

EAST WEST  
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## ARTISTIC DIRECTORS EMERITI

Mako (d.)  
Nobu McCarthy (d.)

For Immediate Release  
April 9, 2010  
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**Pixar Films recognized with Visionary Award and Jordan Nagai  
recognized for Breakout Performance Award for Animated Feature Up  
at East West Players 44<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Visionary Awards; other performers announced**

East West Players (EWP), the nation's premier Asian American theatre, will recognize Pixar Films with the EWP Visionary Award on their feature animation film *Up*. **Jordan Nagai**, the voice of Russell from the animated film *Up*, will be recognized with the Breakout Performance Award at East West Players 44<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Visionary Awards and Silent Auction, which takes place at the Hilton Universal City on Monday, April 19, 2010. The awards gala recognizes those who have helped to raise the visibility of the Asian Pacific American community through their craft. Also being announced is a growing list of celebrity participants such as presenter **Carrie Ann Inaba**, popular judge of ABC's hit show *Dancing With The Stars*, and dynamic urban/hip-hop dance group **Kaba Modern**, who will perform in what has become one of the most entertaining and enjoyable evenings in the Los Angeles Asian Pacific community.

This year's honorees include previously announced **Wenda Fong**, Vice President of Alternative Entertainment for FOX (oversees *American Idol*, *So You Think You Can Dance*, *Hell's Kitchen*) and **Mike Shinoda**, visual artist and musician for two-time Grammy Award-winning rock band *Linkin Park*. Also performing for the gala event are **Joan Almedilla**, **Jennifer Paz**, and **Jenni Selma** of EWP's upcoming musical production of *ROAD TO SAIGON* and talented vocalist **Ethan Le Phong**. Tony Award winner **Lea Salonga** and actress **Tamlyn Tomita** will emcee. Proceeds from the event will benefit East West Players' educational and artistic programs.

"We are proud to honor a very progressive film company like PIXAR who cast an Asian American character alongside an elderly one to play the leads in a feature film. We also honor young actor Jordan Nagai with our Breakout Performance Award," says EWP's Producing Artistic Director Tim Dang. "This evening promises to be an exciting and fun-filled night of entertainment and promises to showcase the depth of Asian American talent in the entertainment industry."

**Additional Honorees**

**Pixar Animation Studios** is an Academy Award ®-winning computer animation

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studio. *Up* won Golden Globe Awards for Best Animated Feature Film and Best Original Score from the Hollywood Foreign Press Association. More recently, the film received five Academy Award nominations, including Best Picture, making *Up* only the second animated film in history to receive such a nomination, following *Beauty and the Beast* in 1991. It was awarded with two Academy Awards for Best Animated Feature and Best Original Score in 2010. Pixar's objective is to combine proprietary technology and world-class creative talent to develop computer-animated feature films with memorable characters and heartwarming stories that appeal to audiences of all ages. Pixar is now a wholly-owned subsidiary of The Walt Disney Company. Accepting on behalf of Pixar will be Production Designer for *Up*, **Ricky Nierva**. Ricky joined Pixar Animation Studios in May 1997. He was the lead character designer for *Monster's Inc.* and the character art director for the Academy Award-winning feature *Finding Nemo*. Ricky most recently completed working as the production designer on Disney Pixar's Academy Award-winning feature *Up*.

**Jordan Nagai** started his acting career at around one and a half years old and first appeared in the PSA commercial *First Five*, as well as doing print work for companies such as Pacific Care and JC Penney. While attending Saturday Japanese school, his principal sent out an audition notice for Disney Pixar's *Up*. After several auditions, Jordan got the role of "wilderness explorer" Russell and had a great time working on his first big film. The Breakout Performance award recognizes someone who, through an outstanding performance that year, has made a huge impact on the visibility of the Asian Pacific American community.

### **Additional Performers**

**Kaba Modern** is an urban dance group established in 1992 by Arnel Calvario. As a proud part of the Filipino-American club Kababayan, at the University of California, Irvine, Arnel founded the group to perform in the modern dance suite of their annual PCN (Pilipino Cultural Night). The group has since evolved to be one of the most cutting edge Hip Hop dance crews in California. Kaba Modern rose to fame in 2008 when they competed on Randy Jackson's *America's Best Dance Crew*.

Event sponsors include: Southern California Edison (Titanium Circle Sponsor); CBS Corporation, FOX, NBC Universal, The Walt Disney Company (Platinum Circle Sponsors); T. Rodd Bancroft (Gold Circle Sponsor); The Boeing Company, Deutsche Bank Alex. Brown, Edwin Kwoh and Lynn & Brian Arthurs, David L. Mauss, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Bill Imada/IW Group (Silver Circle Sponsors). The Honorary Chair is Erwin Furukawa, Vice President of Customer Programs and Services of Southern California Edison.

East West Players' 44<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Visionary Awards Dinner and Silent Auction will be held on Monday, April 19, 2010 at the Hilton Universal City, 555 Universal Hollywood Drive, Universal City, CA 91608. The no-host reception and silent auction will start at 6pm. The dinner and awards program will start at 7pm. Tickets are \$175 - \$1,250. For more information on East West Players' 44<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Visionary Awards Dinner and Silent Auction

please visit [www.EastWestPlayers.org](http://www.EastWestPlayers.org) or contact Development Manager Lisa Tang at (213) 625.7000 x17 or [LTang@EastWestPlayers.org](mailto:LTang@EastWestPlayers.org).

Additional celebrity talent and honorees to be announced.