

# THE FANTASTIC

**A K-POP VIRTUAL TOUR!** 





## **EWP'S THEATER FOR YOUTH**

WRITTEN BY: NICKY SA-EUN SCHILDKRAUT DIRECTED BY: FRAN DE LEON FEATURING: AMY LIN WORKMAN | DEBORAH CHOI-FLORES | SOLEIL JOUN PAUL DATEH | ANDY LOWE TEACHING ARTIST: AMY SHU PODCAST PRODUCER: MARVIN YUEH/HAPPYECSTATIC MEDIA SOUND DESIGN: JESSE MANDAPAT STAGE MANAGER: MELISSA LUBINA

#### **About EWP**



As the nation's premiere Asian American theatre organization, East West Players produces outstanding works and educational programs that give voice to the Asian American/Pacific Islander experience.

East West Players began with nine artists who wanted a theatre where they could strive for artistic excellence, have control over their own careers as AAPI artists, and tell the stories of their own community. Over the years the organization has provided opportunities to AAPI artists by producing classic plays, Broadway musicals, and stories specific to the Asian American and Pacific Islander experience.

In 1998, East West Players moved to its current 240 seat home, the David Henry Hwang Theater at the historic Union Center for the Arts in Downtown Los Angeles' Little Tokyo district. The theater now serves more than 50,000 people each year through its main stage productions and arts education programs serving youth and marginalized communities.

#### A Note from the Arts Education Manager

By Jade Cagalawan, Arts Education Manager

March 14th, 2021 was the one year anniversary of the shutdowns. Two days later, March 16th, 2021 I woke up to the news of the Atlanta shooting, just like many others did. My mood was heavy to say the least. What we've been experiencing through 2020 up until now is not new though. This only a repetition of history.

When I decided to do the Theatre for Youth show on The Kim Sisters, it was to tell their immigration story and successes under the guise of K-Pop music. It is through their story that we realize that the power is in our hands to uplift not just ourselves, but all marginalized communities.

Pull out your instruments, and strum and sing along to some familiar classics as you learn more about The Kim Sisters and a "forgotten" history.

### **Director's Note**

By Fran De Leon, Director

I cut my teeth in educational theater, so when the opportunity came up for me to circle back to my roots and direct "The Fantastic Kim Sisters" for a school tour, I jumped at the chance. I'd just started tuning my ears to current K-Pop stars Black Pink and BTS, so I was fascinated with the sisters' quick and immense success so many decades prior, and disappointed at how history (unsurprisingly) had hidden them away. It's time their story is told and for proper recognition to be given to Sue, Mia, and Aja for not only their talent, but also their resilience and determination.

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### **Cast & Creative Team Bios**



#### Amy Lin Workman (She/Her/ Hers) (Sue Kim)

Amy Lin Workman first started acting in community theater in Cleveland, Ohio, featuring in such shows as Grease, CATS, and Seussical the Musical. Since moving to California, she's mainly acted in film, TV, and commercials. As a dancer, theater has always stayed near and dear to her heart, so Amy is so excited to finally be involved in theater again, and even more excited to be involved and celebrate diversity and culture with East West Players and The Fantastic Kim Sisters!



#### Deborah Choi-Flores (She/Her/ Hers) (Ai-ja Kim)

Hi! I'm Deborah. I learned so much about courage, discipline and resilience from The Fantastic Kim Sisters, and I hope they inspire you, too. Here's to the original Queens of K-pop!



#### Soleil Joun (They/Them/Theirs) (Mia Kim)

Soleil is a graduate of Cal Poly Pomona where they earned their BA in Theatre with an emphasis in Acting. Some of their most recent credits include Macs in Maarte Theatre Collective's Song by the Cranberries and vocal directing Elf the Musical at Covina Center for the Performing Arts.



#### Paul Dateh (He/Him/His) (Soldier, Bob McMackin, and Interviewer)

Paul Dateh is very excited and grateful to be part of this production of The Fantastic Kim Sisters! Originally coming from a musician background, it is especially meaningful to him to help tell the story of these three awesomely talented Asian and Asian American music artists. He hopes you enjoy listening to this production as much as he had fun being part of it.

