

# Contemporary Asian Theater Scene Presents 2nd Annual AAPI Playwright Festival

*A one-of-a-kind theater experience showcasing five newly commissioned 10-minute plays by AAPI playwrights*

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Contemporary Asian Theater Scene (CATS), in partnership with San Jose Stage Company, presents the 2nd annual AAPI Playwright Festival, a vibrant celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) storytelling. Under the artistic direction of Jeffrey Lo, award-winning playwright, director and this year's featured playwright, CATS showcases five newly commissioned 10-minute plays and a series of monologues written by Lo.



Flyer for Contemporary Asian Theater Scene's 2nd Annual AAPI Playwright Festival, taking place on Saturday, July 26, 2025, at San Jose Stage. The festival features new works by AAPI playwrights under the artistic direction of Jeffrey Lo.

This year's playwrights are a dynamic mix of emerging and established AAPI artists:

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At last year's festival, we witnessed six amazing AAPI playwrights and shared in their humor, heartaches, and perspectives. This year's playwrights will leave us moved, entertained, and inspired.”

*Jeffrey Lo, Artistic Producer and playwright*

- Jeffrey Lo (also serving as Artistic Producer)
- Marissa May Macaraeg Martinez
- Jenny Nguyen Nelson
- Conrad Panganiban (returning playwright from the inaugural festival)
- Lisa Marie Rollins
- Kenna Tanaka (returning this year as a playwright; appeared as an actor in last year's festival)

“After our inaugural AAPI Playwright Festival sold out last summer, we knew we'd only scratched the surface of what AAPI playwrights can offer. This year, we're thrilled to bring five new diverse stories to the stage. Each play is a window

into the lives of unique characters that will spark conversation and connection in the audience

and across our community,” says Leianne Wong Lamb, President and Board Chair of CATS.

“It’s an honor to guide this unique festival as both Artistic Producer and playwright,” adds Jeffrey Lo. “Last year’s AAPI Playwrights was such a thrilling evening where we witnessed six amazing AAPI playwrights and shared in their humor, heartaches and perspectives. I’m excited to build upon the momentum of last year’s festival, creating more opportunities for AAPI playwrights, directors, actors, and audiences. We have another exciting mix of playwrights to introduce to the community. I’m sure their pieces will leave us moved, entertained and inspired.”

Audiences will see a theatrically staged reading of five world premiere 10-minute plays and enjoy a talkback, a post-show discussion with the playwrights. A staged reading is a performance format in which actors mostly read from scripts—often with minimal blocking, sets, and costumes—allowing the focus to remain on the text and the playwright’s words. The AAPI Playwright Festival is a welcoming space where theatergoers can connect, reflect and celebrate AAPI storytelling.

#### CALENDAR LISTING:

- WHO: Contemporary Asian Theater Scene (CATS) in partnership with San Jose Stage Company
- WHAT: 2nd Annual AAPI Playwright Festival — five commissioned 10-minute plays by AAPI playwrights
- WHEN: Saturday, July 26, 2025, 7:30–9:30 p.m.
- WHERE: San Jose Stage, 490 North First Street, San Jose, CA 95112
- TICKETS: Starting at \$17.85 | Purchase tickets on [Eventbrite](#).

#### ABOUT CONTEMPORARY ASIAN THEATER SCENE (CATS)



Scenes from last year’s AAPI Playwright Festival: Signs of Life, Short, Little Green Men, and Ryce (with a Y)—featuring actors Lisa Hu, Joseph Alvarado, Kausar Mohammed, Karen Law, and Josh Del Rosario.



Actors Joanne Wu, Joseph Alvarado, Dana Soliman, Eiko Yamamoto, Kenna Tanaka, and Patrick Rivera perform in plays from the inaugural AAPI Playwright Festival.

Founded in 1995 by the late Dr. Jerry Hiura, the late Steve Yamaguma, and Miki Hirabayashi Bellon, CATS has been a beacon for Asian American artists in the South Bay and the greater San Francisco Bay Area. With a rich history of supporting, mentoring, and presenting Asian American artists and cultural disciplines, CATS has become a pivotal platform for showcasing talent through events, including staged readings, comedy nights, music concerts, film screenings, and now, the AAPI Playwright Festival. CATS also produces the annual Silicon Valley Asian Pacific FilmFest (formerly known as San Jose J-Town FilmFest). CATS continues to fulfill its founders' dream of enriching the cultural landscape of San Jose and Silicon Valley by promoting AAPI artists and their stories. CATS is located in San Jose's Japantown and is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization—more information is available at [CatsAsianTheaterScene.org](http://CatsAsianTheaterScene.org).

#### ABOUT JEFFREY LO

Jeffrey Lo (He/Him/His) is a Filipino American playwright and director based in the Bay Area. He is the recipient of the Leigh Weimers Emerging Artist Award, the Emerging Artist Laureate by Arts Council Silicon Valley and Theatre Bay Area Director's TITAN Award. Selected directing credits include "Happy Pleasant Valley: A Senior Sex Scandal Murder Mystery Musical," "Miss Bennet: Christmas" at Pemberley, "The Language Archive," "Little Shop of Horrors" and "The Santaland Diaries" at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, "The Glass Menagerie," "Chinglish," "The Paper Dreams of Harry Chin" and "Hold These Truths" at San Francisco Playhouse, "Vietgone" and "The Great Leap" at Capital Stage. As a playwright, his play "Writing Fragments Home" had its world premiere at Hillbarn Theatre; his other plays have been produced and workshopped at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, BindleStiff Studio, City Lights Theatre Company and Stanford University. For more: [JeffreyWritesAPlay.com](http://JeffreyWritesAPlay.com).

#### ABOUT SAN JOSE STAGE

San Jose Stage Company (The Stage) is recognized as the South Bay's premier professional theatre, acclaimed for its bold, imaginative, and provocative productions that ignite conversation and deepen understanding of the human experience. Through compelling storytelling, The Stage fosters community, sparks dialogue, and forges dynamic partnerships both locally and internationally.

Locally, The Stage has cultivated key collaborations, including a three-year partnership with El Teatro Campesino that resulted in two world premieres and a commissioned work.

Internationally, The Stage partnered with its sister city, Dublin, Ireland, and the Dublin City Arts Office to co-commission and premiere Donal O'Kelly's *The Memory Stick*, extending its artistic reach across borders.

A multi-award-winning company, The Stage is the proud recipient of the City of San Jose Cornerstone of the Arts Award and the 2018 Paine Knickerbocker Award from the San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle for its sustained contributions to Bay Area theatre. To date, The Stage has produced over 200 productions, including 20 world premieres and 50 new works. Ranked as the second-largest professional theatre and the eighth-largest performing arts organization in Silicon Valley, The Stage welcomes more than 30,000 patrons annually and

employs over 150 local artists, serving as a vital force in the region's cultural and economic landscape.

Learn more at [thestage.org](http://thestage.org).

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