



## **PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT**

For Immediate Release

### **EAST WEST PLAYERS AND JAPANESE AMERICAN CULTURAL & COMMUNITY CENTER ANNOUNCE CO-PRODUCTION OF LOS ANGELES PREMIERE OF BROADWAY MUSICAL *ALLEGIANCE* IN 2018**

**April 20, 2017, Los Angeles** – East West Players (EWP) and Japanese American Cultural & Community Center (JACCC) are pleased to announce **the Los Angeles premiere of the Broadway musical *Allegiance***, which had its 2012 world premiere in a record-breaking engagement at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego and played on Broadway from 2015-16 at The Shubert Organization’s Longacre Theatre. *Allegiance* will be co-produced by EWP and JACCC by special arrangement with Sing Out, Louise! Productions and ATA, with performances at JACCC’s Aratani Theatre in Los Angeles from February 21-April 1, 2018. Previews will run from February 21-25, with the Opening Night performance and reception on February 28.

With music and lyrics by Jay Kuo and a book by Marc Acito, Kuo, and Lorenzo Thione, *Allegiance* is inspired by the true childhood experiences of TV/film actor and social media icon George Takei (Mr. Sulu on “Star Trek”). *Allegiance* tells the story of the Kimura family, whose lives are upended when they and 120,000 other Japanese-Americans are forced to leave their homes following the events of Pearl Harbor. Sam Kimura seeks to prove his patriotism by fighting for his country in the war, but his sister, Kei, fiercely protests the government’s treatment of her people. An uplifting testament to the power of the human spirit, *Allegiance* follows the Kimuras as they fight between duty and defiance, custom and change, family bonds and forbidden loves.

EWP Artistic Director Snehal Desai says, “It’s an incredible honor to partner with JACCC and the original producers of *Allegiance* on Broadway to bring it to Los Angeles. This year marks the 75th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066, which led to the forced removal of Japanese Americans during World War II. In this politically charged climate, the story of *Allegiance* resonates with timeliness and urgency. We felt it was important to stage *Allegiance* in Little Tokyo, and we are thrilled to share this courageous story inspired by the Co-chair of EWP’s Council of Governors, George Takei.”

JACCC President & CEO Leslie A. Ito says, “JACCC is thrilled to partner on this production to bring this important story to the Aratani Theatre in the heart of Little Tokyo. As Japanese Americans, we need to continue to share our history during World War II and the violation of civil rights through mass incarceration so that as a country, we do not repeat these injustices. I can think of no better way to tell these human stories and share them with a wider public than through musical theatre.”

Producer Lorenzo Thione says, “The story of *Allegiance* has found new relevance in today’s political climate, and we are excited that East West Players and Japanese American Cultural & Community Center will breathe new life into it with this production, further fulfilling George’s

mission of telling the story of the incarceration of Japanese Americans around the world. It's particularly special for *Allegiance* to return to Little Tokyo in Los Angeles, where its first readings were held and where this story has its richest legacy. We look forward to this new production as one that will build on the Broadway production to bring *Allegiance* to smaller theaters, schools, and every place in the world where the need to remember this story is greater now than ever."

### **About East West Players**

East West Players (EWP), the nation's longest-running professional theatre of color in the country and the largest producing organization of Asian American artistic work, was founded in 1965, at a time when Asian Pacific Islanders (APIs) faced limited or no opportunities to see their experiences reflected outside of stereotypical and demeaning caricatures in the American landscape. EWP not only ensures that API stories are told, but works to increase access, inclusion, and representation in the economy.

### **About Japanese American Cultural & Community Center (JACCC)**

Founded in 1971, Japanese American Cultural & Community Center is one of the largest ethnic arts and cultural centers of its kind in the United States. A hub for Japanese and Japanese American arts and culture and a community gathering place for the diverse voices it inspires – JACCC connects traditional and contemporary; community participants and creative professionals; Southern California and the world beyond. JACCC also provides office space in its five-story complex to a wide variety of nonprofit cultural, educational, and community-based organizations in Los Angeles.

### **About Allegiance**

The original Broadway production of *Allegiance* opened on November 8, 2015 at the Longacre Theater in New York City and was produced by Sing Out, Louise! Productions and ATA with Mark Mugiishi/Hawaii HUI, Hunter Arnold, Ken Davenport, Elliott Masie, Sandi Moran, Mabuhay Productions, Barbara Freitag/Eric & Marsi Gardiner, Valiant Ventures, Wendy Gillespie, David Hiatt Kraft, Norm & Diane Blumenthal, M. Bradley Calobrace, Karen Tanz, Gregory Rae/Mike Karns, in association with Jas Grewal, Peter Landin, and Ron Polson.

Ticketing information and casting will be announced soon. For more information, please visit [www.eastwestplayers.org](http://www.eastwestplayers.org) and [JACCC.org](http://JACCC.org).

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