#### Andy Lowe (He/Him/His) (The Announcer, Ed Sullivan, and Dean Martin)

Founding Artistic Director of San Diego's Asian American Repertory Theater for 10 seasons '95-'05. Program Coordinator at La Jolla Playhouse '07-'12. Freelance acting coach, director of plays, musicals, experience design & immersive entertainment, Animation Cultural Consultant, Puppeteer and Fight Choreographer (2019 Ovation Nominee).

As an actor, Andy has appeared on numerous Music Videos, Films & Episodic TV, and stages around San Diego, as well as Audio Dramas "Re-Imagine" "The Water Dragon", "Kaidan Alone" and assorted animation.

#### Muet Li (She/Her/Hers) (Mother)



Her/Hers) (Playwright) Nicky Sa-eun Schildkraut is a poet, scholar and teacher who lives in Los Angeles. She holds an M.F.A. degree in poetry (2002) and a Ph.D. degree in Literature & Creative Writing from the University of Southern California (2012). Her first book of poetry. Magnetic Refrain, was published in February 2013 by Kaya Press. She is currently completing a second book entitled Until Qualified For Pearl and a literary novel, I Never Let You Go.

Nicky Sae-un Schildkraut (She/

#### Fran de Leon (She/Her/Hers) (Director)

Fran de Leon is Co-Artistic Director of Will & Company, an ensemble member of Critical Mass Performance Group, and serves on the Advisory Board of Fil-Am Arts. Her one person show, Faces of America, toured to 500+ venues across 49 states, including keynote performances for the United Nations Associations, California and New York. Recent credits: Valor, a documentary of her research and process in writing a play about Filipino-American veterans of WWII (Center Theater Group's Digital Stage); Sacrifice Zone: Los Angeles, (USC Arts in Action); Allos: the Carlos Bulosan Story, (Artists at Play), Assistant Director for critically acclaimed production of Lauren Yee's The Great Leap, (Pasadena Playhouse).



## Amy Shu (She/Her/Hers) (Podcast Producer) The Chinese Lady, by Lloyd Suh.

#### Marvin Yueh (He/Him/His) (Podcast Producer)

Marvin Yueh is the founder & executive producer of HappyEcstatic Media with almost a decade of experience in digital media and live event production. As an independent producer, Marvin has produced podcasts for clients including Entertainment Weekly, Travel + Leisure, Artists at Play, and more. Marvin has also produced live and digital events for the Asian American entertainment community in and alongside major events such as SXSW, Sundance Film Festival, and Tribeca Film Festival. He was also a lead producer at Kollaboration from 2014 - 2020. An advocate for diversity and inclusion in media, he has spoken about the subject at industry events such as PodCon and Podcast Movement, and he is also a co-founder and manager of the Potluck Podcast Collective, a network of independent Asian American hosted podcasts.

#### Jesse Mandapat (Sound Designer/Music Director)

Jesse Mandapat is a theatrical and immersive sound designer, recently nominated for an Ovation Award for his design of The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time (Greenway Court Theatre). Previous projects include: What Goes Around, a Kaiser Permanente Educational Theatre production aimed to educate at-risk Los Angeles high school students about HIV & STD prevention; The Castle Rock Live Experience at San Diego Comic-Con 2018, an immersive walkthrough based on the Hulu Original Series. Jesse received his MFA in Sound Design from CalArts in 2015 and was named "Sound Designer of the Year" by StageSceneLA in 2019.

Melissa Lubina (She/Her/Hers) (Podcast Stage Manager)

#### Thank you to the following folks who originally worked with us for the live production!

Jacquelyne Quinn Estrada (She/Her/Hers) (Set & Props Designer) Jacquelyne was introduced to theatre through theme parks and themed entertainment, and spent several years exploring theatrical productions through her local theatres and school. In 2019 she graduated summa cum laude from Cal Poly Pomona and began working freelance as a scenic designer in Southern California. In early 2021, Jacquelyne accepted an opportunity to attend the University of California Irvine's Masters of the Fine Arts program in theatre for scenic design. She was honored to have been a part of the development of The Fantastic Kim Sisters! and wishes the show's continued success!

