloquently to the strategic significance of the fortress at the time.

Namhansanseong was constructed in its current form in 1624 during the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910), utilizing the surviving base and stone blocks from Silla's Jujangseong. People were assigned to live inside the walled enclosure so that they could perform daily maintenance tasks and ensure the protection of the fortress.

The fortified space of Namhansanseong was equipped not only with a settlement, but also with a range of government institutions. Among them is Haenggung Palace, a temporary residence for the king. Haenggung Palace at Namhansanseong is distinguished from other temporary royal residences of Joseon in that it



The Bock casemates in the City of Luxembourg



An outwork at Yeonjubong Peak in Namhansanseong Fortress

accommodated a royal ancestral shrine (Jongmyo) and an altar for gods of earth and grain (Sajikdan), the ritual spaces of key national importance during Joseon since they represented the sovereignty and legitimacy of the dynasty. The presence of a Jongmyo and Sajikdan in Namhansanseong allowed the king to retreat here and designate it a temporary capital in case of national emergency.

Luxembourg, One of Europe's Most Fortified Cities from the Middle Ages

Similar to Joseon, caught geographically between China and Japan and subject to attack from the outside, the City of Luxembourg occupied a strategically important position between northern and southern Europe and was successively conquered by European powers including the Holy Roman Empire, the House of Burgundy, the Habsburgs, French and Spanish kings, and finally the Prussians.

As it passed from the hands of one European power to the next, the City of Luxembourg gradually added to its surrounding defenses. The name *Luxembourg*, or *Lëtzebuerg* in Luxembourgish, actually means a "small fortress." As such, fortifications lie at the heart of its identity. The remains of the fortifications in the City of Luxembourg were inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1994 as the City of Luxembourg: Its Old Quarters and Fortifications.



The Yeonjubong outwork of Namhansanseong Fortress

After Luxembourg Castle was erected in the 10th century, a settlement developed around the castle and was protected by a stone wall in the 12th century. This was later extended in the 14th and 15th centuries. In the 16th century the site emerged as a formidable fortress, and in the 17th century Sébastien Le Prestre de Vauban (1633–1707), the foremost French military engineer of his time, further expanded and reinforced the fortifications. During the 17th–18th centuries, large-scale underground forts equipped with casemates were constructed, enhancing the military capacity of the site. As late as the latter part of the 19th century, new structures were added to the site by the Prussians.

Geography Used for Defense

Namhansanseong is a grand mountain fortress constructed to take advantage of rugged geography rising as high as 500 meters above sea level. The City of Luxembourg is similar in that it utilized the local topography as part of its fortifications. Formed on a rocky hill reaching 300 meters high, Luxembourg was renowned as an impregnable fort city. The site was constructed as a Vauban-style fortress, making the most of the given landscape in order to ensure the greatest possible military effectiveness. A vast underground system of passages was created to intensify the defensive power of the site.

Sited south of the Hangang River, Namhansanseong did not require an artificial moat and instead used the river as a natural deterrence to attacks from the north. Similarly, the Alzette River runs around the fortifications in the City of Luxembourg.

External Exchanges Transformed into Structural Changes

As explained above, both Namhansanseong and the fortifications of Luxembourg were constructed to make the most of the given geography as the people of the day strived to defend themselves from neighboring powers. Another common characteristic between the two World Heritage Sites is the reflection of technological advancement and the development of weaponry by the structures. As the weapon of choice shifted over time from swords and arrows to guns and then to the more formidable cannon, both Namhansanseong and the fortifications in Luxembourg underwent transformations in their structures, size of stone blocks, and construction technology to more effectively respond to attacks applying newly developed armaments.

During the Second Manchu Invasion in 1636 by Qing China (1644–1912), Namhansanseong was hit hard by the enormous power of the cannon, a novel weapon operated by the Qing enemies. One of the historical records attesting to the effectiveness of this new weapon accounts, “A cannon fired from Bongam Mountain struck Haenggung Palace in Namhansanseong Fortress.” Once aware of the power of this novel weapon, Joseon constructed additional walls at Bongam Mountain (in 1686) and on Hanbong Peak (in 1693) to expand the area of Namhansanseong to encompass these two vantage points. Three outworks were also added to the southern section of the Namhansanseong wall to improve its defensive capacity. The World Heritage Site in Luxembourg began from a small fort (castle) and expanded to cover the entire city by gradually appending layers of walls as it experienced attacks from one European power after another over the passage of centuries.

Fortified Cities in the East and the West

Despite their similarities, Namhansanseong and the City of Luxembourg manifest a conceptual difference in the formation of a city between the East and the West. From

the perspective of traditional Korean architecture, a series of individual buildings, each with different functions, are combined to form a courtyard area, several courtyard areas are assembled to comprise an architectural cluster, and a number of architectural clusters together constitute a city. In the West, a castle for the feudal lord is positioned on a geographic high point with a good view of the surrounding area, and then his vassals settle around the castle and their squares and markets develop into a city.

In the case of Namhansanseong, upon the completion of its construction people were encouraged to settle within the walled enclosure to eventually form a town of more than 1,000 households. Namhansanseong served as an administrative center in peacetime, and in times of war the walled city could function as a center of national defense where the king and people living around the fortress could gather and fight against the enemy alongside the fortress residents. Meanwhile, for the City of Luxembourg a castle was first constructed and then subjects began to settle around the residence of the lord. Walls were gradually added to protect the settlements, and the boundary of the city enlarged to its current size. While the noble residence was the first structure for the City of Luxembourg, at Namhansanseong the formation of people’s settlements was considered the foremost priority.

A Thought on the World Heritage System

The inscription of Korean heritage sites onto the World Heritage List is definitely an event for national celebration. However, it should be remembered that inscription as World Heritage does not indicate some kind of recognition of the cultural superiority of the inscribed property. In fact, the World Heritage system does its due service when we perceive World Heritage Sites as the heritage of not just a single country, but of all humanity and as a reservoir of ancestral knowledge and wisdom that we are obliged to transmit to future generations.

In this sense, it is worth exploring a World Heritage Site in one country from the perspective of other similar examples from other parts of the world as we did in this article. It is an interesting way to not only improve the appreciation of other countries’ World Heritage, but also to gain a novel perspective on our own. 🌐

Western Buildings in the Korean Palace of Deoksugung

Text & Photos by Kim Jae-eun, Curator, Deoksugung Palace Management Office

Deoksugung Palace served the Joseon Dynasty as a royal residence during its waning years. However, it is not simply a monument recalling dynastic demise, but a space attesting to Joseon's audacious attempts at modernization.



