

THE PASADENA Playhouse

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For production photos of *THE ORIGINALIST* and *HOLD THESE TRUTHS* go to:
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

THE PASADENA PLAYHOUSE
WILL PRESENT TWO POWERFUL POLITICAL PLAYS
AS PART OF THE 2016-2017 SEASON

JOHN STRAND'S "*THE ORIGINALIST*" DIRECTED BY MOLLY SMITH,
A CO-PRODUCTION WITH ASOLO REPERTORY THEATRE
APRIL 11 - MAY 7, 2017

AND

JEANNE SAKATA'S "*HOLD THESE TRUTHS*" DIRECTED BY JESSICA KUBZANSKY,
PRODUCED IN ASSOCIATION WITH EAST WEST PLAYERS
MAY 30 - JUNE 25, 2017

TO PROVIDE A SPACE FOR PUBLIC DIALOGUE AND DISCOURSE,
FREE POST-SHOW ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES TO BE FEATURED AFTER EVERY
PERFORMANCE OF BOTH PRODUCTIONS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS.

PASADENA, CA (February 28, 2017) - The Pasadena Playhouse (Danny Feldman, Producing Artistic Director and Sheldon Epps, Artistic Director Emeritus) announced today that they will present *THE ORIGINALIST* and *HOLD THESE TRUTHS* as part of the theater's 2016-2017 Season. *THE ORIGINALIST*, by John Strand (Charles MacArthur Award-winning *Lovers and Executioners*), directed by Molly Smith (*Camp David* and Artistic Director of Arena Stage), and starring four-time Helen Hayes Award-winner Edward Gero (Goodman Theatre's *Red*), tells the story about a liberal law student's nerve-wracking clerkship with Justice Antonin Scalia. *THE ORIGINALIST*, a co-production with Asolo Repertory Theatre, will begin performances April 11, 2017 and play through May 7, 2017, and single tickets go on sale tomorrow. *HOLD THESE TRUTHS* by Jeanne Sakata (Off Broadway's *Hold These Truths*), directed by Jessica Kubzansky (The Pasadena Playhouse's *Pygmalion* and Co-Artistic Director of Boston Court), and starring Ryun Yu (Geffen Playhouse's *Take Me Out*), will take the stage on May 30, 2017 and run through June 25, 2017. *HOLD THESE TRUTHS*, produced in association with East West Players, is a cautionary tale of the injustices perpetrated when nationalism, fear and hysteria collide.

THE ORIGINALIST and *HOLD THESE TRUTHS* both center on issues of democracy, constitutional laws, and what it means to be an American. The Pasadena Playhouse will present post-show engagement activities for every performance in order to help facilitate conversation around these timely topics. The free post-show events are in cooperation with community organizations

throughout Los Angeles. The post-show engagement activity line-up for both productions will be released at a later date.

"As the State Theater of California, it is our mission to bring people together to facilitate open dialogue regardless of political affiliation and belief. It is through art that we can engage in healthy discourse with our neighbors, friends and community. We are thrilled not only to be producing these wildly entertaining and powerful plays, but also to be able to partner with organizations throughout our community to continue the dialogue after every performance of both plays," said **Producing Artistic Director Danny Feldman**. "In addition, it is especially gratifying to present ***THE ORIGINALIST*** with our producing partner Asolo Repertory Theatre and ***HOLD THESE TRUTHS*** in association with East West Players."

THE ORIGINALIST

by John Strand

Directed by Molly Smith

Starring Edward Gero, Jade Wheeler, and Brett Mack

A Co-production with Asolo Repertory Theatre

April 11, 2017 - May 7, 2017

Official Press Opening: April 13 at 8:00 p.m.

When a bright, liberal law school graduate embarks on a nerve-wracking clerkship with Justice Antonin Scalia, she discovers him to be both an infuriating sparring partner and an unexpected mentor. ***THE ORIGINALIST*** uncovers the complexities of the polarizing Supreme Court Justice while portraying the passionate people risking heart and soul to defend their interpretation of the truth, and the constitution.

"John Strand's ***THE ORIGINALIST*** is flat out great, provocative theater. It's funny, it's moving and packs some big punches. The play has become more and more meaningful over the past year since Justice Scalia's passing and with the new administration. Striving for a middle ground feels like an epic struggle these days, said **Director Molly Smith**. "Ed Gero's performance as Justice Scalia is even stronger and more monumental, and I know he will only continue to deepen and grow in the role. I can't wait to share this production with the wonderful audience and staff at The Playhouse. Look out, Pasadena."

