

**EAST WEST
PLAYERS**

120 Judge John Aiso St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Telephone 213.625.7000
FAX 213.625.7111

website:
www.eastwestplayers.org

email:
info@eastwestplayers.org

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EWP

For Immediate Release
August 3, 2011
Los Angeles, CA

Contact: Christine Huynh
(213) 625-7000 ext. 12
chuynh@eastwestplayers.org

**East West Players' 46th Season Languages of Love Launches With
World Premiere Comedy, A WIDOW OF NO IMPORTANCE**

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, opens its 46th Anniversary season, themed *Languages of Love*, with the world premiere comedy *A WIDOW OF NO IMPORTANCE* by Shane Sakhrani. This production will be directed by Shaheen Vaz. The cast of the production will feature artists of South Asian backgrounds: Anjali Bhimani (*Bombay Dreams*, *Outsourced*), Parvesh Cheena (*Outsourced*), Sunil Malhotra (*House*, *West Wing*), Puja Mohindra (*Three Rivers*) and Lina Patel (*24*, *CSI :Crime Scene Investigation*).

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 carving new paths and leaping for the stars.

"We are excited to open our season with this South Asian World Premier," says EWP Producing Artistic Director Tim Dang. "We are committed to bringing the South Asian community to East West Players and to develop more South Asian work and stories to our audiences."

Writer SHANE SAKHRANI was born in Hong Kong to Indian parents and has also lived in London and Toronto. Shane describes himself as a 'Global Indian'. He holds an MFA in Dramatic Writing from the University of Southern California, School of Theatre. Shane is a finalist for the 2010-II Keneda Graduate Playwriting Award from the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta for his play "The Doctor Is Indian". Shane is a Visiting Lecturer at Hong Kong University teaching playwriting and screenwriting. He divides his time between Hong Kong and Los Angeles.

Director SHAHEEN VAAZ is a director, actor and educator. Her recent directing credits include *Our Town*, *West Side Story*, *The Women*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *The Syringa Tree*, all for Secondary schools. For California Institute

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of the Arts she recently constructed and directed pieces based on The Arabian Nights and the women of The Mahabharata and The Ramayana. Acting credits include Homebody/Kabul and The House of Bernarda Alba for The Mark Taper Forum, East is East for Manhattan Theatre Club, Rice Boy for Yale Repertory Theatre, Twelfth Night and Caucasian Chalk Circle for LaMama ETC. Education: Smith College, BA, Columbia University, MFA.

The design team consists of set designer John Iacovelli, lighting designer Jose Lopez, costumer designer Melanie Watnick, sound designer John Zalewski and property master Michael O' Hara. The stage manager is Katherine Haan.

Generous support for this production of A WIDOW OF NO IMPORTANCE is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, California Community Foundation, Shubert Foundation, LA County Board of Supervisors through the LA County Arts Commission, City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, the James Irvine Foundation, and Bank of America.

All performances of A WIDOW OF NO IMPORTANCE 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. A WIDOW OF NO IMPORTANCE opens Wednesday, September 14, 2011 and closes on Sunday, October 9, 2011. Opening night will be accompanied by a pre-performance cocktail reception and a post show reception with the cast and creative team. Performances are Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm, and Sundays at 2pm. Previews are Thursday - Saturday, September 8 - 10 at 8pm and Sunday, September 11 at 2pm. The Pay-What-You-Can Performance will be held Thursday, September 15 at 8 pm with a suggested \$5 minimum donation.

General Admission Tickets range from \$25 - \$35. Preview tickets are \$20 for all seats. Please call theatre for opening night ticket availability and special event pricing. For ticket purchases or more information, please call East West Players at (213) 625-7000 or visit www.eastwestplayers.org. Senior, student and group discounts are available. Dates and details are subject to change.