

## PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT For Immediate Release

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### ***JERO in Concert*** **Enka Singing Sensation in San Francisco March 28, 2010**

SAN FRANCISCO (February 24, 2010) – The Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California (JCCCNC) is excited and proud to announce the first United States tour of the *enka* singing sensation, JERO. The tour will kick-off with a performance on Sunday, March 28, 2010 at the Palace of Fine Arts, 3301 Lyon Street, in San Francisco at 4:00 p.m.

Tickets can be purchased by contacting City Box Office by phone at (415) 392-4400 or by visiting their website: [www.cityboxoffice.com](http://www.cityboxoffice.com).

General ticket prices will be \$100, \$55 and/or \$35 plus a minimal ticket and order fee. A very limited number of Premium Ticket Packages will be sold at \$250 per person.

The Premium Package includes seating located in the first six rows in the center of the aisle and includes a private buffet and no-host cocktail reception featuring an appearance by Jero immediately following the show.

**Jerome Charles White, Jr. aka Jero**, makes his long-awaited U.S. concert tour debut with his performance in San Francisco this March. As the first African American *enka* singer in the history of Japanese music, Jero single-handedly reignited interest in the musical ballads that emerged in Japan's post-war era.

Jero began singing *enka* actively at the age of six and continued to study the Japanese language all throughout high school and college. He also studied Japanese at the Kansai Gaidai University of foreign languages. Jero majored in information science at University of Pittsburgh and graduated in 2003, and moved to Japan in the same year. Two months after arriving in Japan, he entered the NHK Noto Jiman competition broadcast on TV.

Jero first began pursuing his dream to become an *enka* artist because of the influence of his Japanese grandmother Takiko who had met his grandfather, an African-American serviceman, at a dance during World



War II. They married, had a daughter Harumi, and eventually moved to his grandfather's hometown, Pittsburgh. He was reared amid a strong sense of Japanese culture and it was through the guidance of his grandmother that he grew to love the genre as a child.

Jero worked toward becoming an *enka* singer because he had promised his grandmother that one day he would perform at the annual Kohaku Uta Gassen song show. As a result, he actively participated in numerous singing contests and eventually achieved real success only two months after arriving in Japan. Sadly, his grandmother never was able to see her grandson achieve *enka* fame, as she died in 2005, three years before he became famous.

His first single, *Umiyuki*, literally *Ocean Snow*, was released in Japan in early 2008 and it entered the music charts at number four. This marked the highest-ever debut for a single released by an *enka* singer in Japan. He won the Best New Artist Award in the 50th Annual Japan Record Awards in December 2008.

Jero was selected to appear on the 59th NHK Kohaku Uta Gassen, NHK New Year's Eve musical spectacular, on December 31, 2008. In his participation, he fulfilled a pledge he made to his dying grandmother to appear on the yearly competition. Jero appeared wearing a black and white shirt bearing the image of his grandmother. Critics have lauded the way this meteoric talent has managed to mould an old musical genre around a modern context in a way that appeals to both old and new generations. Looking like a hip-hop star, with a voice of an angel, he has redefined the soul of Japan. Jero will appear in this year's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary New Year's Eve show on the White Team.

**Don't miss this historical SELL-OUT tour as it opens in San Francisco.**

This exclusive West Coast concert tour is co-presented and co-sponsored by the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center (based in Los Angeles) and the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California. There will also be a show on Wednesday, March 31 at the Aratani Japan America Theatre. For tickets to the LA show, please visit [www.jaccc.org](http://www.jaccc.org).

To order premium tickets, please contact Lori Matoba at (415) 567-5505 x226 or email [lmatoaba@jcccnc.org](mailto:lmatoaba@jcccnc.org) and for general tickets, please contact City Box Office at (415) 392-4400.

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**About the JCCCNC**

Envisioned by the Japanese American community, the JCCCNC will be an everlasting foundation of our Japanese American ancestry, cultural heritage, histories and traditions. The JCCCNC strives to meet the evolving needs of the Japanese American community through programs, affordable services and administrative support and facilities for other local service organizations. The JCCCNC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit community center based in San Francisco.