

We will really miss Dr. Bo Hi Pak after the support he gave us at Universal Ballet

Anne Inoue
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We will really miss Dr. Pak after all the support he gave us at Universal Ballet. He tried to attend every one of our performances. I don't mean one performance of every season or series. I mean every performance. If we had five performances of Giselle, he would come five times. If we had eight performances of Swan Lake, he would come eight times. And after every performance, he would come to see us backstage and give us a pep-talk.

He pushed the company to grow so much faster than we thought was possible. In 1986, he told us to make a new Korean Ballet based on the Shim Chung legend for the Asian Games. Then to upgrade it for the Olympics in 1988. And he wouldn't take "No" for an answer.

In 1991, when we prepared the plans and budgets for 1992, he said he would not bring the report and budget request to True Parents unless we rearranged it to add "Swan Lake". "Swan Lake" is the best known work in the classical ballet repertory, and we were just a seven-year-old company way off in Korea, far from Europe and Russia where the ballet experts and traditions can be found. We did not think we were ready for "Swan Lake." But he was adamant -- add "Swan Lake" or no budget for next season. So we rearranged everything and put "Swan Lake" in the schedule and the budget, even though we were afraid it would look like "Duck Lake."

1992 came. We spent almost half the year learning new styles and techniques, and then finally the new choreography for "Swan Lake." Fortunately, the iron curtain had fallen in 1991, which meant we could invite top experts from Russia to help us with this "mission impossible." November 1992 came, and we gave our premiere performances and we realized he was right. Somehow we were ready. He knew we would be. But we hadn't really been ready to believe it.

Then he took us on tours all over the world to perform "Shim Chung" and "Swan Lake" in Japan (including 22 "Swan Lakes" in 16 cities in 32 days in 1994), Taiwan, New York, London, the Kennedy

Center, and finally more than forty countries, including Russia. Being on tour with Dr. Pak was an unforgettable experience. He coached us to keep a battle-ready mentality when we were on tour, ready to solve any unexpected obstacle that might arise, so that none of them would harm the performances.



One day in Munich we were missing 17 suitcases that had not made the flight the day before, containing dancers' performance shoes. We had to set up the whole stage, rehearse with a local orchestra and do a performance of "Swan Lake" the same evening, and the furnace at the hotel was broken, so there was no hot water for showers. But he kept us all calm and focused, and we found a solution for each of the challenges.

We will never forget those 25 years of tours we took with him.

Thank you Dr. Pak! We love you! We will never forget you!

Hoon-sook Nim's message to members following the ascension of her father, Dr. Bo Hi Pak (unofficial translation from the Korean):

Dad ascended this morning at 7:30. I pray that since he went to the heavenly realms during this time, a time of the providence more important and intense than any other, we can tell that he has gone to the spirit world following Yo Han Lee to attend True Father and to support True Mother as she leads us in the crucial work to Open the Era to Firmly Establish the Heavenly United Korea.

Thank you very much for joining us to honor and support him; I ask that you also join us with your prayers.