

CELEBRITY TRAVEL

For indie rock star, music is memory

By Jae-Ha Kim
Tribune Content Agency

Indie rock musician Meaningful Stone, the stage name of Kim Jimin, recently finished a tour of Asia and played a showcase in Mexico. But she's hoping that she will play more concerts around the world, including shows in the United States.

"As long as I get the visa," she said, laughing from her home in Seoul.

Her latest album is "Angel drop (Live)."

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

Q: Because you're Korean, do foreigners automatically assume you are a K-pop idol instead of an indie artist?

A: (Laughs.) That's a fun question. I think that kind of stereotype naturally comes with being a Korean musician. As K-pop has become more globally popular, K-indie has also started gaining attention. We're even seeing more cases where the idol industry reaches out to collaborate with the indie scene first. Just as there are amazing people everywhere in the world, I think if you look at Korea with genuine interest, you'll naturally get to know many more musicians.

Q: Did you get to be a tourist during your recent work trip to Mexico?

A: Yes, actually. Outside of work, I spent more time sightseeing and hanging out with Mexican



Kim Jimin said that of all the places she has visited, she draws inspiration from Thailand. **LEE SEONG RYUL**

musicians. The most memorable place I visited was a small town called Tepoztlán.

Q: You were also in Los Angeles, right?

A: Yes, I had some tea time with a musician named Jay Som. It was a short visit, so we didn't have enough time to start a new project. But after returning to Korea, we continued discussing potential future collaboration. Since I've never worked with an artist outside of Korea before, it feels exciting to be setting something fun in motion.

Q: What do you remember about your first gig?

A: I think I was a bit shocked to realize that the fans who came to see me actually exist beyond the internet. The letters they brought were so much longer and warmer than the comments on YouTube. (Laughs.) Above all, I felt that being on stage is truly my calling.

Q: Have you written or worked on any songs while you were on the road?

A: Rather than actively working on songs, I mostly jotted down lyrics whenever I had a moment. After returning home, I would add melodies to those notes and complete the songs. Music stays with me as a memory. I've been visiting Thailand often recently. The music I

heard there seems to have become the kind of sound I want to resemble the most. Traveling has always been a major source of inspiration for me, so these days I'm trying to change my work environment and test what feels the most fun and fresh for myself.

Q: Do you have free time built into your tours?

A: When I went on the Tokyo tour, I happened to get a message from a well-known photographer and ended up doing a photo shoot. They've photographed musicians I really like, so I was looking forward to it a lot. And in Ochanomizu, the famous instrument district, I bought a Fender Jazzmaster I'd been wanting.

Q: What is your bucket-list venue that you have yet to perform in?

A: I'd love to perform on channels I really admire, like KEXP and NPR's Tiny Desk Concert. I also want to play at various festivals such as Primavera Sound (in Barcelona), Glastonbury (in Somerset, England) and Fuji Rock (in Japan).

Q: Where would you like to go that you have never been to before?

A: Hawaii! I've heard the nature there is unbelievably beautiful.

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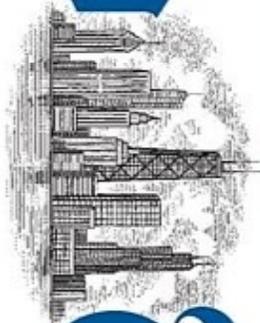


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