Deoksugung Palace

Deoksugung Palace as an Incubator of Modernity

Deoksugung Palace served as imperial seat for the Korean Empire (1897–1910). King Gojong (r. 1863–1907), the 26th ruler of Joseon, declared the birth of the Korean Empire in 1897 at Deoksugung Palace under the motto *Gubon sincham*, meaning “respecting the old and accepting the new.” He used the palace as a test bed for modern transformation. Telling evidence of this modernization drive is provided by the Western buildings remaining within the Deoksugung Palace compound today. In the late 1890s–early 1900s, a series of Western buildings were erected there as a place to receive foreign diplomats and hold royal banquets. Among them are Seokjojeon Hall, Jeonggwanheon Pavilion, and Jungmyeongjeon Hall.

Seokjojeon Hall, the First Western Building in Korea

The Joseon court employed selected foreigners within the government, and it was McLeavy Brown from Ireland serving as an advisor to the Ministry of Financial Affairs and as Chief Commissioner of Customs who first suggested the construction of Seokjojeon. He recommended the Welsh architect J. R. Harding, a member of the Imperial Maritime Customs Service in China, as its architect. An elevation made by Harding survives to the present inscribed with the date February 25, 1898, indicating that the design of Seokjojeon had been carried out by that time. Before ground was broken for the construction of Seokjojeon, a one-tenth scale model was constructed, a new architectural method never before attempted in Korea. A structure with one floor underground and two aboveground was completed by 1906, and in 1907 interior construction began under the direction of a British architect and with the British firm Maple & Co. hired as an operator.

As the name *Seokjojeon*, literally meaning a “hall made of stone” signifies, the surface of the building is finished in granite. The structure is in the Neo-Classical style, with a triangular pediment and an orderly array of columns recalling the image of a Greek temple. The interior is also adorned in a Neo-Classical style, as manifested by molding decorated with acanthus leaves and wall ornamentation in the shape of flowering fruit trees, all rendered in rigorous bilateral symmetry. Meanwhile, the pediment of the building’s façade and the reception room feature plum flowers that represent the imperial family of the Korean Empire, emphasizing its identity as a component of the imperial palace of Korea.



Seokjojeon Hall

In 1910, however, the same year Seokjojeon was completed, the Korea-Japan Annexation Treaty was signed and the Korean Empire faded into history. Throughout the colonial era (1910–1945) Deoksugung experienced a steady process of erosion. For example, a project to convert the palace area into a public park was pushed head in the 1930s and Seokjojeon was adapted into an art center. After national liberation in 1945, Deoksugung was left deformed on the inside and was used as an art gallery or museum until the Cultural Heritage Administration undertook a restoration project in 2009. For the next five years, efforts were made to collect relevant historic records and restore Seokjojeon to its original appearance. The restoration was completed in 2014 and Seokjojeon was opened to the public as the Korean Empire History Museum.

The Korean Empire History Museum offers daily guided tours at designated times (eight sessions on weekdays and eleven on weekends), through which visitors can experience the everyday life of the imperial family. Based on a historic record indicating that Seokjojeon hosted concerts for Emperor Gojong, classic music performances are held in the central hall at 19:00 on each Culture Day, the last Wednesday of every month. Those who wish to attend these concerts can make a reservation online



The central hall of Seokjojeon

through the webpage of the Deoksugung Palace Management Office. Ten seats are set aside for on-site applications from people from abroad and Koreans aged 65 and over.

Jeonggwanheon Pavilion, Gojong's Coffee Chamber

Alongside Seokjojeon, another of the exotic buildings in Deoksugung is Jeonggwanheon Pavilion, nestled in the innermost area of the palace. While Seokjojeon clearly resembles a Western building, Jeonggwanheon embodies too many traditional elements to truly be called a Western building, but at the same time it appears too foreign to be considered traditional Korean architecture. This is why Jeonggwanheon is recognized as a harmonization of Eastern and Western architectural characteristics. A close look at the pavilion structure clearly reveals such features. The verandas that surround the building on three sides and the wooden columns connecting the verandas with the roof are architectural factors not found in traditional Korean architecture. Furthermore, the column heads are rendered in the Ionic order and decorated with acanthus leaves. However, the roof is made in a traditional hip-and-gable style and decorative details show traditional Korean motifs, such as the bats, pine trees, and deer appearing on the railings in the verandas.

It is known that Gojong would frequent Jeonggwanheon to enjoy coffee. This is understandable considering the siting and structure of the building: it is situated in the resting area within the overall spatial composition of the palace and it is rendered



Jeonggwanheon Pavilion

in a pavilion style with three open sides. Jeonggwanheon was not simply a place for coffee and enjoying the gardens, however. Historical records account that the original purpose of the building was to enshrine royal portraits, and a few photographs

of Jeonggwanheon that have survived to the present show a structure enclosed on all sides with brick walls. Further research seems to be required on the function and structure of Jeonggwanheon.

Jeonggwanheon today is still considered a place for rest where visitors can stop and take in the refreshing air after looking around palace buildings such as the main throne hall (Junghwajeon) and Seokjojeon. At Jeonggwanheon, renowned lecturers give public talks on scheduled spring and autumn days. Every October, Jeonggwanheon offers a reenactment of diplomatic receptions by Emperor Gojong at which the audience can observe the diverse foreign relations the Korean Empire established at the time.

Jungmyeongjeon Hall, a Repository of Modern History

Jungmyeongjeon Hall, known as Suokheon during the era of the Korean Empire, is also one of the definitive Western buildings of Deoksugung. Although somewhat detached from the palace complex, Jungmyeongjeon was built in 1899 as an imperial library. Standing today as a two-story red brick building, Jungmyeongjeon was originally constructed as a single-story structure in 1899. It was reconstructed in

its current form following a fire in 1902. It is presumed that the reconstruction was designed by a son of William McEntyre Dye, an American serving as a military advisor to the Korean Empire at the time. When a major fire in 1904 reduced most of the buildings in Deoksugung to ashes, including Junghwajeon, Jungmyeongjeon assumed the status of throne hall. In the following year, Jungmyeongjeon took on a tragic historical role when the Korea-Japan Protectorate Treaty was signed under duress here in 1905.

