Press Release

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Unsuk Chin

Alice in Wonderland
new opera in Munich

Alice in Wonderland
(world premiere)
30 June 2007, 7.30 pm
Nationaltheater, Munich

further performances
4/7 July
15/17/20/23 November

The world premiere of Unsuk Chin's first opera, *Alice in Wonderland*, opens the Munich Opera Festival on 30 June. Presented by the Bavarian State Opera, the new work is conducted by the company's Artistic Director Kent Nagano, a leading champion of Chin's music, and staged by Achim Freyer. The libretto, based on Lewis Carroll's classic tale, has been created by the composer in collaboration with David Henry Hwang, author of the acclaimed and award-winning play *M. Butterfly*.

The cast for *Alice in Wonderland* includes Sally Matthews in the title role, Piia Komsi, Dietrich Henschel, Andrew Watts, and a cameo appearance by Dame Gwyneth Jones as the Queen. Following three performances in June and July, the opera returns in the main Munich season in November. These Munich performances take place by permission of Los Angeles Opera, who commissioned the work during Kent Nagano's time as its Music Director.

Kent Nagano on Unsuk Chin

Lewis Carroll's surreal dreamlike world, full of curious happenings and black humour, promises to finds a perfect partner in Chin's music. Kent Nagano writes: *"I regard Unsuk Chin as one of the most fascinating voices of our present day; born in Korea, she studied in Germany and lives today in Berlin. Her music can never be pinpointed as having a single, specific style. It remains eternally fresh, original and full of surprises. She mixes and matches well-known parameters, uses rhythm as colour, colour as tempo, interweaves catchy tunes with unexpected harmonies - the ideal artist to give operatic life to the equally zany and philosophical story of Alice on her way through the land of wonders."*

about the new opera

Unsuk Chin discovered Carroll's *Alice* stories in South Korea as an adult, partly through references in scientific books exploring the parallels between minds and machines. She was immediately attracted to the multi-layering of the action and its attraction for *"different groups of people – regardless of age, education, profession or nationality. It can captivate experts and laymen, children and adults as well. That is also an artistic ideal for me."*

...dreams and reality...

"Already, when I read Alice *for the first time, I was fascinated and wholly amazed because I recognized much of what I had seen in my own dreams. I wanted the dreamworld to be the reality in my opera. So, I decided to replace the beginning and the end - with their references to everyday life - with two dream scenes. Apart from these scenes we have used the sequence of the book quite faithfully. But* Alice *is not solely a matter of dreams – it is also about a clash between the different ways in which we communicate and experience reality."*

For an interview with Chin about *Alice in Wonderland* visit the News section at **www.boosey.com/chin**. For full information about the Munich performances visit **www.bayerische.staatsoper.de**.

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Chin at European festivals

Unsuk Chin features at:
Settembre Musica
(Turin and Milan)
5-7 September

Musica Strasbourg
6-7 October

Venice Biennale
6 October

This autumn brings a series of major festival features for Unsuk Chin. Italy's leading new music festival, Settembre Musica, includes performances of her most notable works in Turin and Milan: the Grawemeyer Award-winning *Violin Concerto* is performed by Francesco D'Orazio and a London Sinfonietta programme includes *Acrostic-Wordplay*, *Canatatrix Sopranica* and the *Double Concerto*. The Musica festival in Strasbourg also features the *Violin Concerto* with Hae-Sun-King as soloist and *Acrostic-Wordplay* with Ensemble Modern, together with the French premieres of *Kala* and *Trojan Women* for voices and orchestra. In addition, *Acrostic-Wordplay* is performed by the Nieuw Ensemble at the Venice Biennale.

A 15-minute suite from Chin's *Alice in Wonderland*, scored for soprano and orchestra and entitled *snagS & Snarls*, has been performed in the USA, UK, Germany, Sweden, Denmark and Spain to date. Chin's next project is a new work to be premiered by the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal under Kent Nagano in March 2008.

For further information on Unsuk Chin, visit **www.boosey.com/chin** or contact:

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