

**EAST WEST
PLAYERS**

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Mako (d.)

Nobu McCarthy (d.)

For Immediate Release
January 12, 2011
Los Angeles, CA

Contact: Christine Huynh
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East West Players and Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking Partner to Bring Awareness to Human Trafficking

East West Players (EWP), the nation's premier Asian American theatre, in collaboration with Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) is proud to present a reading of *LETTERS FROM MY MOTHER* by Udaya Kanthi Salgado, directed by Shaheen Vaaz on Thursday, January 20, 2011 at 7:30 pm at the National Center for the Preservation of Democracy in Little Tokyo. The reading will feature James Kyson Lee (NBC's *Heroes*), Camille Mana (UPN's *One on One*), Tamlyn Tomita (*The Karate Kid II*, *The Joy Luck Club*), and more to be announced.

LETTERS FROM MY MOTHER tells the story of Sripa, a young Sri Lankan high-school graduate who endured 26 months of forced labor in a household in the U.S. With only her mother's letters to keep her going, and a neighbor whose inquiries lead to her rescue, Sripa finds strength, bravery, and finally the power and self-confidence to become an advocate for the abolition of human trafficking. This play was developed in the East West Players David Henry Hwang Writers Institute with the support of CAST, based on the playwright's true life experience.

"We believe that the topic of human trafficking and slavery is something that needs to be addressed more in our society," says Tim Dang, Producing Artistic Director of East West Players. "Slavery and human trafficking take on many forms, sometimes right before our own eyes. We are very proud of Udaya for her strength and commitment in telling her own story and helping to bring awareness of this topic through art."

"Udaya's play demonstrates the tremendous strength and courage that reminds us of the resiliency of the human spirit. Her work as an artist, activist and leader is an inspiration to all of us working in the anti-trafficking movement," says Kay Buck, Executive Director of the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and

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Trafficking.

The reading will be followed by a panel discussion and a wine and cheese reception. To RSVP to this free event, please call 213-625-7000 or email boxoffice@eastwestplayers.org by January 19, 2011. In association with Japanese American National Museum, this event will be held at the Tateuchi Democracy Forum in the National Center for the Preservation of Democracy, 111 N. Central Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Parking is available in Lot 7 off of Judge John Aiso Street for \$7 or street parking.

President Obama, for the second year in a row, has pronounced January as national human trafficking prevention and awareness month.

The key to ending modern-day slavery is in the hands of every Los Angeles resident, and therefore CAST encourages everyday citizens to take action.” If they believe that they or someone they know is a victim of slavery, CAST’s 24-hour hotline **1-888-KEY-2-FRE(EDOM)** provides immediate emergency support from expert staff and trained volunteers. Anyone who is interested in learning how to become a modern-day abolitionist can do so by [volunteering, donating or learning](#) more about the issue by visiting www.castla.org.

EAST WEST PLAYERS (EWP)

As the nation’s largest producing organization of Asian American artistic work AND the longest-running professional theatre of color, East West Players produces outstanding works and educational programs that give voice to the Asian Pacific American experience. Established in 1965, East West Players began with nine artists who wanted a theatre where they could strive for artistic excellence, have control over their own careers as Asian American artists, and tell stories about their own community. East West Players started as a small 99-seat theater in Silverlake before moving to its current 240-seat home, the David Henry Hwang Theater at the Union Center for the Arts in Downtown Los Angeles’ Little Tokyo District. For over 40 years, East West Players has provided opportunities to Asian Pacific American artists by producing classic plays, Broadway musicals and stories specific to the Asian American experience. To learn more about East West Players, please visit: www.eastwestplayers.org.

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COALITION TO ABOLISH SLAVERY AND TRAFFICKING (CAST)

CAST, the leading organization working with and for trafficking victims and survivors in the Los Angeles area was established in the aftermath of the 1995 El Monte sweatshop case, which involved 72 Thai garment workers held in slavery. Its mission is *to assist persons trafficked for the purpose of forced labor and slavery-like practices and to work toward ending all instances of such human rights violations*. CAST is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual human rights organization that has been nationally and internationally recognized for its dedication to the identification of victims, mobilization of all sectors of the community to identify and advocate against trafficking, and provision of direct services to ensure that victims receive appropriate services and assistance to recover from their trauma. To learn more about CAST, please visit: www.castla.org.

For more information on human trafficking and the awareness campaign, contact:

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For more information on the January 20th play reading, contact:

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