Acclaimed actor **Edward Gero** reprises his role as Scalia. *The New York Times* said, "Scalia, portrayed with terrific verve and snappy humor by Edward Gero," and *The Washington Post* proclaims, "He (Gero) lands the laughs, delivers the gravitas and at every turn makes you believe this tantalizing man knows and feels American law down to his very bones." *Sarasota Magazine* which reviewed the production in January 2017 said, "Strand's careful balance of comic and dramatic moments, Molly Smith's smart direction and Gero's flawless portrayal of Scalia, ***THE ORIGINALIST*** draws you in immediately and keeps you watching."

THE ORIGINALIST will play The Pasadena Playhouse immediately after its run at Asolo Repertory Theatre in Sarasota, Florida.

HOLD THESE TRUTHS

by Jeanne Sakata

Directed by Jessica Kubzansky

Starring Ryun Yu

Produced in association with East West Players

May 30, 2017 - June 25, 2017

Official Press Opening Date - TBD

75 years ago, Executive Order 9066 called for American citizens to be ripped from their homes and forced into internment camps, detained solely based on their heritage and ancestry. Amid the chaos, one young student stands up for what he passionately believes is right in the face of a country deeply divided between national security and freedom for all. Based on a true story which follows the life of civil rights hero Gordon Hirabayashi, **HOLD THESE TRUTHS** is a shockingly relevant cautionary tale of the injustices perpetrated when nationalism, fear and hysteria collide. "I had the privilege of meeting this play of Jeanne Sakata's in a very early stage of development, and was blessed to get to develop and direct it from then forward to its world premiere production and beyond. It has been an extraordinary gift, said **Director Jessica Kubzansky**. She added, "Not only because playwright Jeanne Sakata is herself an extraordinary light and spirit, and Ryun Yu, the actor who created the role, a beautiful man and a hugely gifted actor with enormous passion and integrity, but because, as I worked on this play, which is in some ways a love story between a man and his Constitution, I began to realize that for the first time in my life I was encountering a hero. A true hero. An American hero."

The Seattle Times said, "Absorbing account of civil disobedience...It's a fascinating saga...eloquent writings. 'Hold These Truths' is also surprisingly humorous and openhearted," and *The Huffington Post* raved, "'Stunning! A brilliant portrayal of a genuine hero...a story that needs to be shared again and again.'" *BroadwayWorld* said, "'Hold These Truths' is excellent...and important...everyone should see it! 90 minutes of exceptional theatrical storytelling. Between the tight script and an outstanding performance by Ryun Yu."

HOLD THESE TRUTHS premiered at East West Players in 2007 under the title *Dawn's Light: The Journey of Gordon Hirabayashi*.

Please note that the previously announced production of *Twelfth Night* and *M. Butterfly* were replaced by **THE ORIGINALIST** and **HOLD THESE TRUTHS**, respectively. And, the Artistic Director's Choice is the current PlayWorks development production of Dotson Rader's **GOD LOOKED AWAY** starring Al Pacino and Judith Light, and directed by Robert Allan Ackerman.

The Pasadena Playhouse is located at 39 South El Molino Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101. Single tickets for **THE ORIGINALIST** go on sale March 1, 2017 and the on-sale date for **HOLD THESE TRUTHS** is April 3, 2017. Tickets for **THE ORIGINALIST** and **HOLD THESE TRUTHS** range from \$25 - \$80 with premiere seats at \$115. Tickets are available online at PasadenaPlayhouse.org, by phone at 626-356-7529 or at The Pasadena Playhouse Box Office (39 South El Molino Avenue).

The Pasadena Playhouse began in 1917 and was recognized by the State Legislature as the State Theater of California in 1937 for bringing national and international renown to the state as a center for dramatic art in 1937. Production highlights include the launch of the national tour of

Purlie (with the Goodman Theatre); *Sister Act: The Musical*, which played in the West End at the London Palladium Theatre and on Broadway at the Broadway Theatre (Five 2011 Tony Award nominations, including Best Musical) and is currently on a national tour; *Baby It's You!*, which played at Broadway's Broadhurst Theatre; and *Looped* starring Valerie Harper, which played at Broadway's Lyceum Theatre (2010 Tony Award Nominee, Best Actress in a Play). Other productions developed at The Pasadena Playhouse include *A Night With Janis Joplin* (2014 Tony Award Nominee), *Stormy Weather: The Lena Horne Story*, *Can-Can* and *Ray Charles Live!*

Under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director, Danny Feldman, The Pasadena Playhouse's mission is to enhance the lives of our community through theatrical productions, community programs and education. This year, The Pasadena Playhouse State Theater of California celebrates its Centennial Anniversary.

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