



University of North Texas
College of Music

Lecture Recital | Thursday, April 17, 2025 | 6:30 p.m. | Recital Hall

Daniel Salls, tenor

Mary Feminear, soprano *

SeonYoung Im, piano

A Comprehensive Performance Guide of the
Korean opera *Lee Joong Seob* (*이중섭*, 2019)
by Hyun Seok Ju (현석주, b. 1971)

from *Lee Joong Seob* (*이중섭*) (2019)..... Seok Ju Hyun (현석주)
(b. 1971)

Text by Sook Young Kim (김숙영)

Arietta, Act 1, Scene 1: Off the Coast of Seogwipo (서귀포 앞바다)

Duet, Act 1, Scene 2: House of Joong Seob (중섭의 집) *

Aria, Act 2: House of Jeong Chiyeol (정치열의 집)

Duet, Act 4: Psychiatric Ward (정신병동) *

Program five hundred eighty-two of the 2024–2025 season
Photography and videography are prohibited

Program Notes

Salls, Daniel Kim. A Comprehensive Performance Guide of the Korean Opera *Lee Joong Seob* (이중섭, 2019) by Hyun Seok Ju (현석주, b. 1971).

This dissertation provides a comprehensive performance guide for the Korean opera *Lee Joong Seob*, composed by Hyun Seok Ju in 2019, which portrays the life and artistic struggles of painter Lee Joong Seob (1916–1956), within Korea's complex historical landscape. Addressing the challenges of staging this opera, the study explores its musical, linguistic, and dramatic demands, including Korean phonetics, stylistic nuances, and the integration of Western operatic traditions with Korean musical elements. A complete International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) transcription of the libretto is provided, along with word-by-word translations, character analysis, and vocal performance recommendations to aid singers in achieving an authentically expressive performance. Additionally, the dissertation contextualizes the work within the broader evolution of Korean opera and examines its potential for international recognition, contributing to the expansion of operatic repertoire and cross-cultural engagement.

Biographies

Hyun Seok Ju (b. 1971) is a composer whose work has contributed significantly to contemporary Korean music and opera. He earned both a Master of Music and a Doctor of Musical Arts in Composition from Yonsei University Graduate School of Music, where he developed a compositional approach that integrates traditional Korean elements with contemporary techniques. His work has been recognized in various national competitions, including the Orchestral Division of the 34th and 36th Seoul Music Festivals, hosted by the Korean Music Association, as well as the Grand Prize at the 9th Korean National Creative Music Festival. His choral composition Mixed Choir Whale Song received the Grand Prize at the Ulsan National Creative Music Festival, reflecting his ability to incorporate Korean musical aesthetics within modern choral writing. The contributions of Hyun to opera are particularly significant. *Lee Joong Seob* was presented at the 2019 Seoul Opera Festival at the Seoul Gangdong Arts Center in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of the artist Lee Joong Seob. The work was subsequently selected for the New Works of the Year program by the Arts Council Korea in 2022 and 2023. Other operatic works include *Flame of the Nation Yu Gwan Sun*, *Daejeon Blues* from 2017, and *Haenyeo* from 2021, each demonstrating an engagement with historical and cultural narratives relevant to Korean identity. The compositions of Hyun have been performed by leading ensembles in Korea, including the KBS Symphony Orchestra under Kang Suk-hee, the Suwon City Symphony Orchestra under Park Eun-sung, the Seongnam City Symphony Orchestra under Kim Bong, and the Gangnam Symphony Orchestra under Lee Dong-ho. His choral works have been interpreted by the Seoul Metropolitan Choir under Kim Myung-hyeop, the Ulsan Metropolitan Choir under Min In-ki, and the Daejeon Metropolitan Choir under Lee Dae-woo. He currently holds teaching positions at Korea Baptist Theological University/Seminary and Mokwon University. In addition, he serves as General Manager at Opera in Jeju, where he continues to contribute to the expansion of contemporary Korean opera. His work reflects an ongoing commitment to musical innovation and the preservation of Korean cultural heritage within a global artistic context.

Kim Sook Young (b. 1970), the librettist, is also a stage director, and a scholar. She has helped shape the artistic discourse on Korean cultural narratives in contemporary Korean opera and theater. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Vocal Music from Hanyang University, a Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Directing from Arizona State University, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Theatre Performance America from Arizona State University. Her academic and artistic practice is rooted in an interdisciplinary approach that integrates theatrical and operatic traditions. She had directed canonical Western operas such as *Rigoletto*, *Madame Butterfly*, *La Traviata*, *Tosca*, and *The Magic Flute*, as well as original works including *Lee Joong Seob* and *Queen Heo*. Her libretti and directorial work demonstrate an interest in reinterpreting historical and artistic figures through contemporary perspectives. Underscoring her ability to construct narratives that synthesize national history with broader operatic traditions, her production of *Lee Joong Seob* was the first Korean creative opera invited to the Seoul Opera Festival. Kim's scholarship and creative output extend to productions that explore the intersections of Korean and global cultural elements. The adaptation of *Die Fledermaus* for the Victoria Theatre in Singapore incorporated both local and Korean influences, demonstrating a directorial philosophy that emphasizes intercultural engagement. In addition to her work as a librettist and director, Kim is involved in higher education as an adjunct professor in the Department of Music at Sejong University and an honorary professor at Seoul Cyber University. Her pedagogical approach focuses on mentoring young artists and fostering critical engagement with performance studies. Other contributions to opera and theater continue to include the representation of Korean narratives within the international operatic canon. Through her libretti, directorial work, and academic engagement, she remains an active participant in the evolving discourse of contemporary opera and performance.