

'GANGAM STYLE' sweeps YouTube, pop culture

By Kalyan Manohar Dadala
TECHNEWS WRITER

Watch out people; there's a Korean pop video on YouTube spreading like wildfire. 'Gangnam Style' by PSY, heard about it? On July 15, this video was posted on YouTube. In just 51 days, it had 100 million views. It zoomed to the top of the YouTube chart, beating Carly Rae Jepsen's Call Me Maybe and Justin Bieber's Baby. It's the hot cake of the music industry, topping the US iTunes Top Song chart - which it entered in late August - at No. 58. So far, the official video has 194,665,000 views and still is ticking.

It's the aggressively hypnotic techno-trance beat that seems designed for the hardcore clubbing; the eminently catchy tune, with its peppy chorus, which children love. Want to learn the Gangnam style? Then do this, hands in front, gallop, shuffle, imaginary lasso. You are in the club! This song is hip, slick and slightly challenging. Designed for blasé audiences with short attention spans, it's high-octane pop illustrated in a fresh, flashy video, bouncing with bubble gum bright color.

Scene changes are as rapid as they are random in PSY's romp through conventional urban spaces. He's snoozing in a deck-chair under a bright pink umbrella. He's in a horse stable in Seoul. He's spoofing cult videos, walking through an abandoned parking lot in fake snow. It gets more bizarre; here he's dozing off in the sauna wrapped in a baby blue and pink towel, there he's bouncing around a tour bus, jiggling with disco balls.

Next comes the march of Korean celebrities. A solemn dance-off with come-

dian Yoo Jae Suk, dressed in canary-yellow, the 'elevator dance' replete with pelvic thrusts, featuring comedian Noh Hong-cheol. Finally, busting some moves with svelte redhead, Kim Hyun-a, member of the popular K-Pop girl group 4Minute.

Short, plump and bespectacled, PSY is an unlikely star, especially in K-Pop where the girls are pretty and the boys prettier. However, his 'everyman' persona seems to be his not-so-secret weapon. He's willing to laugh at the world and himself, and this sharp subversive humor is what elevates the song from catchy to memorable.

Britney Spears tweeted a link to Gangnam Style saying, "I am LOVING this video. Thinking that I should possibly learn the choreography. Anybody wanna teach me?!" Out came PSY himself to teach the moves when she appeared on The Ellen DeGeneres Show.

Born Park Jae-Song, he's a 34-year-old rapper from South Korea. His stage name comes from his first album Psy From The Psycho World, released in 2001. He studied at the prestigious Berkeley College of Music in the United States.

This song is an accomplishment, considering it is in his native language with no translations. PSY is the first Korean artist to go mainstream in the United States. This was largely possible because of the Internet, since the song went viral via mobile phones and computers, on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

You will probably see more of him; he has signed a contract with American label Schoolboy Records after being spotted by music producer Scooter Braun, best known



for discovering Justin Bieber. Braun famously toasted PSY over glasses of Korean Soju saying, "To PSY, to Korea, to breaking down barriers, to the future."



Images courtesy of YouTube & kpopstarz.com

we're hunting for a new resident hipster



you've probably never heard of us

TechNews

email editor@technewsiit.com

to submit an A&E Editor application

You may be wondering...

How can I get involved with sustainability on and around campus?

Get involved in the Community Garden
Attend a NetImpact event
Join Engineers for a Sustainable World
Let us know when you see something that doesn't look sustainable
Ask your prof to accept digital submissions
Post suggestions on our facebook wall
Volunteer to help Campus Sustainability man an event
Ride a bike instead of car or bus
Attend a IIT Sustainability Forum
Check out a Chicago farmer's market
Get LEED Certified



Congratulations to Daniel Vega, the winner of the IIT Campus Sustainability folding bike.