

CORNERSTONE THEATER COMPANY
in association with the
MARK TAPER FORUM'S ASIAN THEATRE WORKSHOP
and EAST WEST PLAYERS
presents

a beautiful country

A THEATRICAL PERFORMANCE WITH DANCE, DRAMA AND DRAG



WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY Chay Yew
MUSIC Nathan Wang
SET DESIGN Akeime Mitterlehner
LIGHTING DESIGN Geoff Korf
PRODUCED BY Christopher Lore
and Leslie Tamaribuchi

WITH
Byungkoo Ahn, Chi Kiet Au, Colin Campbell,
José Casas, Tina Chao, Denh Chu, Xu Ping
Dong, Victoria Gathe, Sean Healey, Reggie Lee,
Page Leong, Cindy Luong, Armando Molina,
Lisa Phan, Chan Pui, Eric Steinberg, Peter
Tamaribuchi, Amy Vaillancourt, Cheuk Vuong,
Chien Wang, Mary Wang, Chris Wells, John Lung
Wen, Nancy Yee, Gwendoline Yeo, and Fong Yu.

A Beautiful Country chronicles the colorful and rich history of Asians in America for the last century as seen through the eyes of an immigrant drag queen, Miss Visa Denied. From the plight of Filipino migrant farm workers and the ousting of Chinese residents in Seattle, to the ruthless death of Vincent Chin and the razing of L.A.'s Negro Alley in Chinatown, Visa bares witness to the provocative events that shape the tapestry of Asian Americans in a multi-disciplinary, multi-media performance.

June 4 - 21, 1998

Thurs, Fri, Sat at 7:30. Sat & Sun at 2:30.
Admission: Pay What You Can.

RESERVATIONS & INFORMATION

310.449.1700

Castelar School

840 Yale Street, Chinatown, Los Angeles

Parking is available in the school lot. Enter on College (between Yale and Hill Sts.) Wheelchair accessible.

A Beautiful Country and the Broadway/Hill (Chinatown) residency is made possible with the support of the National Endowment for the Arts.

East West Players is a participant in the National Theatre Artists Residency Program, administered by Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the American theatre, and funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts.

Tim Dang, Artistic Director
EAST WEST PLAYERS

Gordon Davidson, Artistic Director
MARK TAPER FORUM

Bill Rauch, Artistic Director
CORNERSTONE THEATER

Cornerstone Theater Company
in association with
the Mark Taper Forum's Asian Theatre Workshop
and East West Players
presents

美國

a beautiful country

150 YEARS OF ASIAN AMERICAN HISTORY IN DANCE AND DRAMA

Written and Directed by Chay Yew

June 5-21, 1998

Thurs, Fri, Sat at 8:00 pm; Sat & Sun at 2:00 pm

Admission: Pay What You Can

Castelar School

840 Yale Street, Chinatown, Los Angeles

a beautiful country

by Chay Yew

CAST (In alphabetical order)

Chi Kiet Au Fan Dancer, Tai Chi Dancer
José Casas Testimony, Percussionist, Chorus
Tina Chao Chorus
Reggie Lee* Miss Visa Denied
Page Leong* Visa's Soul, Anti-Chinese Play Actor, Chinaman, Model,
Mary, Laotian Girl, Lily Chin
Armando Molina* Anti-Chinese Play Actor, Ralph, Club Lady
Jeanne Sakata* Filipino Migrant Worker, Laotian Man
Eric Steinberg* Visa's Voice, Massacre Performer,
Anti-Chinese Play Actor, Yoshi, Model
Jessica Wallenfels Dancer, Chorus
Chris Wells* Immigration Officer, Anti-Chinese Play Actor, M.C.,
Club Lady, Gunner Lindberg
John Lung Wen Chinese Singer, Poet
Nancy Yee* Mother, Laotian Woman, Testimony
Gwendoline Yeo Dancer, Zither Player, Testimony, Chorus

* indicates a member of Actors' Equity

**VIDEOTAPED
PERFORMERS**
singers:
Xu Ping Dong
Chien Wang
Mary Wang
musician:
Ji Shi

CREW
Denh Chu
Cindy Luong
Lisa Phan

Running time is
approximately
two hours
including
one 10 minute
intermission.

