

**EAST WEST
PLAYERS**

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East West Players Announces 46th Anniversary Season *Languages of Love*

East West Players (EWP), the nation's largest producing organization of Asian American artistic work *and* the longest-running professional theatre of color in the country, announces its 46th Anniversary Season of three new works and a seminal musical classic. This season, themed *Languages of Love*, includes the world premiere of *A WIDOW OF NO IMPORTANCE* by Shane Sakhrani, the Los Angeles premiere of *THE LANGUAGE ARCHIVE* by Julia Cho, the mainland premiere of *THREE YEAR SWIM CLUB* by Lee Tonouchi, and the Tony Award Winning musical *A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC* with book by Hugh Wheeler, music/lyrics by Stephen Sondheim.

“East West Players is entering its 46th year, focusing on the many ways we communicate our passion for each other and the work we do,” says Tim Dang, EWP Producing Artistic Director. “Our season is transnational on many levels, delving deep into diverse cultures’ handling of love, a universal emotion.”

A WIDOW OF NO IMPORTANCE: Deepa has been a widow for two years. Her only desire now is to see her daughter married so that she can die in peace. But when her recently divorced neighbor, also her son’s best friend, professes his love for her, her inner-cougar emerges to break tradition and start living again. A smart and sexy comedy about creating new paths and reaching for the stars. Written by Shane Sakhrani and directed by Shaheen Vaaz. *A WIDOW OF NO IMPORTANCE* will run September 8 – October 9, 2011. World Premiere.

Shane Sakhrani was born in Hong Kong to Indian parents and has lived in London, Toronto and Los Angeles. After many years of experiencing crippling cultural confusion everywhere he went, Shane is finally comfortable describing himself as a ‘Global Indian’. He holds an MFA in Dramatic Writing from the University of Southern California. Shane was a finalist for the 2010-11 Kendeda Graduate Playwriting Award from the Alliance Theatre for his play “The Doctor Is Indian”. He is inspired to tell new stories about contemporary, urban and globalized Asia. Shane also teaches playwriting and screenwriting at Hong Kong University.

THE LANGUAGE ARCHIVE: Meet George, a linguist, a master of languages, who

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cannot express his love for his wife—and ends up losing her. Follow this whimsical and heartbreaking look at love and language that asks, “How do we save what is dying?” Written by Julia Cho and directed by Jessica Kubzansky. THE LANGUAGE ARCHIVE will run November 3 – December 4, 2011. Los Angeles Premiere. The LANGUAGE ARCHIVE is presented by special arrangement with Dramatist Play Service, Inc., New York. Generous support for this production is provided by the S. Mark Taper Foundation Endowment for East West Players.

Julia Cho's plays include THE PIANO TEACHER, DURANGO, THE WINCHESTER HOUSE, BFE, THE ARCHITECTURE OF LOSS and 99 HISTORIES. Her work has been produced at The Public Theater, The Vineyard Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, Playwrights Horizons, South Coast Repertory, New York Theatre Workshop, East West Players, The Theatre@Boston Court, Theater Mu and Silk Road Theatre Project among others. Honors include the 2010 Susan Smith Blackburn Award, the Barrie Stavis Award, the Claire Tow Award for Emerging Artists and the L. Arnold Weissberger Award. An alumna of the Juilliard School and NYU's Graduate Dramatic Writing Program, Julia is a member of New Dramatists. Her plays are available from Dramatists Play Service and www.playscripts.com.

THREE YEAR SWIM CLUB: Inspired by the true life story of Soichi Sakamoto, who trained the youth of Maui to swim in the plantation irrigation ditches on their path to becoming Olympic champions. Set on the island of Maui in the 1930's, this heartwarming play becomes transcendent as the art of hula becomes the metaphor for competitive swimming. Written by Lee Tonouchi and directed and choreographed by Keo Woolford. THREE YEAR SWIM CLUB will run February 9 – March 11, 2012. World Premiere.

Lee Tonouchi is Hawai'i's leading Pidgin advocate. In the new verbal revolution Lee A. Tonouchi's known as “Da Pidgin Guerrilla” because of his activism in getting Hawai'i Creole English a.k.a. Pidgin more accepted as a legitimate language. His landmark essay collection Living Pidgin chronicled the discrimination and prejudices Hawai'i's Pidgin speakers face. And in a front page story, The Wall Street Journal recognized his efforts in starting the first ever Pidgin Language and Pidgin Literature courses at Hawai'i Pacific University.

A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC: East West Players' historic success of producing musicals by Stephen Sondheim continues with this Tony Award-winning seminal classic about love, marriage and infidelity inspired by the Ingmar Bergman film Smiles of a Summer Night. A newly envisioned production not to be missed.

Book by Hugh Wheeler, music/lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, directed by Tim Dang. A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC will run May 10 – June 24, 2012. Tony Award Winning Musical. A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC is presented through special arrangement with Musical Theater International (MTI). Generous support for this production is provided by the S. Mark Taper Foundation Endowment for East West Players.

Hugh Wheeler was a novelist, playwright and screen writer. He wrote more than thirty mystery novels under the pseudonyms Q. Patrick and Patrick Quentin. For films he wrote the screenplays for *Travels with My Aunt*, *Something for Everyone*, *A Little Night Music* and *Nijinsky*. His plays include BIG FISH, LITTLE FISH, LOOK: WE'VE COME THROUGH and WE HAVE ALWAYS LIVED IN THE CASTLE, he co-authored with Joseph Stein the book for a new

production of the 1919 musical IRENE, wrote the books for A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC, a new production of CANDIDE, SWEENEY TODD and MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS, contributed additional material for the musical PACIFIC OVERTURES, and SILVERLAKE.

Stephen Sondheim is an American composer and lyricist for stage and film. He is the winner of an Academy Award, multiple Tony Awards (eight, more than any other composer) including the Special Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre, multiple Grammy Awards, and a Pulitzer Prize. Described by Frank Rich of the New York Times as "the greatest, and perhaps best-known artist working in musical theatre", his most famous scores include (as composer/lyricist) A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM, COMPANY, FOLLIES, SWEENEY TODD, SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE, INTO THE WOODS, and ASSASSINS, as well as the lyrics for WEST SIDE STORY and GYPSY. He was president of the Dramatists Guild from 1973 to 1981.

Additional funding is provided by the California Community Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, the Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, the Shubert Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the LA County Arts Commission and the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs.

All performances will be staged at the David Henry Hwang Theater at the Union Center for the Arts at 120 Judge John Aiso St., Los Angeles, CA 90012. Season Subscriptions are available with General Subscriptions starting at \$125. Wednesday, Thursday, Student, and Senior Subscriptions are discounted to \$110. Preview Subscriptions are \$85. Opening Night subscriptions include pre-show cocktails and a post-show reception and are \$200. Season Subscription purchases and additional information can be found at www.EastWestPlayers.org or by calling 213-625-7000. All plays and dates subject to change.