#### Ashphord Jacoway (She/Her/Hers) (Costume Designer)

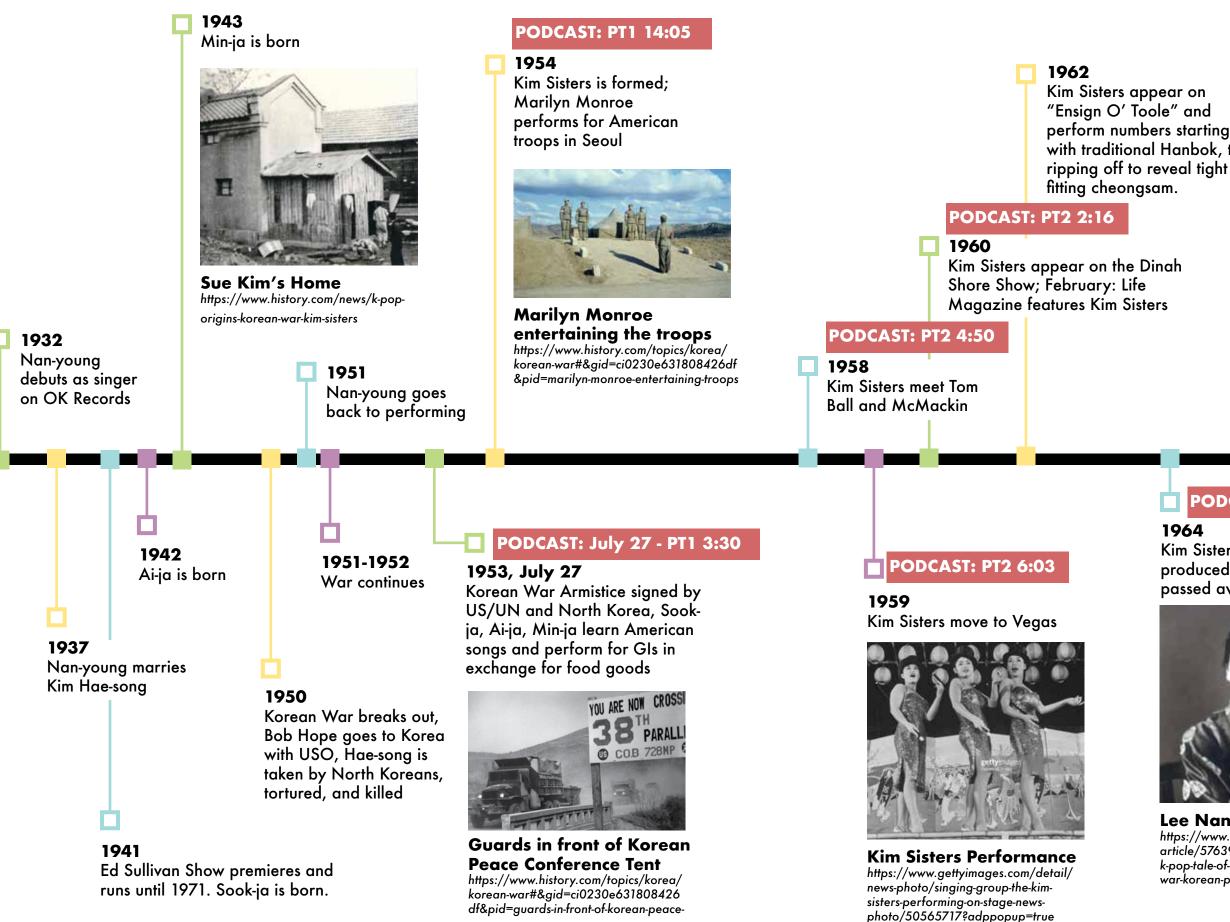
Ashphord Jacoway is a passionate Costume Designer with a BFA in Theatre: Performance. She is a Staae Raw Nominee for Best Costume Design (Paradise Lost, Not Man Apart Physical Theatre Company), and her credits include Watson's Go To Birmingham-1963 and The Bluest Eye directed by Bernadette Speaks, Tam Tran Goes to Washington another East West Players Theatre for Youth production, Two Mile Hollow produced by Artists At Play, Hamlet and \$5 Shakespeare Company with 6th Act Productions. Look out for more of her designs in the upcoming East West Players Production of Sitayana.

