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MacArthur genius grant winner Luis Alfaro re-dreams the Oedipus tale in the world premiere of *Oedipus el Rey* at Magic Theatre

14 December, 2009 – SAN FRANCISCO, CA: Magic Theatre, San Francisco's home for new plays, kicks off the new year with the world premiere of *Oedipus el Rey* by Luis Alfaro, directed by Loretta Greco. *Oedipus el Rey*, a reimagined classic, opens February 3rd, 2010.

Do you believe in destiny? With his unique Chicano swagger and sly sense of humor, Luis Alfaro transforms Sophocles' ancient tale into an electrifying and unforgettable myth for the modern age. As Oedipus struggles against fate amidst a chorus of prison inmates, his epic journey takes him down California's dusty Highway 99 from the Golden Gate Bridge to the City of Angels.

Magic is thrilled to give a theatrical home to Luis Alfaro, one of the great renaissance men of the theatre and a brilliant interpreter of the classics. According to the LA Times, Alfaro "has proved uncommonly adept at telling the stories of outsiders who, lacking validation from without – must find it within." The muscular poetry in Alfaro's *Oedipus* explores the thirst for power and control while demonstrating the importance of community. Under the direction of Loretta Greco, the production features a versatile cast of shape-shifting actors, stark theatricality, and explosive music from El Coro (the inmate Chorus). Asked why it is important to revisit the classics, Greco says "it is incredibly exciting to crack open classical texts and make them accessible to people of all ages, colors, and economic backgrounds. By treating an ancient Greek play as a living, breathing text we hope to engage our entire Bay Area community."

Oedipus el Rey stars San Francisco actors Carlos Aguirre, Eric Aviles, Marc David Pinate, and Armando Rodriguez as the chorus of prison inmates, and welcomes Romi Dias and Joshua Torrez from NYC in the roles of Jocasta and Oedipus.

The production team for *Oedipus el Rey* features set designer Erik Flatmo, light designer Sarah Sidman, costume designer Alex Jaeger, and sound designer Jake Rodriguez.

Oedipus el Rey is a National New Play Network World Premiere.

BIOGRAPHIES

Luis Alfaro (Playwright) is a critically acclaimed writer/performer who works in poetry, plays, short stories, performance and journalism. Chicano born and raised in the Pico-Union district of downtown Los Angeles, he is the recipient of, among other awards, a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship and an NEA/TCG residency grant. In 2002 he was awarded the Kennedy Center Fund for New American Plays twice, for his plays *Electricidad* and *Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner*. *Electricidad* received its world premiere at the Borderlands Theatre in Tucson, Ariz., and was subsequently produced at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago, and has an upcoming production at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles. A highly anthologized writer, he is featured in the anthologies *O Solo Homo* (Grove Press), *Twelve Shades Red* (Graphically Speaking LTD) and *Particular Voices: Portraits of Gay and Lesbian Writers* (MIT Press); *Out of the Fringe: Contemporary Latino Theatre and Performance* (TCG) and *Extreme Exposure: An Anthology of Solo Performance Texts from the Twentieth Century* (TCG). He is a member of the New York playwrights' organization, New Dramatists, and was a resident artist at the Mark Taper Forum, where he is also co-director of the Latino Theatre Initiative. He was a visiting artist at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., where he created *Black Butterfly*, *Jaguar Girl*, *Piñata Woman and Other Super Hero Girls*, *Like Me*, as part of the New Visions/New Voices youth theater program. *Black Butterfly...* is also performed as part of the Mark Taper Forum's PLAY touring program. He has toured his performance work throughout the United States, England and Mexico. His short film, *Chicanismo*, was nominated for an Emmy award, won Best Experimental Film at the 1998 San Antonio CineFestival and was featured in San Francisco's CineAcción '98. A member of The Dramatists Guild, he is the winner of the 1998 National Hispanic Playwriting Competition and the 1997 Midwest PlayLabs for his play *Straight As a Line* which was seen in New York at Primary Stages, in Minneapolis at 3 Legged Race, in Los Angeles at Playwright's Arena and had its world premiere at the Goodman Theatre. His play *Bitter Homes and Gardens* premiered in Los Angeles at Playwrights Arena. *Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner* was commissioned by South Coast Rep and was workshopped at the Public Theater. He teaches throughout Los Angeles including the University of Southern California and California Institute of the Arts.