Throughout the tumultuous modern history of Korea, Jungmyeongjeon changed hands several times for use as a foreigners' club or office building, losing its original appearance to a great extent. Purchased by the Cultural Heritage Administration in 2004, Jungmyeongjeon was included as part of the Deoksugung heritage site in 2007 and was restored and opened as an exhibition space in 2010 to display the history of Korea from the 1905 Korea-Japan treaty to the fall of the Korean Empire. Temporarily off limits to the public due to landscape construction at the front of the building, public visitation will be resumed in April of this year. The opening hours will be from 10:00 to 17:00. 📍



Jungmyeongjeon Hall

Lee Mae-bang: A Genius Dancer with a Divine Aptitude

Text & Photos by the Ubong Lee Mae-bang Art Company

Lee Mae-bang (nickname Ubong; 1927–2015), by far the dominant figure in the traditional Korean dancing scene, was often praised as a “dancer with heavenly skills.” Dedicated to the preservation and transmission of traditional Korean dance over the course of his entire life, Lee established a unique dancing style known as the Lee Mae-bang school in the two most representative traditional Korean dances, *seungmu* (Buddhist monk dance) and *salpurichum* (exorcism dance).



Lee Mae-bang



Exorcism dance by Lee Mae-bang



Monk dance by Lee Mae-bang

Eighty Years of Dancing

Born in 1927 in Mokpo in the southwestern province of Jeollanam-do, Lee Mae-bang entered the world of traditional dancing at the age of seven. At the time, the head of the Mokpo Gwonbeon, a training center for *gisaeng* (or entertainers), was living near Lee's home and noticed the little boy's extraordinary talent. He convinced him to begin lessons at his center. After training at the Mokpo Gwonbeon, Lee continued to build essential dancing skills through his elementary, middle and high school years by practicing under renowned traditional Korean dancers of the time, including Lee Dae-jo (for Buddhist monk dance), Park Yong-gu (drum playing for Buddhist monk dance),

and Lee Chang-jo (sword dance). He also spent five years in China as an elementary school student where he learned sword dance and lantern dance from the legendary Chinese master Mei Lanfang (1894–1961).

Having developed a passion for traditional dance since early childhood, Lee Mae-bang made his public debut at the young age of 15. At the Virtuoso Artists Contest held in 1941 in front of Mokpo Station, Lee took the stage for the first time as a stand-in for the established dancer Park Bong-seon, who had been scheduled to perform the Buddhist monk dance at the contest but failed to make it to the event. Despite his tender age and lack of experience with public performance, the boy genius on the stage immediately mesmerized the audience with his dexterous moves.

Lee's Dancing Creations

A life-long dancer, Lee Mae-bang not only preserved the existing forms of traditional Korean dance, but also gave birth to various creative innovations. Among them are the long-sword dance, which blends the sword dance he learned from the



A performance of a drum dance, one of the innovative dance forms created by Lee Mae-bang

Chinese dancer Mei Lanfang with the traditional Korean form of sword dance; the *hallyang* (a man leading a leisurely and tasteful life) dance, which transforms the spontaneous and excited feelings of a lofty scholar into movement; and a Buddhist chant dance (*boryeommu*) that artistically completes the existing Buddhist ritual dance.

The pinnacle of his creations is a drum dance, which comes in versions using three, five, and seven drums. Drawing on one of his many artistic accomplishments, drum playing, the drum dance is performed at the finish of the Buddhist chant dance.

Traditional Korean Dance on the International Stage

Recognized for his passionate efforts toward the preservation of traditional Korean dance, Lee Mae-bang was designated as the Master (or Living Human Treasure) of Buddhist monk dance (*seungmu*; National Intangible Cultural Heritage No. 27) in 1987 and of exorcism dance (*salpurichum*; No. 97) in 1990. A definitive folk dance, *seungmu* traces its roots to Buddhist rituals expressing solemnness and tranquility through

subdued movements. *Salpurichum* originally derived from the improvisational dances performed by shamans as part of a ritual, but has since developed into one of the most famous Korean artistic dances. Characterized by a long white strip of cloth, *salpurichum* depicts an emotional sublimation from sorrow into joy through beautiful dancing movements.

At the frontline of the preservation of traditional dance, Lee also played a critical role in bringing Korean dance to international attention. Through global performances by the Lee Mae-bang Art Company, Lee put on events in diverse countries such as Japan, the United States, and France. At the Avignon Festival held in France in 1998, Lee performed a Buddhist dance that was highly acclaimed in the local media: one French daily newspaper commented that within his dance the energy accumulated in the body was discharged through the hands at the drums, and the sounds from the drums were converted into music resonating through the night. In the same year, Lee received an art prize from the French government for this performance.

Lee Mae-bang, an Artist to the Core

Lee Mae-bang was also known for crafting his own stage costumes. At one corner of the living room in his house was a more than 130 year-old sewing machine that he had received from his mother. With this worn-down machine he would sew his own stage attire and also costume his disciples. He hand-crafted stage clothing out of the belief that not only the dance itself, but also the costumes are part of a performance.

Despite a long period suffering from cancer toward the end of his life, Lee never ceased his ardent endeavors for preserving traditional dance, creating new forms, and nurturing future generations of dancers. He maintained his fiery passion for traditional dance right up until his last breath at the age of 89 in 2015. Dedicated to traditional dance over his entire life and never once regretting his choices, Lee Mae-bang remains one of the greatest artists of Korea. 🌐



Lee Mae-bang in his youth (1940s)



Lee Mae-bang performing an exorcism dance in the 1970s



Lee Mae-bang in his last performance in 2014

The Ganghwa *maehwamareum* habitat in spring

Maehwamareum Habitat : A Treasure Trove of Biodiversity

Text by Park Do-hoon, National Trust of Korea
Photos by the National Trust of Korea and Topicimages

A colony of *maehwamareum*, a hydrophyte previously believed to be extinct in Korea, was discovered in 1998 at Choji-ri in Ganghwa near the western port city of Incheon. Providing a home to about 300 species of hydrophytes, aquatic insects, and endangered birds, the *maehwamareum* habitat in Ganghwa retains high significance as a natural heritage site.

