

P R E S S R E L E A S E



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EASTERN LIGHTS

MUSIC OF ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

December 5 & 12, 2009

Seattle Pro Musica presents **EASTERN LIGHTS**, an evocative and innovative program for the winter season featuring traditional folk songs and new choral music from Japan, Korea, China, India, Southeast Asia, New Zealand, and Australia. This unique concert includes music from various Asian and Pacific cultures, sung in twelve different languages.

In addition to traditional melodies, beautiful harmonies and stunning new choral works, the program also features music in which singers use their voices to imitate characteristic sounds of various cultures—the sounds of an Indonesian gamelan, a herd of Mongolian horses, or a train travelling through Taiwan in the rain. See next page for information on specific works, composers and countries represented. Performances also include a free pre-concert talk by conductor Karen P. Thomas one hour prior to all performances except Family Matinee. Attendees will gain insights into the historical and contemporary developments in choral music from Asia and the Pacific.

Saturday, December 5, 2009 3:00 pm & 7:30 pm
(Pre-Concert Lecture at 6:30 pm only)

Town Hall, 1119 Eighth Avenue, Seattle

Family Matinee at 3 pm. Music and fun at this one-hour performance for children and families, which includes a sing-along of favorite carols and a chance for kids to conduct. Children twelve and under free with advance purchase.

Saturday, December 12, 2009 3:00 pm & 7:30 pm
(Pre-Concert Lectures at 2:00 pm and 6:30 pm)

Chapel at Bastyr University, 14500 Juanita Drive NE, Bothell

Call (206) 781-2766 for tickets or order online at seattlepromusica.org

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COMPOSERS AND COUNTRIES FEATURED IN EASTERN LIGHTS:

CHINA—Composers Chen Yi and Zhou Long, both of whom moved to the U.S. after the Cultural Revolution, are now internationally renowned. Chen Yi was the first woman to receive a master's degree in composition in China and has composed works for Yo Yo Ma, Chanticleer, and the New York Philharmonic, among many others. Our program features her work *Written on a Rainy Night*, as well as her arrangements of traditional folk songs. The program also includes music by Chien Shan-Hua from Taiwan.

KOREA—Sungji Hong, Hyo-Won Woo, and Hyun Chul Lee are contemporary composers from Korea. Sungji Hong has composed for the Seoul Philharmonic, BBC Singers, and Trio Medieval. Hyo-Won Woo is the composer-in-residence for the world-renowned Incheon City Chorale of Korea. Also on the program is the beloved folk song *Arirang*.

JAPAN—We include two traditional Japanese folk songs arranged by Ken Hakoda and Chen Yi: *Hiraita, hiraita* and the well-known *Sakura*—as well as a new work by the young composer and pianist Rikuya Terashima.

PHILIPPINES—One of the leading composers in the Philippines today, Francisco Feliciano is a composer of opera, oratorio, symphonic and choral works. *Pokpok Alimpako* is based on a Southern Philippines melody and the words of a Muslim children's chant.

THAILAND—The beloved Thai melody, *Lao Duang Deuan*, in an arrangement by K. Tantrarungroj.

INDONESIA—Two rhythmically intricate works by Budi Susanto Yohanes, in which singers imitate the sounds and rhythms of traditional Balinese and Javanese gamelans.

INDIA—*Dravidian Dithyramb* by the famed Indian composer and conductor Victor Paranjoti. This work embodies traces of ragas from the Carnatic music of South India.

MONGOLIA—*Naiman Sharag* by Se Enkbayar is set to a poem celebrating the importance of horses in Mongolian culture and refers to the *Eight Chestnut Horses* of Genghis Khan.

AUSTRALIA—Stephen Leek is one of Australia's leading composers and choral conductors, here represented by his new Christmas carol *Southern Cross*.

NEW ZEALAND—The leading choral composer of New Zealand, David Hamilton has written over 100 works for choirs. We feature his recent Christmas piece *Lullaby Carol*.

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ABOUT SEATTLE PRO MUSICA. As a recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts American Masterpieces grant and the Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence, Seattle Pro Musica has garnered international recognition and praise for its CDs and performances. Seattle Pro Musica has appeared at international music festivals and on NPR's *Saint Paul Sunday* and hosted the 2007 American Masterpieces Choral Festival. American Record Guide ranks Seattle Pro Musica as "*among America's very best choirs.*"

Seattle Pro Musica's 2009-2010 Season is supported in part by:

