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AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER ANNOUNCES
FULL CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM FOR AWARD-WINNING BAY AREA
PLAYWRIGHT LAUREN YEE'S *THE GREAT LEAP*

Starring Tony Award winner BD Wong, *The Great Leap* explores cultural identity, global politics, and the collision of cultures and generations

A.C.T.'s Geary Theater
March 6–31, 2019

SAN FRANCISCO (January 22, 2018)—**American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon** announced today the full cast and creative team for award-winning Bay Area playwright Lauren Yee's *The Great Leap*, performing at A.C.T.'s **Geary Theater** (415 Geary St., San Francisco) **March 6–31, 2019**. When a college basketball team from San Francisco is invited to China for an exhibition game in 1989, a smack-talking American coach prepares to take on his protégé—now grown and bent on crushing the Westerners. But after a public high school star from Chinatown joins the American team, his actions in Beijing become the accidental focus of attention, escalating the fractured history between the coaches. Funny, urgent, and contemporary, this slam dunk of a sports drama from Yee—developed at A.C.T.'s New Strands Festival in 2017—explores cultural identity, global politics, and the collision of cultures and generations. Under the direction of two-time Obie Award winner **Lisa Peterson**, *The Great Leap* soars through time and leaps across continents from the hardball courts of San Francisco's Chinatown to a Beijing on the brink of a revolution, building tension right up to the buzzer. Press night for *The Great Leap* will be held on Wednesday, March 13, 2019. **Single tickets** (ranging from \$15–\$110) are available at the A.C.T. Box Office at **415.749.2228** or online at www.act-sf.org. *Ticket prices are subject to change without notice.*

Following rave reviews and audience acclaim in *The Great Leap* at off-Broadway's Atlantic Theater Company this past spring, Tony Award winner and San Francisco native **BD Wong** (*The Orphan of Zhao* at A.C.T.; *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*) will reprise his role as "Wen Chang." Joining him are (in alphabetical order) **Arye Gross** (ABC's *Castle*; *Wild Oats* at South Coast Repertory Theatre) as "Saul," **Tim Liu** (*A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey; *Incident at Hidden Temple* at Pan Asian Repertory Theatre) as "Manford," and **Ruibao Qian** (*Bull in a China Shop* at Lincoln Center Theater; *Water by the Spoonful* at The Old Globe) as "Connie."



Says A.C.T. Artistic Director **Pam MacKinnon**: "I am delighted to have this San Francisco story—written by one of theater's most exciting new voices and developed at A.C.T.'s New Strands Festival—play The Geary Theater. Yee's basketball play puts a surprising search for self and belonging center court."

The creative team for *The Great Leap* includes **Robert Brill** (Scenic Designer), **Meg Neville** (Costume Designer), **Yi Zhao** (Lighting Designer), **Jake Rodriguez** (Sound Designer), and **Hana Sooyeon Kim** (Video Designer).

In connection with *The Great Leap*, A.C.T. will offer numerous **InterACT events**—many of which are presented free of charge—that will give patrons opportunities to get closer to the action while having an entire night out at the theater. Visit act-sf.org/interact to learn more about subscribing to these events throughout the season:

- **Bike to the Theater Night:**
Wednesday, March 6, 7 p.m.
Providing a greener alternative to theater transportation, A.C.T. and the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition offer free valet bike parking, as well as a special discount on tickets, for these select performances.
- **Prologue:**
Tuesday, March 12, 5:30 p.m.
Before the curtain goes up, get a sneak peek at the artistic process at this fascinating preshow discussion with the director and artistic staff.
- **Audience Exchanges:**
Tuesday, March 19, 7 p.m. | Sunday, March 24, 2 p.m. | Wednesday, March 27, 2 p.m.
After the show, stick around for a lively Q&A session with the actors and artists who create the work onstage.
- **OUT with A.C.T.:**
Wednesday, March 20, following the 8 p.m. performance
The best LGBT night in town! Mingle with the cast and enjoy free drinks and treats at this popular after-party.
- **Wente Vineyards Wine Series:**
Tuesday, March 26, 7 p.m.
Before the show, raise a glass at this wine-tasting event featuring the Bay Area's hottest local winery.

- **PlayTime:**

Saturday, March 30, 12:45 p.m.

Before this matinee performance, get hands-on with the artists who make it happen at this interactive theater workshop.

