

LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE ANNOUNCES CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM FOR LAUREN YEE'S *CAMBODIAN ROCK BAND*

Acclaimed Work by UC San Diego MFA Alumna Makes San Diego Premiere

La Jolla, CA – La Jolla Playhouse announces the cast and creative team for its upcoming presentation of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival production of *Cambodian Rock Band*, by UC San Diego MFA Playwriting alumna **Lauren Yee**, directed by **Chay Yew**, featuring music by **Dengue Fever**. A co-production with Portland Center Stage at the Armory, *Cambodian Rock Band* will run in the Playhouse's Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre **November 12 – December 15** (press opening: Sunday, November 17 at 7:00 pm).

The cast features **Brooke Ishibashi** as "Neary/Sothea," **Abraham Kim** as "Rom," **Jane Lui** as "Pou/Guard," **Joe Ngo** as "Chum," **Daisuke Tsuji** as "Duch," and **Moses Villarama** as "Ted/Lang."

The creative team includes **Takeshi Kata** (*Last Tiger in Haiti, Guards at the Taj*), Scenic Designer; **Sara Ryung Clement** (*The Astronaut Farmworker*), Costume Designer; **David Weiner** (*The Seven, The Darrell Hammond Project*), Lighting Designer; **Mikhail Fiksel** (*Seize the King, Tiger Style!*), Sound Designer; UC San Diego MFA graduate **Matt MacNelly**, Music Director; and **Gwen Turos**, Stage Manager.

"It's a pleasure to welcome UC San Diego graduate Lauren Yee back to San Diego with her riveting, prize-winning work that offers a rocking and redemptive story of a father and daughter finding each other amidst decades-old secrets," said **Christopher Ashley**, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse.

A "fierce, gorgeous and heartwarming" (*Los Angeles Times*) play/rock concert, *Cambodian Rock Band* thrusts us into the life of a young woman trying to piece together her family history 30 years after her father fled Cambodia. Featuring a cast that performs a mix of contemporary Dengue Fever hits and classic Cambodian oldies, playwright and UC San Diego MFA alumna Lauren Yee brings to vivid life the Cambodian rock scene of the '60s and '70s, a movement cut short by the Khmer Rouge's brutal attempt to erase the music (and musicians) once and for all. This is a story about survivors, the resilient bond of family and the enduring power of music.

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Lauren Yee's *Cambodian Rock Band*, with music by Dengue Fever, premiered at South Coast Rep, subsequent productions at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, City Theatre, Merrimack Rep, Signature Theatre, Portland Center Stage and Jungle Theatre. Her play *The Great Leap* has been produced at the Denver Center, Seattle Repertory, Atlantic Theatre, Guthrie Theatre, American Conservatory Theatre, Arts Club, InterAct Theatre and Steppenwolf, with future productions at Long Wharf and Asolo Rep/Miami New Drama. Honors include the Doris Duke Artists Award, Steinberg Playwright Award, Whiting Award, Steinberg/ATCA Award, American Academy of Arts and Letters literature award, Horton Foote Prize, Kesselring Prize, Primus Prize, a Hodder Fellowship at Princeton, and the #1 and #2 plays on the 2017 Kilroys List. She's a Residency 5 playwright at Signature Theatre, New Dramatists member, Ma-Yi Writers' Lab member and Playwrights Realm alumni playwright. Her TV work includes *Pachinko* (Apple) and *Soundtrack* (Netflix). She is currently under commission from La Jolla Playhouse, Geffen Playhouse, Portland Center Stage, Second Stage and South Coast Rep. BA: Yale. MFA: UCSD. www.laurenyee.com