The endangered *maehwamareum*

Maehwamareum

Maehwamareum, or *Ranunculus trichophyllus* Chaix var. *kadzusensis* (Makino) Wiegleb, is a *Ranunculaceae*-family plant that lives on water. In May of 1998 the botanist Hyeon Jin-o discovered rice paddies blanketed with white flowers in Ganghwa. It was a habitat of *maehwamareum*, which had been believed to have been exterminated in Korea during the harsh waves of agricultural development of the 1970s.

This unexpected *maehwamareum* discovery was immediately followed by its designation as an endangered plant by the Ministry of Environment of Korea. Although this species is found in the neighboring countries of Japan and China, *maehwamareum* in Korea is unique for living in rice paddies (for example, the version in Japan is found along the sides of flowing streams). *Maehwamareum* grows in rice paddies that remain flooded over the winter: it sprouts in winter and blossoms from April to May, coexisting with rice stalks in the same habitat but during alternating times of the year. The coexistence of *maehwamareum* and rice stimulates a natural circulation of organic nitrogen and therefore allows for rice cultivation with reduced use of pesticides.

The Cause of Endangerment

It was agricultural development that brought *maehwamareum* to the brink of extinction in Korea. *Maehwamareum* was not difficult to find as late as in the 1960s, but the launch of the New Community Movement (Saemaul Undong) and the policy drive for farming productivity in the 1970s drastically transformed this situation. At the time, under the call for modernization and development, the winding boundaries of land plots were reorganized into straight lines and the elevation of farmlands was graded. The application of pesticides was promoted and irrigation facilities were reinforced. Through this process, rice paddies that had once been fed only by rain disappeared and low-lying farmlands were filled in with earth, gradually removing the required ecological environments for *maehwamareum*. As such, the spectacular agricultural renovation of the 1970s came at the price of gradually eliminating the *maehwamareum* that used to throw a white blanket over the rice paddies every spring in Ganghwa.

Conservation through Civic Participation

Conservation of the *maehwamareum* habitat in Ganghwa has been driven by citizens through the national trust movement, a global campaign to purchase and preserve significant cultural and natural sites using private donations. Considering the urgent need for conservation, the National Trust of Korea bought the *maehwamareum* habitat in Ganghwa in 2002 as the first such site to be protected through collective civic funding.

Ever since its discovery in 1998, the *maehwamareum* habitat in Ganghwa has been under continuous conservation management. Local farmers keep fresh water in the rice paddies over the winter and are farming without pesticides. A collaborative oversight group was created in the form of the Ganghwa Maehwamareum Committee. It consists of local residents, ecological activists, and expert ecologists, and is leading efforts at sustainable farming and ecological tourism while operating a range of public engagement programs. In 2008, these civic conservation efforts and the inherent significance of the site resulted in the *maehwamareum* habitat in Ganghwa being inscribed on the Ramsar List, a compendium of wetlands of international importance operated under the Ramsar Convention (1971). These were the first rice paddies in Korea to be inscribed.

Replete with Life

At the core of the Ramsar Convention is the “wise use of wetlands,” which refers to the sustainable use of wetlands to allow for the conservation of their ecological characteristics while providing benefits to people. As an artificial form of wetland,

rice paddies can perform a diverse range of services to humanity. They produce food, reserve water, absorb carbon and emit oxygen, and they also provide homes to a wide range of wildlife. They have social and cultural value as well: rice paddies form an aesthetic landscape, offer recreational benefits, and showcase cultural diversity in agriculture. All of these functions conspire to enrich human life.

The *maehwamareum* habitat in Ganghwa is renowned for its rich biodiversity. It is home to 48 species of waterfowl, including nationally designated Natural Monuments such as the black-faced spoonbill (National Monument No. 205), Eurasian oystercatcher (No. 326), grey frog hawk (No. 323-2), and common kestrel (No. 323-8), along with diverse amphibians (such as the Seoul pond frog and narrow-mouth toad) and mammals (water deer and raccoon dog). In addition, 57 kinds of hydrophytes have been confirmed as residing in the *maehwamareum* habitat and an additional 195 species of wild plants have been found on the ridges of the rice paddies and the surrounding water channels. In the case of the black-faced spoonbill, only around 3,400 individuals are found worldwide and most of them use Ganghwa for their breeding grounds. Mother spoonbills catch freshwater fish here to feed their babies, which cannot eat from salty water.

Paddy fields are perceived primarily as a means for producing rice, the staple food for Koreans, but they are also a place which wildlife relies on to survive. The *maehwamareum* habitat in Ganghwa awakens contemporary Koreans to the significance of the close relationship between nature and humans. Hopefully, the Ganghwa *maehwamareum* habitat, a wetland replete with wildlife, will not be lost once again and will instead benefit from sustained public conservation efforts. 🌿



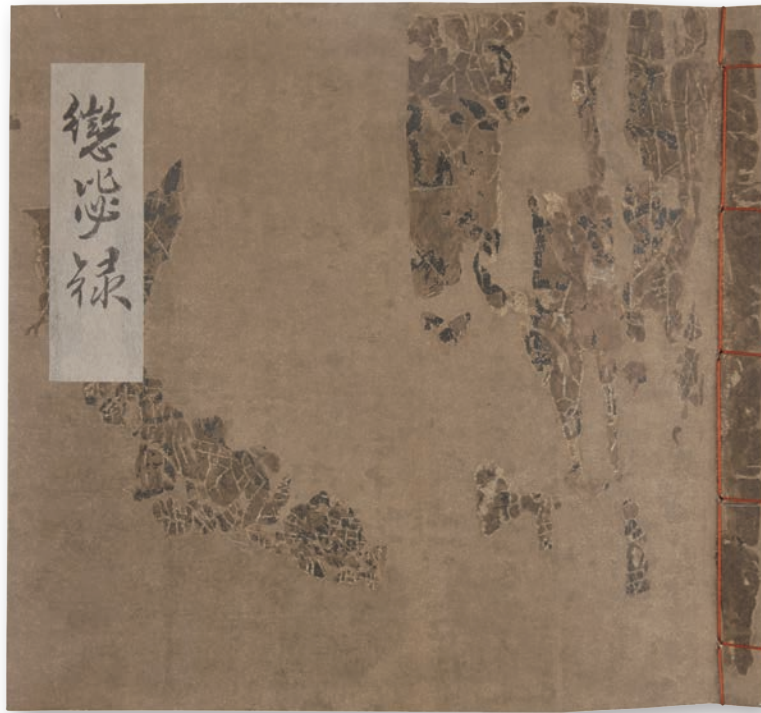
Eurasian oystercatcher



Water deer

Black-faced spoonbills on the *maehwamareum* habitat in Ganghwa

Seoul pond frog



The cover of *Jingbirok*, National Treasure No. 132

Jingbirok Expresses a Deep Remorse over the Imjin War

Text by Kim Sun-seok, Senior Researcher, Advanced Center for Korean Studies
Photos by Kim Sun-seok and the Cultural Heritage Administration

In 1592 the Korean Peninsula came under attack from Japan, culminating in great numbers of deaths and devastation across the entire territory. The Japanese invasions that took place over the years 1592–98 are collectively referred to as the Imjin War. It was initiated by the Japanese warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi as part of his ambitions to eventually advance into mainland China. The Imjin War was a pivotal experience for Joseon society and divides the 500-year dynastic history into two periods. *Jingbirok* (*A Record of Penitence and Warning*) is a first-hand account of the Imjin War produced by Ryu Seong-ryong (1542–1607; penname Seoae), who served as Yeonguijeong (Chief State Councillor), equivalent to today's Prime Minister, during the wartime period.

Motivation behind the Writing

The term *Jingbi* in *Jingbi-rok* is derived from a line from *Shijing* (*The Classic of Poetry*), one of the most authoritative books on Confucianism from China. It means “Repent of the past and warn for the future.” What did Ryu Seong-ryong intend to repent and warn of by compiling *Jingbirok*? Its preface recounts his motivation:

Assuming a great responsibility, I as an incapable official neither stabilized the situation nor minimized the damage, a sin which cannot be properly punished even with death... Discharged of official duty, I recorded what I had seen and heard from the Imjin year [1592] to the Musul year [1598] in this compilation and added an appendix at the end...

As such, Ryu Seong-ryong penned *Jingbirok* based on his personal experience of the devastating war, delivering his strong desire to prevent a similar tragedy from ever taking place again on Korean territory.

A Detailed and Comprehensive Description of the War

In the year following the completion of the Imjin War, Ryu retired from his official career and retreated to his hometown, Hahoe Village in Andong, where he completed *Jingbirok* in 1604 as a record of the seven-year conflict. Ryu's handwritten original manuscript remains under government conservation as National Treasure No. 132. *Jingbirok* was also included in *The Collected Works of Ryu Seong-ryong*, compiled in 1633 by his son Ryu Jin.

Jingbirok provides a thorough account of the Imjin War from the build-up to the war through its completion and observes many diverse aspects. It relates that upon the king's evacuation from the capital, flames arose from Jangyewon Office, a place where records of slavery were stored, and war-afflicted people went on to the plundering of crops. It also accounts that despite the losses suffered by the government armies, militias that arose across the country showed a better performance.

Details of the battles with Japan are covered as well, including those by Admiral Yi Sun-sin (1545–1598), who played a critical role in defeating Japan in the Imjin War. The imprisonment of Yi Sun-sin based on false accusations and his death in the Battle

of Noryang in November 1598 are fully described in *Jingbirok*. Ryu's consultations with China in pursuit of support are also included in the book.

More than anything else, *Jingbirok* effectively conveys the horrifying nature of the war: it portrays children and seniors lying dead in streams and valleys, honest men turning into thieves, a rampant smallpox epidemic taking numerous lives, and Japanese troops setting fire to settlements, killing people, and raping women. Ryu Seong-ryong describes these tragic aspects of the war in his compilation as a warning for the future generations.



Records of the Imjin War in *Jingbirok*

Life of Ryu Seong-ryong

Ryu Seong-ryong was born in 1542 as the second son of the literary scholar Ryu Jung-yeong (1515–1573) and a lady from the Andong Kim clan. Dedicated to the study of the Confucian classics from childhood, Ryu entered the Dosan Confucian Academy in Andong at the age of 21 and came under the teaching of Yi Hwang (1507–1570), the foremost Confucian scholar of Joseon. After his first encounter with Ryu, Yi Hwang commented, “He is extraordinary and is destined to make considerable achievements for the country.” Passing the state civil service examination in 1566, Ryu Seong-ryong served in a variety of important positions.

Appointed as the Right State Councilor (Uuijeong) in 1590, Ryu was promoted to Left State Councilor (Jwauijeong) in 1591, one year before the eruption of the war. At the time, envoys dispatched to Japan reported an imminent attack on China by Japan,

and he began preparations for the upcoming military campaign. With the outbreak of war in 1592, Ryu pushed through with the evacuation of the king to Uiju in the north of Korea, successfully countering the argument for his crossing the border into China. He contended that “Escaping into China is no different from abandoning the country.” In October 1593, Ryu was installed in the highest government position, Chief State Councilor, and accordingly took over the role of supervising and directing the war. After the end of the Imjin War in 1598, Ryu shed all official titles and returned to his hometown, Hahoe Village in Andong, in 1599 to devote his time to the compilation of *Jingbirok*. In 1604 Ryu received the title of meritorious subject for his service as an escort of the king during the war. He died in his hometown on May 6, 1607.

Significance of *Jingbirok* as Documentary Heritage

Jingbirok, which survives in the form of only a single copy (the manuscript by Ryu Seong-ryong himself), offers invaluable material for a more comprehensive understanding of the Imjin War, especially so given the high official position held by the author during the war and the extensive records to which he referred. As the executive superintendent of the war, Ryu Seong-ryong took advantage of the stream of reports dispatched from every corner of the country, the administrative and military orders he issued, and his dialogues with Chinese counterparts.

The particular value of *Jingbirok* as documentary heritage can be found in the fact that it is a record of arguably the most significant war of the Joseon Dynasty and was produced by a person holding a key position able to draw on both personal experience and a vast pool of documents to fulfill a personal motivation. The book is also recognized for its objective evaluations of important figures unprejudiced by partisan interests. *Jingbirok* goes beyond the scope of a military record to describe multiple aspects of the Joseon society of the time.

