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Media contact: Jennifer Lord

Phone: 604.682.2871 ext. 4864 | jlord@vancouveropera.ca

Vancouver Opera Presents
VOICES OF THE PACIFIC RIM

An evening of opera with an Asian twist

Vancouver, B.C. ~ Vancouver Opera brings Asian and western cultures together in ***Voices of the Pacific Rim***, a recital of popular opera selections combined with traditional Asian songs, performed by rising young Asian Canadian opera singers. Celebrating and honouring the Chinese, Korean and Japanese communities, *Voices of the Pacific Rim* will be presented on Sunday **February 3, 2008 @ 7:30 pm** at the **Vancouver Playhouse**.

Soprano **Jessica Cheung**, tenor **Sam Chung**, lyric soprano **Gina Oh**, soprano **Sookhyung Park** and baritone **Gene Wu**, accompanied by **Kinza Tyrrell** on piano, will perform works by Puccini, Mozart and Strauss among others.

Tickets are \$20 each, including GST, and can be ordered by calling the Vancouver Opera Ticket Centre at 604-683-0222.

Vancouver Opera has been recognized for its leadership role in bringing cultures together in creative partnerships. During the 2006-2007 season, VO presented its new production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, which was developed during a three-year collaboration with First Nations artists and designers. In the 2004-2005 season, leading up to the production of *Madama Butterfly*, VO worked extensively with the Japanese Canadian communities in a series of more than 20 events that explored the rich history of, and complex relationships between Japanese and Canadian cultures. And in 2003 Vancouver Opera commissioned a new opera for young audiences, *Naomi's Road*, based on Joy Kogawa's book about a Japanese Canadian family's harrowing experiences during the internment of the 1940s.

Voices of the Pacific Rim will join together the Chinese, Korean and Japanese communities to celebrate the talent and artistry that they have brought to the western world of opera. As well as being a showcase for the fine young Asian singers who thrive in the opera community, the evening will introduce many people in Asian communities to the world of opera. By embracing the communicative impact of music in *any* language this recital 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

Soprano **Jessica Cheung** was seen by Vancouver audiences in the title role of *Naomi's Road*, a commissioned opera based on Joy Kogawa's book *Naomi's Road* for Vancouver Opera In Schools 2005-2006 season. She has sung roles with Burnaby Lyric Opera, North Shore Light Opera and University of California Irvine Opera. She holds degrees in both Psychology and Biology from the University of British Columbia.

Tenor **Sam Chung** is a regular with Vancouver Opera's chorus and most recently sang Second Peasant in *I Pagliacci*. He recently performed the role of Stephen in the VOIS production of *Naomi's Road* and Tybalt in *Roméo et Juliette* with the Boston University Opera. Upcoming engagements include the chorus in *Fidelio* and *La Bohème* for Vancouver Opera.

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Lyric soprano **Gina Oh** was seen by Vancouver audiences as Obasan in the VOIS production of *Naomi's Road*. Performing the role 170 times, she received the Joe Boxer Memorial Award with a career development scholarship as most promising artist from Vancouver Opera. Recent operatic performances include Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Helena from Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Mère Marie from Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmelites* and Dorothee from Massenet's *Cendrillon*. Ms. Oh recently completed her Doctorate in Music at Montreal University. Upcoming projects include *Two Divas are Better than One* and touring with her New York chamber ensemble *The Calliope Trio*.

Soprano **Sookhyung Park** has received praise for her performances of the lyric coloratura repertoire in both Canada and Korea. The *Globe and Mail* described the "pearly sheen of her lovely sound" and her "refinement and poise" in her recent appearance in the title role of *Daphne* for Pacific Opera Victoria. She will be joining this recital following her performances as Elvira in VO's *The Italian Girl in Algiers*.

Baritone **Gene Wu** made his Vancouver Opera debut in the role of The Speaker in 2007's *The Magic Flute* and performed the role of Father in the VOIS production of *Naomi's Road*. He recently appeared as Marullo in *Rigoletto* and as the Motor Cop and First Prison Guard in *Dead Man Walking* for Calgary Opera where he is a regular member of the chorus.

Vancouver Opera welcomes Victoria native **Kinza Tyrrell** to the company as the new principal repetiteur and music director of the Vancouver Opera In Schools program. She holds a Doctorate in piano and vocal coaching and for the past three years was on the music staff at the Canadian Opera Company.

Also in the cast are soprano **Lucy Choi**, tenor **Brian Lee**, soprano **Stephanie Nakagawa** and soprano **Szu-Wen Wang**.

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