

UC SANTA BARBARA

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UCSB MUSIC AFFILIATES OFFER FREE PREVIEW OF OPERA 'RED AZALEA'

Composer William Kraft and director Michael Sokol will give area music fans a preview of Kraft's opera, "Red Azalea" -- based on the award-winning book by Anchee Min -- Sunday, Feb. 2 at 2:30 p.m. in the Mary Craig Auditorium at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1130 State St. in Santa Barbara.

The preview, hosted by the UCSB Music Affiliates, the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, and the UCSB Department of Music, comes just five days before the opera's world premiere at UCSB.

Kraft and Sokol will discuss Min's autobiographical story of life in China during the Cultural Revolution and how the story was put to music.

The preview is free. Seating is limited and will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

Tickets are on sale for the Friday, Feb. 7 premiere performance of the opera at 8 p.m. and for a second performance at 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 9. Both shows are in the Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall on the UCSB campus. Tickets cost \$15 for general admission, \$10 for students, and can be purchased at the UCSB Arts and Lectures Ticket Office (893-3535).

Kraft, a professor of music at UCSB since 1991, has had a distinguished career as both a composer and a musician. He was affiliated with the Los Angeles

Philharmonic Orchestra for 30 years as a percussionist, timpanist, conductor, and composer-in-residence.

Sokol joined the UCSB music faculty in 1999 and has sung with the Metropolitan Opera, the Santa Fe Opera, the Glimmerglass Opera, and the Portland Opera. He has also performed with many symphonies, including the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and the St. Louis Symphony.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.