Chay Yew's credits include Off-Broadway productions at The Public, Playwrights Horizons, NY Theatre Workshop, Rattlestick, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Playwrights Realm, National Asian American Theatre Company, Ma-Yi Theatre. Regional: Victory Gardens Theater, American Conservatory Theater, Berkeley Rep, South Coast Rep, Long Wharf Theatre, Denver Center, Humana Festival, Kennedy Center, Mark Taper Forum, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Huntington Theatre, Woolly Mammoth, East West Players, Northlight Theatre, Curious Theatre, Pillsbury Theatre, Teatro Vista, GALA Hispanic Theatre, Portland Center Stage, Cincinnati Playhouse, Mosaic Theatre Company, Playmakers Rep, Round House, Southern Rep Theatre, Boise Contemporary Theatre, Laguna Playhouse, Geva Theatre, Empty Space, Cornerstone Theater, Theatre @Boston Court, Highways, Northwest Asian American Theatre, Singapore Repertory Theatre. Opera: Tanglewood Music Center, Los Angeles Philharmonic. Awards: Obie, Drama-Logue awards.

Brooke Ishibashi's New York credits include: *Good Person of Szechwan* with Taylor Mac (The Public); *A Beautiful Day in November* (NY City Center); *Takarazuka!* (HERE Arts); Qui Nguyen's *The Inexplicable Redemption of Agent G* (Ma-Yi); *Happy Sunshine Kung Fu Flower* (Ars Nova). Regional: *Cambodian Rock Band* (World Premiere: South Coast Repertory, Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *All's Well That Ends Well* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival). Developmental: originated new works in collaboration with Qui Nguyen/Vampire Cowboys, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, Thomas Kail, Dave Malloy, Maltby & Shire, Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig, BD Wong, Evan Cabnet, Lear deBessonet, May Adrales, Daniel Fish, Lee Sunday Evans, Lloyd Suh, Kimber Lee, Baayork Lee, The Public, Geffen Playhouse, Lincoln Center, La MaMa, Vineyard Theatre, Women's Project, The Lark, NAAP, NAATCO, Soho Rep., Clubbed Thumb, New Georges, The Foundry. Concerts: Joe's Pub, Highline Ballroom, City Winery, Stonewall Inn. TV: Series lead in DJ Nash's *People Are Talking* (NBC, dir. Pam Fryman). Education: B.A. in Theatre/Musical Theatre, Marymount Manhattan College; Upright Citizens Brigade. Other: Proud Actors' Equity Association Western Region Principal Councilor and member of Fair Wage Onstage. @BrookeIshibashi / @CambodianRockBand / FairWageOnstage.org

Abraham Kim's credits include *Cambodian Rock Band* (Pacific Playwrights Festival, South Coast Rep, Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Son in LA Riots* (Café-Club Fais Do Do); Orchestra, *Alice in Wonderland* (Hoover High School). Music: National and international tours with Run River North, DANakaDAN and Magnetic North & Taiyo Na. Drummer on Magnetic North & Taiyo Na's album, *Home: Word*. Music band affiliations: IXS, Castor and Pollux, Monroe Street, The Blazing Rays of the Sun, Former Faces, Fyke, Ruth + the Library. TV/Film: *Good Sessions* (CBS pilot), *Jasyn's Theme* (YouTube). Education: Craig Kupka, Daniel Yoo, Angelica Thompson. @0abrahamkim0

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Jane Lui's credits include *Huong* in *Vietgone* (East West Players); *Pou* in *Cambodian Rock Band* (South Coast Repertory, Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Maudlin* in *All's Well That Ends Well* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Cecily Pigeon* in *The Odd Couple* (Sierra Madre Playhouse); *Shannon Baker* in *The Sparrow*, *Ute/Chief* in *Cannibal the Musical* (Coourage Theatre Company); *Julie* in *John Doe the Musical* (Lyceum Theatre); *Penny* in *Dr. Horrible's Sing Along Blog* (Chinese Pirate Productions). Composition: *Under Milk Wood*, *Secret in the Wings* (Coourage Theatre Company), San Diego Zoo. Film/TV/Internet/Commercial: *67th Emmy Awards*, *Odious*, *The Soulman*, *Daylight Savings*, *Luieland* (YouTube personality, 4m views). Voiceovers: *Call of Duty*, San Diego Zoo, *Hibakusha*. Awards: Stage Raw nomination for Best Original Music, Dublin Web Fest Best Music Video, San Diego Best Recording nominations for albums *Goodnight Company* and *Barkentine*, YouTube's Unsigned Pick. Music: All original albums available on iTunes, Spotify. Upcoming fourth album to be released as music project *Surrija*. www.Surrija.com