#### Jaime "Jai" Mills (She/Her/Hers) (Stage Manager)

Jaime attended Santa Monica College Theatre Arts Program with studies in both Stage and Production Management. Some of her most recent Stage Management Credits include Steel Magnolias & Violet with Actors Co-Op Theater, Scrimmage with East West Players' Theater For Youth Tour, as well as Mamma Mia, The Resurrection Experience I & II held at the Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, The Dance Experience I - V at the Martha B.Knoebel Dance Theater at Cal State Long Beach University. In recent years, Jai has worked as a Stage Manager for The American Musical and Dramatic Academy (AMDA) in Los Angeles while managing her own community dance project Inspire Danz Co.

Amy Shu (She/Her/Hers) is a Chinese American born and raised Angeleno. She is finishing graduate school at Cal State LA to obtain her MFA in Acting. Her professional life started in elementary school education. She found her way to the stage in adulthood and when she became a Teaching Artist Fellow at First Stage in Milwaukee, WI, she found a way to marry the two careers. She feels fortunate to be able to have opportunities in both professions. She was last seen as Afong Moy in Artists at Play and Greenway Court Theatre's production in

### **Kim Sisters' Timeline**



perform numbers starting with traditional Hanbok, then

#### 1968

Kim Sisters became US citizens and they helped their four brothers immigrate to the US from Korea.



Mia Kim http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/ news/special/2011/09/178\_95166. html

#### PODCAST: PT2 8:48/9:50

#### 1964

Kim Sisters released their first self-titled album produced by Monument Records. Their mother passed away.



#### Lee Nan Youna

https://www.soompi.com/ article/576399wpp/the-1960s-americank-pop-tale-of-the-kim-sisters-from-postwar-korean-poverty-to-usa-prime-time



#### Who Were The Kim Sisters?

The Kim Sisters were a Korean-born American singing trio who made their career in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s. They are known for being the first South Korean music group to achieve success in the US market. They also performed on the Ed Sullivan Show more than twenty times.

### Where Are They Now?

By the end of the 1960's The Kim Sisters stopped performing. Ai-ja passed away in 1987 due to Lung Cancer.

Sue Kim was named the first Korean American Nevada Entertainer/Artist Hall of Fame in March 2014. After Ai-ja's passing, she performed with her brothers around Las Vegas until 1989, then moved onto selling real estate. She still lives in Las Vegas today with her husband, children, and grandchildren.

Mia now lives in Hungary with her husband, Tommy Vig. In 2018 she was invited to perform at the celebration of the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Hungary and Korea.



Sue Kim: Sook-Ja Kim



Mia Kim: Min-Ja Kim

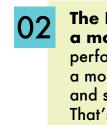




Ai-ja Kim: Ai-Ja Kim

1942-1987

The Kim Sisters performed on The Ed Sullivan Show (1948-1971) twenty-two times. The group's performance total on the show far exceeded the number of appearances by groups such as The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, and The Supremes.



The Kim Sisters were the first Korean group to release an album in the United States. They produced the album in 1959 in Las Vegas, where they later held many concerts. Their cover of "Charlie Brown" reached No. 7 on the Billboard singles chart.



The Kim Sisters were making \$400 a month. Through their entertainment performances in Vegas, they would make \$400 a month, budgeted for their rent, food, utilities, and still sending money to their family in Korea. That's approximately \$3,000 today!



The Kim Sisters learned how to speak English by watching TV and singing American songs. Because they only knew how to speak Korean, they had to be innovative in learning how to speak English

()4

The Kim Sisters were easily confused with Tokyo Happy Coats. Tokyo Happy Coats was a Japanese singing group composed of five members the same time as the Kim Sisters



#### Each member of the band knew how to play approximately 17 instruments.

You can see some of them in these pictures! Can you match the instruments?



1	Drums
2	Accordion
3	Acoustic Guitar
4	<b>Electric Guitar</b>
5	<b>Bass Guitar</b>
6	Cello
7	Xylophone
8	Saxophone
9	Clarinet
10	Banjo
11	Violin







ANSWERS: 1. acoustic guitar 2. xylophone 3. drums 4. accordion 5. electric guitar 6. clarinet 7. cello 8. violin 9. saxophone 10. banjo 11. bass guitar

#### Make anything from home into an instrument!

Below are some ideas. But remember! Before doing this activity, make sure to ask your parents for permission to use any of the supplies suggested below.

