



under the artistic direction of:
PHILIP W. CHUNG
CHIL KONG

One Nation, Under God

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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LODESTONE THEATRE ENSEMBLE PRESENTS THE WORLD PREMIERE OF

One Nation, Under God

The new play exploring religion and violence opens this Sat., Aug. 5

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LOS ANGELES, CA – Lodestone Theatre Ensemble presents the world premiere of *One Nation, Under God*, running August 5-27, 2006 at the GTC Burbank (1111-B West Olive Ave., Burbank, CA 91506) located inside George Izay Park. The award winning theatre company concludes its seventh season with a special bonus summer production of an original play written and directed by Co-Artistic Director Philip W. Chung who most recently wrote *The Golden Hour*, which was a critical and commercial hit for Lodestone this spring. *One Nation, Under God* was developed over the past year through workshops led by Chung.

"All of our plays this season touched on the themes of faith and spirituality so Philip's play is the perfect way to cap this cycle," says Co-Artistic Director Chil Kong. "*One Nation, Under God* is in some ways a companion piece to Philip's last play *The Golden Hour*. But whereas his previous play took a positive look at how faith can lead to deeper human connections, this new play is more disturbing. It basically explores how blind faith can sometimes have destructive and tragic consequences."

One Nation, Under God stars Ryun Yu – who received raves for his performance as the uptight Korean American attorney boyfriend in *The Golden Hour* – as Paul Kim, a brilliant young physics student who has rejected religion for science. But when an angel appears to him and reveals that he has been chosen by God to commit a brutal act of violence that will bring about the world's salvation, Paul must choose between faith and reason. Veteran actor Dennis Dun (*The Last Emperor*) joins the cast as the conflicted priest who tries to help Paul. Dun last appeared on the Lodestone mainstage in Fall 2001 in the critically acclaimed production of Matt Pelfrey's *Terminus Americana*. The rest of the cast includes Nechelle Fabiana, Caroline Le Duc, Jeff Liu, Kelley Lund and Brian P. Nichols. *One Nation, Under God* is produced by Nicole Miyako Cherry and the cast.

"I was reading a number of case studies of seemingly normal people who end up doing very violent things in the name of God," writer and director Chung explains. "The subject was absolutely fascinating. What would make an average person believe that God was talking directly to him? Furthermore, if that person actually believed God was telling him to do something very disturbing, what would make that person go out and follow God's instructions?"

To create the play, Chung gathered a group of actors, both Asian and non-Asian, who expressed interest in the topic. Over the past year, the group met regularly and researched the subject by studying everything from the psychology of Islamic terrorists to a recent case where a mother who killed her children claimed she committed the act because God had instructed her to do so. Through improvisations and discussions, Chung and his actors developed the characters and storyline for the piece. Then, Chung used this material to write the play itself.

Playwright Philip W. Chung is one of the founders and current Co-Artistic Director of Lodestone Theatre Ensemble. As a writer, his credits encompass theatre, film and television including the TV series *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman* and Lodestone's productions of *laughter joy & loneliness & sex & sex & sex & sex* and, most recently, the critically acclaimed *The Golden Hour*. Upcoming projects include co-producing a documentary about Charlie Chaplin's Japanese valet—Toraichi Kono, the screenplay adaptation of Gail Tsukiyama's acclaimed novel *The Samurai's Garden* and another screenplay he is developing entitled *The Crimson Flower*, which is currently a finalist for the ABC/Walt Disney Talent Development Scholarship Program and semi-finalist for the Korean Film Council's Film Development Lab.

SOON-TEK OH
ALEXANDRA CHUN
TIM LOUNIBOS
EMERITUS
ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

ALINA SZPAK
ROBERT C. FLEET
DON DONGSUK KIM
JEANNE CHINN
EMERITUS

Performances are Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., Sundays at 3 p.m., August 5-27, with special low-priced previews on August 3 and 4 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for general admission, \$13 for students and seniors. Group rates of \$11 each are available for reservations of ten or more. Tickets for the August 5 Opening Night Gala with a post-show dessert reception are \$20. All Sunday matinees (except August 27 closing night) will be specially discounted pay-what-you-can performances.

For more information, call the Lodestone Theatre Ensemble hotline at (323) 993-7245 or visit www.lodestonetheatre.org.

Founded in 1999 by Philip W. Chung, Alexandra Chun, Chil Kong and Tim Lounibos, Lodestone is committed to providing a forum for Asian American artists in all aspects of the theatre arts. The Ensemble seeks to challenge limited perceptions of Asian Americans through the creation of original theatrical productions as well as a fresh retelling of established works.

Lodestone Theatre Ensemble is a Company-in-Residence at GTC Burbank.