

Artist blends pop, folk sounds

By Jae-Ha Kim
Tribune Content Agency

Many westerners view Korean music as being synonymous with K-pop. However, artists like Song Sohee want to make it clear that her country's music is diverse, ranging from traditional folk and classical, to pop and rock to metal. On her latest EP "(Re:5)," the singer-songwriter incorporated world, folk and contemporary sounds to create songs that are memorable and distinct.

"I've always loved music that has a bit of a traditional (or) folk feeling to it," she said from her home in Seoul. "Even when it comes to pop music, I'm drawn to songs that carry a unique soul, like the sounds of Africa, Mongolia, indigenous cultures or the Nordic region."

This interview, which was conducted in Korean and translated into English, has been edited for length and clarity.

Q: How would you describe your sound?

A: Right now, I'm working in two different fields. I'm a singer who performs traditional Korean folk music, but I also create my own kind of pop, something new and fun, filled with my own soul and character. So naturally, I'm really inspired by pop music that has the mood of world or folk music in it. "(Re:5)" blends alternative rock and world music.

Q: "(Re:5)" is such a unique album title. What does it stand for?



Song Sohee said her music is inspired by what she hears and sees around the world. **MAGIC STRAWBERRY SOUND**

A: This mini album speaks about recovery, which is why it begins with "re." The number 5 that follows carries two meanings. It represents the five tracks on the album and the concept of the Five Elements, which is an ancient Eastern philosophy that explains the changes and balance of the world. Wood, fire, earth, metal and water are not simply materials, but rather a system that explains how nature's forces flow, circulate and maintain balance. I wanted listeners to experience (the album) not just as individual songs, but as a complete story with a continuous narrative that unfolds around the central theme of the cycle of life. I hope that as listeners follow this journey, they can experience a moment of healing and restoration.

Q: Did you film your music video in Seoul?

A: It was filmed entirely in Gwangju, using a variety of indoor and outdoor locations. One of the main shooting spots was a small island surrounded by dense trees and forests. Though tiny, the island's serene and peaceful atmosphere left a strong impression. The natural energy of the setting perfectly aligned with the theme of the album. In particular, it visually embodied the emotions of the ... track, "Hamba

Kahle," which conveys a heartfelt (Zulu) farewell to travelers setting out for another land. Through filming in Gwangju's forests and on the island, I wanted to capture the beauty of nature and express the cycle of life and quiet comfort that exist within it.

Q: Do you work on your music when you're on the road?

A: I think travel shouldn't turn into work, so I usually don't do any songwriting while I'm away. However, when I visit a place that inspires me or go somewhere peaceful where I can enjoy quiet reflection, I sometimes end up writing lyrics. None of those songs have been released yet, though.

Q: Do you have any upcoming trips planned?

A: At the time of this interview, I'm preparing for my upcoming show in New York. After the performance, I plan to stay in the city for a few days to travel and unwind a little. Communicating with people through music in new spaces always gives me great inspiration and motivation. I believe this time, too, I'll gain fresh creative energy from the local atmosphere, scenery and the audience's reactions to my music.

For more from the reporter, visit www.jaehakim.com.

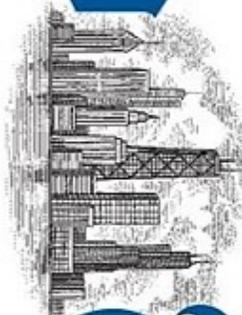


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