A.C.T.'s production of *The Great Leap* is made possible by executive producers **Kevin and Celeste Ford; The Milledge and Patti Hart Family; Jo S. Hurley; and Fred M. Levin and Nancy Livingston, The Shenson Foundation;** and producers **Lloyd and Janet Cluff; and David and Carla Riemer.**

A.C.T. would like to acknowledge its 2018–19 Season Presenters: **Jerome L. and Thao N. Dodson; Priscilla and Keith Geeslin; James C. Hormel and Michael P. Nguyen-Hormel; Fred M. Levin and Nancy Livingston, The Shenson Foundation; Toni Rembe and Arthur Rock; Robina Riccitiello; Mary and Steven Swig; Jeff and Laurie Ubben; and Kay Yun and Andre Neumann-Loreck.**

A.C.T. would also like to acknowledge its 2018–19 Company Sponsors: **Lesley Ann Clement and Karl Lukaszewicz; Ray and Dagmar Dolby Family Fund; Frannie Fleishhacker; Kevin and Celeste Ford; Mr. and Mrs. Gordon P. Getty; Kirke and Nancy Sawyer Hasson; Jeri Lynn and Jeffrey W. Johnson; Mr. and Mrs. Robert McGrath; Burt and Deedee McMurtry; David and Carla Riemer; Patti and Rusty Rueff; Aaron Vermut and Adriana López Vermut; Jack and Susy Wadsworth; and Barry Williams and Lalita Tademy.**

Additional support provided by **The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation; PG&E; The Shubert Foundation; The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust; San Francisco Grants for the Arts; Wells Fargo; and Hilton Union Square and Parc 55 San Francisco, A.C.T.'s Official Hotel Partner.**

Up next, A.C.T. will present Kate Hamill's intoxicating new stage adaptation of William Thackeray's classic novel, ***Vanity Fair* (April 17–May 12, 2019)**. Closing out the 2018–19 season, A.C.T. will present Eugène Ionesco's "seminal absurdist satire" (*Los Angeles Times*) ***Rhinoceros* (May 29–June 23, 2019)**—translated by Derek Prouse and directed by two-time Tony Award winner Frank Galati.

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FACT SHEET FOR *THE GREAT LEAP*

WHAT:

When a college basketball team from San Francisco is invited to China for an exhibition game in 1989, a smack-talking American coach prepares to take on his protégé—now grown and bent on crushing the Westerners. But after a public high school star from Chinatown joins the American team, his actions in Beijing become the accidental focus of attention, escalating the fractured history between the coaches. Funny, urgent, and contemporary, this slam dunk of a sports drama from Yee—developed at A.C.T.’s New Strands Festival in 2017—explores cultural identity, global politics, and the collision of cultures and generations. Soaring through time and leaping across continents from the hardball courts of San Francisco’s Chinatown to a Beijing on the brink of revolution, *The Great Leap* builds tension right up to the buzzer.

WHO:

Written by **Lauren Yee**

Directed by **Lisa Peterson**

CAST (in alphabetical order):

Arye Gross as “Saul,” **Tim Liu** as “Manford,” **Ruibo Qian** as “Connie,” and **BD Wong** as “Wen Chang.”

CREATIVE TEAM:

Robert Brill (Scenic Designer), **Meg Neville** (Costume Designer), **Yi Zhao** (Lighting Designer), **Jake Rodriguez** (Sound Designer), and **Hana Sooyeon Kim** (Video Designer).

WHERE:

A.C.T.’s Geary Theater (415 Geary St., San Francisco)

WHEN:

March 6–31, 2019

Press Night: Wednesday, March 13, 2019

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE:

Tuesdays–Saturdays at 8 p.m.

Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2 p.m.

Sundays at 2 p.m.

InterACT Events

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Prologue: **Tuesday, March 12, 5:30 p.m.**

Audience Exchanges: **Tuesday, March 19, 7 p.m.** | **Sunday, March 24, 2 p.m.** | **Wednesday, March 27, 2 p.m.**

OUT with A.C.T.: **Wednesday, March 20, following the 8 p.m. performance**

Wine Series: **Tuesday, March 26, 7 p.m.**

Playtime: **Saturday, March 30, 12:45 p.m.**

TICKETS & INFORMATION:

415.749.2228 | act-sf.org

\$15–\$110

Ticket prices are subject to change without notice

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