

GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

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GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE ANNOUNCES LINEUP OF LIVE, VIRTUAL AND INTERACTIVE WORLD PREMIERES FROM ITS GEFFEN STAYHOUSE BANNER

Cold Case Murder Mystery “Citizen Detective”

Previews Begin November 10 – Opening Night is November 18

“The Present” Follow-Up from Helder Guimarães – “The Future”

Directed by Academy Award Nominee Frank Marshall

Previews Begin December 4 – Opening Night is December 11

Bollywood Cooking Extravaganza “Bollywood Kitchen”

Previews Begin January 15, 2021 – Opening Night is January 23, 2021

LOS ANGELES (October 20, 2020) – Geffen Playhouse will launch a series of three new live, virtual and interactive world premiere productions from its Geffen Stayhouse banner, it was announced today. In addition to ***The Future***, the highly anticipated follow-up to Helder Guimarães’ (*Invisible Tango*, *Nothing to Hide*) ***The Present***, the lineup includes playwright, director and current member of The Kilroys Chelsea Marcantel’s (*Airness*, *Tiny Houses*) ***Citizen Detective*** and filmmaker and cookbook author Sri Rao’s (Netflix’s upcoming *The Actress*) ***Bollywood Kitchen***. Additional Geffen Stayhouse productions are currently in development for 2021.

“We have been uplifted by the positive response to *The Present* and *Inside the Box*,” said Geffen Playhouse Artistic Director Matt Shakman. “While we wait to be in a room together, the Playhouse is proud to have launched a platform where audiences can connect with performers and with each other. Whether through magic, puzzles, mystery or food, each show creates connection in innovative ways. For me and the Geffen staff, these shows have been a bright light in a dark time and we are thrilled to continue sharing the work.”

“While our physical stages are dark, like all arts organizations, we’ve had to pivot and adapt to keep our staff and audience engaged in this moment,” said Geffen Playhouse Executive Director Gil Cates, Jr. “We’re excited to further develop our Geffen Stayhouse brand and offer patrons a new lineup of unique, live and interactive shows that will carry us into the new year.”

The *Geffen Stayhouse* banner originally launched in March 2020 with free, short-form content in response to the Geffen temporarily closing as a result of COVID-19. *Geffen Stayhouse* went on to develop and produce its first full-length effort *The Present*, a live, virtual, and interactive experience from magician, illusionist and storyteller Helder Guimarães, which made its world premiere in April

2020. The 250+ performance sold-out run was extended three times before closing with a global, livestreamed grand finale on October 17 with more than 6,000 viewers in the finale's audience. Currently running is *The New York Times* crossword constructor and magician David Kwong's sold-out *Inside the Box*, which made its world premiere in September 2020 and has since been extended through January 3, 2021.

GEFFEN STAYHOUSE LINEUP

CITIZEN DETECTIVE

WORLD PREMIERE

Written and Directed by Chelsea Marcantel

November 10 – December 20

In this virtual show based on an unsolved 1920s Hollywood murder, audience members become the detectives in a case that mixes theater, mystery, and collaborative code-breaking. Guided by best-selling true crime author Mickie McKittrick, the home audience will uncover the evidence and follow the clues, altering the course of the show every night.

HOW IT WORKS

Mickie McKittrick will be the audience's guide throughout the show. Sometimes the entire group will work together, while at other times audience members will join a smaller squad breakout room for a more intimate examination of evidence and clues. Ultimately, the entire group will make choices to determine the show's surprising conclusion. *Citizen Detective* will take place via the Zoom video conferencing platform and each performance will be limited to a maximum of 24 participants. In a unique twist, each participant will take a brief personality survey quiz one week prior to their performance, which will determine the best fit for the detective squad they will be assigned to.

ABOUT CHELSEA MARCANTEL

Reared by Cajuns in southwest Louisiana, