

## MEET AO'S CIO-CIO-SAN – YUNAH LEE

[HTTP://WWW.YUNAHLEE.COM/](http://www.yunahlee.com/)



Photo by Kristin Hoebermann

- Born in Daegu, South Korea
- Played the piano and violin as a young child
- Did not know much about opera until she went to college in Seoul.
- Came to the U.S. and studied at the New England Conservatory of Music and Juillard

**Question from an interview at Glimmerglass Festival: “Your career is associated with the role of Butterfly. Do you feel a connection with the Character of Cio-cio-San?”**

*“Dramatically, I understand her. I grew up in a similar culture, in which it was considered better to die than live in dishonor.*

*My father was born in Osaka, Japan. Japan and Korea traditionally have similar attitudes about death being preferable to dishonor.*

*You know that Korea has the highest suicide rate of all nations. One of our recent presidents took his own life because he was dishonored.*

*I can understand the culture so well and understand Cio-Cio San so well and can play her so naturally. I feel hugely lucky that there is this role on which I could build my career.” – Yunah Lee*

“ Lyric Soprano Yunah Lee is thrilling audiences in the U.S., Europe and Asia with her “handsomely colored full lyric sound” (Opera News) and “picture perfect” acting (Berkshire Fine Arts).

“Lee deservedly earned the most vociferous ovation of the Glimmerglass Festival as the audience leapt to their feet as one to roar their approval at her curtain call” (Opera Today).

“Director Francesca Zambello’s ability to get the voices she wanted is abundantly clear, especially with Korean-born lyric soprano Yunah Lee in the title role”(Syracuse New Times).

“Lee is one of the world’s leading interpreters of the role of Cio-cio-San. It’s hard to imagine a more nuanced, yet powerful delivery of the music...” (The Salt Lake Tribune).

See some of Ms. Lee’s performances here:

<http://www.yunahlee.com/audio.html>