

OPERA

“KAGUYA-HIME”

“PRINCESS FROM THE MOON”

- U. S. premiere

in 2 Acts / in Japanese (with English supertitle)

Music & Libretto by
HIDEAKI HIRAI

Conductor & Stage Director
HIDEAKI HIRAI

"Puccini Japanese style"
THE CANBERRA TIMES
(AUSTRALIA)

"impressed by the birth of
a fascinating Japanese
national opera"
"full of beautiful melodies"
ONGAKU-NO-TOMO
(JAPAN)

"constantly melodious
and warmly harmonic"
"beautiful melodies"
ZPRAVODAJ
(CZECH REP.)

Saturday, August 22, 2015
at 7 pm, Doors open at 6pm

ARATANI THEATRE, Little Tokyo

244 S. San Pedro Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Japanese American Cultural & Community Center

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TICKETS: \$75 (including Post-concert Reception & Gift) \$40 \$35 \$30
\$50 (a pair of parent & child) All seats are reserved.

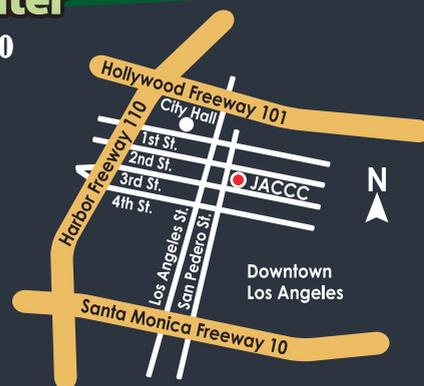
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Presented by Opera "Kaguya-Hime" L.A. Committee
Japanese American Cultural & Community Center

Under the auspices of Consulate-General of Japan in Los Angeles
The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles
Tokyo International Association of Artists

Sponsored by Robert Crowder Foundation

Cooperated by Nikkei Choral Federation of Southern California, L.A. Daiku,
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在ロサンゼルス日本国総領事館
CONSULATE GENERAL OF JAPAN
LOS ANGELES

JAPAN FOUNDATION
LOS ANGELES

About the Opera, "KAGUYA-HIME"

The opera, "**Princess from the Moon (KAGUYA-HIME)**", its music and libretto written by Japan's critically acclaimed conductor, Maestro Hideaki HIRAI (www.hideaki-hirai.com), is based on the classic Japanese folktale, "Tale of Taketori (a bamboo-cutter)" or "Kaguya-Hime (Princess Kaguya)". The story is the Japan's oldest and one of the most well-known fairytales. This opera has been performed in Salzburg, Anif, Prague, and Canberra as well as many cities in Japan. It has already become one of the most favorite and frequently performed Japanese operas.

It is the tale of a young princess who descends to Earth. An old bamboo-cutter and his wife find the princess in a piece of golden shining bamboo and raise her as their daughter. Merely in 3 months, she grows up to be the most beautiful woman in the country, attracting many marriage proposals from dignitaries, including the Mikado (Emperor of Japan). The princess rejects these proposals, knowing in her heart that she must one day return to the moon.

HIDEAKI HIRAI, *Conductor & Composer*

Hideaki Hirai, who has "a talent deeply ingrained in his genes" (The Den), is one of the most gifted young conductors from Japan. In December, 2013, "Maestro Hirai made a remarkable Carnegie Hall debut" (The New York Culture Examiner) with rave reviews such as "especially impressive, dynamic, confident, justly deserving of the standing ovation" (The New York Concert Review), conducting from the memory the Beethoven 9th Symphony with New York Festival Orchestra (NYFO). Upon a great success, NYFO has appointed him Music Director and Conductor, starting from 2014-2015 season. Since 1998, as a Co-founder, he has collaborated with Czech Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra both in the Czech Republic and abroad, now serving as Principal Guest Conductor.

Highlights in the 2012/13 season include his sensational debut at the Wiener Staatsoper and his successful debut in Salzburg for the Austrian premiere of his own acclaimed opera, "Princess from the Moon (Kaguya-Hime)". Besides, Maestro Hirai has written two other operas: "True Love of Komachi" and "The White Fox" which have also become very popular to enjoy many performances in Japan. In 1997 he was the first prize-winner of the Sixth International Conducting Competition in Hradec Kralove (Czech Republic). In 2001 Mr. Hirai was chosen by Lorin Maazel as one of the ten promising conductors in Asia.

Mr. Hirai, born into a celebrated musical family, studied piano, violin and composition with his grandfather, eminent composer Kozaburo Hirai, who studied under G. Mahler's disciple, Klaus Pringsheim, and cello with his father, Takeichiro Hirai, noted cellist whom Pablo Casals designated as his successor. Hideaki Hirai graduated from the University of Rochester (New York) with a Bachelor's degree in political science, where he studied conducting under David Effron at the Eastman School of Music. He completed his Master's degree in conducting at the Peabody Conservatory of the John's Hopkins University under Frederik Prausnitz, followed by further studies under Otakar Trhlik at the Janacek Academy of Music (Czech Republic) and his mentor Sir Colin Davis in London. www.hideaki-hirai.com

<Cast>

The Princess Kaguya:	Nobuko Takahashi
Mikado (<i>The Emperor</i>):	Katsuji Miura
Okina (<i>An Old Bamboo Cutter</i>):	Toshihiro Tachibana
Ohna (<i>Okina's wife</i>):	Hiromi Morota
Prince Kuramochi (<i>A Handsome Prince</i>):	Nadav Hart
Dainagon (<i>Grand Counsellor</i>):	Benito Galindo
Chunagon (<i>Middle Counsellor</i>):	Steve Moritsugu
Kuge (<i>Courtier</i>):	TBA
Prince Ishizukuri (<i>Master of Bamboo Flute</i>):	TBA
Sato-no-musume (<i>A village maiden</i>):	Manami Sugimori Tobenkin
King of the Moon:	Steve Moritsugu
Chorus:	Kaguya-Hime L.A. Chorus Kaguya-Hime L.A. Mothers' & Children's Chorus
Orchestra:	Kaguya-Hime L. A. Orchestra