#### Make drums out of:

... pots and pans! ... use the lids as cymbals and hit them with a wooden spoon or hit them together. It'll make a crash sound. But remember - be gentle. Drums can be loud! Need to be softer? Set up pillows around you, get a couple of rulers, and turn them into drum sticks. Quieter, but you can get the hang of the rhythm that way.



... a glass bottle and some water. Fill a glass bottle with the desired amount of water. (More water will make the pitch go higher, less water will make the pitch go lower.) Place the bottle on your bottom lip and blow downwards into the bottle.

Want to step it up? Fill two glass bottles with different amounts of water and switch!

#### What are some other fun, made at home instruments?

... the cup song. Get plastic/solo cups and make a rhythm out of tapping it on the table and using your hand to tap the table. WATCH VIDEO () Here's an example: bit.ly/3f7WhNw

## Activity



#### Make a guitar out of:

... an empty tissue box with some rubber bands wrapped around it. Depending on where the rubber bands are placed over the opening, the pitch will lower or go higher. Just want to play pretend? There's always doing some air guitar!

#### Make a flute out of:

#### The Kim Sisters in America

MIA: What do you think of my new name? (Holds up paper with MIA spelled out in large letters.)

AI-JA: (Scowls) Why are you doing that? I'm not changing my name.

MIA: A-jay. Ah-jah. (Rolls her eyes.) Mia is so much easier to remember than Min-ja. Do you want people stumbling over your name? (Aside to audience) Secretly, I never liked my name. My aunt first changed my name from Hyang to Min-ja Kim when I joined the singing band so I could blend in as the youngest sister. So, changing my name is like slipping into a sparkly, new dress. A new self. (BEAT. She turns to SUE.) Agree, Unni?

SUE: You're right. Call me Sue from now on. And, we're not in Korea, any longer... no need to address me as 'older sister' so formerly. Nobody does that here.

AI-JA: Easy for you both to change your name carelessly. (Folds arms over her chest.) I'm just going to have to be the solo rebel in this family. It's the one part of me no one can't take away. HA! I'm staying AI-JA!

## **Reflection:**

Names are important and can define you as a person - from family and identity, to culture (or two different cultures that you have to balance!)

Do you have anyone in your family that changed their name when they came to America? Or maybe it's even you that has an "American name"? Do you take pride in your name?



#### SUE

Manager McMackin translated this for me. The reviewer says, "The best thing we can do is tear up their passports so the three little dolls can't return to South Korea when they are famous and wealthy." Little China dolls!

## AI-JA:

(Pouting) Everyone always thinks we're Chinese! Has anyone heard of the Korean War around here? Mia was right about wanting to change our last Mandarin dresses. Do we have to dress alike all the time? One lady said I looked like an exotic Marilyn Monroe!



## The Model Minority Myth and Harmful Stereotypes

**Before reading about** what the model minority myth is, here are some words to understand:

Assimilation: to change and adapt oneself into the culture of the dominant or mainstream group.

American Dream: the belief that there is equal opportunity for any American to achieve their aspirations, no matter what their background or identity is.

**Discrimination:** to distinguish someone as being inferior or less than, especially based on their sex, race, religion, gender or age.

Stereotype: a simplified and over-generalized understanding or image of a group of people, place, or thing; when referring to a group of people, stereotypes can lead to certain expectations/assumptions of how or what that group may act, think, talk, care about, etc. BTS condemns anti-Asian racism, says they've experienced it



The Model Minority myth is a cultural expectation, rooted in racism, placed on Asian Americans as a group that each individual will be:

• smart (i.e., "naturally good at math, science, and technology")

- wealthy
- hard-working
- obedient/submissive
- spiritually enlightened

The first issue is that the model minority myth was used to generalize the experiences of an enormous group of people.

It is estimated that about 21 million AAPI citizens live in the United States. They represent a large and diverse group of people, with lives all over the socioeconomic scale. What jobs have you heard people say that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders stereotypically work?