STAFF

Director/Playwright
Composer
Scenic Design
Costume Design
Lighting Design
Choreography
Assistant Director
Assistant Director
Assistant Costume Designer
Assistant Lighting Designer

Producers

Production Stage Manager
Stage Manager
Technical Director
Graphic Design
Press Representative
Production Dramaturgs

Translator
Videographer
Carpenter

Chay Yew
Nathan Wang
Akeime Mitterlehner
Ann Closs-Farley
Geoff Korf
Jessica Wallenfels
Colin Campbell
Byungkoo Ahn
Kharen Zeunert
Kuo-Lung Kai

Christopher Lore
Leslie Tamaribuchi
Victoria Gathe
Valerie Claxton
Sean Healey
Chris Komuro
Jason Martin
Peter Tamaribuchi
Amy Vaillancourt
Nancy Yee
Javier Fuentes-León
Alessandro Thompson

Our deepest gratitude for their wisdom,
inspiration and commitment
to the members of the **Chinatown Advisory Council**
Cheuk Choi and Rosa M. Eshaq *Castelar School*
Deborah F. Ching and Lawrence J. Lue *Chinatown Service Center*
Suellen Cheng *Chinese American Museum*
Chi Mui *Friends of Castelar*
Betty Wong Oyama
Ambrose Leong
John Wong

Many thanks to our extraordinary hosts at Castelar School:
Principal Cheuk Choi
Rosa M. Eshaq
and the entire staff especially Diane Mankie and custodial staff: Robert
Martinez, Charles Harrison, Margarito Majoyga and Jackie Singleton

Special Thanks

Center Theatre Group/Mark Taper Forum, CalArts
Lisa Peterson, Judi Nihei/Northwest Asian American Theatre, Robert
Chavoya, Dazian Fabric, Alan, Heather Stagl, Actors' Gang, Evidence
Room, Alex Papalexis, Vicky at ABC, UCLA's Asian American Studies
Library

For their contributions to the Wall Project: Sophiline Cheam Shapiro,
Johnathon Wong, Gilbert Chan, Blossom Chen, Sheila Selwyn, Mr. Lou,
Dominick Ma, Tina Chao, Kevin Lam, Tina Lau

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Commission, the City of Santa Monica Cultural Affairs Division, the James
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iam Mayer Foundation, French Cultural Affairs, Meet the Composer and
hundreds of extraordinary individuals nationwide.

A Beautiful Country:

Program Notes

By Amy Vaillancourt with Peter Tamaribuchi

A Beautiful Country chronicles the turbulent and rich history of Asians in America, as seen through the eyes of an immigrant drag queen, Miss Visa Denied. Perhaps it is appropriate that the narrator is a drag queen, as this character is a metaphor of duality experienced by most immigrants: a person caught between two continents, two cultures, two languages, and two homes. As the provocative events that shape the tapestry of Asian American history unfold, Miss Visa Denied bares silent witness to the plight of Filipino migrant workers and the ousting of Japanese citizens to internment camps, to the ruthless murder of Vincent Chin and the razing of L.A.'s Negro Alley. In this non-linear, anti-chronological performance, Miss Visa Denied's persona is also divided into two: his inner thoughts, which we hear interpreted by an actor offstage, and his soul, interpreted by a female dancer. Like some recent immigrants to this country, Miss Visa Denied also embodies and pursues the American Dream by wearing the mask of a pop icon and lipsyncing words that aren't his. This multi-media performance with dance and drama is also an artistic collaboration of artists from three veteran Los Angeles theatre companies, Cornerstone Theater, East West Players and Mark Taper

Forum, and residents of the Chinatown community. Their personal histories and experiences add dynamic points of reality to *A Beautiful Country*.

