

# BEHIND THE SCENES OF K-POP

USC Visions & Voices

USC Annenberg  
School for Communication  
and Journalism

USC Thornton  
School of Music

USC Student Life  
*Asian Pacific American Student Services*

KOREA **KF**  
FOUNDATION

# BEHIND THE SCENES OF K-POP

**Friday, October 18, 2024**

**9:45 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

**Annenberg Auditorium (ASC G26)**

**University of Southern California**

## SCHEDULE

**9:45 a.m.**

### **WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS**

**JASON KING**

Dean, USC Thornton School of Music

**YOUNGWAN KIM**

Consul General of the Republic of Korea in Los Angeles

**10 a.m.**

### **SESSION 1: K-POP JOURNALISM**

**P. CLAIRE DODSON**

Associate Director of Culture, *Teen Vogue*

**JAE-HA KIM**

Columnist, *Chicago Tribune*

Moderator: **HYE JIN LEE**

USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism

**11:15 a.m.**

**SESSION 2: MAKING K-POP  
SONGWRITING, PRODUCING, AND PUBLISHING**

**DAVID AMBER**

Music producer and songwriter for TWICE, NCT, AOA

**JUSTIN HAHN**

Chief Creative & International Officer, 153/Joombas  
Music Group

**BEN SAMAMA**

Songwriter for RIIZE, NCT 127, IVE, ITZY

**CHARLOTTE WILSON**

Songwriter for ITZY, ENHYPEN, NMIXX

Moderator: **NATE SLOAN**

USC Thornton School of Music

**12:15 p.m.**

**LUNCH BREAK**

**1:15 p.m.**

**PERFORMANCES BY SPADE A DANCE**

**“CRAZY,” LE SSERAFIM**

Dancers: Bennie Andon, Jasmine Hooks, Aud Ma,  
Mylie Rodrigo, Nanxi Wang

**“WALK,” NCT 127**

Dancers: Jasmin Ashley, Michael Bernardo, Chloe Chen,  
Rachel Chen, Carol Li, Sammi Li, Chaney Liu

**“BOOM BOOM BASS,” RIIZE**

Dancers: Belle He, Jasmine Hooks, Aud Ma, Grace Park,  
Mylie Rodrigo, Nanxi Wang

**1:30 p.m.**

**SESSION 3: LIVE EVENTS**

**JOEN CHOE**

Senior Vice President of Marketing and Partnerships,  
CJ ENM America

**MARLENE TSUCHII**

Music Agent, Creative Artists Agency

Moderator: **HYE JIN LEE**

USC Annenberg School for Communication and  
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**2:45 p.m.**

**SESSION 4: K-CULTURE MARKETING**

**JOEN CHOE**

Senior Vice President of Marketing and Partnerships,  
CJ ENM America

**SOY KIM**

Head of North America, Music & Podcasts Content  
Strategy, YouTube

**MARISSA PUTNEY**

Vice President, Global Artists & Label Services,  
The Orchard

**ANNIE STOLL**

Vice President of Creative, Republic Records

Moderator: **HYE JIN LEE**

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4 p.m.

## SESSION 5: K-POP IN THE U.S.

### **MEG HARKINS**

Executive Vice President, Imperial Music and  
Casablanca Records

### **DANIEL HONG**

COO of JYP USA

Moderator: **HYE JIN LEE**

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**David Amber** is a Los Angeles-based music producer and songwriter who has become a force and a household name in K-pop, writing hits and notable songs for artists such as TWICE, IZ\*ONE, EXO, NCT, Gfriend, Super Junior, and many more. He produced and was a featured artist on YouTube sensation Wengie’s song “Talk Talk (feat. David Amber).” He also recently contributed to original songs to Netflix’s hit TV show *Julie and the Phantoms*, including the lead single, “Edge of Great.” As an artist, he releases music as David Amber, and more recently as synthwave artist Palmy Chiller. Accolades include over 10 million single and album sales from K-pop releases, two number-one singles (TWICE, “Yes and Yes” and “Heart Shake”), over 800 million combined YouTube views, two-time Golden Disc Award (Korea) winner, and over 400 million combined streams (non-YouTube).



**Joen Choe** leads marketing and partnerships for CJ ENM America, engaging U.S. fans with CJ ENM’s TV shows, films, live entertainment, and digital platforms. Prior to CJ, Joen has held brand leadership roles at both iconic global brands and high-growth startups. Most recently, he was Vice President of Global Brand & Creative Services for DC Comics at Warner Bros, after a long track record of accelerating consumer brands via media and entertainment: vitaminwater with 50 Cent and Kelly Clarkson (acquired by Coca-Cola), Absolut Vodka with Jay-Z and Cee Lo, Ryan Reynolds with Aviation Gin (acquired by Diageo), and Zoa Energy with Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson. Raised in the U.S., educated in France and England, and having worked across Asia, Joen brings a global perspective to building brands and fandoms.