#### The second issue is that it puts AAPI on an

https://english.umd.edu/research-innovation/journals/interpolations/ spring-2011/asian-americans-model-minority imaginary pedestal, setting unrealistic expectations for all minority groups. The model minority myth pitts different minority grou against each other. The general attitude being: "If they can do it, why can't you?" This puts a blanket statement over the AAPI community, wh also creating unrealistic expectations for folks of different experiences. Reflect on your own assumptions of other people based on their race and gender.

The third issue is that its existence create opportunities for erasure of AAPI history in the United States. Asian Americans have experienced many injustices in America, from internment camps, to racial exclusion and exploitation. Today, we see violent hate crimes committed against AAPI in refere to COVID-19. The media coverage on these attacks is historically minimal and often utilizes coded words like "incident" instead of "hate crime".

If the public belief is that AAPI citizens are doing "better" in comparison to other minority groups, then it will be **harder** for the public to see targeted acts of injustice and violence committed against AAPI citizens as anything more than a one-off "incident".

## **Reflection:**

Examine the images and quotes on the previous pages 12 and 13, written about The Kim Sisters. What were some stereotypes that were written about them? Why is this harmful?

e oups	
hile	CONTRACTOR COVID-19
ce	1,400 reports in the first 3 weeks
es 'Y	46 states with incident reports
3	16% attacks were due to Asian Americans wearing masks
ence	2-3 times more women get harassed
	When you witness someone being bullied, practice the 3 R's: <b>Recognize</b> , <b>Refuse</b> , <b>and Report.</b> Recognize that bullying is wrong. Refuse to allow the bully's actions. Interrupt what they're doing, publicly support the

victim, or even call for help.

going on.

Report it, whether or not you stopped the

bullying. It is important to tell an adult what's

### **Korea and America**

#### The Korean War aka The Forgotten War:

The Korean war is considered the first war of the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States. Historians have concluded that the main causes of the Korean war were: American containment and the Japanese occupation of Korea during WWII.

During WWII The Soviet Union and the United States government worked to liberate Korea from Japanese rule in an effort to instill their own rule and influence to the nation. In 1945 the Soviet union had liberated the North half of Korea and the United States liberated the South, creating a harsh divide within the nation along the 38th parallel.

The Korean war was only three years long, but it was massively devastating to the nation as a whole. Nearly 5 million people died and more than half of those were Korean civilians.

The total of civilian casualties (between 3 and 4 million) in the Korean war was higher than WWII and the Vietnam war. Many families were broken up by the war and divided across the 38th parallel, unable to see each other. The war was also devastating to Korean industry. It took years for the nation to recover.



The Kim Sisters, Sue, Ai-ja and Mia (left to right), share cake with Army Sat. Gilbert R. Danner in Little Rock, Arkansas, following a 1963 performance.

#### **DEFINITIONS:**

**Communism:** Communism is an economic system and social ideology that advocates for a classless society in which the goods of a nation should be owned and shared by all. In this system the state has control of distributing capital and services as opposed to individuals earning varying levels of capital based on their job or skill set themselves.

Capitalism: Capitalism is an economic system in which wealth and goods are privately owned by the individual instead of the state. Capitalism promotes the idea of individual and corporate wealth by creating competition in a free market system. The United States is an example of a nation that practices capitalism.

Socialism: Socialism is an economic system, as well as a political philosophy, which comes from the idea that individuals do not live or work in isolation, but live in cooperation with one another. Meaning- everything that people produce is in some sense a social product, and everyone who contributes to the production of a good is entitled to a share in it.

Fascism: Fascism is a form of far-right, authoritarian rule, led by a dictator and enforced by suppression of opposition, and strong regulation of society and of the economy. Fascists believe that liberal democracy is obsolete, and that complete totalitarian rule is necessary to the success and strength of a nation.

Now having a better understanding of what The Kim Sisters went through before coming to America, how does it make you feel about their journey? Why is it important to know about The Kim Sisters and their contribution to music in America? How did the Kim sisters pave the way for Kpop to be well-known at present day? Why is this important? Did you know who The Kim Sisters were before hearing this podcast?





#### **Reflection:**

## **Pop Culture**

#### The Kim Sisters interacted with many people during their career. Here are some of the people they met! You might even get to meet them in the podcast!

#### **Ed Sullivan**

A popular TV host in the 1950s for the show, "Toast of the Town". He invited the Kim Sisters to perform at his show quite often





#### **Dean Martin**

Known as the "King of Cool", Dean Martin was a wellknown entertainer and host of "The Dean Martin TV Show" where he invited the Kim Sisters to perform.

