

CHAD DEITY MAKES ITS ELABORATE ENTRANCE AT GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

NY Cast Members Usman Ally, Terence Archie and Desmin Borges are Joined by Justin Leeper, Timothy Talbot and Steve Valentine in the West Coast Premiere of Kristoffer Diaz's Pulitzer Prize Nominated Play

LOS ANGELES, September 6, 2011 — Kristoffer Diaz's Pulitzer Prize nominated play *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* makes its West coast debut at the Geffen Playhouse on Wednesday, September 7. New York cast members **Usman Ally** (VP), **Terence Archie** (*Chad Deity*) and **Desmin Borges** (*Mace*) get back in the ring to reprise their roles at the **Geffen Playhouse** where they're joined by seasoned pro-wrestler **Justin Leeper** (*The Bad Guy*), actor and wrestler **Timothy Talbot** (*Billy Heartland / Old Glory*), and character actor **Steve Valentine** in the role of Everett K. Olson (aka EKO). Helmed by **Edward Torres**, this acclaimed new work slams together thrilling spectacle, incredible characters and geopolitical allegory into an invigorating theatrical experience you can't find on pay-per-view. *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* tackles racism, drop-kicks globalization and brings this championship tale onto center stage when it opens in the Gil Cates Theater at the Geffen Playhouse this week.

The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity had its world premiere in 2009 at Victory Gardens Theater in Chicago before moving to Second Stage in New York. This West Coast premiere will allow both playwright and director to delve deeper into this still new work, which has already been lauded with the 2011 New York Times Play Prize, the Obie Award for Best New American Play and the Lucille Lortel Award for Best New Play.

Opening night festivities, which are sponsored by **Audi of America** and **Los Angeles magazine**, will be held at **Napa Valley Grille** with beverages provided by **Malibu Family Wines** and **Glacéau Smartwater**. In addition, **Montage Beverly Hills** pastry chef **Richard Ruskell** will be unveiling one of his signature themed cakes. Additional special events during the run of *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* include the theater's special **Signature Series** options for no additional cost. These evenings include intellectual, thought-provoking post show discussions **each week** at **Talk Back Tuesdays**; a scintillating, one-of-a kind after-party on **September 15** for **Girls Night Out**, a cultural happy hour with Lounge Fridays (**September 23 and 30**) and complimentary wine tastings **each week** during **Wine Down Sundays**. For specific partners and events in regards to each of these signature evenings please view www.geffenplayhouse.com/meetchad.

THE ELABORATE ENTRANCE OF CHAD DEITY

Written by Kristoffer Diaz

Directed by Edward Torres

Opening Night: Wednesday, September 7, 2011

Closing Night: Sunday, October 9, 2011

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Cast

Usman Ally	Vigneshwar Paduar (aka VP)
Terence Archie	Chad Deity
Desmin Borges	Macedonio Guerra (aka Mace)
Justin Leeper	The Bad Guy
Timothy Talbot	Billy Heartland / Old Glory
Steve Valentine	Everett K. Olson (aka EKO)

Production Credits

Set Designer	Brian Sidney Bembridge
Costume Designer	Christina Haatainen Jones
Lighting Designer	Jesse Klug
Sound Designer	Mikhail Fiksel
Projection Designer	Peter Nigrini
Fight Director	David Woolley
Production Stage Manager	Young Ji

Performance Schedule

Monday	No performances
Tuesday – Friday	8:00pm
Saturday	3:00pm; 8:00pm
Sunday	2:00pm; 7:00pm

Ticket Info

Ticket prices currently range from \$47 - \$77. Contact the Geffen Playhouse box office in-person, via phone at 310-208-5454 or online at www.geffenplayhouse.com for updated pricing and seating availability.