Although there are other records of the Imjin War from Korea, Japan, and China, *Jingbirok* is by far the most systematic account of this war that transformed the military, taxation, and class systems of Joseon, as well as many other facets of society. Given the implications of the Imjin War not only for Korea but for East Asia in general, the broader significance of *Jingbirok* as documentary heritage can be more fully understood. 🌐

Gyeongju Historic Areas in Spring

Text by the Cultural Heritage Administration
photos by Topicimages

The Gyeongju Historic Areas are the epicenter of the history and culture of Silla (57 B.C.–A.D. 935), a Korean dynasty that survived for nearly 1,000 years. Featuring sites and monuments of great significance to the development of traditional architecture and Buddhist art on the Korean Peninsula, the Gyeongju Historic Areas were inscribed on the World Heritage List in December 2000.



Donggung Palace and Wolji Pond (Historic Site No. 18)



Cheomseongdae Observatory (National Treasure No. 31)



Azaleas at the Three Tombs in Bae-dong (Historic Site No. 219)

The Gyeongju Historic Areas encompass five component sites: the Mt. Namsan area, a treasure trove of Buddhist artworks; the Wolseong area, a Silla palace; the Tumuli Park area, which accommodates ancient tombs; the Hwangnyongsa Temple area, the pinnacle of Silla Buddhist art; and the Mountain Fortress area, which played a central role in defending the dynasty. Here, visitors can experience the glory days of the Silla Dynasty together with its flourishing culture and art.



Dabotap Pagoda (National Treasure No. 20) at Bulguksa Temple

An Ice Age Mammal on Display

Text & photos by the Natural Heritage Research Division, National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage

A special exhibition of the remains of woolly mammoths is being held at the Natural Heritage Center in the central city of Daejeon. Visitors can explore first-hand the bones of this fur-covered animal from the last ice age not only with their eyes, but with their hands as well. The exhibition provides a panoramic view of the entire conservation process from excavation to laboratory treatment and continues until the end of March this year.

The Extinct Woolly Mammoth

Woolly mammoths are a species of mammal which existed on the earth from about 450,000 to 11,000 years ago. With a long trunk and four-meter tusks, the woolly mammoth's coat of long fur and thick layer of subcutaneous fat allowed it to thrive in cold temperatures. Diverse hypotheses have been suggested regarding its extinction, including overhunting by humans and climate change.

Public Display of Mammoth Remains

The special exhibition displays not only bones of various parts such as the tusks, teeth, skull, jaw, and legs, but also rare samples of skin and fur from a woolly mammoth. Some shoulder bones on display bear distinct marks presumably from hunting or from the crafting of tools by humans. Telling evidence of the evolutionary process of adaptation to the cold of the ice age, samples of the woolly mammoth's skin are on display for the first time in Korea. The exhibits are part of an approximately 1,300-piece collection of relics of Cenozoic-era mammals that was donated to the National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage by Park Hui-won, the director of a paleontology museum in Nagano Prefecture, Japan.



The exhibition hall



The tusks of a young woolly mammoth aged 20–25 years (above) compared with that of an adult



The leg of the woolly mammoth compared in size with a human's

The tusks, teeth, and leg bones of the woolly mammoths are exhibited according to the developmental stage of the animal so that visitors can easily grasp the different physical characteristics of the now-extinct mammal as it grew from a baby to an adult. In particular, the leg specimens are presented at the level of

children's eyes to enable them to perceive their size relative to their own height.

Alongside the woolly mammoth specimens, the event uses text and visual images to showcase the process of preservation the relics went through before arriving at the exhibition hall.

Special Donation of Mammoth Specimens

This special exhibition of woolly mammoth fossils would not have been possible without the passion and affection for the public display of rare exhibits in Korea demonstrated by the Korean-Japanese paleontologist Park Hui-won. After donating

relics from prehistoric mammals that he had excavated himself, Park delivered a message to visitors: "I hope that these rare mammoth specimens will provide inspiration to children in my homeland so that they can have bigger dreams and broader imaginations."



Woolly mammoth jawbones presented by age

Park Hui-won dedicated more than 20 years to excavating prehistoric animals, including three years from 1994 to 1996 that he spent along the frozen sea at Yakutsk in Russian Siberia. Park donated the collection of about 1,300 relics to the Cultural Heritage Administration in late 2016 and in recognition of his contribution to the public appreciation of prehistoric mammals the Cultural Heritage Administration awarded him the Silver Cultural Medal, a national recognition provided to those who have made distinguished accomplishments toward the development of culture and arts.

The National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage is planning to draw on the results of this special exhibition to implement diverse experience programs using the woolly mammoth specimens. 🌐

Visitor Information

Address : Natural Heritage Center, 927 Yudeung-ro, Seo-gu, Daejeon, South Korea

Tel : +82 (0)42 610 7610

Homepage : www.nhc.go.kr



Children looking around the exhibition



The garden of the Korea Furniture Museum

The Korea Furniture Museum

Text by the Korea Furniture Museum
Photos by the Korea Furniture Museum and Graphickorea

Mission of the Museum

The Korea Furniture Museum is designed to showcase the Korean lifestyle of the past by displaying traditional wooden furnishings and houses. Situated on the skirts of a hill in Seongbuk-dong, Seoul and endowed with a bird's-eye view of the capital, the Korea Furniture Museum was founded in 1993 by Chyung Mi-sook. This passionate aficionado of traditional wooden furniture began collecting in the 1960s. The wooden

furniture and elements of traditional housing exhibited at the museum effectively deliver to visitors the classical Korean lifestyle that cherishes harmony with nature and spiritual satisfaction.

Characteristics of Traditional Furniture

The permanent exhibition hall displays about 550 pieces of wooden furniture out of the total collection of roughly 2,000 items. As well as discovering the localized characteristics of furniture from different parts of the country, visitors can gain an understanding of the general features of traditional Korean furnishings: their aesthetics emphasizing the intrinsic beauty of the raw materials over artificial decorations, thoughtful design taking into consideration the natural contraction and expansion of wood, the overall distribution of weight, and practical structure which makes full consideration of the human scale.

Traditional Architecture Scaled for Humans

The rooms of traditional houses collected at the museum are fully decorated with furniture and fittings as if people were still living within. These furnished rooms illustrate not only the beauty of traditional furniture but also its practical applications. In the space furnished as an aristocrat's room, for example, furnishings are designed to remain below seated eye level so that the master of the room can lean on them without being intimidated by their height. The furnishings are also sized in consideration of the width of the space between two columns and the height of the windows.

