

Festival shows two versions of Vietnamese family life

The Milpitas-based San Khu Viet Cali drama company and author Aimee Phan will be two of the world performers appearing at Evergreen Valley College's ARTICULATE global arts festival in San Jose Sept. 21-26. Each will offer glimpses of Vietnamese families living in the United States — 40 years apart.

Based on true stories of once successful immigrants suddenly facing financial insecurity, divorce and suicide in the current economic crisis, San Khu Viet Cali performers will stage the bilingual Vietnamese-English drama "Dream and Life" Sept. 26 at 2 p.m.

Playwright and Artistic Director Van Pham Mai and Artistic Director Dr. Vioria Rue want the play "to provide hope and help in the midst of cultural and economic upheaval." Since the drama is reality-based, Pham Mai asked actors to contribute to the scripts by writing their own scenes.

On Sept. 23, 30-year-old Phan, who

was born in the United States and watched her social-service mother shepherd Vietnamese orphans from the 1976 Operation Babylift to foster homes in Los Angeles, will read from her book "We Should Never Meet," a collection of stories about those displaced Vietnamese and Amerasian orphans, their mothers, and the American workers at the Saigon Hospital.

"The orphans, both Vietnamese and Amerasian, were born and displaced in a very tumultuous moment in history," Phan said. "This pocket of history had long been overshadowed by other accounts of the war, from world leaders to veterans of both sides."

Phan hopes her book will serve as a reminder that the casualties of war don't stop at the numbers of dead and wounded.

Other world performers joining Phan and San Khu Viet Cali at ARTICULATE



San Khu Viet Cali performers will stage the bilingual Vietnamese-English drama "Dream and Life" Sept. 26, at 2 p.m. at Evergreen Valley College.

Courtesy of San Khu Viet Cali

2009 include Filipina ballet dancer Maggie Parungao-Ferla, Calcutta-born NPR personality Sandip Roy, African American audio artist Pamela Z, Taiwanese-American classical guitarist Steve Lin, Iranian-American journalist Antra

Amirezvani, and Latino pop sensation Manuel Romero, a Milpitas resident. "Evergreen Valley College is home to a richly diverse population of Latino, Vietnamese, Filipino, Indo-American, African American and Pacific Islander students, and we've worked hard to include activities that will engage and represent them as well as the community of the South Bay," Evergreen President David Wain Coon said. "We also wanted to share what the community's bond dollars have provided: a theater, studios, and classrooms for our 2D and 3D programs, music and dance practice spaces, and an art gallery."

Weekday events during ARTICULATE week are free. Parking for all events is free. The complete schedule of ARTICULATE events and details are at www.evc.edu/articulate on the Web. Evergreen Valley College is located at 3095 Yerba Buena Road in San Jose.