

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Magic Theatre's World Premiere of *Jesus in India* Begins January 25

Playwright Lloyd Suh returns to Magic Theatre with a contemporary take on the world's most famous rebel—before He found His cause

San Francisco, CA, January 9, 2012 – Three years after the world premiere of his hit play, *American Hwangap*, **Lloyd Suh** is back at Magic Theatre with *Jesus in India*, a contemporary reimaging of a wild stretch in the lost years of Jesus Christ. Teenaged and wayward, Jesus of Nazareth runs away from home and journeys to the East with his friend, Abigail of Galilee, towards a spiritual haven full of Maharajas, punk rock, and some really good weed. Performances begin **January 25** and run through **February 19**. New York-based director **Daniella Topol** helms this world premiere production.

Magic Theatre unveiled a unique new voice with the 2009 world premiere of **Lloyd Suh's** quirky and affecting *American Hwangap*. Suh refers to his latest play as a "rebooting or prequel" to the biblical story. "This play is for everyone," said Suh, "It's about humanity, coming of age, finding your way. It's the lost chapter, before Jesus became *Jesus*. You don't have to know the biblical story of Jesus or even be religious to appreciate the play. I think in the end it's about transformation and humanity and nothing is more universal than that."

Magic Theatre has been a champion of this play from its inception. "Just before we opened *American Hwangap*, I asked Lloyd what he'd like to work on next and he shared his desire to theatrically imagine the lost years of Jesus," stated **Loretta Greco**, Producing Artistic Director of Magic Theatre. "It has been exhilarating to watch this play grow from just an idea, through several drafts via readings and three workshops here at Magic between the spring of 2009 and January of 2012. It is thrilling to continue to watch its evolution in the rehearsal hall. We are honored to have such an exceptional team working on this world premiere with Lloyd – director **Daniella Topol**, dramaturg **Shirley Fishman**, a top-tier design team and a ridiculously talented cast. Two of the actors, **Bobak Bakhtiari** and **Jomar Tagatac**, have been an integral part of the the development of the play over the last few years."

The five multi-talented cast members include two new faces to the Bay Area in **Damon Daunno** (Jesus) whose credits include the Broadway production of Kneehigh Theatre Co.'s *Brief Encounter* and **Mahira Kakkar** (Mahari/Mary) who played Emily Webb in *Our Town* at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival; as well as some notable familiar faces in **Bobak Bakhtiari** (Gopal) who has been seen in productions by Word for Word, Golden Thread, and Aurora Theatre; **Jessica Lynn Carroll** (Abigail) who was most recently in *Bellwether* at Marin Theatre Company; and **Jomar Tagatac** (Sushil) whose most recent credits include *The Nature Line* at Sleepwalkers Theatre and *The Best of Playground Festival*.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit magictheatre.org or call the box office at [415-441-8822](tel:415-441-8822).

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Biographies

Lloyd Suh (Playwright) is also the author of *Great Wall*

Story (premiering at the Denver Center Theatre Company in March). His play *American Hwangap* was produced at Magic Theatre in San Francisco; with Ma-Yi & The Play Company in New York; and with Tanghalang Pilipino at the Cultural Center of the Philippines in Manila, in connection with the Andrew Mellon Foundation and Lark Play Development Center's Launching New Plays into the Repertoire initiative, and was published in Smith & Kraus's Best New Playwrights 2009, *American Theatre Magazine*, and with Samuel French, Inc. Other plays include *The Children of Vonderly*, *The Garden Variety*, *Masha No Home* and *Happy End of the World*, a play for young audiences commissioned by Children's Theatre Company in Minneapolis via the NEA New Play Development program. He has been the recipient of grants and awards from the New York Foundation of the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, Jerome Foundation, and others. He is an alum of EST's Youngblood, and the Soho Rep Writer/Director Lab, and a current member of Ensemble Studio Theatre and the Ma-Yi Writers Lab. He has served since January 2011 as Director of Onsite Programs at the Lark Play Development Center.



