

# Zen Master Su Bong

## (Mu Deung Sunim)

Transmission name Su Bong  
(High Mystic Peak)  
Dharma name Mu Deung  
Original name See Hoy Liao

*In the clear clear, stillness stillness  
True face stands revealed.  
All dharmas originally empty.  
Pine tree is green, rock peak is white.*

Zen Master Seung Sahn

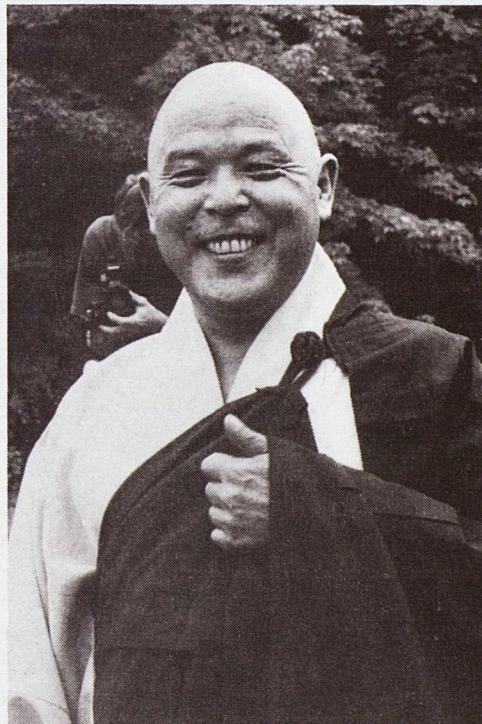
Sky and ground complete stillness  
Zen Master Seung Sahn already transmission: all  
transmissions to birds and trees  
Nothing left for you and me  
Then what is this?  
Me facing you, you facing me  
You ask the sky, you ask the tree  
Rocks head talking to rocks head wake up wake up  
Why?  
KATZ!  
Nice to see your face, how are you?



Interview by Mu Ryang Sunim



Zen Master Su Bong has been a student of Zen Master Seung Sahn since 1974. He was given inka, the authority to lead retreats and teach kong-an practice, in 1981. In 1983, he was ordained a monk. A native of Hawaii, Zen Master Su Bong is an accomplished industrial designer, sculptor, artist, and carpenter. In the United States, he was the abbot of a temple in Los Angeles for several years, and helped construct Zen centers in Providence and Cambridge. He has led many 90-day winter Kyol Che retreats in the United States and Korea, living and studying in Korea for the past several years. His recent activities include extensive teaching trips to South Africa; he is also the guiding teacher for the new Hong Kong sangha.



Zen Master Su Bong

MRSN: Zen Master Seung Sahn is a very great Zen Master. Do you feel any awe in stepping into his shoes?

ZMSB: Dae Soen Sa Nim is a very great Zen Master. Many people in Korea wear white rubber shoes. So no problem. What kind of shoes do you wear? More questions? (*laughter*)

MRSN: Many people nowadays talk about American Zen. What does this mean to you?

ZMSB: In America we say good morning, in Hong Kong they say ni hau ma, in Korea annyang hashimika. That is Zen, that's just moment to moment, what are you doing now? What is your correct situation just at that moment? So if you say American Zen, that means what

is your correct situation? If you say Korean Zen, that means what is your correct situation? What is your correct function in that place where you are? But when you say American Zen means this kind of practicing, or American Zen means we do ten hours of sitting, or Korean Zen means we can talk at retreats, that's not correct. American Zen, Korean Zen, European Zen—that is all opposite worlds. That is "making something."

MRSN: In the future how do you think the Western students in the Kwan Um School of Zen will connect with Korean Buddhism?



### Dharma talk

*(HITS the platform with his Zen stick.)*

Originally Buddha and eminent teachers never gave transmission

*(HIT)*

One sound takes away attainment and no attainment

*(HIT)*

**ZMSB:** Over the past ten years Dae Soen Sa Nim has been slowly introducing us to Korea. Many of the monks have spent time in Korea, and now we have the very successful International Kyol Ches at Shin Won Sah. We've had two Whole World is a Single Flower conferences in Korea, and a third one is planned for 1993.

Now, when Zen Masters like Won Dam Sunim visit America, they talk about Koreans and Westerners together as "our family." Other Korean people hear this speech, and this family feeling grows. So Dae Soen Sa Nim has fertilized these seeds and now the bond is taking root. I think it will continue to grow stronger even after he passes.

**MRSN:** Where and when did you meet Zen Master Seung Sahn?

**ZMSB:** In 1974 I attended a small lecture about Buddhism, where I met a Korean monk. He asked me, "Why did you come here?" I said, "I want to understand Zen." He told me it was not a Zen discussion group, and asked if I wanted to meet a great Zen Master. I said "O.K." So two days later, he introduced me to Dae Soen Sa Nim, who shouted at me, "WHO ARE YOU?" BOOM! My mind stopped and I couldn't articulate an answer. But inside an answer was there, "You are my teacher."

**MRSN:** Did you have any idea at that time that you would become the next Zen Master?

**ZMSB:** (*laughter*) No idea. No Zen Master.

**MRSN:** Thank you. □

# Zen Master Bo Mun

## (George Bowman)

Transmission name Bo Mun  
(Wide Gate)  
Dharma name Song Hae  
Original name George Bowman

*Everything follows the law of appearing  
and disappearing.*

*All dharmas originally stillness.*

*In no form, no name*

*Bright moon appears over mountain.*

*Zen Master Seung Sahn*



Zen Master Bo Mun studied anthropology and biology at Brown University, and attended Duke University on a Ph.D. program in anthropology of religion in 1969, until he left to study Zen full-time. He has studied extensively with other Zen Masters living in America, received inka from Zen Master Seung Sahn in 1977, and led the first three Winter Kyol Che retreats at Providence Zen Center. A longtime runner, he has done extensive racing, including a number of marathons. Zen Master Bo Mun is a skilled carpenter and worked on major Providence Zen Center building projects. He was ordained a bodhisattva priest in 1982. Zen Master Bo Mun is guiding teacher of the Nashville Zen Group. He is also guiding teacher of the independent Cambridge Buddhist Association. He has a private practice in contemplative psychotherapy and lives in Cambridge with his wife, Trudy Goodman.



### Dharma talk

One fall day, a day very much like this several hundred years ago, a monk asked Zen Master Un Mun, "How is it, old Master, when the tree withers, and leaves fall?" And Un Mun said to the monk, "Body exposed to golden wind!" So I ask all of you, where is your golden wind? (*Hits the platform with his Zen stick.*) Outside a fall breeze scatters golden and crimson leaves.

I will tell one short golden wind story. It involves Zen Master Seung Sahn and it takes place twenty years ago, when I first met my teacher. It has a lot to do with our practicing and bringing this wonderful clear presence to this moment, and meeting life as it is—this really is what our practice is about. In a sense it is no practice at all. We were sitting Zen and Zen Master Seung Sahn had just come. In those days he was very poor; he was fixing washing machines. We lived in a very poor section of town, and the street noises were very loud when we practiced. Every night at exactly seven o'clock when our evening practice began, a rock and roll band would start playing upstairs. Plaster would fall from the ceiling. I remember asking myself, "What in the world am I doing here?" Zen Master Seung Sahn looked at me and smiled with those bright and vivid eyes—only this.