According to history books, the first people of Asian descent arrived in 1587 to what is now California. It is not known how long the Filipino sailors aboard the Spanish ship stayed. Other arrival groups of immigrants were recorded in New Orleans in 1761. In Baltimore in 1785, three Chinese sailors were left after the ship's owner could not afford to return to China for to trade for more silk, porcelain and tea.

A large influx of Chinese came after the discovery of gold in California in 1848. By the end of 1865 over 3,000 were hired by the Central Pacific Railroad Company to build tracks eastward from Sacramento. This was a dangerous business which entailed breaking rugged terrain by using explosives to clear the way over the Rocky Mountains. In 1867, 2,000 Chinese stage a week-long strike for better working conditions. When the project was completed in 1869 in Promontory Point, Utah, it left over 10,000 Chinese out of work. Anti-Chinese sentiment swept over the U.S. during the 1870's. The Chinese Must Go by Henry Grimm (1879) paral-

leled these wide spread feelings toward the Chinese. The title is derived from Denis Kearney's popular campaign slogan of the Workingmen's Party of California. Economic recessions led to a shortage of labor and many protests against low wage Chinese labor on the West Coast. The **Negro Alley Massacre**, Los Angeles (1885) is an example of the hostility during this era. In downtown existed a place for people of all races to find entertainment and gambling. One night, following a disagreement with a Chinese man, a Caucasian man was killed. In retaliation, the white community rose, killing 19 Chinese.

As California was geographically isolated from the rest of the Union and jobs were scarce in the new land, many **anti-Chinese laws** were enacted beginning in 1850. The **Foreign Miners' Tax** was enacted to discourage Chinese gold miners. More laws were created only to be declared unconstitutional at a later date. These included, taxing laundries and wash houses, not allowing testimony to be given in court, barring the importation of women for the purpose of prostitution, prohibiting mixed-race marriages, and mandating public school segregation. Soon, immigrants from Japan, the Philippines, and India were also subjected to this treatment. Perceived as a threat to the Caucasian population, these later groups were added to the laws.

The Chinese Exclusion Acts were first established in 1882 prohibiting all but teachers, students,

diplomats, and business people from entering the U.S. These acts were the first to prohibit immigrants on the basis of race. They were not lifted until 1943, when a new quota for immigrants from China was set for 105 persons per year.

Filipino migrant workers came to America to pursue a livelihood supporting their families in the 1920s. They were hired as cheap labor for cannery factories and farms. Unfortunately, these grueling jobs were only available as long as there was work to be done. Once the fish migrated and the crops picked, workers were out of a job and needed to move to the next prosperous city. In several large cities grew taxi dance halls that employed white and Mexican women to dance with ticket purchasing customers. "10 cents a dance" became a popular phrase that referred to this diversion from a lonely life of difficult labor without family or friends.

In California in 1923 over 90% of the Filipino immigrants were male. With laws prohibiting marriages of mixed race this left a need to send for "picture brides." A woman and man would exchange photos and complete government paperwork to send this woman to the U.S. This practice is still used today, though it takes the form of international dating magazines. The **Filipina Mail Order Bride** came to America under such circumstances. As recent as 1994, a Filipina woman came to the U.S. to marry Timothy Blackwell, and their marriage soon

fell apart. On the last day of the divorce trial, Blackwell entered the courthouse with a gun. He killed **Susana Blackwell**, who was eight months pregnant, and two other women.

Anti-Japanese sentiment was overwhelming during World War II and often aimed at the Japanese immigrants. **How to Tell Your Friends from the Japs** from Time Magazine, December 22, 1941, is aimed to assist the common man in distinguishing Chinese people from Japanese. The difficulty of this task is concluded with: "even an anthropologist... is sometimes stumped." When President Roosevelt signed Act 9066 on February 19, 1942, the internment of 120,000 Japanese people on the West Coast began. Mexican American **Ralph Lazo** is the only person not of Japanese ancestry to be interned. The 16-year-old joined his friends and their families journeying to Manzanar, the largest camp, holding 10,000 people 200 miles northeast of Los Angeles in Owens Valley. Lazo was well-liked by his classmates and elected president of his high school class. It was not until he was drafted for the army in August 1944 that the War Relocation Authority realized his ethnicity. Internment ended in 1945.

