
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE January 26, 2009
CONTACT Selina Rajani, 604-331-4824
srajani@vancouveropera.ca

**VANCOUVER OPERA ANNOUNCES PERFORMERS FOR
VOICES OF THE PACIFIC RIM**

An evening of opera with an Asian twist

Vancouver BC ~ Vancouver Opera is pleased to announce the performers for this year's ***Voices of the Pacific Rim***, a recital of popular opera selections combined with traditional Asian songs performed by rising young Japanese-, Korean- and Chinese-Canadian opera singers.

Voices of the Pacific Rim will be presented on Sunday, February 8, 2009 at 7:30pm at the **Vancouver Playhouse** (Hamilton & Dunsmuir Street). Tickets are \$20 each, including GST, and can be ordered from the **Vancouver Opera Ticket Centre** at **604-683-0222**.

In honour of the 80th anniversary of Japanese-Canadian diplomatic relations, and with the support of the Consulate General of Japan, this year's *Voices of the Pacific Rim* will spotlight Japan.

By embracing the communicative impact of music in any language, *Voices of the Pacific Rim* is intended to celebrate eastern content in western opera and honours the generations that have immigrated to Canada and have integrated their families in Canadian culture.

The Performers

Born in Kyoto, Japan, soprano **Asako Tamura** has appeared with opera companies on three continents, including Hungarian State Opera; the Ente Luglio Musicale Trapanese, Sicily; Tokyo City Opera; and Gotham Chamber Opera, New York. On the concert stage, Ms. Tamura has performed as the female soloist with The Three Tenors (Domingo, Pavarotti, Carreras) in Yokohama, Japan, as well as with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in New York.

Taiwanese soprano **Szu-Wen Wang** has appeared in several Vancouver area productions with Opera Appassionata, DragonDiva Operatic Theatre and the inaugural *Voices of the Pacific Rim* recital in 2008. Ms. Wang holds a Bachelor's degree in Vocal Performance from Taipei National University of the Arts and Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in Vocal Performance from the University of Texas.

Most recently having sung at the Presidential House in South Korea and greeted by the First Lady, Vancouver-born soprano **Gina Oh** was honored as one of the most influential Korean Women Of The World of 2008 for her work as a cultural ambassador for Canada. Ms. Oh, who holds a doctorate in opera studies from McGill University, was seen by Vancouver audiences as Obasan in the Vancouver Opera In Schools production of *Naomi's Road* and now teaches at Caulfield School of Dance and for the opera program at Vancouver Academy of Music.

Lucy Hyeon Kyung Choi is a Korean lyric soprano living in Vancouver. She has performed extensively on both sides of the Pacific Ocean since graduating from the Dan-Kook University. In addition to singing numerous solo recitals and Oratorio performances, Ms. Choi has performed the roles of Despina in *Così fan tutte*; Una Conversa and Suor Dolcina in *Suor Angelica*; Vespetta in *Pimpinone*; Suzel in *L'Amico Fritz* and as a soloist in eight Opera Appassionata mainstage productions.

Baritone **Michael Mori** completed his Masters in Opera at the University of British Columbia. He performed such roles as Schaunard, Figaro, and Guglielmo and the role of Papageno in repeat performances in Vancouver, the Czech Republic, and Prince George. Mr. Mori also performs regularly with the Vancouver Opera Chorus.

Soprano **Jessica Cheung** is an Artist Diploma candidate at The Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory of Music. Ms. Cheung made her professional opera début with Vancouver Opera In Schools in the title role of *Naomi's Road*. In 2006, she made her international début with the Hong Kong Bach Choir as a soloist in Honegger's *Le roi David*.

Music Director **Kinza Tyrrell**'s musical education has been extensive, taking her across Canada and to Europe and earning her a Doctorate in piano and vocal coaching. She is a multiple prize-winner, most recently the Bösendorfer Prize at the International Belvedere Opera Competition in Vienna. She has been invited to Italy this summer to join the COSI opera program in Sulmona. Currently, Dr. Tyrrell is Principle Répétiteur at Vancouver Opera and Music Director of the VOIS program.

Also in the cast are mezzo-soprano **Joyce Ho**, tenor **Sam Chung**, tenor **Brian Lee** and soprano **Stephanie Nakagawa**.

-30-

MEDIA SPONSORS

World Journal Georgia Straight Vancouver Shinpo