

**EAST WEST
PLAYERS**

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EWP

For Immediate Release
September 2, 2011
Los Angeles, CA

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**East West Players' World Premiere Play Partners with
South Asian Network and USC School of Theatre**

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. East West Players presents *A WIDOW OF NO IMPORTANCE* in association with South Asian Network (SAN) and USC School of Theatre. This production is directed by Shaheen Vaaz. 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.

"East West Players has partnered with community organizations, other arts organizations and educational institutions to create a deeper relationship raising awareness of art and the themes of the production," says Tim Dang, East West Players Producing Artistic Director.

South Asian Network was founded in 1990 to provide an open forum for people of South Asian origin to gather and discuss social, economic, and political issues affecting the community, with the goal of raising awareness, engagement and advocacy among community members leading to an empowered and active community. As the South Asian American community continues to grow, SAN is committed to challenging systems of oppression and inequality, building solidarities with other communities, and achieving economic, political, and human rights of all communities.

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“SAN is proud to partner with East West Players on this production. A WIDOW OF NO IMPORTANCE raises awareness of issues that are important to the South Asian American community as it delves into the complexity of human emotion in the most universal of ways,” says Manjusha Kulkarni, Executive Director of the South Asian Network.

Founded in 1945, the USC School of Theatre is recognized internationally as a leader in theatre education. Ranked among the top five undergraduate theatre programs in the nation, the School blends artistic training in a conservatory environment with all the academic advantages of a major research university. The School’s active production program (over 20 shows annually) utilizes four theatre facilities, including the Bing Theatre, the Scene Dock Theatre, the Massman Theatre and the Village Gate.

"I am very proud that Shane's first play is being produced by East West Players. EWP has been at the forefront of presenting new voices and new plays since its inception and under Tim Dang's direction (another USC School of Theatre alumnus) it has grown to become one of the most important theaters in Los Angeles. Shane has a truly rare gift – the ability to write 21st century 'comedy of manners' plays in which the humor comes honestly from the characters. I look forward to reading and seeing many more of Shane's plays," says Madeline Puzo, Dean, School of Theatre, USC.

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 E. 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

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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 \$26 - \$36. 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, prices, and details are subject to change.