

[2017-81]

 한국문화원 Korean Cultural Center, Los Angeles	Press Release		 PyeongChang 2018™  PyeongChang 2018™ PARALYMPIC GAMES
Request	For Immediate Release		Pages : 4
Date of Release	10.10.2017 (Tuesday)	Contact	Tammy Chung 323-936-3015

2017 ARI PROJECT: Performing Arts **Opera Yun Dong Ju**



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- ▶ Title : 2017 ARI PROJECT: Performing Arts
Opera Yun Dong Ju
 - ▶ Date: Friday, October 20, 2017 at 7:30pm
 - ▶ Place: Korean Cultural Center, Los Angeles 3rd Fl. Ari Hall
 - ▶ Presenters : Korean Cultural Center, LA (KCCLA) & Los Angeles
Korean-American Musicians Association(LAKMA)
 - ▶ Online Reservation : www.kccla.org
 - ▶ For more Info: tammy@kccla.org or 323-936-3015 Tammy Chung
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The Korean Cultural Center Los Angeles (KCCLA) and Los Angeles Korean-American Musicians Association(LAKMA) will present a special performance, “**Opera Yun Dong Ju**”, on Friday, October 20th, 2017 at 7:30P.M. on the 3rd floor of the Korean Cultural Center Los Angeles in the Ari Hall.

Opera Yun Dong Ju is an original Korean opera that is based on the life story of Korean poet Yun Dong Ju. His life is vividly depicted through his poems, which are set to music by Korean composer Gon Hwang. After its premier in Japan in 2014, LAKMA introduced this music to the American audience by performing highlights of the opera at the Walt Disney Concert Hall in 2015. The profound messages and artistic presentations of the opera were highly praised by the audience. In order to celebrate and commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Yun Dong Ju, the full production of this opera is going to be presented on stage at the Korean Cultural Center Los Angeles as the U.S. premier.

Under Japanese rule of Korea in 1943, Yun Dong Ju was arrested as a thought criminal by the Japanese police and had been imprisoned in Japan until he died six months before Korea gained independence from Japan in 1945. His poetry was finally published in 1948, when three collections of handwritten manuscripts were published posthumously as "The Sky and the Wind and the Stars and Poetry" (Haneulgwa Baramgwa Byeolgwa Si). With the appearance of this volume, Yun Dong Ju came into the spotlight as a Resistance poet of the late occupation period.

English subtitles and program notes in English will be provided for the non-Korean-speaking audience, so it will be a great opportunity to learn about the modern history, literature, and arts of Korea. Tenor Kenny Hojin Hwang will perform the role of Yun Dong Ju along with soloists and members of LAKMA and Pianist Kyungmi Kim. The production team includes Artistic Director Im Sang Yoon, Stage Director Clara Kim Shin, Music Coach Ryan Changhan Jeon, and Performance Coordinator Grace Eunhye Kim.

**This performance is presented as a part of the Korean Cultural Center's 2017 ARI PROJECT Season 4: Performing arts series, which features a rich program of various performing arts programs including Korean traditional music and dance, modern fusion world music, Jazz, royal court tea ceremonies, puppet shows as well as theater.*

-PROGRAM-

1. Interrogation Room

In the year of 1943, Yun Dong Ju was arrested as a thought criminal by the Japanese police and detained at the police station. In the interrogation room, Dong Ju is being accused to be one of the Chosun(Korean) students who led the independence movement in Japan. When the detective asks Dong Ju why he came to Japan, he answers that he came to Japan to study English literature.

2. A Poem I've Easily Written (In Tokyo)

In 1942, Dong Ju wrote 'A Poem I've Easily Written' while studying in Tokyo. Dong Ju feels ashamed that writing poetry is "easy" when his own beloved country is in despair.

3. Interrogation Room

In the interrogation room, Dong Ju tells the detectives that he has not accomplished anything yet for the independence of Chosun. However, the detectives do not believe his words and threatens him to reveal the identity of the main leader of the group.

4. Forward

In 1941, Dong Ju chose 19 poems to publish in a collection he intended to call "Sky, Wind, Star, and Poem", but he was unable to get it published because it was impossible to pass the censorship of the Japanese government. The use of Korean language was also forbidden during the colonial times. But he sings, "With my heart singing to the stars, I shall love all things that are dying. And I must walk the road that has been given to me."

5. Interrogation Room

Back in the interrogation room, the detective takes out the original manuscript of "Sky, Wind, Star, and Poem" -- written in Korean -- and forces Dong Ju to translate it to Japanese. Dong Ju initially argues that it is impossible to translate to Japanese since two languages are different but eventually gives in and starts translating the poem.

6. Self-Portrait

Song Mong Gyu is not only a cousin but also a lifelong friend and companion to Dong Ju. They grew up together in Manchuria, went to the same university, and were arrested for the same charge in Japan. Now, Mong Gyu sings <Self-Portrait> along with another Chosun female student who also longed for the independence of Chosun.

7. Love(Spring)

Soonee appears in three of Dong Ju's poems: 'The Hall of Love', 'Boy', and 'Snowing Map'. There is no consensus of who she really was, but she is generally thought to be someone Dong Ju secretly admired. In this scene, Soonee sings about 'Spring' with the energy of spring.

8. Solitary Cell

Dong Ju is imprisoned in a solitary cell, and the doctor visits him to give him an unknown shot, which she claims to be a nutritional injection for his health. Being unable to resist, Dong Ju gets the shot and becomes dizzy.

9. The Road (Mother)

Dong Ju loved his mother dearly, so she frequently appears in his poems. On the road, Dong Ju's mother is standing alone without knowing what she has lost nor where she has lost it. She might have not been able to imagine what would have happened to him. The meaning of this poem becomes more profound when the despair of losing one's own country is taken into consideration.

10. Counting the Stars at Night

On a starry night, Dong Ju starts counting the stars and misses his mother: one star for memory, one star for love, one star for sorrow, one star for longing, one star for poetry, and one star for his mother. Mother...

11. Solitary Cell

Again, in the solitary cell, Dong Ju has become very suspicious about the nutritional shot because he feels dizzy and lethargic after the shots. When he asks the doctor about it, the doctor denies his suspicion and gives him another shot. After the shot, Dong Ju starts to vomit and shortly falls to the floor. He dies in prison on a cold winter day of 1945.

12. Finale

※ *The program is subject to change without notice.*

<ARTISTS>

Composed by SungGon Hwang

Music Director Dr. Imsang Yoon, Producer Clara Kim Shin, Music Coach Ryan Chaghan Jeon, Coordinator/MC Eunhye Kim, Pianist Kyungmi Yoon Kim

Ten. Kenny HoJin Hwang, Bar. KyungTae Kim, Bar. Sang Keun Chang, Ten. Jong Soo Son, Ten. SinYoung Kim, Sop. Esther Heewoo Kim, Sor. JiYeon Kim, Sop. YooJin Yang, Sop. Junghyun Yuk

LAKMA (Los Angeles Korean-American Musicians' Association)

LAKMA (Los Angeles Korean-American Musicians' Association) is a non-profit organization comprised of professional musicians and music lovers who reside in California, and it was founded in January, 2012 in order to financially support other nonprofit organizations in need, through holding various musical events and concerts.