Some more recent immigrants are the **Vietnamese Boat People**. These refugees fled South East Asia during the 1970's and 80's because of the political and social turmoil after the Vietnam War. Unfortunately, many did not survive their

escape from their home countries because of difficult conditions including pirate attacks and rough seas. Many people of Laos were also displaced during the same war. A great number of these people still struggle with the emotional aftermath of that experience. Mental conditions resulting from war, genocide, and surviving in a modern American society continue to keep these people from functioning as they used to in their home land.

Racially motivated crimes have risen in the past two decades. This performance highlights two such cases. **Lily Chin** is a Chinese immigrant and the adopted mother of Vincent Chin, a man killed because of his racial misidentification as Japanese. During the early 1980's, Detroit, Michigan, with its high rate of automotive industry lay-offs, pointed its anger towards the Japanese car makers. On June 19, 1982, this rage led to a late night bar scuffle between Vincent Chin and an unemployed autoworker, Ronald Ebens, and his step-son, Michael Nitz. Later that night the two men chased Vincent and struck him repeatedly in the head with a baseball bat. He died 4 days later. The first verdict found both guilty and sentenced each to three years probation and a fine of \$3,000. The final verdict in May 1987 deemed that there was no violation against Vincent Chin's civil rights. Ebens and Nitz never spent any time in prison. Lily Chin then returned to China. Though this case is seen as a failure of the justice system it did set up an important network of

Asian Americans fighting against racial violence.

The second case is **Gunner Lindberg** and Domenic Christopher and the murder of Thien Minh Ly on January 29, 1996, at Tustin High School. The jury in the trial concluded this killing to be racially motivated with the evidence of a confession letter and white supremacist paraphernalia in the two men's rooms. The 24-year-old Ly was an alumni of UCLA, a graduate student of Georgetown University, and well respected by his peers and family. Excerpts of Lindberg's letter to his cousin describing the crime in detail are used as found text in this performance.

A Beautiful Country is a journey into the darker side of Asian American history and their struggle with xenophobic and racist laws and attitudes in this country. From exclusionary laws to the Internment, we remember how Asian Americans have had to fight to become an integral part of this country. This reminder is timely because history has a way of repeating. This year, we witnessed the Chinese Finance Scandal, where Asian Americans were mistaken, because of their surnames, for foreign national contributors to the American government. In the scandal, we see the Clintons depicted as cartoon stereotyped China-hatted buck-toothed "coolie laborers" in a prominent conservative magazine, *American Spectator*. Following the scandal, hate crimes rose. We also saw how

Olympic medalist ice skater Michelle Kwan was mistaken as a foreigner who was beaten by a "real" American, Tara Lipinsky. Recently, on the internet, an email from a California resident complaining about Asian Americans in his community circulated. He wrote: "One reason ethnic pressures become so overbearing on our American culture [is] that the numbers of these non-European foreigners has exploded...I see elderly Asian immigrants EVERYWHERE. They waddle around, bend over, bowlegged, tired - and confused-looking. They don't speak English, don't know a damn thing about our country, and have no desire to ever learn. And yet these creatures, with their ever-growing numbers, keep White Americans from being considered to be on the Fremont school board. This is outrageous!"

Despite the harsh realities of violence, exclusion, and negative attitudes that still persist in our American history, it is also vital to remember the multitude of achievements accomplished by Asian Americans in politics, commerce, entertainment, social services and communities through the centuries. In this all too brief journey into the countless stories, testimonies and histories of Asians in America, it is hoped that this theatrical experience will open a door of further exploration and examination for our Asian and non-Asian audiences tonight.

Please join us for "Talk-backs" following these performances of **A Beautiful Country**

Saturday, June 6, 8:00 pm
Sunday, June 7, 2:00 pm
Thursday, June 11, 8:00 pm
Sunday, June 14, 2:00 pm
Thursday, June 18, 8:00 pm

CAST AND STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

Byungkoo Ahn (Assistant Director) was born in South Korea. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Theatre and Film. He is currently completing his M.F.A. degree at UCLA.