**P. Claire Dodson** is the Associate Director of Culture at *Teen Vogue*. Hailing from Knoxville, TN, she previously was an editor at *Fast Company* and has written for *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, *Esquire*, *InStyle*, *Village Voice*, and more. She loves to explore an artist's coming-of-age story and shifting public persona, as well as how fandoms grow and evolve over time.



**Justin Hahn** is Chief Creative & International Officer at 153/Joombas Music Group, an independent music company founded in 2012 and operating across multiple sectors, including music publishing, production, music rights, and education. Born and raised in Los Angeles, CA, and now based in Seoul, South Korea, Justin oversees the creative operations and international business affairs for 153/Joombas. Justin's experience crosses a variety of verticals in entertainment, including A&R and artist and label management. As head of A&R operations of 153/Joombas's publishing arm, Justin has helped 153/Joombas place songs with some of K-Pop's biggest acts, such as BTS, SEVENTEEN, NCT, aespa, ILLIT, Lim Young-woong, TWICE, Red Velvet, ITZY, and more. With nearly a decade's worth of experience in the K-pop space, Justin has a wide breadth of expertise and knowledge, and a deep passion for furthering K-Pop's global reach, establishing it as a genre and culture that is here to stay as opposed to being perceived as just a trendy commodity.



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As Executive Vice President of Imperial Music and Casablanca Records, **Meg Harkins** is integral to the growth of REPUBLIC's distribution arm. She notably catalyzed the company's successful expansion into K-pop by spearheading marketing over the last five years with artists including TWICE, STRAY KIDS, and TXT. This year under her watch, TWICE scored their first number-one debut on the *Billboard* 200 with "With You-th," while STRAY KIDS logged their fifth number-one on the respective chart with "Ate." Simultaneously, she directed the marketing campaign for Ariana Grande's blockbuster *Eternal Sunshine*, notching her sixth number-one debut on the *Billboard* 200.



**Daniel Hong** is a music expert who specializes in bridging the Asian and global markets through his deep understanding of both cultures and the music industry. With a keen eye for talent and a strategic approach to artist development, he played a pivotal role in the global success of BLACKPINK during his tenure at YG Entertainment. His expertise in marketing, branding, and fostering cross-cultural appeal helped BLACKPINK break through internationally, becoming one of the most influential K-pop groups of their generation. Currently, Daniel works with JYP Entertainment, where he is instrumental in shaping the careers of VCHA, a rising group, as they aim to achieve similar global prominence. With a passion for innovation and a deep commitment to expanding the reach of Asian artists on the world stage, Daniel continues to be a key figure in transforming the global music landscape.







New York Times bestselling author **Jae-Ha Kim**

started writing professionally as a pre-law student at the University of Chicago. Since earning her MS in journalism from Northwestern University, Jae-Ha has covered everything from hard news (as a reporter for United Press International) to pop culture (as the Pop Music Critic and film reviewer for the *Chicago Sun-Times*). She is currently a nationally syndicated columnist for Tribune Publishing and her column runs in about 100 publications nationwide, including the *Chicago Tribune*. Her profiles, essays, and reviews also appear in outlets such as *Rolling Stone*, *Teen Vogue*, *TODAY.com*, *Variety*, *New York Daily News*, and *MTV News*. Kim has won a Peter Lisagor Award for Excellence in Journalism. She also wrote the first book about the hit sitcom *Friends* and is a co-editor of several travel books. She has appeared as a pop culture expert on NBC's *Today*, *Entertainment Tonight*, A&E's *Biography* and E! Entertainment. An in-demand voice on Korean entertainment who has been quoted in media outlets like the *New York Times*, NPR, Associated Press, MTV, *Korea Times*, and *South China Morning Post*, her Substack — *K-Culture With Jae-Ha Kim* — is devoted to all things Korean.



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**Soy Kim** heads North American music and podcast content strategy at YouTube. Bicultural and bilingual, she has launched first-in-market collaborations between the U.S. and Korea. As a marketer, Soy has developed GRAMMY award-winning campaigns for artists including BTS, John Legend, Baby Keem, and Chloe x Halle. Previously, she worked at Spotify as a product marketer across content discovery, audience development, and industry education. Her experience spans D2C / B2B marketing, content distribution, and international business in music and film at Columbia Records in NYC and CJ ENM in Seoul. Soy believes in paying it forward, and serves as a mentor for the national non-profit Asian American Collective and the Recording Academy's GRAMMYU program. She holds an MBA from Yale and a BA from Harvard, and has been invited to speak at the NYU Stern School of Business, the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, and Drexel University, and been a panelist or moderator at SXSW, MU:CON, NY:LON CONNECT, and Music Biz, to discuss global music cultures, tech x entertainment, K-culture/K-pop/Korean diaspora, music data, and DEI leadership. Kim has received academic grants to conduct ethnographic research on Korean society and is a published thought leader on Asian Pacific content and culture. Outside of music and film, Soy is a dedicated sports fan and believes in the power of sports to enact societal change. She serves on the nonprofit board for Street Soccer USA, a national nonprofit dedicated to eradicating youth poverty through soccer.



