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SHIGEMATSU ORNSTEIN

## ABOUT:

### Virtual Tour of *1 Hour Photo* by Tetsuro Shigematsu

Navigating this new world of social distancing spawned the innovative solution to bring vAct's award-winning production *1 Hour Photo* across Canada. vAct has collaborated with a Vancouver based film production company, Brightlight Pictures, to produce a high quality, 75 minute cinematic adaptation of *1 Hour Photo* by Tetsuro Shigematsu. Presented by theatre companies across Canada, the *1 Hour Photo* Virtual Tour will engage with audiences through scheduled showings accompanied by a live talkback with Tetsuro Shigematsu.

### SYNOPSIS

Written and performed by Tetsuro Shigematsu, *1 Hour Photo* is the story of Mas Yamamoto, a man whose life was swept up by the major currents of the 20th century. From growing up in a fishing village on the banks of the Fraser River, to being confined at a Japanese Canadian internment camp during World War II, to helping build the Distant Early Warning Line in the Canadian Arctic during the height of the Cold War, *1 Hour Photo* is a moving portrait saturated with the most vivid colours of our times.

### PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES

There are many things that drew me to Mas' story. In particular, his "love story" is unconventional, and yet true to life. I was also fascinated how Mas' life so closely follows the contours of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, from the chaos of World War II, The Cold War, to the economic boom of the 1980's. This story is about the major currents that shaped our century, yet it is also a very personal story, about suffering egregious injustice, and resilience, in the face of overwhelming odds. Sometimes, it's easy to look at an old person, and never give them another thought. For me, learning Mas' story has made me better appreciate how everyone has a story, especially our elders.

*Tetsuro Shigematsu*

### DIRECTOR'S NOTES

I'm very pleased to be working with Tetsuro Shigematsu and the VACT family on our follow-up to Tetsuro's *Empire of the Son*. I've always loved biographies. Maybe that's why I've always loved theatre. When a person's life is thrown into relief against the backdrop of history, both can become more vivid, more real. Time and time again, history has shown that the human spirit can rise above the walls that others put in its way. This is a glimpse into the life and times of Mas Yamamoto, one of those remarkable people whose resilient spirit could not be held down.

*Richard Wolfe*

## THE COMPANY

Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre occupies a unique role within the ecology of Canadian theatre. We are only one of two professional companies in Canada whose mandate focuses on Asian Canadian theatre artists, and one of the only diversely mandated companies committed to creating new Canadian work.

Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre was originally founded in 2001 as a community theatre group led by Joyce Lam. Joyce saw that Vancouver's stages didn't reflect the REAL Vancouver, with its dynamic, diverse, and ever growing Asian Canadian community. VACT, became an incubator of some of the best Asian Canadian talent in the country. Over the next 12 years, VACT collaborated with over 500 Asian Canadian theatre artists, and produced over 40 shows.

In 2013, Donna Yamamoto was appointed as Artistic Director and began VACT's rapid transformation from a community theatre to one of the most exciting diversity-mandated professional theatre companies in Canada. She wanted the company to become not just professional, but world class - one that nurtured the incredible talent of the many Asian Canadian artists who needed more professional opportunities and support. Which is why we do what we do – the development and premiering of new Asian Canadian dramatic works.

Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre is now a PACT member with operations funding support from three levels of government, producing a seasonal mainstage production, tours of past mainstage productions to theatres across Canada, development workshops, and the MSG Lab, the annual new play development program in association with the Playwrights Theatre Centre.

A central part of our mission is working to subvert the stereotype that Asian Canadians constitute a monolithic community. Central to how we dismantle this perception is through the unpacking and exploration of the iridescent diversity that can be found within Asian Canadian communities. This approach directly informs how we seek out, develop and curate both our play development and mainstage programming. Not only is there a wide range of nations or cultures within the Asian Canadian community, further to that, there is even more diversity to be found within each community in and of themselves.

vAct operates on the traditional, unceded territories of the xʷməθ kwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

## COMPANY LIST

Playwright/Performer

Tetsuro Shigematsu\*

## PRODUCTION TEAM

Director	Richard Wolfe*
Stage Manager	Susan Miyagishima*
Production Manager / TD	Adrian Muir
Set Designer	Pam Johnson
Lighting Designer	Gerald King
Assistant Lighting Designer	Harika Xu
Sound Designer/Composer	Steve Charles
Video Designer	Jamie Nesbitt
Model and Miniature Designer	Susan Miyagishima
Costume Designer	Laura Fukumoto
Costume Design Mentor	Barbara Clayden
Dramaturg	Heidi Taylor
Audio Dramaturg	Yvonne Gall
Virtual Tour Host	June Fukumura

## VANCOUVER ASIAN CANADIAN THEATRE TEAM

Producing Artistic Director	Donna Yamamoto
General Manager	Annie Jang
Associate Producer	Susan Miyagishima
Marketing Associate	Sally Yoo Jun Lee

\*vAct is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT), and engages under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement, professional artists who are members of Canadian Actors' Equity Association.

