

To: Theatre Editor
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Press

LODESTONE THEATRE ENSEMBLE'S WORLD PREMIERE OF *AMERICAN MONSTERS*

TO OPEN FOR HALLOWEEN AND EDGEFEST

Three one-acts exploring the dark side of Americana

Lodestone Theatre Ensemble presents the world premiere of **American Monsters** featuring three one-act plays written by Philip W. Chung, Judy Soo Hoo and Matt Pelfrey. This is Lodestone's follow-up to their highly successful run of **laughter joy & loneliness & sex & sex & sex & sex**. The production is a presentation of the East L.A. College Theatre Artists-in-Residence Program and will be a part of Edgefest 2000, a citywide celebration of the vibrant and diverse L.A. theatre community. The show will run at The Edison Center for the Performing Arts, East L.A. College, 1301 Ave. Cesar Chavez in Monterey Park from Oct. 28-Nov. 19, 2000. The plays will be directed by three acclaimed directors Frances Hearn (*Judith*), Jeff Liu (Lodestone's inaugural production *TEXAS*) and Elizabeth Sung (*The Water Ghost*).

American Monsters consists of three one-acts. In *Dead of Night* by Philip W. Chung, directed by Elizabeth Sung, a grown woman, haunted by dreams of a frightening clown, explores the gruesome layers of a horrifying family secret with the help of her psychiatrist. In *Beastly Beauties* by Judy Soo Hoo, directed by Frances Hearn, three women encounter a dead man who springs to life to prey upon their sexual fears until only one person is left standing. In *Murderabilia* by Matt Pelfrey, directed by Jeff Liu, two murder encyclopedia salesmen, a woman obsessed with the dark side and a man tortured by a hideous crime from his past, find themselves on a path toward murder and mayhem.

Philip W. Chung is one of Lodestone's co-founders and the writer of the company's last production *laughter joy & loneliness & sex & sex & sex & sex* which played to SRO crowds. His numerous stage and television credits include the play *Yellow Face* and the television series *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman*. Matt Pelfrey's play *Drive Angry* won the Heideman Award and premiered at the 1999 Humana Festival at the Actors Theatre of Louisville. His play *Cockroach Nation* was recently presented to critical raves by Moving Arts. Judy Soo Hoo's play *TEXAS* won the Yukon Pacific New Play Award at the Edward Albee Conference and was presented by Lodestone as its inaugural presentation in Fall, 1999. She is also the recipient of the East West Players AT&T New Voices Award and the PEN/West Emerging Voices Fellowship among other honors.

"**American Monsters** was first conceived as our Halloween production, but we didn't want to do anything we've seen before," says Lodestone co-founder and co-artistic director Bokyun Chun. "We wanted to do a show for the Halloween season where we weren't just building on traditional icons and myths. We wanted to really explore the dark and perverse nature of suburban life, and show that what's beneath the surface of our idealized and sanitary image of America is, in fact, quite disturbing. And with an Asian American cast, we're shattering all the stereotypes that often confine our society."

"People might ask why an Asian American theatre is putting on new plays that don't deal with Asian themes," says Lodestone co-founder and **American Monsters** co-writer Philip W. Chung. "Part of our mission is to create edgy and compelling work. This is our chance to do that and explore themes and stories that we as Asian American artists would not be allowed to explore elsewhere. All the actors in this show and most of the directors and writers are Asian Americans, and we are staking claim to these American stories as our own."

Performances for **American Monsters** are Oct. 28-Nov. 19, Friday and Saturday evenings at 8:30 pm and Sundays at 7:30 pm. There will be a special Halloween performance, Oct. 31 at 8:30 pm and no performance on Nov. 3. General ticket prices are \$12. Student and senior prices are \$11. Groups (10 or more) are \$10. At the Edison Center for Performing Arts, East L.A. City College, 1301 Ave. Cesar Chavez, Monterey Park. For tickets and general information call the Lodestone Theatre hotline at 323-993-7245, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.