#### **Bob McMackin**

He was the official manager for the Kim sisters in the US after seeing them perform in the Army circuit in 1957

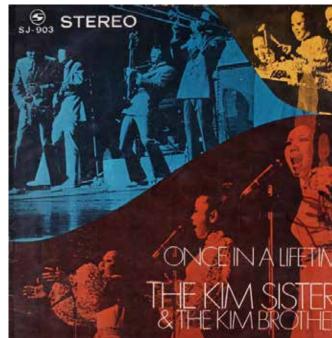
## **Their Families Were Also Talented**

#### **Kim Hae-Song**

Kim Hae-Song was a famous composer and orchestra conductor who produced many popular musical shows.

#### Lee Nan-Young

Lee Nan-Young rose to fame in Korea for her ballad "Mokpo Tears." She also gained popularity by performing for US troops in their military camps. The soldiers would often offer her whiskey of cases of beer that she would trade for rice on the black market.





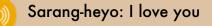
Appa: Father





#### The Kim Brothers

The Kim Sisters also had three brothers who formed their own band called The Kim Brothers. Although they did not experience the same success as their sisters, they did tour and end up on albums with them.



Annyeonghaseyo: Hello

Han: "What doesn't break us, make us resilient"

## The Kim Sisters ASL Guide

#### Video to Watch:

Nyle DiMarco on growing up in a multigenerational deaf family

https://bit.ly/3hBwzUz





#### Why is ASL Important?

American Sign Language is important because it raises awareness for the Deaf community while enabling a mode of communication throughout THE population. As ASL is the way that Deaf people communicate, learning about and being aware of this language decreases stigma surrounding the Deaf community. In some cases, ASL can be seen as a type of "deaf gain," which can be described as something that is a benefit of being deaf rather than being hearing. (https://www.healthyhearing.com/report/52285-The-importance-of-deaf-culture)

#### Why are Signers animated?

In American Sign Language, facial expressions are an important part of communication. The facial expressions you use while doing a sign will affect the meaning of that sign. For example, if you sign the word "quiet," and add an exaggerated or intense facial expression, you are telling your audience to be "very quiet."

(https://www.lifeprint.com/asl101/pages-layout/facialexpressions.htm)

Signers are animated not because they are bubbly and energetic, but because sign language uses face and body movements as part of its grammar In American Sign Language, certain mouth and eye movements serve as adjectival or adverbial modifiers.

(https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2012/11/why-great-sign-language-interpreters-are-so-animated/264459/)

#### Sign for the Theatre!

Applause Sign.

You will see this often done by our ASL interpreters. Feel free to use this on your own to show that you enjoyed what you just saw or experienced!



Match the Songs to the Lyrics! Once you've matched up all the songs, you can use it to sing along to the show!

eus



A. Going Out of My HeadB. Charlie BrownC. Try To RememberD. All Shook Up

Fe-fe, fi-fi, fo-fo, fum I smell smoke in the auditorium Charlie Brown, Charlie Brown He's a clown, that Charlie Brown He's gonna get caught Just you wait and see (Why's everybody always pickin' on me) Charlie Brown!

A well'a bless my soul What'sa wrong with me? I'm itchin' like a man in a fuzzy tree My friends say I'm actin' wild as a bug I'm in love I'm all shook up

Well, I think I'm goin' out of my head Yes, I think I'm goin' out of my head Over you, over you I want you to want me, I need you so badly I can't think of anything but you

Try to remember the kind of September When life was slow and oh, so mellow. Try to remember the kind of September When grass was green and grain so yellow.

#### EXTRA CREDIT! Who did these songs BEFORE The Kim Sisters did?



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#### **Graphic Design by:**



VivoDesignsSolutions.com

#### **Special Thanks:**

Sue Kim, Marisa Bonifazio, Prince Golmovilas, Karen Huie, Jessica Kubzansky, Janet Song, Crissy Guerrero, Ellen D. Williams, Jully Lee, Colin Cox, Kieran Atticus, and The Kaboodle.

> This program is made possible in part by a grant from: City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs The Dwight Stuart Youth Fund