Au Chi Kiet (Performer) Master Au studied martial arts in Vietnam and Taiwan. He was the chief instructor at Wen Chuang Martial Arts Association for Tai Chi Chuan and an Instructor at the Wu Shu Association of Vietnam. Since immigrating to Los Angeles in 1989, he has been an instructor of Tai Chi at Tang Fe Tak Tai Chuan Dao Institute, the Los Angeles Times, Kowng Siu Alumni Association, Chinatown Service Center and Grand Plaza.

Colin Campbell (Assistant Director) His recent directing credits include *The Winter's Tale* for the Gallery Players, *Romeo and Juliet* for the New Jersey Shakespeare Festival, *Taxing*

Lear for H.E.R.E., *Henry Ford Dreams* for Lincoln Center Director Lab and assistant-directing for the Cornerstone/Actor's Gang *Medea/Macbeth/Cinderella*. He has an M.F.A. from Columbia University.

José Casas (Performer) is a writer and actor who is currently working with Cornerstone Theater as a 1998 Altwater Fellow. His writing and acting credits include *A Bag of Oranges*, *Freddy's Dead*, *Manuel's*, *Rendezvous with the Remote*, and *Mindprobe* at the Ivar Theatre. He is a former member of the Tripas Comedy Troupe. He was awarded the Sherill C. Corwin/Metropolitan Theatres Award for Writing (One-Act Play). He received his Bachelor's Degree from UC Santa Barbara and M.A. in Theatre Arts from Cal State Los Angeles.

Tina Chao (Performer) My Chinese name Yu-Wen Chao, my neighbor calls me "UN" abbreviation of "United Nation." My English name

is Tina. I came from Taiwan originally. I came to United States to seek, learn, and develop my self fulfillment, and wish to contribute these to American society and community. As a Chinese, I hold a deep consciousness of building a bridge between West and East, to shorten mutual distance and increase mutual understanding.

Denh Chu (Crew) My name is Denh Chu. I am currently a high school senior. My goal is to save up and travel around the world and also visit relatives I've haven't seen before.

Valerie Claxton (Stage Manager): I have a smile on my face and am happy to be alive. I thank God for blessing me with a talent only He can give. Hey Cornerstone waz up!! Long time no see.

Ann Closs-Farley (Costume Designer) Extensive costume and style design has enhanced recent theatrical productions of *Euphoria*, *Plastica Fantastica*, *Andromache*, *Salome*, and the recent Actors' Gang's collaboration MMC with Cornerstone Theater Company. One recent film credit is the 1997 independent film, *Hang Your Dog in the Wind*. Upcoming projects include *Liberty* at A.S.K. Theater Projects for the Common Ground Festival, *Cheese* and *The Tennessee Williams Project* at the Actors' Gang Theatre during summer 1998.

Javier Fuentes-León (Videographer) (1968) a doctor in his hometown of Lima, Perú, graduated from CalArts with an M.F.A. in film. He has writ-

ten, produced and directed for film and theater. His film *ROOMS* won a National Prize in Perú.

Victoria Gathe (Stage Manager) Victoria has worked as the Stage Manager and/or Technician for such companies as: I.C.T., LA Classical Ballet, SRT, Long Beach Opera, LBCLC, Goodspeed Opera House, SCR, Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, Long Beach Convention and Entertainment Center, and is currently a substitute stage tech for LBUSD.

Ji Shi (Videotaped Musician) Plays many instruments, for example piano, violin, Chinese violin (Er Hu), accordion, harmonica, etc... Coming from China Mainland. Music teacher's experience ten years, as well as writer, many years experiences of music in Los Angeles, ready to service to you all if necessary. Thank you!

Kuo-Lung Kai (Assistant Lighting Designer) is currently attending CalArts under the School of Theater, Lighting Design Program. His most recent work is the Spring Dance Concert at CalArts. He would like to thank Geoff for the opportunity to work with a fantastic crew.

