

**Music & Arts releases *Song for UhmMa*, the latest offering from Project Imagine**

Orchestral work is the third work offered in the Project Imagine series

The piece, created by Korean-American composer Soo Han, reflects multi-culturalism and the immigrant experience by drawing upon themes from a popular Korean folk song and the nation’s anthem, as well as deeply personal experiences from Soo Han’s family’s journey

**Frederick, MD, October 18, 2023:** [Music & Arts](https://www.musicarts.com/), one of the nation’s largest musical instrument retailers and lesson providers, announces the latest developments regarding Project Imagine, a commissioned composition project aimed at providing underserved music programs the opportunity to perform high-quality pieces entirely free of charge. The series’ third composition, and first orchestral work, is *Song for UhmMa*, composed by Soo Han. Requests for the piece were fielded on a go-live date a few weeks ago, and demand was exceeded in just nine hours, making this the most successful Project Imagine piece to date. The piece has been distributed to youth orchestra programs nationwide and will be performed by dozens of ensembles this academic year.

Composed by Soo Han, Director of Orchestras at George Mason University and contributing editor for Hal Leonard’s Essential Elements string method book, *Song for UhmMa* is a moving and deeply personal work, in which the composer called upon his childhood upbringing and Korean roots in a very evocative way. *Song for UhmMa* is the perfect tribute to his mother (an immigrant from Korea) and the cultural, financial, and personal obstacles she overcame as she relocated to America. These experiences not only shaped this composition, but molded Soo to be the man and musician he is today. This incredible work is broken into three distinct parts: settings of “Spring in My Hometown” (a well-known Korean folk song) and the Korean National Anthem, followed by a combination of the two melodies as one.

Soo Han remarks, “Growing up during the aftermath of the Korean War, my mother grew up incredibly poor. As a child, she had the natural talent of singing and was selected to sing a solo on a nationally televised TV show. The director asked all the kids to wear a specific attire, but mom couldn’t afford the dress, so she didn’t get to sing the solo and was placed in the back of the choir. The song she was supposed to sing, ‘Spring in My Hometown,’ is the basis for the main melody of this work.”

Scott Lang, Music & Arts Director of Advocacy remarks, “We are proud not just of this composition, but the entirety of Project Imagine. This new offering, combined with our multi-lingual programs, clearly demonstrates our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusivity in music education.”

Project Imagine is an ongoing program designed to address issues of access and inclusivity by providing free commissioned works by industry leading composers, to programs and students in need. Brian Wilson, Music & Arts Vice President of School Services, remarks, “With Project Imagine, we are doing more than simply providing opportunities to programs and students in need; we are building and implementing a model that can serve as a blueprint for the future. This is something I am personally proud to be associated with and involved in.”

To learn more about Project Imagine, visit [MusicArts.com/cms/project-imagine](http://www.musicarts.com/cms/project-imagine).

About the composer:

Dr. Soo Han is the newly appointed Director of Orchestral Studies at Reva and Dew Berry Family School of Music at George Mason University, Music Director of the Elkhart County Symphony Orchestra, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic. He is also a contributing editor for Hal Leonard’s Essential Elements for Strings, a D’Addario Orchestral Strings Artist, a Conn-Selmer Educational Clinician, program coordinator and faculty member with Los Angeles Philharmonic’s summer YOLA program. Prior to George Mason, he was the director of orchestral studies at Baldwin Wallace Conservatory of Music in Berea, OH. There he conducted the symphony orchestra, collaborated on several projects with the BW Opera Theatre, led a successful performance tour with the BW Symphony Orchestra, and maintained an active conducting studio. Learn more at <https://www.soohanconductor.com/>.

More about Project Imagine:

Project Imagine features a series of compositions (classified as grade/difficulty level 2-3 out of 5) intended for middle school and high school ensembles. Each piece is accompanied by optional rehearsal suggestions / tips and social-emotional learning curricula, creating a comprehensive nine-week thematic instructional unit that will create a memorable experience for directors and their students.

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Photo file 1: SongforUhmMa\_Score.JPG

Photo caption 1: Score for *Song for UhmMa*

Photo file 2: DrSooHan.JPG

Photo caption 2: Dr. Soo Han, composer of *Song for UhmMa*

Photo file 3: MusicArtsLogo.JPG

Photo caption 3: Music & Arts logo

**About Music & Arts:**

Music & Arts is celebrating over 70 years as one of the nation’s largest band and orchestra instrument retailers and lessons providers, and is part of the Guitar Center family of brands. Based in Frederick, MD, the company operates more than 260 stores specializing in instruments sales and rentals, lessons for musicians of all levels and a nationwide repair network, serving educators, musicians and parents. More than 230 Music & Arts educational representatives provide personalized service to the music educators in their communities, supporting them and their students with in-school service calls, rentals and repairs. Through offering its services, Music & Arts spreads the power of the band and orchestra experience to transform lives, enrich communities and stir the soul.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:**

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