Daniella Topol (Director) is a New York-based freelance theatre director primarily focused on working with writers to develop and direct relevant, theatrical and adventuresome new plays and musicals. Recent world premieres include: Rajiv Joseph's *Monster at the Door* (Alley Theatre, TX), Willy Holtzman's *The Morini Strad* (City Theatre, PA), Janet Allard and Niko Tsakalacos' *Pool Boy* (Barrington Stage, MA), Sheila Callaghan's *Lascivious Something* (Women's Project, NYC), Caridad Svich's *Instructions for Breathing* (Passage Theatre, NJ). Committed to developing programs that develop new writers and new plays, Daniella has served as the Associate Producing Director of the City Theatre in Pittsburgh, the New Works Program Director of the National Alliance for Musical Theatre, and the Artistic Program Director of the Lark Play Development Center. She has been a grants review panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts, TCG, New York State Council on the Arts, and NYC's Department of Cultural Affairs. Upcoming world premieres include: Catherine Treischmann's *How the World Began* (South Coast Rep, CA: Women's Project, NYC); Carla Ching's *Sugarhouse at the End of the Wilderness* (Ma-Yi Theatre, NYC), and Stefanie Zdravec's *Electric Baby* (Quantum Theatre, PA).

Shirley Fishman (Dramaturg) As Director of Play Development at La Jolla Playhouse, Shirley oversees new projects under commission and in development. She served as dramaturg on a number of productions and workshops, including Charlayne Woodard's *The Night Watcher*, David Schweizer's *Peer Gynt*, John Leguizamo's *Diary of a Madman*, Terrence McNally's *Unusual Acts of Devotion*, Moisés Kaufman's *33 Variations*, Culture Clash's *Zorro in Hell*, musicals *Bonnie & Clyde* and *The Wiz*, among others. During five years at The Public Theater, she served as dramaturg on such projects as Jessica Hagedorn's *Dogeaters*, directed by Michael Greif; Nilo Cruz's *Two Sisters and a Piano*, directed by Loretta Greco; Tina Landau's *Space*; Thulani Davis' *Everybody's Ruby*; David Henry Hwang's *Golden Child*; a workshop production of Brian Freeman's *Civil Sex*, and numerous readings and workshops as co-curator of The Public's annual New Work Now! Festival. She has been a Creative Advisor/Dramaturg at the Sundance Theatre Lab (1997-2000) working on such projects as Doug Wright's *I Am My Own Wife*; Naomi Iizuka's *36 Views*; Moisés Kaufman's *The Laramie Project* and Emily Mann's *Meshugah*. An MFA graduate of Columbia University's Dramaturgy program, she has lectured at UC San Diego's Department of Theater and Dance, is a Playwrights' Dramaturg for their annual Baldwin Playwrights Festival, dramaturg for Native Voices at the Autry and San Diego's Playwrights Project which nurtures young writers. She is a member of Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas.

Bobak Bakhtiari (Gopal) is excited to make his Magic Theatre debut as Gopal in *Jesus in India*. Bay Area credits include performances with Word For Word, Golden Thread, and the west coast premiere of *Betrayed* at Aurora Theatre, where he received a Critics Circle Nomination. Recent LA stage credits include *Glamour Girls* at the Barbara Morrison Performing Arts Center, acting alongside Bond girl Gloria Hendry, and performances with Workshop '79. On TV he can be seen interrogating Saddam in *Interrogating Saddam* on Nat Geo Cable, and in various comedic commercials. He is part of the

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sketch comedy troupe Scratch N-Sniff productions and normally resides in a tiny cottage surrounded by cypress trees in Beverly Hills. Bakhtiari holds a Performance Studies degree from Bowdoin College and intensive training at A.C.T.



Jessica Lynn Carroll (Abigail) most recently played Amy Draft in *Bellwether* at Marin Theatre Company. She's been seen regionally as Gabriella in *Boeing-Boeing* at Center Rep and as Amelia Ainsley in *Auctioning the Ainsleys* at TheatreWorks. Miss Carroll has also participated in readings of new plays through PlayGround (*Christina Walters*), Playwright's Foundation (*Rock Creek: Southern Gothic*), and TheatreWorks New Works Festival (*The Burnt Part Boys, Asphalt Beach, The Funkentine Rapture*). Other local roles include Little Sally in *Urinetown* (Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award nomination), Evelyn Nesbit in *Ragtime* (Dean Goodman Award), Emily Webb in *Our Town*, and Sally in *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*. Ms. Carroll earned a BFA in Acting from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, and is a member of Actors' Equity.

Damon Daunno (Jesus) is a native of New Jersey and a graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. Credits include (Broadway) Kneehigh Theatre Co.'s *Brief Encounter* and (Regional) *The Last Goodbye* at the Williamstown Theatre Festival. Also an accomplished musician and regular performer at various New York clubs and cafes, his *Adulterated Trappings EP* can be purchased on iTunes. He is thrilled to be making his Magic Theatre debut and thanks his cast and crew, Abrams, Jesus Christ and punk rock.

