



Opera Viva Ltd

22 Gemmill Lane, #04-00,
Singapore 069257

MEDIA RELEASE – Singapore, September 9th, 2009

The blending of two distinctive art forms and cultures into one precious evening...

“KANNAGI, the story of the Jewelled Anklet”

**Proudly presented jointly by
OperaViva Limited & Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society
In conjunction with the Sri Mariamman Temple**

Many Firsts in this Production

A first for **“Kannagi, the story of the Jewelled Anklet”** adapted into an operatic piece, with the music and libretto written exclusively for this interpretation;

A first production from two diverse cultures creating a western interpretation of an Indian Legend;

A first collaborative effort between OperaViva Ltd and the Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society, blending two distinctive Art forms into one;

A first operatic presentation in the historical Indian temple, the Sri Mariamman Temple.

The Composer and Librettist

This short chamber opera is a condensed version of an ancient Tamil epic Silappadikaram by Prince Illango Adigal. The music is composed exclusively by John Sharpley for this beautiful interpretation and accompanied with lyrics wonderfully penned by Robert Yeo. Together their art piece will emphasize universal elements of love, infidelity, faith, forgiveness, deification and return to Oneness while at the same time honouring timeless Indian elements.

Canadian Shelly Quick will lend her artistic direction to tell an evocative story of an Indian legend through western opera and traditional Indian dance, blending two art forms and cultures into one with veteran soprano, Amanda Colliver as the catalyst.

OperaViva Limited registration no. 200809663K

An approved charity organization under the Charities Act since 12/03/09. IPC approved since 14/04/09.

OperaViva Limited c/o CAEMPL T 6323 3790 | F 6225 2748 | W www.operaviva.com.sg



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Performance Details

Venue : Wedding Hall @ Sri Mariamman Temple on
244 South Bridge Road 058793
Date : Sunday, 25 October 2009
Time : 7.30pm to 8.30pm (1 hr with no interval)
Seats : 244

Synopsis

The virtuous and beautiful Kannagi, renowned for the ruby anklets she wears, marries Kovalan, the handsome son of a rich merchant Kovalan. Their happy marriage is however short - lived as he has a karmic past that pursues him. He is easily ensnared by the beguiling courtesan and dancer Madhavi, betrays his wife, and has a daughter with Madhavi. Fortunately, he realizes his error, returns to his beloved wife and both decide to go on a redemptive journey to the city of Madurai. Here, Kovalan decides to sell one of Kannagi's anklets to help with their expenses. But it so happens that the Queen of Madurai has lost an anklet that nearly resembles the one Kannagi has. The person to whom Kovalan tries to sell of the anklet reports him as a thief and he is seized and killed on the King's instructions. In her anger and distress, Kannagi blames the rulers. The gods and goddesses, who have witnessed Kannagi's dilemma and empathized with her fidelity, go to her assistance by turning her into an avenging goddess. Kannagi is deified, acquires divine powers and destroys the rulers and their accomplices, and the city, which goes up in flames. In the end, however, after the torching of the city, Kannagi discovers forgiveness. Purged of all desires by fire, she becomes One with her enemies and the universe, proclaims Peace. To the refrain of Shantih, Shantih, she rises, still a goddess, reunites with her husband and is honored.

Creative Team

Composer : John Sharpley
Libretto : Robert Yeo
Producer : Robert Yeo
Artistic Director : Shelly Quick

Production Team

Stage Manager : Siti Raudha Tehan

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Performers

Soprano : Amanda Colliver
Pianist : John Sharpley
Dancer : Anjum Bharti from SIFAS

Management Team

Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society : Pathmanaban Selvadurai
: Vimala Selvadurai
: Shankar Rajan

OperaViva Limited : Robert Yeo
: Belinda Yeoh
: Doreen Tan
: Jun Yeo

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OperaViva Limited

The 2nd opera company in Singapore, OperaViva was incorporated on 16 May 2008 by the trio comprising impresario-vocalist Leow Siak Fah, composer-pianist John Sharpley and poet-playwright Robert Yeo. OperaViva focuses on Baroque and contemporary opera as well as on new works by Singaporean and other Asian composers / librettists.

“KANNAGI, the story of the Jewelled Anklet” will be its second production for 2009 since its inaugural concert held on 8 and 9 April this year, entitled *Songs of Love, Despair & Hope*, featured songs and excerpts from operas and musicals in three sets – Early Music, Contemporary Musicals and Contemporary Opera and was received successfully. In February 2010, OperaViva will premiere *Fences*, an original opera written by Sharpley and Yeo. Conceived by Leow six years ago, *Fences*, is about the fences in our hearts told through a version of the Romeo and Juliet story set in the tumultuous 1960s just before Singapore joined Malaysia, through the period when Singapore was in Malaysia and into separation from Malaysia. The question is whether love will triumph despite parental objections and racial and religious divisions.

OperaViva’s other directors are Dr Chua Soo Pong, the Director of the Chinese Opera Institute; Mr Liew Chin Choy, Vice-President (Admin), Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts; arts enthusiast Ms Juliana Lim; Mr P Selvadurai a Consultant with Tan Rajah & Cheah and President of the Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society; and Ms Karen Koh Executive Director of Nutmeg Management Corporation.

OperaViva is a non-profit, charity and IPC registered organisation providing tax exemptions for all donations received individually or through a corporation.

For more information on OperaViva, please contact:

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Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society

The Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society was founded in the year 1949 and has completed now 60 years of establishment. The Society is devoted to the teaching of the classical arts in a non-formal environment. It began humbly, with just 12 members. Today it has a Principal, 21 full time teachers, 1 part time teacher, over 1700 members and about 1,750 students with a pan-Indian curriculum that reflects the cultural diversity of a vast country with an ancient heritage. Developing and sustaining that curriculum has been one of the greatest challenges for the Society so far, but one which has yielded many benefits. It has fostered home-grown talent and created an awareness and understanding of the Indian cultural heritage, particularly valuable in the multi-ethnic Singapore.

The Society's philosophy is described in Sanskrit in its logo which reads: 'Kala Samskrithi Lakshanam' – art characterises civilisation.

The Society is a non-profit Indian cultural organisation in Singapore that has achieved a high level of technical excellence in Indian Fine Arts.

For more information on SIFAS, please contact:

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Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society
2A Starlight Road
Singapore 217755
Website: www.sifas.org

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Sri Mariamman Temple

The Sri Mariamman Temple is Singapore's oldest Hindu temple. It is an agamic temple, built in the South Indian style. Located at No. 244 South Bridge Road, in the downtown Chinatown district, the temple serves mainly South Indian Tamil Hindu Singaporeans in the city-state. Due to its architectural and historical significance, the temple has been gazetted a National Monument.

For more information on the performance, please contact:

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For more information on sponsorship opportunities and media related, please contact:

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