Geoff Korf (Lighting Design) is the father of one and the son of two.

Reggie Lee (Performer) received a 1997 Dramalogue Award for his performance in *F.O.B.* at East West Players. Broadway credits include *Carousel* and *Miss Saigon*. Television credits include *Diagnosis Murder*,

Babylon 5, *Dangerous Minds* and *Moloney* among others. Films: *Give & Go* and *Cyberdorm*. "Thanks, Chay Yew for this challenge (!)"

Page Leong (Performer) joined Cornerstone's ensemble in 1994. This is her 17th production. She was most recently *Medea* in *Medea/Macbeth/Cinderella* and, simultaneously, *Gloria* the daycare worker on *E.R.* She dedicates her performance to Lee Shee Chin, her mother's mother, who came to America to wed when she was 15.

Christopher Lore (Producer) heads special projects at the Mark Taper Forum and is the associate producer of the Taper's annual New Work Festival. Other Taper producing credits include *Two At the Two*, with Alec Mapa and Sandra Tsing Loh at the Taper, *Too*, *Hymn To Her* with Margaret Cho, Amy Hill, Jude Narita, Denise Uyehara, Deb Nishimura and Lauren Tom in conjunction with East West Players, *A Diva Like Me*, by Ren Woods, *American Medea* by Silas Jones, and was associate producer for *Virtual Theatre* at the Taper, *Too*, with Marga Gomez, Danny Hoch, Guillermo Gomez-Pena and Yehuda Hyman. For the Actors' Gang Theatre, Chris has produced *Private Battle* by Lynn Manning, *The Kick Ass Militia!!* by Jason Reed, and *The Tragedy of Salome* by Oscar Wilde, directed by David Schweizer. Other producing credits include George Walker's *Suburban Motel*, *Featuring Loretta* and *Problem Child* with Buffalo Nights Theatre Company and Gary Marshall's Falcon Theatre and Oliver Mayer's

Joe Louis Blues at the Los Angeles Theatre Center. He recently produced a short film, *Clowns*, starring Dan Butler and John Fleck and is pleased to be working with Cornerstone once again.

Cindy Luong (Performer) was born in Los Angeles in 1982. She enjoys reading, writing and watching movies.

Akeime Mitterlehner (Set Designer) is pleased to be returning to Cornerstone and to work again with Chay Yew. Akeime designed the set for Chay's acclaimed *Whitelands* at East West Players, and three incarnations of *I Remember Mapa*, most recently at the Magic Theatre in San Francisco. Other noteworthy shows are *Heading East* for EWP, *Suburban Motel* at the Falcon Theatre, and *Los Vecinos* for Cornerstone. In her double life she is the Prop Coordinator for the Mark Taper Forum.

Armando Molina (Performer) is a member of Cornerstone Theater Company and was a nasty witch in *Medea/Macbeth/Cinderella*, a thrilling collaboration with the Actor's Gang. Also, founding member of Latins Anonymous.

Lisa Phan (Production) was born in Los Angeles in 1980, moved to Sacramento for 5 years, then moved back to Los Angeles. "After living in Los Angeles for so long, I would like to move to a new place."

Jeanne Sakata (Performer) is delighted to be performing with

Cornerstone, has also performed with the Mark Taper Forum, New York Shakespeare Festival, Lincoln Center Theater, Pick Up Performance Company, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Arizona Theatre Company, Syracuse Stage, A Contemporary Theatre, Intiman Theatre and South Coast Repertory. TV and film credits include *Fine Things*, *Hiroshima: Out of the ashes*, *Alien Nation: The Enemy Within*, and *Consensual Relations*, and the feature film *Poison Ivy*.

Eric Steinberg (Performer) Eric has performed for Mark Taper Forum, A.S.K. Theatre Project., South Coast Rep, Berkeley Rep, Actor's Theatre of Louisville, The Sundance Lab and HBO Writer's Workshop. T.V. and Film Includes *Dark Skies*, *V.I.P.*, *Star Trek: First Contact*, *Pogie King*, *Martin*, *Pauly*, *Babylon 5*, *Jag*, *Conan*, among others.