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With 17 years of dedicated experience in the music industry, **Marissa Putney** is a passionate advocate for independent artists and musicians. Since joining The Orchard in 2013 as a Label Manager, she has ascended to the role of Vice President of Global Artist & Label Services, where she now leads the Global Artist & Label Services team. In her current position, Marissa orchestrates pan-territorial release campaigns for the company’s most high-profile projects. Notably, she played a pivotal role in the success of BIGHIT Music’s BTS during the *Love Yourself* and *Map of the Soul* series, including the chart-topping hit “Butter,” which shattered records with the most views in 24 hours on YouTube and achieved the largest single-day streams on Spotify, securing BTS’s fourth number-one debut on the Billboard Hot 100. Marissa’s expertise extends to supporting Rimas Entertainment—one of the fastest-growing Latin labels globally—and emerging global star RAYE, who made history by winning six BRIT Awards in a single night. She is also closely involved with J-pop sensation YOASOBI, whose track “IDOL” set the record for the most consecutive weeks at number one on Billboard Japan. Her team currently oversees campaigns for artists across South Korea, Japan, Philippines, United Kingdom, South Africa, and India. Recognized in 2023 as one of *Billboard Magazine*’s “40 Under 40,” Marissa is celebrated for her work with breakthrough independent artists. Beyond her professional achievements, she volunteers with Studio Samuel, a civil society organization dedicated to empowering girls in Ethiopia through education and vocational skills.



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**Ben Samama (SAMAMA)** is an L.A.-based, Grammy-nominated songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, and producer. Ben has an illustrious musical background, having studied music at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague and Berklee College of Music. He was also an associate professor of songwriting at Berklee from 2013 to 2015. Ben has worked on a diverse range of records, including RIIZE’s mega-hit “Get a Guitar” and “Boom Boom Bass,” IVE’s title single “Accendio” off of their latest EP, the David Guetta x 5 Seconds of Summer x Galantis single “Lighter,” OneRepublic’s single “Runaway,” and many more. He has collaborated with some of the industry’s top songwriters and producers such as Louis Bell, Gian Stone, Digital Farm Animals, Ryan Tedder, and Tyler Spry.



**Annie Stoll** is a GRAMMY-winning creative director and music executive. Currently she is VP of Creative at Republic Records where she works with artists across genres, including Nicki Minaj, Miranda Lambert, Jimmy Fallon, Stray Kids, TWICE, and TXT. Previously, she was Senior Art Director at Columbia Records/Sony Music where she worked across all labels from legacy acts to frontline. She worked across a range of artists and soundtracks including “Weird Al” Yankovic, Arashi, Adele, and BTS. Annie’s past freelance clients include Lucasfilm, Chronicle Books, MIYAVI, and The Rose. Hailing from Buffalo, NY, Stoll is passionate about the intersection of art and music and is fascinated with finding new ways to help artists tell their stories and connect more closely with fans. Annie currently mentors through the She Is the Music program every summer. She still stays up late listening to as much music as she can, and her favorite song is “Boy with Love” by BTS.



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**Marlene Tsuchii** is a Music Agent at leading entertainment and sports agency Creative Artists Agency (CAA). Based out of the Los Angeles office, Marlene works with many of today's top artists, such as Ariana Grande, Justin Bieber, Maggie Rogers, H.E.R., RÜFÜS DU SOL, Daft Punk, Beck, Foo Fighters, Britney Spears, Phoenix, Gorillaz, Tool, Rise Against, Sabrina Carpenter, and Lana Del Rey, among many others. She is passionate about using her work to further the influence, reach, and impact of Asian artists throughout the industry. Over the past few years, she focused many of her efforts on signing clients that bolster CAA's roster of talent, and support the agency's goal of amplifying Asian voices across various facets of the industry. She signed major music company 88rising; one of the largest K-Pop companies in the world SM Entertainment, which houses major artists including SuperM, NCT 127, and aespa; and rising all-girl punk rock band The Linda Lindas. Marlene began her career at Triad Artists. She joined CAA in January 2002 from the William Morris Agency. She graduated from UCLA with a degree in music performance.



**Charlotte Wilson** is a Billboard-charting, multi-platinum award-winning songwriter with a penchant for writing catchy and impactful melodies crafted specially for the artists she writes for. Having penned iconic hits such as aespa's "Drama," ITZY's "Not Shy," ENHYPEN's "Blessed-Cursed," and NMIXX's "O.O" and "DICE," amongst many others, Charlotte has established herself as an influential and impactful songwriter, contributing greatly to K-pop's global expansion and presence over the last 5 years.