Mahira Kakkar (Mahari/Mary) is a proud member of the acting unions in America. She is happy to be making her Magic Theatre and Bay Area debut. New York credits include: *Ms. Witherspoon* (Playwrights Horizons), *Opus* (Primary Stages), *Cavedwellers* (Pearl Theatre Company), *Betrothed* (Ohio Theatre/Ripe Time), and *Sophistry* (New World Stages). Regional credits include *Twelfth Night* (Westport Country Playhouse), *Rafta Rafta* (The Old Globe), *Romeo and Juliet* (Arden Theatre and Virginia Stage Company), *Our Town* and *Coriolanus* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), *Inana* (Denver Center), *Three Sisters* and *Lady Windermere's Fan* (Baltimore CenterStage), *Around the World in 80 Days* (Florida Studio Theatre) and *Seven* (International). Film and TV: *In Real Life, A Night In the Hill, The Life of Pi, Gareeb Nawaz's Taxi, The Big C, Blue Bloods, Law and Order: CI*. Upcoming: *No Word in Guyanese* – a one woman show about growing up gay, Guyanese and Muslim (The Directors Company, New York). Training: Juilliard, Public Theater, SITI Company.

Jomar Tagatac (Sushil) is excited to be part of this production. After earning a B.A Degree in Theatre from San Diego State University, he moved to San Francisco. He received an MFA in Acting from The American Conservatory Theater in 2005 and played the role of Young Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*. His most recent credits include *The Nature Line* (Benji) at Sleepwalkers Theatre, and *The Best of Playground Festival 2010 and 2011*. He's also been seen in *Holes* (Orpheum/SHN) and performed in projects for Word For Word and a collaboration of a new play, *What's a Little Death* performed at the Source Festival and The Baltimore Theatre Project. Jomar has been a Teaching Artist for The New Conservatory Theatre since 2006 teaching Improv/Theatre Games as well as teaching Hip Hop Dance throughout the Bay Area. Jomar is a member of the Actors' Equity Association.

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Calendar Editors:

JESUS IN INDIA

by Lloyd Suh

Directed by Daniella Topol



The world's most famous rebel—before He found His cause

Three years after the world premiere of his hit play, *American Hwangap*, Lloyd Suh is back at Magic Theatre with a contemporary parable imagining a wild stretch in the lost years of Jesus Christ. Teenaged and wayward, Jesus of Nazareth journeys to the East with his friend, Abigail of Galilee, towards a spiritual haven full of Maharajas, punk rock, and some really good weed.

Previews:

January 25, 26 @ 8pm

January 27 @ 8pm (Free TalkBACK post-show discussion)

January 28 @ 8pm

January 29 @ 2:30pm (Free post-show discussion with the director and playwright)

January 31 @ 7pm

Press/Opening Night:

February 1, 8pm

Run:

Feb. 2 @ 8pm (Free pre-show discussion at 7:30pm and post-show discussion)

Feb. 3 @ 8pm (Free TalkBACK post-show discussion)

Feb. 4 @ 2:30pm & 8pm

Feb. 5 @ 2:30pm

Feb. 7 @ 7pm

Feb. 8 @ 8pm

Feb. 9 @ 8pm (Free pre-show discussion at 7:30pm and post-show discussion)

Feb. 10 @ 8pm (Free TalkBACK post-show discussion)

Feb. 11 @ 8pm

Feb. 12 @ 2:30pm

Feb. 14 @ 7pm

Feb. 15 @ 8pm

Feb. 16 @ 8pm (Free pre-show discussion at 7:30pm and post-show discussion)

Feb. 17 @ 8pm (Free TalkBACK post-show discussion)

Feb. 18 @ 2:30pm & 8pm

Feb. 19 @ 2:30pm

GENERAL INFORMATION

Magic Theatre

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

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

BY PHONE: [\(415\) 441-8822](tel:4154418822)

IN PERSON: The Box Office opens 1 hour prior to curtain.

PRICES AND DISCOUNTS:

PREVIEWS: \$30

TUESDAYS, WEDNESDAYS, and THURSDAYS: \$45-55

FRIDAYS, SATURDAYS, and SUNDAYS: \$50-60

SENIOR & EDUCATOR DISCOUNT: \$5 discount available to seniors (62 and over) and educators with valid ID.