Nature-centered Architecture

At the museum, visitors can also experience *chagyeong*, or "borrowed scenery," one of the definitive characteristics of traditional Korean housing (*hanok*). Koreans of the past enjoyed the extensive landscapes visible through their windows as if they

were private gardens. This traditional technique illustrates a receptive attitude toward nature and, at the same time, a macroscopic view of architecture. People of the time valued geomantic principles and accommodated natural geographic features into their architecture, but they also applied this creative technique of borrowed scenery as a means to not confine the human quarters to within the walls, but expand it as far as the eyes can reach in order to embrace nature.

Traditional Handicrafts on Display

The special exhibition hall at the museum is dedicated to the display of traditional crafts. Genre paintings, bronze and wooden utensils, and artifacts with silver or mother-of-pearl inlay have been presented to public view in this space, and a special



An aristocrat's house on display at the Korea Furniture Museum

exhibition has even been organized in cooperation with the Italian luxury brand Gucci to showcase the harmony between Gucci accessories and Korean traditional furnishings. Currently, traditional Korean clothing, including royal ceremonial robes, is on exhibit in the hall,

demonstrating to the public the dignified and elegant beauty of traditional Korean attire.

Global Reputation

The Korea Furniture Museum was featured by the American television channel CNN (Cable News Network) on its webpage in 2011 as the "most beautiful museum in Seoul." Furthermore, the museum has been visited by a number of prominent international

figures, including the heads of states of China, Germany, Hungary, and Singapore, the actor Brad Pitt, celebrity Victoria Beckham, musician Quincy Jones, and architects Frank Gehry and Zaha Hadid. They visited the museum and gained a chance to experience a traditional Korean lifestyle. Now, the museum is widely recognized among people from abroad as a must-visit place for gaining a genuine understanding of a traditional Korean lifestyle.



The "borrowed scenery" technique embodied in one of the traditional Korean houses at the Korea Furniture Museum

Museum Tour

The museum offers guided tours to visitors upon reservation. A docent takes visitors through the museum for one hour to help them gain a better appreciation of Korean furniture and architecture. Visitors can enjoy an overall experience of a traditional Korean lifestyle that accommodates nature from indoors, but always puts humans at the center. 🌐

Visitor Information

Address : Korea Furniture Museum, 121 Daesagwan-ro, Seongbuk-gu, Seoul, South Korea

Tel : +82(0)2 745 0181

Homepage : www.kofum.com



The Mok-A Museum

The Mok-A Museum

Text & Photos by the Mok-A Museum

The Mok-A Museum was founded in 1989 by nationally recognized master of wood sculpture (National Intangible Cultural Heritage No. 108) Park Chan-su as a showcase for traditional wooden carvings and Buddhist artworks. The name *Mok-A* is the nickname of Director Park, denoting “sculpting dead wood into living artifacts.”

The museum holds about 60,000 objects from both historical and modern periods, including three nationally designated Treasures (*Contribution in the Name of Amitabha Buddha* [Treasure No. 1144], *The Lotus Sutra* [No. 1145], and *The Flower Garland Sutra* [No. 1146]). Along with displaying its holdings to the public, the museum is also intent on providing a diverse range of interpretation programs, such as a Buddha drawing contest, exhibition of artifacts inspired by the Korean alphabet *Hangeul*, a museum school, and experience classes.

The museum building is sheathed in red bricks which originally decorated the surface of the building of the College of Liberal Arts and Science at Seoul National University and were adapted by Director

Park for reuse in the museum in order to provide a new lease on life to these historically significant materials. Along with the indoor exhibition halls, the outdoor space offers a colorful array of wooden sculptures and Buddhist artworks. These include the House for Heaven, which displays woodcrafts associated with the foundation myth of Korea; the Afterlife Judgment Hall, where the King of Hell and other judges



The House for Heaven

in the hereafter are exhibited; and the Great Teaching Hall, which safeguards a spinning bookcase believed to offer as much merit at each turn as reading the Buddhist scriptures stored inside. Among other outdoor exhibits are the Standing Stone Maitreya Triad, which is based on a traditional sculptural style with the addition of modern artistic sensibilities; the Standing Stone White-robe Avalokitesvara, which is carved of locally sourced white granite to effectively represent this image; and the Church in Heaven, in which a crucifix carved by Director Park meets sunlight streaming through a skylight to generate a pure and sacred atmosphere. ☸

Visitor Information

Address : Mok-A Museum, 21 Imunan-gil, Gangcheon-myeon, Yeosu, Gyeonggi-do Province

Tel : +82(0)31 885 9952-4

Homepage : www.moka.or.kr

CHA News

Ssireum Accorded National Heritage Status

The Cultural Heritage Administration has added the Korean wrestling form known as *ssireum* to the national heritage list as National Intangible Cultural Heritage No. 131, respecting the deliberation results from the Cultural Heritage Committee, an advisory organ of the CHA.

Ssireum is a competitive traditional game in which two opponents grasp each other's waist belts (*satba*) and apply diverse techniques in an attempt to drive the other to the ground. Based on the robust community culture of Korea, *ssireum* has been transmitted across generations to the present as one of the classic seasonal practices of the country.



The designation of *ssireum* as national heritage was decided after considering the following aspects. *Ssireum* is actively practiced in diverse forms in contemporary Korean society across the entire nation; its historical significance has been confirmed through the representation of *ssireum* in artifacts, documents, and paintings dating from an extended period from

the Three Kingdoms (57 B.C.–A.D. 668) to modern times; the rules and techniques of *ssireum* manifest unique Korean characteristics; and *ssireum* provides an important research subject for understanding the general features of Korean traditional games.

The Cultural Heritage Administration will strive to ensure a better appreciation of *ssireum* among the broader public by supporting documentation and a diverse range of academic research efforts.

New Discovery in Ichnotaxonomy Made in Korea

The National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, a research arm of the CHA, recently discovered the first-ever fossil footprints of a hopping mammal from the Cretaceous Period.

The fossil footprints are comprised of nine sets from the hind legs of a mammal that are rendered in a hopping form, just like *Ameghinichnus* from the Jurassic Period of the Mesozoic Era and *Musaltipes* from the Cenozoic Era. Hopping refers to the way certain animals such as the kangaroo or kangaroo mouse move using only their hind legs. This recent discovery of hopping footprints is considered to be of great importance since it is the first such example from the Cretaceous Period.