Joe Ngo's credits include: *Cambodian Rock Band* (South Coast Rep, Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Nhan/Khue* in *Vietgone* (Studio Theatre); Actor 1 in *King of the Yees*, *Xu Xian* in *The White Snake* (Baltimore Center Stage); Actor 3 in *King of the Yees* (A Contemporary Theatre); *Hotspur* in *Henry IV, Part One* (Wooden O/Seattle Shakespeare); *Hortensio* in *The Taming of the Shrew* (Island Stage Left); *Hank* in *Marvin's Room* (Covina Center for the Performing Arts); *Boy* in *Blood Wedding* (Odyssey Theatre Ensemble); *Elvis* in *Miss Nelson Is Missing* (Lewis Family Playhouse). Solo performances: *Words, Words...* (The Barn Arts Collective and Leviathan Labs Living Room Series). Film/TV: *Crashing*, *Off the Record*, *Beach Blossom*. Education: B.A., Cal Poly Pomona; M.F.A., UW, Seattle. www.joe-ngo.com

James Ryen's credits include *Cambodian Rock Band*, *Othello*, *Snow in Midsummer*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Vietgone*, *The Winter's Tale* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Fat Pig* (SpeakEasy Theatre Company); *Romeo and Juliet* (American Repertory Theater); *Hamlet* (New Art Theatre); *Love's Labour's Lost* (Huntington Theatre); *Arms and the Man* (Lyric Stage); *The Taming of the Shrew* (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company); *The Birthday Boys* (Texas Theatre); *The Winter's Tale* (Actors' Shakespeare Project); *Julius Caesar* (Gamaliel Theatre Company). Film/TV: *American Sniper*, *The Kill Corporation*, *Minotaur*, *Summer's End*, *Evidence*, *This Is Mortal Combat*, *Dark House*, *Shuttle*, *The Young and the Restless*, *General Hospital*, *Anger Management*, *The Mentalist*, *Mighty Med*, *Days of Our Lives*, *Mistresses*, *Kickin' It*, *Body of Proof*, *GCB*, *Zeke & Luther*, *NCIS: Los Angeles*, *Without a Trace*, *How I Met Your Mother*, *CSI: Miami*, *Lie to Me*, *NCIS*. Training: B.F.A. in Acting, University of Oklahoma.

Daisuke Tsuji appeared in La Jolla Playhouse's productions of *The Orphan of Zhao*, *American Night*. Regional: *Cambodian Rock Band* (South Coast Rep, Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *With Love and a Major Organ* (The Theatre @ Boston Court); *Orlando* in *As You Like It* (Antaeus Theatre Company); *William Shakespeare* in *Imogen Says Nothing* (Yale Repertory Theatre); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (California Shakespeare Theater/Portland Center Stage); *The Orphan of Zhao* (American Conservatory Theater). International: *Public Clown* in *Dralion* (Cirque du Soleil); *Meditations on Virginity* (Poland tour). Other credits: Writing/directing: *Clowns Are Peoples Too* (OSF Midnight Project); *Death and Giggles* (Three Chairs Theater Company); *Monkey Madness* (Los Angeles Theater Ensemble). Film/TV: *Love, Death & Robots*; *Brockmire*; *The Man in the High Castle*; *The Blacklist*. Video Game: *Jin* in *Ghost of Tsushima*, *Call of Duty: Black Ops 4*, *Prey*. Education: B.A., UCLA. www.daisuketsuji.com