Leslie Tamaribuchi (Producer) is proud to have produced or co-produced all of Cornerstone's shows since 1992.

Peter Tamaribuchi (Production Dramaturg) is a playwright, poet and teacher currently working on his MFA at UCLA. He has had his work developed at the Boston Playwrights' Theater, the Kennedy Center's Ten Minute Play Festival and the Asian American Theater Company. This month, his plays, *Mall Animals* and *The Hostage*, will be given readings at East West Players and UCLA.

Amy Vaillancourt (Intern/Production Dramaturg) Is a girl from Massachusetts whose younger days were captured on Super 8 film by her great-grandfather. She's now writing a thesis on this production for a Master of Arts from UCLA's Department of World Arts & Cultures. Thank you for sharing your thoughts, insights, and lives with me. Don't worry.....I wrote it down.

Jessica Wallenfels (Choreography) Most recently created an original dance theatre work, *Losing It* at Glaxa Studios. She has performed with Diavolo Dance Theatre and holds a BFA in Acting from CalArts. TV and film work includes *Dogfight* and *Twin Peaks*.

Nathan Wang (Composer) Graduated from Pomona College and received a Fulbright Fellowship to study at Oxford University, England. He composed for the CD interactive games, *The Muppet Treasure Island* and *The Return to Zork*. For television, Nathan has worked on *Eekstravanza* on Fox as well as *The Excellent Adventures of Bill and Ted* at Lorimar. Nathan's movie credits include Jackie Chan's Asian version of *Rumble in the Bronx* and *First Strike*. For theatre, he is proud of having worked on *The Traveler* at the Mark Taper Forum, Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* at the Old Globe in San Diego and *Bouncers* at the Tiffany Theatre. Nathan is happy to be collaborating again with Chay Yew.

Chris Wells (Performer) Angeleno. For the Actors' Gang: *Euphoria*;

Imaginary Invalid; *Batboy*. Fabulous Monsters: *Importance of Being Earnest*. L.A. Weekly Award. Other: *Harry Thaw Hates Everybody*, Mr. XMAS. Coming: *Liberty!*

John Lung Wen (Performer) a naturalized U.S. citizen since 1973, was born in China, father Shou Kuo Wen, mother Chong Chin Ho Wen, son Dr. Han Chin Wen, Ph.D. Wen is the 17th Direct Descendant of Tien Hsieng Wen, China's National Hero, Premier and Trust Father of Nation, the greatest Poet and author. Wen Lung received his LL.B. from Chao Yang University, and certified Judge. In USA, Wen earned his MBA and CMA, he worked as professional accountant, accounting manager and controller for several corporations. He served as a VOLUNTARY GHOST ADVISER to President Richard M. Nixon from 1962 to 1974, strongly suggesting Nixon change his FOREIGN POLICY toward RED CHINA, to send his security Adviser Dr. Henry Kissinger, to visit Peiking, by a SECRET WAY, and request an official visit to Peiking which changed the world. Editor's Choice Award, The National Library of Poetry Contest, Best Poems of 1997, Republican National Committee 1998 Certificate of Achievement. Author of the book ELEPHANT EMBRACES DRAGON, 46 poetries and poems, Columnist.

Nancy Yee (Performer) Started her acting career in Hong Kong before moving to California forty years ago. Theatre credits include *Wong Bow Rides Again* for East West Players.

Television credits include *3rd Rock from the Sun* in the recurring role of Mrs. Deguzman. Film credits include *Enemy of the State*, *Kiss the Girls* and *Disclosure*.

Gwendoline Yeo (Performer) Is the reigning Miss Chinatown USA 1998. She dedicates much time to acting, modeling and playing the Chinese zither and is currently Assistant Director of the Asia Pacific Media Network and a TA for "Asia Media Systems," an honors course at UCLA.