With the generous support of Canadian Actors' Equity Association

Filmed in association with Brightlight Pictures

*1 Hour Photo* was developed in dramaturgical collaboration and partnership with Playwrights Theatre Centre.

# BIOS

## **Producing Artistic Director:** Donna Yamamoto

Since taking over the helm of vAct in 2013, Donna has devoted herself to the development of stage productions that are written and performed by Asian Canadian artists. Under her tenure, vAct has garnered three Jessie Awards and 21 Jessie nominations, for *Ga Ting*, *Empire of the Son*, *1 Hour Photo*, *The Ones We Leave Behind* and *Kuroko*. Donna was awarded the Vancouver NOW Representation and Inclusion Award at the 2016 Jessies for outstanding leadership in developing works by 3 Asian Canadian playwrights in The Cultch's 2015-16 season. That same year, she was chosen as the UBCP/ACTRA Women's Committee International Women's Day Honouree in recognition of her outstanding contribution to causes of social justice.

## **Writer/Performer/Filmmaker:** Tetsuro Shigematsu

Described by the Georgia Straight as "one of the city's best artists," Tetsuro Shigematsu is a former writer for *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, in 2004, he became the first person-of-colour to host a daily national radio program in Canada, where he wrote and produced over 50 pieces of radio drama. His solo-work, *Empire of the Son*, has played in 18 cities to over 20,000 people, and was described by Colin Thomas as, "one of the best shows ever to come out of Vancouver. Ever." *1 Hour Photo*, was a finalist for the 2019 Governor General's Award for Drama.

## **Director:** Richard Wolfe

Richard is multi-award winning director, producer, dramaturg and specialist in contemporary theatre who's received, among other awards: The Ray Michel Award, The John Moffat and Larry Lillo Prize, as well 6 Jessie Richardson nominations and 2 awards for Outstanding Direction. Richard is the Artistic Director of Pi Theatre and will be directing the Canadian premiere of *Lampedusa* by Anders Lustgarten which can be seen at Performance Works in Vancouver this spring.

## **Dramaturg:** Heidi Taylor

Heidi Taylor is a dramaturg, director, and Artistic & Executive Director at PTC, based on the traditional unceded, occupied territories of the xʷməθ kwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl̓ílwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. She recently dramaturged the world premieres of Carmen Aguirre's *Anywhere But Here*, Tetsuro Shigetmatsu's *Kuroko*, *Chicken Girl* by Derek Chan, and *Public and Private* by choreographer Ziyian Kwan. Current projects: Derek Chan's *yellow objects*, Zahida Rahemtulla's *The Wrong Bashir*, Amber Funk Barton's *How to Say Goodbye*, and *Mermaid Spring*, created by Barbara Adler and Kyla Gardiner. Heidi served as Board Treasurer of LMDA and the founding president of LMDA Canada.

## **Set Design:** Pam Johnson

Pam is thrilled to be designing *1 Hour Photo*. This is Pam's 40th year as a set designer since graduating from Studio 58. She has designed for, *Bard on the Beach*, *Arts Club*, *Theatre Calgary*, and *Shaw Festival* to name just a few companies. Pam is a multiple Jessie Award winner, along with a Career Achievement Award.

## **Lighting Design:** Gerald King

Gerald has designed lighting for many local Dance, Theatre and Opera Companies. Some of those include: *Ballet British Columbia*, *Bard on The Beach*, *The Vancouver Opera*, *The Arts Club*, and *Kokoro Dance*. Outside of Vancouver his work has been seen with *The National Ballet of Canada*, *Theatre Calgary*, *The Citadel*, *The National Arts Centre*, *Western Canada Theatre* and numerous others. Gerald has received a number of Awards for his Lighting Design and is a member of the Associated Designers of Canada.

