

Gotanda's 'Love in American Times' to Premiere at San Jose Rep



Linda Park and J. Michael Flynn

SAN JOSE — The age-old tradition of matchmaking takes a contemporary twist in San Jose Repertory Theatre's world premiere of "Love in American Times" by Philip Kan Gotanda.

The play is directed by San Jose Rep Artistic Director Rick Lombardo, and will run from May 12 through June 5. Opening night is Wednesday, May 18, at 8 p.m.

Tickets are available at the San Jose Rep Box Office, 101 Paseo de San Antonio, or can be purchased online at www.SJRep.com or by calling (408) 367-7255.

The production's featured actress, Linda Park, was raised in San Jose and is best known for her portrayal of communications officer Hoshi Sato in the television series "Star Trek: Enterprise." She has also been featured on "Crash," "Women's Murder Club" and "Raines," and recently guest-starred on "House" and "The Mentalist."

J. Michael Flynn is a well-known stage and television actor who also worked on the "Star Trek" franchise and has had successful appearances on San Jose Repertory Theatre's stage in "Communicating Doors" and "A Flea in Her Ear."

The cast also includes Arwen Anderson, Zarah Mahler, Gabriel Marin, Craig Marker, Rosina Reynolds, Vanessa Alvarez and Jason Kapoor.

In Gotanda's play, wealthy businessman Jack Heller has a pre-arranged meeting with sharp and accomplished Scarlett Mori-Yang. Sparks aren't the only things flying when these two driven individuals with intractable egos try to one-up each other on what could scarcely be called a "first date." With single-minded practicality and a pre-nuptial that looks more like articles of incorporation, it isn't long before dysfunctional chaos breaks out. Is there room for love when there's no shortage of money or power?

"It was a special joy to work with Philip on his play, and with this remarkable cast to bring these vivid and bold, contemporary characters to life for the first time on our stage," says Lombardo. "We are very grateful to the Edgerton Foundation for selecting this play to receive special funding which allowed us to develop and rehearse this play over a longer period of time — truly an important gift when bringing a new work to the stage."

Over the last two and a half decades, Gotanda has been a major influence in the broadening of the definition of theater in America. In particular, he has been a leader in bringing the stories of Asian Americans to the nation's stages in such plays as "Song for a Nisei Fisherman," "The Wash," "Fish Head Soup," and "Yankee Dawg You Die."

Gotanda is no stranger to San Jose Rep; "Love in American Times" marks his third world premiere with the company. "The Wind Cries Many" was commissioned and performed by the company during the 2002-03 season and "Sisters Matsumoto" was produced during the 1998-99 season. One of the Bay Area's best-known playwrights, Gotanda is also a filmmaker.

San Jose Rep is the premier non-profit, professional theatre company in the South Bay, presenting six main stage productions each year. Now in its 30th year as a major contributor to the South Bay's cultural community, San Jose Rep's mission is to engage, entertain and inspire people. It produces innovative performances that offer fresh perspectives into the human condition, educational programs that promote life-long learning, and outreach initiatives that benefit the diverse local community.

Japan Relief Effort

San Jose Rep has partnered with the Japanese American Community and Cultural Center of Northern California to support its Japan relief efforts. Proceeds from Pay What You Will Night on Thursday, May 12, at 8 p.m. will go to support the JCCNC's Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund. 100 percent of the donations received by JCCNC will go to local non-profit and community service organizations in Japan for citizen-to-citizen relief efforts reaching those most in need in the most affected areas.

You choose your own ticket price. The more you pay, the higher the total donation amount will be. Doors open at 7 p.m.

The complete schedule of shows:

Thursday, May 12, 8 p.m. (preview)

Friday, May 13, 8 p.m. (preview)

Saturday, May 14, 8 p.m. (preview)

Sunday, May 15, 2 p.m. (preview with post-show discussion) and 7 p.m.

Tuesday, May 17, 7:30 p.m. (preview)

Wednesday, May 18, 8 p.m. (opening night)

Thursday, May 19, 8 p.m.

Friday, May 20, 8 p.m.

Saturday, May 21, 3 p.m. (post-show discussion) and 8 p.m.

Sunday, May 22, 2 p.m. (post-show discussion)

Tuesday, May 24, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 25, 11 a.m. (post-show discussion) and 8 p.m.

Thursday, May 26, 8 p.m.

Friday, May 27, 8 p.m.

Saturday, May 28, 3 p.m. (post-show discussion) and 8 p.m.

Sunday, May 29, 2 p.m. (post-show discussion)

Tuesday, May 31, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, June 1, 8 p.m.

Thursday, June 2, 8 p.m.

Friday, June 3, 8 p.m.

Saturday, June 4, 3 p.m. (American Sign Language interpreted show, post-show discussion) and 8 p.m.

Sunday, June 5, 2 p.m. (post-show discussion)