

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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American Roots Music & Chinese American Stories

JustStories 8th Annual Chicagoland Story Festival

WHAT: This year - two story concerts on April 17, 2010 for high school through adult audiences at **the only storytelling festival in the nation dedicated to stories of social justice and ethnic pride!** One performance in Chinatown at 1 pm and one in Evanston at 7:30 pm. This year's festival will feature Nancy Wang of San Francisco premiering an original piece, *Bittersweet: A Chinese American Daughter's Legacy*. China is often in the news. Come learn about the Chinese in America - on the west coast and right here in Chicago! (There is a street in Chinatown named after Nancy Wang's father because of his contributions to the Chicago Chinese American community. Nancy's father was instrumental in building the archway into Chinatown on Wentworth Avenue as well as the local park and affordable housing for seniors.)

Nancy was a JustStories Fellowship recipient this year and created this new story under the direction of Susan O'Halloran. Her husband and performing partner, Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo, will join us by adding a tandem, traditional Asian folk story to the mix and a little music as well.

In addition, Robert Jones of Detroit will blend music and stories in *Roots to Rap* to create a tapestry of this country's history and a celebration of the rich diversity that is America today. We'll coax Robert's wife, Sister Bernice, to share a few Gospel songs as well. Susan O'Halloran will tell *The Other 9/11 Story* an inspirational true account of Chicagoans standing up for their Muslim neighbors after the September 11th attacks.

This year, for our Saturday afternoon performance, we are co-sponsoring with the Chicago Chinese Museum Foundation in an effort to support them in the reconstruction of the Chinese American Museum in Chicago's Chinatown.

WHY: JustStories Storytelling Concerts are devoted to strengthening and honoring the human family through sharing **artistic and entertaining stories** of ethnic identity, immigration and race relations to honor our unique cultures and to celebrate our diversity and common humanity.

WHERE/WHEN: Saturday, April 17, 2010

St. Therese Chinese Catholic School at 247 West 23rd Street, Chicago from 1 - 2:30 pm

The SPACE at 1245 Chicago Avenue, Evanston, IL from 7:30-9:30 pm

WHO: Nancy Wang and Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo founded Eth-Noh-Tec in 1982, Eth-Noh-Tec is a kinetic story theater company based in San Francisco, weaving [tec] together distinctive cultural elements of the East and West [eth] to create new possibilities [noh]. Eth-Noh-Tec produces and performs contemporary presentations of traditional folktales from the many countries and cultures of Asia through storytelling, theater, dance, and music. Eth-Noh-Tec has performed at venues including at the Smithsonian, Kennedy Center, and the National Storytelling Festival and at President Obama's Inaugural Celebration. Eth-Noh-Tec's awards include the 2008 Circle of Excellence Award from the National Storytelling Network.

For over 20 years **Robert Jones** of Detroit has been a champion of American Roots music, with a special emphasis on traditional African American music. Spirituals, blues, work songs, field hollers, country music, folk songs, gospel and original songs are all a part of fabric of American Roots Music. This is the music that gave the world jazz, R&B, bluegrass, rock and even Hip Hop. This music also communicates history and tradition that goes far beyond mere music. Robert shows us the blending of American styles that can serve as a model for what is possible – celebrating both our unique gifts and our universal triumphs.

Susan O'Halloran is one of America's top diversity speakers and storytellers. She is a writer, story artist, corporate workshop leader and keynote speaker whose work explores the complex issues of social justice. She is author of four books and producer of performances, videos and films including *Black, White and Brown: Tribes & Bridges at the Steppenwolf Theatre* and *More Alike Than Not: Stories of Three Americans – Catholic, Jewish and Muslim*. *The Chicago Reader* says O'Halloran "has mastered the Irish art of telling stories that are funny and heart-wrenching at the same time." Susan was a National Storytelling Network keynote speaker and several times a featured teller at the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough.

Our goal is to promote understanding and cooperation between people of diverse cultures and to celebrate our differences and commonalities. The JustStories festival is dedicated to seeing and hearing one another. When we see and hear each other, we can value each other. When we know someone else's stories, it's easier to accept, appreciate and understand them. This day of stories will be energizing, empowering, thought provoking and, most of all, *entertaining*. JustStories is sponsored by Angels Studio/Chicago, a communications ministry of the Chicago Province of the Society of the Divine Word.

JustStories Storytelling Festival P.O. Box 7036 Evanston, IL 60204 1-866-997-8726 or 1-847-869-4081.

Visit our web site: www.racebridges.net/juststories

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