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## EAST MEETS WEST IN VANCOUVER OPERA'S VOICES OF THE PACIFIC RIM

Concert combines popular opera selections with traditional Asian songs

**Vancouver, BC** ~ Vancouver Opera once again brings east to west in **Voices of the Pacific Rim**, its popular concert of opera selections combined with traditional Asian songs, performed by rising young Asian Canadian opera singers.

*Voices of the Pacific Rim* will be presented on **Sunday, March 20, 7:30pm** at the **Vancouver Playhouse** (Hamilton & Dunsmuir Street). Tickets are \$25, including HST, and can be ordered through the Vancouver Opera Ticket Centre at 604-683-0222.

*Voices of the Pacific Rim* features established and rising young opera singers from various communities, performing arias from the international repertoire as well as traditional Asian songs. This will be VO's third *Voices of the Pacific Rim* recital. Each concert has focused on a particular country; this concert's spotlight will be on Korea.

The recital is programmed by Artistic Curator **Gina Oh** with Music Director **Kinza Tyrrell** and features soprano **Young Mi Kim** from Seoul, Korea. Ms. Kim will be joined by mezzo soprano **Evanna Chiew**, baritone **Jihwan Cho**, soprano **Caroline Yoonkyoung Jang**, soprano **Teiya Kasahara**, tenor **Brian Kwangmin Lee**, mezzo soprano **Rose-Ellen Nichols**, and tenor **Xiao Dong Zhang**, accompanied by **Tina Chang** on piano.

### The Performers

#### **Gina Oh – Artistic Curator**

Vancouver-born soprano Gina Oh has sung at the Presidential House in South Korea and was honored as one of the most influential Korean Women Of The World of 2008. She holds a BA and a Doctorate in Music from l'Université de Montréal. Ms. Oh appeared as Obasan in the Vancouver Opera In Schools production of *Naomi's Road*.

#### **Kinza Tyrrell – Music Director**

Victoria native Kinza Tyrrell has a Doctorate in Piano and Vocal Coaching and recently won the Bösendorfer Prize at the International Belvedere Opera Competition in Vienna. She works regularly as Répétiteur and Assistant Conductor at the Nuova Opera Program in Edmonton and the Opera As Theatre Program at The Banff Centre. Ms. Tyrrell is Principal Répétiteur and Assistant Chorus Director at Vancouver Opera and Music Director of the Vancouver Opera In Schools program.

#### **Tina Chang – Pianist**

Tina Chang recently toured with Vancouver Opera In Schools as Pianist and Music Director while on the road. She has been Pianist and Music Director for the San Diego Opera Ensemble and has coached and performed with young professional singers from all over the United States. Ms. Chang has been on the faculty at Dalhousie University, the Victoria Conservatory of Music and the Interlochen Center for the Arts.

**Evanna Chiew – Mezzo-soprano**

Evanna Chiew is currently in the second year of her Bachelor of Music degree at UBC. She made her operatic debut as the Abbess in the UBC Opera Ensemble's production of *Suor Angelica*. Ms. Chiew's recent performances include Dvořák's *Stabat Mater* with the UBC Symphony Orchestra and Choral Union and Prince Charming in *Cendrillon*. She is the recipient of the Golden Leaf Scholarship and the Maurice Taylor Scholarship in Music. Ms. Chiew's upcoming performances include Nancy in *Albert Herring* and Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro* with UBC Opera.

**Jihwan Cho – Bass-baritone**

Jihwan Cho is pursuing his Doctorate of Musical Arts in Voice Performance at UBC. His recent performances include Papageno in *The Magic Flute*, Peter in *Hansel & Gretel*, and Ariodate in *Senso*. He has performed as a soloist in Handel's *Messiah*, Haydn's *Creation* and *Requiem* by Brahms and Fauré. Mr. Cho has been the recipient of numerous awards including the Gerry Segger Music Scholarship in Performance Excellence.

**Caroline Yoonkyoung Jang – Soprano**

Born in South Korea, Caroline Yoonkyoung Jang is a member of the Pre-Professional Internship Program at Vancouver Opera. She was a finalist at the 2008 Jeunes Ambassadeurs Lyriques Competition in Montreal. Ms. Jang's operatic repertoire includes Adele in *Die Fledermaus* and Pamina in *The Magic Flute*.

**Teiya Kasahara – Soprano**

Born in Ottawa but raised on the west coast, lyric coloratura soprano Teiya Kasahara was First Runner-Up at the Northwest Regional Finals at the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions in 2007. In 2010 she was a Jeunes Ambassadeur Lyrique Laureate, competed in the Julian Gayarre International Singing Contest in Spain and made her European debut with Opéra Toulon Provence Méditerranée. In Toronto, Ms. Kasahara regularly sings with the National Ballet, the Concert Opera Group and a variety of other arts organizations.

**Young-Mi Kim – Soprano**

Born in Korea, Young-Mi Kim earned both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the Music Conservatory and Academy of Santa Cecilia in Rome, Italy. She is the recipient of numerous awards. Her operatic roles include Mimi, Cio-Cio San, Violetta, Norma, Adina, Liu, Desdemona, Adriana and Leonora. As a concert performer, she has performed extensively with orchestras in the United States, Europe and Asia. Ms. Kim is the recipient of an Order of Cultural Merits from the Government of Korea and is a professor at the Korean National University of Arts.

**Brian Kwangmin Lee – Tenor**

Brian Kwangmin Lee has performed in Vancouver and the Czech Republic. His roles include Sam in Kurt Weill's *Street Scene*, Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, Tamino in *The Magic Flute*, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* and Camille in *The Merry Widow*. Currently, Mr. Lee is singing Prince Ramiro in the Vancouver Opera in Schools touring production of *Cinderella*. Mr. Lee performs regularly with the Vancouver Opera Chorus and this past spring sang Soo Chung in *Land of Smiles* with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra.

**Rose-Ellen Nichols – Mezzo Soprano**

Originally from Pender Harbour, BC, Rose-Ellen Nichols has performed in Canada and Europe. She recently sang the role of Rebecca/Red Pine with the Vancouver Opera in Schools touring production of *Jack Pine* and also sings in the Vancouver Opera Chorus. Her operatic repertoire includes Dido in *Dido and Aeneas*, Olga Kromov in *The Merry Widow* and Olga in *Eugene Onegin*. Ms. Nichols performed at the Wexford Opera Festival in Ireland in 2009.

**Xiao Dong Zhang – Tenor**

Tenor Xiao Dong Zhang (Don) is currently in his first year of a Master's degree in Music at UBC. Mr. Zhang's operatic roles include Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi* and Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*. This past November, Mr. Zhang was a winner at the Western Canada District round of the 2010 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

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Vancouver Opera's 2010-2011 Season is generously sponsored by Goldcorp