The nine sets of fossil footprints were first found in Jinju in Gyeongsangnam-do Province on January 19 of last year by a research team led by Professor Kim Gyeong-su of Chinju National University of Education. Upon learning of the discovery, the National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage immediately formed an international research group consisting of relevant Korean experts and their colleagues from the United States and China. This international team of vertebrate fossil specialists conducted a comparative analysis of the Jinju footprint fossil site and accorded it with the name *Koreasaltipes jinjuensis*, meaning a “new fossil footprint in the hopping form from the Jinju Formation in Korean soil.”



Koreasaltipes jinjuensis appears to be distinctively different from previously discovered fossil hopping footprints in terms of the morphology of the toes and the arrangements of the footsteps.

The National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage is planning to present to the public these invaluable traces of a hopping mammal starting later this year at an exhibition at the Natural Heritage Center in Daejeon.

CHA Events



Event	Period	Location	Contents
Evening concerts at Gyeonghoeru Pavilion	April 29–May 6	Gyeongbokgung Palace	Large-scale concerts are held set against the background of Gyeonghoeru Pavilion for those participating in the special night tour of Gyeongbokgung Palace.
Royal refreshments experience	Year-round	Saengmulbang in Sojubang Kitchen at Gyeongbokgung Palace	A chance to experience various royal snacks and teas is offered to visitors to Gyeongbokgung Palace.
Experience of a tea ceremony at Jagyeongjeon Hall	May 13–July 2	Jagyeongjeon Hall in Gyeongbokgung Palace	A tea ceremony is presented for visitors alongside lectures on traditional manners.
Evening tour at Gyeongbokgung Palace	March 20–April 14	Gyeongbokgung Palace	Participants experience a royal meal and enjoy a guided tour of Gyeongbokgung Palace at night.
Royal kitchen experience	April 29–May 7	Sojubang Kitchen in Gyeongbokgung Palace	A chance to experience and appreciate Korean royal culinary culture is offered to visitors to Gyeongbokgung Palace.
Photo exhibition on <i>hanbok</i> (traditional Korean clothing)	April 29–May 7	Gyeongbokgung Palace	A photo exhibition is held in order to promote a deeper appreciation of <i>hanbok</i> among a wider public and also to spark public interest in the Royal Culture Festival.
Ceremony of the changing of the royal guard	Year-round	Gwanghwamun Gate of Gyeongbokgung Palace	The changing of the royal guard, a daily event during the Joseon era as they protected the royal family, is reenacted.
Palace concerts	March 20–June 30 (Gyeongbokgung Palace) April 15–June 30 (Changgyeonggung Palace)	Sujeongjeon Hall in Gyeongbokgung Palace and Tongmyeongjeon Hall in Changgyeonggung Palace	Different sets of programs are held at each palace, offering visitors a diverse range of traditional performances.
Royal pharmacy experience	May 3–7	Changdeokgung Palace	Naeuiwon, the royal pharmacy of Joseon, is recreated to enable visitors to experience traditional medicine.

Event	Period	Location	Contents
Royal poetry exhibition	April 29–May 7	Changdeokgung Palace	Royal poems that are recorded in <i>The Annals of the Joseon Dynasty</i> are exhibited alongside photographs of the palace.
Botanical tour	May 3–6	Changdeokgung Palace	Visitors are informed on the trees and plants at Changdeokgung Palace, a World Heritage Site.
Reenactment of the ceremony for the declaration of the Korean Empire	April 29–May 1	Deoksugung Palace	The ceremony for the declaration of the Korean Empire (October 12, 1897) is reenacted in commemoration of its 120th anniversary.
Modern concerts at Deoksugung Palace	May 2–7	Deoksugung Palace	Concerts are held at Deoksugung Palace themed on “Westernization” and “modernization,” which define the characteristics of Deoksugung.
<i>Yangtangguk</i> (coffee) experience	April 28–May 7	Deoksugung Palace	<i>Yangtangguk</i> , referring to coffee as it was enjoyed by Emperor Gojong, is presented to visitors alongside relevant stories of this coffee-loving monarch.
Theatrical performance on King Yeongjo and Changgyeonggung Palace	April 29–May 21	Changgyeonggung Palace	A theatrical drama is performed showing a series of episodes related to King Yeongjo as he ruled in Changgyeonggung Palace.
Reenactment of the diplomatic reception of foreign envoys during the Korean Empire	May 2–7	Jeonggwanheon Hall in Deoksugung Palace	Emperor Gojong’s diplomatic reception of foreign envoys is reenacted, through which new meaning is endowed to the modernization of the Korean Empire.
Traditional music concerts at Deoksugung Palace	May 18–July 27	Jeonggwanheon Hall in Deoksugung Palace	Concerts of traditional Korean music are organized at Deoksugung Palace to enhance the beauty of the night sceneries of the palace.

Event	Period	Location	Contents
Outdoor theatrical performance at Changgyeonggung Palace	May 3–6	Munjeongjeon Hall in Changgyeonggung Palace	Stories of the palace are reinterpreted through theatrical dramas, which are performed in the outdoor space of Munjeongjeon Hall at Changgyeonggung Palace.
Interactive reenactment of a day at the palace	May 5–6	Changgyeonggung Palace	Civilian actors play designated roles and experience life at the palace as it was during the Joseon era.
<i>Myohyeollye</i> ritual at Jongmyo Shrine	May 3–5	Jeongjeon Hall in Jongmyo Shrine	<i>Myohyeollye</i> , a royal ritual where a recently wed crown princess pays a visit to Jongmyo Shrine alongside the queen, is reenacted.
Evening performance of the music for the royal ancestral ritual	May 2–5	Jeongjeon Hall in Jongmyo Shrine	A night performance is held where visitors can enjoy the music and dance of the royal ancestral ritual in a cozy and tranquil atmosphere.
Royal ancestral ritual at Jongmyo Shrine	May 7	Jeongjeon and Yeongnyeongjeon Halls in Jongmyo Shrine	The royal ancestral ritual, the most authoritative form of ritual in Joseon, is observed.
Experience of musical instruments for the royal ancestral ritual	April 29–May 7	Hyangdaecheong Hall in Jongmyo Shrine	Musical instruments used in the royal ancestral ritual are exhibited and made available for visitors to experience.

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