

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

**Broadway Star Lea Salonga and Actress Tamlyn Tomita
Emcee East West Players Visionary Awards**

East West Players (EWP), the nation's premier Asian American theatre, happily announces Lea Salonga and Tamlyn Tomita as the Emcees of East West Players 44th Anniversary Visionary Award Dinner & Silent Auction. Also announced for the gala event are performances by Joan Almedilla, Jennifer Paz, and Jenni Selma of EWP's upcoming musical production of ROAD TO SAIGON and vocalist Ethan Le Phong. This year's honorees include previously announced **Wenda Fong**, Vice President of Alternative Programming for FOX and **Mike Shinoda**, visual artist and musician for two-time Grammy Award-winning rock band *Linkin Park*. The gala event will take place at the Hilton Universal City on Monday, April 19, 2010. Proceeds from the event will benefit East West Players' educational and artistic programs.

"Asian Americans are raising their visibility in all areas of the entertainment industry, from behind the scenes to in front of the cameras," says EWP's Producing Artistic Director Tim Dang. "I am proud that East West Players has helped to provide opportunities for Asian American artists and at the same time provide a growing voice for the Asian American Community. With all this talent, this is a must-see event."

Emcees

Lea Salonga and **Tamlyn Tomita** will co-emcee the event. Salonga performed at EWP's Visionary Awards in 2009 and was a recipient of EWP's Visionary Award in 2002. She is best known for her role of Kim in the Broadway hit MISS SAIGON for which she won a Tony Award for Outstanding Performance by an Actress in a Musical. She has been the lead singing voice in several Disney movies including *Mulan* and *Aladdin*.

Tamlyn Tomita was a recipient of EWP's Visionary Award in 2006 and has hosted East West Players' Visionary Awards Dinner on several occasions. She has appeared in a number of television shows including *24*, *Heroes*, *General Hospital*, *CSI Miami*, and *Eureka*. Major movie credits include *The Joy Luck Club* and *The Day After Tomorrow*.

(more)

Performers

Joan Almedilla's career took off when she landed the role of Kim in the Broadway production of MISS SAIGON. She then moved on to portray the role of Fantine on the Third National Tour of LES MISERABLES. Her other credits include the Broadway National Tour of JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR and SONGS FOR A NEW WORLD at the Rubicon Theatre Company, which has been nominated for several Ovation Awards including Best Ensemble Cast.

Jennifer Paz has played the title role of MISS SAIGON with several companies, most recently receiving the 2008 Ovation Award for Best Lead Actress. She was again nominated for a 2009 Ovation Award for her work in THE LAST FIVE YEARS with EWP. A Seattle native, her Broadway and regional highlights include LES MISERABLES, BEAUTY AND THE BEAST, THE WHO'S TOMMY, EVITA, and David Henry Hwang's adapted FLOWER DRUM SONG.

Jenni Selma has appeared on Broadway as the understudy to Kim in MISS SAIGON, as well as the first national tour. She has also appeared on CBS' *Star Search* and many national commercials and is actively involved with East West Players, having sung at numerous events and earning rave reviews as a standout performer in EWP's LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS.

Vocalist **Ethan Le Phong's** last appearance with East West Players was in the title character in the anime, hip-hop, martial arts production of *Pippin*. He also starred in the London production of THE KING AND I which also starred past East West Players Visionary Award honoree Daniel Dae Kim (ABC's *Lost*).

Additional event sponsors include: Southern California Edison (Titanium Circle Sponsor); CBS Corporation, FOX, NBC Universal, The Walt Disney Company (Platinum Circle Sponsors); and T. Rodd Bancroft (Gold Circle Sponsor). The Honorary Chair is Erwin Furukawa, Vice President of Customer Programs and Services of Southern California Edison.

East West Players' 44th 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' 44th Anniversary Visionary Awards Dinner and Silent Auction please visit www.EastWestPlayers.org or contact Development Manager Lisa Tang at (213) 625.7000 x17 or LTang@EastWestPlayers.org.

Additional celebrity talent and honorees to be announced.