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Moses Villarama's Off-Broadway credits include: *Fast Company* (Ensemble Studio Theatre); *The Sonic Life of a Giant Tortoise* (The Play Company); *Chairs and a Long Table* (Ma-Yi Theater). Regional: *Cambodian Rock Band*, *Henry V*, *The Odyssey*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Snow in Midsummer* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Vietgone* (OSF/Seattle Repertory); *Warrior Class* (Alliance Theatre); *Suspense! Radio Hour* (Hudson Valley Shakespeare); *King Lear*, *Amadeus*, *A Christmas Carol* (Denver Center); *Swamp Is On* (Pig Iron). Training: M.F.A., National Theatre Conservatory. B.A., University of San Francisco @themighty mos

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. Founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer, the Playhouse is currently led by Tony Award winner Christopher Ashley, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse, and Managing Director Debby Buchholz. The Playhouse is internationally renowned for the development of new plays and musicals, including mounting 102 world premieres, commissioning 52 new works, and sending 32 productions to Broadway – including the currently-running hit musical *Come From Away* – garnering a total of 38 Tony Awards, as well as the 1993 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. LaJollaPlayhouse.org.

Portland Center Stage at The Armory is among the top 20 regional theaters in the country. Established in 1988 as a branch of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the company became independent in 1994, and is under the leadership of Artistic Director Marissa Wolf and Managing Director Cynthia Fuhrman. The company offers a mix of 10 classic, contemporary, and world premiere productions; plus a variety of education and community programs. The company has produced 27 world premieres and presents JAW, an annual new works festival. The Armory (originally built in 1891) became the first building on the National Register of Historic Places and the first performing arts venue in the country to achieve a LEED Platinum rating.

Founded in 1935, the **Oregon Shakespeare Festival** (OSF) has grown from a three-day festival of two plays to a nationally renowned organization that presents an eight-month season of up to 11 plays, including works by Shakespeare, classics, musicals and world-premiere plays. OSF's commissioning programs have generated works that have been produced on Broadway, internationally, and at regional, community and high school theatres across the country. OSF's mission statement: "Inspired by Shakespeare's work and the cultural richness of the United States, we reveal our collective humanity through illuminating interpretations of new and classic plays, deepened by the kaleidoscope of rotating repertory."

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FACT SHEET

WHAT: *Cambodian Rock Band*
By Lauren Yee
Directed by Chay Yew
Songs by Dengue Fever

WHEN: **November 12 – December 15** (Press Opening: November 17 at 7:00pm)
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:

Scenic Designer	Takeshi Kata
Costume Designer	Sara Ryung Clement
Lighting Designer	David Weiner
Sound Designer	Mikhail Fiksel
Music Director	Matt MacNelly
Stage Manager	Gwen Turos

Cast:	<i>Neary/Sothea</i>	Brooke Ishibashi
	<i>Rom</i>	Abraham Kim
	<i>Pou/Guard</i>	Jane Lui
	<i>Chum</i>	Joe Ngo
	<i>Duch</i>	Daisuke Tsuji
	<i>Ted/Lang</i>	Moses Villarama

Understudy	James Ryen
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BACKGROUND:

A “fierce, gorgeous and heartwarming” (*Los Angeles Times*) play/rock concert, *Cambodian Rock Band* thrusts us into the life of a young woman trying to piece together her family history 30 years after her father fled Cambodia. Featuring a cast that performs a mix of contemporary Dengue Fever hits and classic Cambodian oldies, playwright and UC San Diego MFA alumna Lauren Yee brings to vivid life the Cambodian rock scene of the ‘60s and ‘70s, a movement cut short by the Khmer Rouge’s brutal attempt to erase the music (and musicians) once and for all. This is a story about survivors, the resilient bond of family and the enduring power of music.

TICKETS (858) 550-1010; LaJollaPlayhouse.org

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