BIOGRAPHIES**Usman Ally** (*Vigneshwar Paduar (aka VP)*)

Usman is delighted to reprise the role of VP in the Award winning *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*, which he originated during its World Premiere at Victory Gardens Chicago, and then Off-Broadway at Second Stage. Usman has worked at many distinguished theaters around the country including Steppenwolf, Arena Stage, Kansas City Rep, Baltimore Centerstage, and the Tony Award winning Lookingglass Theater Company. Television credits include a recurring role on season four of *Damages*, and *The Chicago Code*. Film credits include Steven Soderbergh's *Contagion*, and *Just Like a Woman* by Academy Award winning director Rachid Bouchareb. Usman is the 2010-2011 recipient of the TCG Fox Foundation Grant for Actors of Extraordinary Potential. He holds an MFA HONORS in Acting from the University of Florida. www.usmanally.com

Terence Archie (*Chad Deity*)

A Detroit native and North Carolina School of the Arts graduate, Terence is pleased to make his Geffen Playhouse debut. Recently, Terence played the title role in the Off-Broadway Pulitzer finalist production of *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* at Second Stage Theatre. Other recent credits include Macheath in Arden Theatre's *Threepenny Opera* and The Greengrocer in Berkeley Rep's mounting of *Arabian Nights*. He also made his Broadway debut in the 2010 Tony-nominated production of *Ragtime*. Other stage credits include numerous one-man shows with Urban Stages in NYC portraying Frederick Douglass, Matthew Henson and George Washington Carver. TV credits include *Law & Order*, *One Life To Live* and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. Special thanks to Litke Abs, Twice, Young Brother Productions, the ever-constant influence of whey protein and the Archie/Beckford family.

Desmin Borges (*Macedonio Guerra (aka Mace)*)

Off Bway: *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* (Theatre World Award/Lortel Nomination/Drama League Nomination-Lead Actor-2nd Stage). Regional: *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* (Jeff Award-Lead Actor-Victory Gardens/Teatro Vista), *Boleros for The Disenchanted* (Goodman Theatre), *Elliot (A Soldier's Fugue)* (Steppenwolf Garage), *The Ascension of Carlotta* (16th Street Theatre), *The Buddy Holly Story* (Mercury Theatre), *Esperanza Rising* (The Children's Theatre Co. in Minneapolis). *Freedom NY* (Teatro Vista), *The Defiant Muse* and *I Sailed with Magellan* (Victory Gardens). Television: "Law and Order: SVU" (NBC), "The Good Wife" (CBS), "True Blood" (HBO). Film: *Untitled Phil Spector Biopic*, *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, *Tower Heist*, *Dreaming American*, *Compliance*, *Cherry*, *Taco Mary*, *Viva El Mariachi!*, *2 De Noviembre*, *Milwaukee*, *Good People*. Desmin is an Ensemble Member of Teatro Vista, and a graduate of The Theatre School at DePaul University.

Justin Leeper (*The Bad Guy*)

A veteran of hundreds of pro-wrestling matches, Justin finds comfort in the chaos of the squared circle. A move to Los Angeles seven years ago shifted his focus to stunts and martial arts. Justin was assistant stunt coordinator on History Channel's *Andrew Jackson* and is Robert Goodwin's right-hand man at Film Fighting LA – training in kali, Hong-Kong styles and various weapons. He's also spent time being humbled by the likes of "Judo" Gene Lebell and Benny "The Jet" Urquidez. Justin's love of video games melded with his passion for wrestling as he directed cinematics for the past three iterations of the *WWE SmackDown vs. Raw* franchise. Justin's debut novel, *Still Man Fights*, is available wherever fine e-books are sold. He tips his hat to those making a living taking bumps.

Timothy Talbot (*Billy Heartland / Old Glory*)

Timothy David Talbot was born in Irving, Texas. At an early age he was fascinated with pro wrestling, TV, and movies. When he was 19 years old he started following his dream of entertainment by joining a small wrestling outfit, Texas Outlaw Promotions (TOPS). From there he rose to the top of the organization and became Texas heavyweight champion. Arriving in Hollywood in 2003, he quickly got started with stunt work and stage fighting for an indie flick *The Last Bad Neighborhood* and *LALA Land*. After being cast for a small role in the film *Anaheim* the writer/director rewrote the movie to feature Timothy as the main villain. Timothy tries to choose diversified roles and take chances with every genre and always approaches everything he does with commitment, humor, and grace.

