

LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE ANNOUNCES CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM FOR WORLD PREMIERE OF *SEIZE THE KING*

WILL POWER RETURNS TO PLAYHOUSE WITH SEARING FIVE-PERSON INTERPRETATION OF SHAKESPEARE'S RICHARD III

La Jolla, CA – La Jolla Playhouse announces the cast and creative team for its world premiere of ***Seize the King***, by **Will Power** (*The Seven, Honey Bo and the Goldmine POP Tour*), directed by Playhouse Associate Artistic Director **Jaime Castañeda** (*At the Old Place, Tiger Style!, Guards at the Taj*), running **August 21 – September 16** in the Playhouse's Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre.

The cast features **Saidah Arrika Ekulona** as *Queen Woodville/Gardener 2/Master of the Royal Wardrobe*; **Julian Parker** as *Lord Buckingham/Gardener 1*; **Jesse Perez** as *Richard III*; **Luis Vega** as *Lord Hastings/Greygor the Tailor/Reverend Shaw*; and **Jenapher Zheng** as *Anne Neville/Edward V*, along with drummer Richard Sellers.

The creative team includes **Lauren Helpert** (*At the Old Place*), Scenic Designer; **Emilio Sosa** (*Miss You Like Hell*), Costume Designer; **Tyler Micoleau** (*The Squirrels*), Lighting Designer; **Mikhail Fiksel** (*Tiger Style!*), Sound Designer; **Shirley Fishman**, Dramaturg; and **Rachael Danielle Albert**, Stage Manager.

"It's a pleasure to welcome back Will Power to the Playhouse with this riveting new work," said **Playhouse Artistic Director Christopher Ashley**. "Will is a force of nature, and his plays demand artists who are equally dynamic. Happily, he and Jaime have assembled a stellar five-person cast and creative team for this propulsive retelling of a Shakespeare classic."

With England's throne empty, Richard knocks down threats to his rule, fueling his insatiable ambition and paranoia. Even if he can be stopped — who can ensure it won't happen again? Playhouse Associate Artistic Director Jaime Castañeda directs this time-blurring story of tyrannical power in Will Power's full-throttle reinterpretation of Shakespeare's *Richard III*.

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Will Power is an award-winning playwright and performer. His Playhouse credits include *The Seven* and the Performance Outreach Program (POP) Tour of *Honey Bo and the Goldmine*. Other plays include *Stagger Lee* (Dallas Theater Center), *Fetch Clay, Make Man* (NYTW, Roundhouse Theatre, True Colors Theater), *Steel Hammer* with SITI Company (Humana Festival, BAM); *Five Fingers of Funk!* (Children’s Theatre Company); and two acclaimed solo shows: *The Gathering* and *Flow*. Power’s numerous awards include a Doris Duke Artist Award, TCG Peter Zeisler Memorial Award, Jury Award for Best Theatre Performance at the HBO Comedy Arts Festival, and the Trailblazer Award from The National Black Theater Network. His film and TV appearances include *The Steven Colbert Report* and *Bill Moyers on Faith and Reason*. Powers was a five-time guest of the U.S. State Department, traveling to South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan. On these trips, Power taught workshops, worked with poets, and lectured at various libraries, grammar schools and colleges. He is currently on the faculty at The Meadows School of the Arts/SMU and is the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Playwright-in-Residence at Dallas Theatre Center.

Jaime Castañeda joined the Playhouse in 2014 as Associate Artistic Director, where he has directed Rachel Bonds’ *At the Old Place*, Mike Lew’s *Tiger Style!* and Rajiv Joseph’s *Guards at the Taj*. Other productions include *Vietgone* (American Conservatory Theatre), *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* by Kristoffer Diaz (Dallas Theater Center), *Chimichangas and Zoloff* by Fernanda Coppel (Atlantic Theater Company), *How We Got On* by Idris Goodwin (Cleveland Playhouse), *The Royale* by Marco Ramirez (American Theater Company), *Welcome to Arroyo’s* by Kristoffer Diaz (The Old Globe) and *Red Light Winter* by Adam Rapp (Perseverance Theatre). He has also developed new plays with the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center, Rattlestick Theater, Portland Center Stage, Denver Center Theater, The Kennedy Center and the Atlantic Theater Company, where he spent five seasons as Artistic Associate. A Drama League Fellow, Castañeda is the recipient of a Princess Grace Award and a TCG New Generations Grant. He holds an M.F.A. in Directing from The University of Texas at Austin.

La Jolla Playhouse is a place where artists and audiences come together to create what’s new and next in the American theatre, from Tony Award-winning productions, to imaginative programs for young audiences, to interactive experiences outside our theatre walls. Currently led by 2017 Tony Award-winning Artistic Director Christopher Ashley and Managing Director Debby Buchholz, the Playhouse was founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer. Playhouse artists and audiences have taken part in the development of new plays and musicals, including mounting 95 world premieres, commissioning 50 new works, and sending 32 productions to Broadway, among them the currently-running hit musicals *Come From Away*, *Escape to Margaritaville* and *SUMMER: The Donna Summer Musical* – garnering a total of 38 Tony Awards, including the 1993 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. For more information, visit LaJollaPlayhouse.org.

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FACT SHEET

- WHAT:** *Seize the King*
By Will Power
Directed by Jaime Castañeda
- WHEN:** August 21 – September 16 (Press Opening: Sunday, August 26 at 7pm)
Tue/Wed at 7:30pm; Thu/Fri/Sat at 8pm; Sun at 7pm; Sat/Sun at 2pm
- WHERE:** Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse
2910 La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla, CA 92037
- WHO:** Saidah Arrika Ekulona: *Queen Woodville/Gardener 2/Master of Royal Wardrobe*
Julian Parker: *Lord Buckingham/Gardener 1*
Jesse Perez: *Richard III*
Luis Vega: *Lord Hastings/Greygor the Tailor/Reverend Shaw*
Jenapher Zheng: *Anne Neville/Edward V*
Richard Sellers: Drummer

Scenic Design: Lauren Helpern
Costume Design: Emilio Sosa
Lighting Design: Tyler Micoleau
Sound Design: Mikhail Fiksel
Dramaturg: Shirley Fishman
Casting: Telsey + Company
Stage Manager: Rachael Danielle Albert

BACKGROUND:

Will Power returns to the Playhouse in a five-person, full-throttle reinterpretation of Shakespeare's *Richard III*. With England's throne empty, Richard knocks down threats to his rule, fueling his insatiable ambition and paranoia. Even if he can be stopped — who can ensure it won't happen again? Jaime Castañeda directs this time-blurring story of tyrannical power.

ADDITIONAL EVENTS:

- **Foodie Fridays:** Aug 24, 31 & Sept 7, 14; pre-show food trucks starting at 6pm
- **Sonic Saturdays:** Aug 25 & Sept 1, 8, 15; pre-show, live band entertainment
- **Talkback Tuesdays:** Aug 28 & Sept 4, following the 7:30pm performance
- **Insider Events:** Wed, Sept 12 at 6:45pm & Sat, Sept 15 at 1:15pm
- **Discovery Sunday:** Sept 16 following the 2pm performance
- **ACCESS Performance:** Saturday, Sept 8 at 2pm

TICKETS: (858) 550-1010; LaJollaPlayhouse.org

SPONSORS: Dowling & Yahnke