## **Costume Design:** Laura Fukumoto

Laura arrived on the stolen land known as Vancouver over a decade ago, and is now a performance poet, playwright, and local cloth wizard with a BFA from UBC. Favourite costume design credits: 'Straight White Men' with Itsazoo, 'The North Plan' with UpintheAir, and 'The Ones We Leave Behind' with VACT. More recently Laura wrote and directed the sold out and honourably mentioned 'Where the Quiet Queers Are' at Vancouver Fringe 2019, co-wrote and performed 'The Mending Circle' at the Powell Street Festival Telethon with Carolyn Nakagawa, and has performed her poetry at events and festivals across Vancouver.

**Audio Dramaturg:** Yvonne Gall

Yvonne Gall is an award winning radio producer and journalist with 35 years experience, including 25 years at CBC Radio producing stories and content for all of CBC's flagship programs.

**Video Design:** Jamie Nesbitt

Jamie designs across North America and Europe. His resume includes: Stratford Festival, Shaw Festival, Canadian Stage, NAC, Soulpepper, Vancouver Playhouse, Citadel, Theatre Calgary, Palazzo Circus (Berlin), Calgary Stampede Grandstand Show, Bard on the Beach, Arts Club, Charlottetown Festival, Electric Company, Kidd Pivot (Germany/Canada), Pacific Opera, Opera de Quebec, Company 14 (New York), Vancouver Opera, Why Not, Neptune, The Belfry, Old Trouts, ARC, Cahoots, PTE, Touchstone, Vertigo, Pi Theatre, Theatre Network, Birdland, Rumble Productions, Gateway, Greenthumb, Yukon Arts Centre, and many more. Jamie is a graduate of Studio 58.

**Associate Producer/Stage Manager/Model & Miniature Design:** Susan Miyagishima

Susan is an accomplished stage manager, props designer, production & event coordinator, and has recently expanded her expertise into both directing and producing. As well as having worked locally with many of Vancouver's esteemed theatre companies, she has toured extensively across Canada and abroad into the US and Asia. Susan is honoured to have stage managed four main stage productions with VACT: Empire of the Son, The Ones We Leave Behind, Kuroko, and 1 Hour Photo, for which she, Tetsuro, and Jamie jointly received a Jessie Award for Technical Design. Susan is a graduate of Studio 58.

**Production Manager & Technical Director:** Adrian Muir

Previous credits for Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre include: Kuroko, The Ones We Leave Behind, several touring versions of Empire Of The Son and the original production of One Hour Photo. Adrian has also worked as a production manager, technical director and lighting designer with many local theatre companies over the past 25 years and is multi-Jessie award winner in both lighting design and production.

**Sound Design/Composer/Performer:** Steve Charles

Steve Charles is a composer, performer, multi-instrumentalist and sound designer from the Pacific Northwest. Highlights include working with Bard on the Beach, Arts Club, Playhouse/MTC, Boca del Lupo, Bluemouth Inc., *Galala* on TV Unis and *Pacifique en Chanson*. With the Escape Artists, he collaborated on *Miss Shakespeare*, *Hey Viola* and he continues to perform in their show *Chelsea Hotel* in theatres across Canada. He tours internationally with bands *The Fugitives* and *Viper Central* and is in demand as a musician and theatre artist for his expertise and versatility. He is delighted to be back with the incredible team at VACT for *1 Hour Photo!* [www.stevenjohncharles.com](http://www.stevenjohncharles.com)

**Virtual Tour Host:** June Fukumura

June Fukumura is a Japanese-Canadian inter-disciplinary theatre artist with a BFA in Theatre Performance and a Certificate in Sustainable Community Development from Simon Fraser University. June is the Co-Founder of [New\(to\)Town Collective](#) an artist collective with a mandate to create new experimental works; provide ongoing accessible physical theatre training and experimental research workshops called Training Jams. June is also the Co-Artistic Director of [Popcorn Galaxies](#) an

experimental theatre company interested in re-enchanting the everyday through unconventional site-responsive and site-specific works. Popcorn Galaxies has produced over eleven independent productions in seven years and has been presented at Centre A Gallery, Vancouver Fringe Festival, BC Culture Days, rEvolver Festival, The Array: First Contact, and will be presenting a new work at PuSHOFF 2021. Additionally, she was the Assistant Dramaturg at the Playwrights Lab at the Banff Centre for the Arts in 2019 - 2020 and the Emerging Dramaturg for Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre's MSG program in 2019. She independently produces the Nikkei Artist Mixer, the Emerging Dramaturg Mixer, and is the founder of Dyslexic Players Canada. Her artistic practice includes: experimental theatre creation, acting for theatre/film, performance, clown, dramaturgy, directing, producing, curating, Japanese language translation and language coaching, and cultural leadership. [www.junefukumura.com](http://www.junefukumura.com)