Steve Valentine (*Everett K. Olson (aka EKO)*)

Born in Scotland, raised near London, Steve Valentine trained as an actor from the age of five. He made his stage debut at seven, playing Chululongkorn in a production of *The King and I*. From there, it was a wild journey getting to the US. At eighteen, Steve ran a nightclub in Yugoslavia, escaping to Italy when war broke out. He then entertained troops as a stand-up comedian, performing in the Belize jungle, Northern Ireland, and the Falkland Islands. Steve has also worked at the Riviera in Las Vegas and the world famous Magic Castle in Hollywood, where he's a multi award winner. As an actor, Steve has appeared in a dozen movies and over 200 hours of television, including series regular roles on NBC's *Crossing Jordan* and Disney's *I'm In the Band*. He also hosted SYFY's *Estate of Panic*, which was nominated for a Rose D'or. Steve is currently developing two series for network television and his graphic novel, *Crimeworld*, will soon be released.

Kristoffer Diaz (Playwright)

Kristoffer Diaz is a playwright and educator, living and working in Brooklyn, NY. His full-length plays, including *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* (finalist for the 2009 Pulitzer), *Welcome to Arroyo's*, *Rebecca Oaxaca Lays Down a Bunt*, *Fucking Vigwan*, and *#therevolution*, have been produced and developed at Center Theatre Group, The Goodman, Second Stage, Victory Gardens, American Theatre Company, The Atlantic, InterAct, Mixed Blood, The Orchard Project, Hip-Hop Theater Festival, The Lark, Summer Play Festival, Donmar Warehouse, and South Coast Repertory. Kristoffer was one of the creators of *Brink!*, the apprentice anthology show at the 2009 Humana Festival of New American Plays. He is a playwright-in-residence at Teatro Vista, a recipient of the Jerome Fellowship, the Future Aesthetics Artist Regrant and the Van Lier Fellowship (New Dramatists), and a member of the Ars Nova Play Group. He is one of the co-founders of The Unit Collective (Minneapolis). Kristoffer is currently working on a commissions for the Center Theatre Group, The Goodman/Teatro Vista, and Oregon Shakes.

Edward Torres (Director)

Edward Torres is a Co-Founder and current Artistic Director of Teatro Vista...Theatre With a View. He has a BFA in Theatre from Roosevelt University and an MFA in Film from Columbia College Chicago. Directorial Credits for Teatro Vista include the following: *The Show Host*, co-produced with Victory Gardens Theatre (also at Theatre on the Lake), *Ambrosio*, *Broken Eggs* (Theatre on the Lake), *The Boiler Room*, co-produced with Steppenwolf Theatre for their Student Exchange Program (Theatre on the Lake) and the critically acclaimed production of *Aurora's Motive* (Theatre on the Lake). Other directorial credits include *Cocks Have Claws and Wings to Fly* (Jeff Recommended) and *Lolita de Lares* (Jeff Recommended) at Latino Chicago Theatre Company. Acting credits for Teatro Vista include *The Crossing*, *Broken Eggs*, *Santos & Santos* and *El Paso Blue*. Other acting credits include work for the Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf, Latino Chicago Theatre, Next Theatre, Apple Tree Theatre, Live Bait, and Court Theatre. Edward Torres is also a member of the Lincoln Center Theatre's Director's Lab West.

ABOUT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

The Geffen Playhouse has been a hub of the Los Angeles theater scene since opening its doors in 1995. Noted for its intimacy and celebrated for its world-renowned mix of classic and contemporary plays, provocative new works and musicals, the Geffen Playhouse continues to present a body of work that has garnered national recognition. Named in honor of entertainment mogul and philanthropist David Geffen, who made the initial donation to the theater, the company is helmed by Producing Director and President of the Board Gilbert Cates, Artistic Director Randall Arney, Managing Director Ken Novice and Chairman of the Board Frank Mancuso. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen Playhouse welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains an extensive education and outreach program, designed to engage young people and the community at large in the arts. For more information, please visit geffenplayhouse.com.