Chay Yew (Playwright /Director) Some of Mr. Yew's plays include *As If He Hears*, *Porcelain*, *A Language of Their Own* and *Wonderland*. His performance texts include *Home: Places Between Asia and America* and *White*. He also adapted and directed *The Courage to Stand Alone* for the Mark Taper Forum. His plays are published by Grove/Atlantic. His new play, *Red*, will be presented at the Intiman Theatre, Portland Center Stage, Long Wharf Theatre and Manhattan Theatre Club next season. As a director, he last directed the award-winning production of *I Remember Mapa* at the Magic Theatre in San Francisco, and will direct Prince Gomolivilas' *Big Hunk O'Burnin' Love* at East West Players this July. A member of the New Dramatists, Mr. Yew is also the Director of the Taper's Asian Theatre Workshop, and the Resident Director at East West Players.

Cornerstone Theater Company

Cornerstone Theater Company builds bridges between and within diverse communities, both in our home city of Los Angeles and our nation. We believe society can flourish only when its members know and respect one another, and that we have a responsibility to make theater in this spirit. We believe everyone is an artist, and our work often includes first-time community collaborators alongside experienced professionals. Our ensemble is driven by a need to make direct connections with our audiences, and our aesthetic is community-specific, contemporary, multilingual, innovative and joyful. We work to help build an inclusive theater of the United States.

ENSEMBLE MEMBERS

Alison Carey
Co-Founder and Ensemble Artist
Benajah Cobb Ensemble Artist
Lynn Jeffries Ensemble Artist
Geoff Korf Ensemble Artist
Sishir Kurup Ensemble Artist
Page Leong Ensemble Artist
Armando Molina Ensemble Artist
Christopher Liam Moore Ensemble Artist

Bill Rauch
Co-Founder and Artistic Director
Leslie Tamaribuchi
Managing Director

Additional Staff

Daniel Forcey Program Associate
Debra Piver Education Director
'98 Altwater Fellows
José Casas
Scott Cheek
Mark Valdez

On Leave Ensemble Members

Amy Brenneman, Stephen
Gutwillig, Peter Howard, Janice
Mabry, Ashby Semple

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Woo

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Margo Lion, John Lithgow, Craig
Lucas, Peter Sellars, Michael Woo,
George C. Wolfe

CORNERSTONE THEATER COMPANY

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Cornerstone Theater Company is a constituent member of Theatre Communications Group, the national service organization for nonprofit theatres, and Theatre L.A.

The BH Cycle

A Beautiful Country was created as part of Cornerstone Theater Company's **Broadway/Hill (Chinatown)** residency. The Broadway/Hill residency is part of the two-year BH Cycle (1997-1999) including residencies in four Los Angeles area communities: Boyle Heights, Broadway/Hill (Chinatown), Baldwin Hills and Beverly Hills.

BH Cycle Productions to date:

in collaboration with Boyle Heights residents...

Los Vecinos: A Play for Neighbors adapted from *La Pastorela*, a Mexican shepherd's play, by Luis Alfaro and Diane Rodriguez; directed by Diane Rodriguez. Performed at the CSO Building, Boyle Heights in December 1997.

Los Biombos/The Screens adapted from Jean Genet by Gloria Alvarez; directed by Peter Sellars. Performed at the East Los Angeles Skills Center, Lincoln Heights in January-February 1998.

Upcoming BH Cycle Productions:

The Baldwin Hills Project by Rickerby Hinds, directed by Armando Molina. Baldwin Hills, October 1998.

The Beverly Hills Project by Alison Carey, directed by Christopher Liam Moore. Beverly Hills, Spring 1999.

and, in collaboration with residents of Boyle Heights, Broadway/Hill (Chinatown), Baldwin Hills and Beverly Hills...

The BH Bridge Project by Lisa Loomer, directed by Bill Rauch. Citywide venues, Fall 1999.

For information, please call us at 310/449-1700.

CORNERSTONE THEATER COMPANY
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE
MARK TAPER FORUM'S ASIAN THEATRE WORKSHOP
AND EAST WEST PLAYERS
PRESENTS

a beautiful country

by chay Yew

150 YEARS OF
ASIAN AMERICAN
HISTORY IN
DANCE, DRAMA
AND DRAG

