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Tokyo Broadcasting System and Kyodo Tokyo Present the World Premiere of *Talk Like Singing* A Japanese Musical Starring Shingo Katori

Written and directed by Koki Mitani with music by Yasuharu Konishi
Friday, November 13 at 8:00 P.M. at
Jack H. Skirball Center for the Performing Arts, NYU

WHO: Shingo Katori | Jay Kabira | Keiko Horiuchi | Shinya Niiro
WHEN: *Preview:* November 12, 8:00 P.M.
World Premiere: November 13, 8:00 P.M.
Additional Showtimes: November 14 (2:00 P.M. & 8:00 P.M.) | November 15 (3:00 P.M. & 7:00 P.M.) | November 17, 18, 19, 20 (8:00 P.M.) | November 21 (2:00 P.M. & 8:00 P.M.) | November 22 (3:00 P.M.)
WHERE: NYU Skirball Center | New York
PROGRAM: *Talk Like Singing*
TICKETS: \$30 - \$70; Available to purchase by phone and online beginning August 3. Call 212-352-3101, or visit www.skirballcenter.nyu.edu/calendar/talk_like_singing. Available to purchase in person beginning August 24 at the Skirball Center's Shagan Box Office located at 566 LaGuardia Place (at Washington Square South)
PRESS TICKETS: Laura Malick, 917.339.7183, lmalick@cohndutcher.com

New York, N.Y. – Talk Like Singing, a groundbreaking production and the first-ever original Japanese musical to premiere in the U.S. prior to engagements throughout Japan, will have its world premiere in New York City on **November 13, 2009 at 8:00 P.M.** at New York University's **Skirball Center**. The show will run through November 22. The talented **Koki Mitani** has written and directs this comedic new material spoken in both Japanese and English. Musician, composer, DJ and founding member of *Pizzicato Five*, **Yasuharu Konishi** has created the music for this production. Japanese superstar **Shingo Katori** will make his international stage debut alongside cast members **Jay Kabira**, **Keiko Horiuchi**, and **Shinya Niiro**.

Talk Like Singing

In *Talk Like Singing* a unique young man, Tarlow (**Shingo Katori**), can only communicate through song. With the help of a speech therapist (**Keiko Horiuchi**) and psychologist (**Jay Kabira**) the singing voices inside his head are eliminated. For the first time in his life the young man can speak without singing, but he is unhappy and misses the songs.

The psychologist presents the man at a conference with his fellow colleagues. All of a sudden the unexpected happens, and Tarlow performs a miracle in front of the audience.

Artists

Shingo Katori is a member of *SMAP* (Sports Music Assemble People), one of the most popular idol groups in Japan. Since their debut in 1991, *SMAP* has released over 30 hit singles. Their stadium tour in 2006 drew audiences of more than one million. *SMAP* kicked off their 2008 tour with a historic six performance series at the Tokyo Dome. The members of *SMAP* were the first Japanese artists to perform that number of times at the Tokyo Dome during a single tour.

Mr. Katori has also appeared in numerous television shows, dramas and commercials in Japan. He hosts a television show in English that features journalists and celebrities discussing current international affairs. Mr. Katori has starred in more than ten major films and appeared in the Japanese box office hit *Saiyuki*.

Koki Mitani is one of the most successful and well known playwrights/directors in Japan. He has written and directed numerous theater works, and his two-person play, *Warai no Daigaku (The Last Laugh)* garnered Mr. Mitani the 4th Yomiuri Theater Grand Prix “Best Play” award in 1996. *Warai no Daigaku* has been translated into English, Russian and French and has been performed in Russia, Belarus, and Canada, with a special production adapted by British playwright Richard Harris which toured the U.K. and ran on London’s West End.

Mr. Mitani is also a very successful filmmaker and has written and directed more than ten movies. His third movie, *The Uchoten Hotel*, was released in 2006 and grossed more than 60 million dollars at the box office. His recent films *Welcome Back*, *Mr. McDonald* and *The Magic Hour* were highly acclaimed both in Japan and internationally.

Yasuharu Konishi came to fame as one of the original members of the Japanese pop group *Pizzicato Five*. They are widely credited with spearheading the shibuya-kei movement in Japan. Shibuya-kei is mod music from the 1960s hipster scene filtered through a 1990s prism. *Pizzicato Five* are known for their eclectic and energetic compositions.

The band's American debut in 1994 coincided with the release of the album *Five By Pizzicato Five*. This was quickly followed by *Made in USA*, a compilation of tracks taken from their last three Japanese albums. Their songs have been heard in the films *Charlie’s Angels*, *Prêt a Porter*, and *Unzipped*.

In 2000, Konishi wrote and produced the hit song, *Shingo Mama no Oha Rock*, for the character “Shingo Mama” performed by Shingo Katori. He started his own record company, Columbia Readymade, and has written, produced, and arranged for well known Japanese artists such as Akiko Wada, Mari Natsuki, Yumi Yoshimura of *Puffy AmiYumi*, and *SMAP*.

Jay Kabira began his career as an actor when he was in college and since then has made various appearances in stage, television, radio and film in Japan. He won the Outstanding Performance Award at the 4th Yomiuri Theater Grand Prix for his role of Cosmo Brown in the musical *Singin’ in the Rain*. Kabira is also a well known sports commentator and hosted a televised broadcast at the Nagano Winter Olympics and the World Championships in Athletics.

Keiko Horiuchi, a graduate of the Shiki Theater Company drama academy, has appeared in various musicals, TV dramas and films and has an extensive musical background. She has starred as Maria in *West Side Story* and Belle in *Beauty and the Beast*. In 1999, she appeared on Broadway for the 5th anniversary of *Beauty and the Beast*. She has recently been seen in several of Koki Mitani’s works.

Shinya Niiro, a promising young actor in Japan, has enhanced his reputation by playing the leading role in the rock musical *Godspell*. He has been seen on stages throughout Japan performing in a variety of works such as *Aladdin*, *Elisabeth*, *Our House*, *Club Seven*, *Pure Love*, and *The Wedding Singer* among others.

About the Jack H. Skirball Center for the Performing Arts, NYU

The Skirball Center for the Performing Arts, New York University, is the premier venue for the presentation of cultural and performing arts events at NYU and lower Manhattan. Located at 566 LaGuardia Place (at Washington Square South), it provides a large-scale performance space for university events and live professional performances from around the world. The 860-seat theater opened in October 2003 and hosts the only major university-based professional multi-arts presenting program in Manhattan. As a result, one natural and continuing mission of the Skirball Center is to build young audiences for live performance through a broad range of compelling performance events at affordable ticket prices. For more information and a current schedule of events, visit www.skirballcenter.nyu.edu.

For Press Tickets Contact:

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TALK LIKE SINGING

Koki Mitani	<i>Director, playwright, and lyricist</i>
Yasuharu Konishi	<i>Composer and Musical Director</i>

Shingo Katori	<i>Tarlow</i>
Jay Kabira	<i>Dyson, Psychologist</i>
Keiko Hariuchi	<i>Nimoy, Speech Therapist</i>
Shinya Niiro	<i>Brother</i>

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