Loretta Greco (Director/Magic Artistic Director) is in her second season helming Magic Theatre where she most recently directed John Kolvenbach's *Goldfish* and last season's hit show *Mauritius* by Theresa Rebeck. Her Bay Area credits include the critically acclaimed revival of David Mamet's *Speed-the-Plow* and the West Coast premiere of David Harrower's *Blackbird* for ACT. Ms Greco's selected New York premieres include: Tracey Scott Wilson's *The Story* (Public Theater /Kesselring Prize/AUDELCO Nom); the Obie Award Winning *Lackawanna Blues* by Ruben Santiago Hudson (Public Theater); Katherine Walat's *Victoria Martin: Math Team Queen* (Women's Project); *Two Sisters and a Piano* by Pulitzer Prize Winner, Nilo Cruz (Public Theater/Kesselring Prize); Emily Mann's *Meshugah* (Naked Angels); Laura Cahill's *Mercy* (Vineyard); Karen Hartman's *Gum* (Women's Project); *A Park in our House* by Nilo Cruz (New York Theatre Workshop); and Toni Press Coffman's *Touch* (Women's Project). Ms Greco directed the national tour of Emily Mann's *Having Our Say* as well as the play's international premiere at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg, South Africa. Regional credits include: *Romeo and Juliet* and *Stop Kiss* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival) as well as productions at South Coast Repertory Theatre, Lajolla Playhouse, McCarter, Long

Wharf, Intiman, Williamstown Theater Festival, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Repertory Theatre of St Louis, Coconut Grove Playhouse, Playmakers Repertory Company, and the Cleveland Play House. As a Producer, Ms. Greco has developed and produced the work of a variety of distinguished contemporary writers including Athol Fugard, Joyce Carol Oates, Emily Mann, Nilo Cruz, Lynn Nottage, Neena Beber, Diane Paulus, Rinne Groff, and Lisa D'Amour. Greco received her MFA from Catholic University and is the recipient of two Drama League Fellowships and a Princess Grace Award.

Romi Dias (Jocasta) is thrilled to make her Magic Theatre debut. Some favorite Off-Broadway credits include *Light Raise the Roof* by Kia Cothron at New York Theater Workshop, *Commit* at Manhattan Class Company, *Young Valiant* by Oliver Mayer directed by Michael John Carces and *Tight Embrace* directed by Ruben Polendo at INTAR 53, *The Ontological Detective* at Blue Heron Theatre, and *Fuente* at Cherry Lane Theater. Regional credits include *The Tempest* at Williamstown Theater Festival, *La Ilorana* at Eugene O'Neill Playwright's Conference, *Joan of Arc* at The Edinburgh Fringe Festival, *Anna in the Tropics* at Seattle Repertory, *Day of Kings* at The Alliance Theater, and starring roles in *Clean House*, *Living Out*, and *Sunsets and Margaritas* at the Denver Center Theater Company. Ms. Dias has appeared on television in *Third Watch*, *Law & Order*, and *Saturday Night Live*. Film credits include *All Night Bodega*, *Sunstorm*, and *El Cantate*. Romi is a graduate of Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University and is a proud recipient of the Princess Grace Award for theatre.

The **National New Play Network** is an alliance of leading nonprofit theaters that champion the development, production and continued life of new plays. Since its founding in 1998, NNPN has commissioned over a dozen playwrights, provided seven MFA graduates with paid residencies, and supported nearly 50 productions nationwide through its innovative Continued Life of New Plays Fund, which creates "rolling world premieres" of new plays. Through these activities and others, NNPN has granted nearly a half million dollars to theaters and artists in the past ten years. All told, hundreds of artists have gained employment through these efforts in the 24 regions of the country where NNPN member theaters are located.

CALENDAR EDITORS

Oedipus el Rey

a reimagined classic by Luis Alfaro
directed by Loretta Greco

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Previews:

January 28, 29, 30 @ 8pm

January 31 @ 2:30pm

February 2 @ 7pm

Press/Opening Night: Wednesday, February 3 @ 8pm

Run:

February 4, 5 @ 8pm

February 6 @ 2:30pm, 8pm

February 7 @ 2:30pm

February 9 @ 7pm

February 10, 11, 12 @ 8pm

February 13 @ 2:30pm, 8pm

February 14 @ 2:30pm

February 16 @ 7pm

February 17, 18, 19 @ 8pm

February 20 @ 2:30pm, 8pm

February 21 @ 2:30pm

February 23 @ 7pm

February 24, 25, 26 @ 8pm

February 27 @ 2:30pm, 8pm

February 28 @ 2:30pm

GENERAL INFORMATION

Magic Theatre

Building D, Fort Mason Center, San Francisco, CA 94123

(parking lot entrance at Marina Blvd. and Buchanan St.)

Tickets

415-441-8822 or www.magictheatre.org.

Pricing

Previews: \$25

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays: \$40 – \$50

Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays: \$45 – \$55

Student & Under 30 Discount: \$20 Tickets Available To Students And People Under 30 Years Of Age With Valid ID, Side Sections Only.

Senior & Educator Discount: \$5 Discount Available To Seniors (62 And Over) and Educators With Valid ID.

PWYC performances: 2/6 @ 2:30 & 2/9

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NEW PLAY EVENTS

TalkBACKs after every performance (with the exception of 1/28, 1/30, 1/31, 2/2, & 2/3)
moderated by Magic Theatre artistic staff and artists.

Docent Thursdays: Thursdays 2/4, 2/11, 2/18, 2/25

Docent led introduction to the play. 7:00pm – 7:30pm. Free glass of wine served.

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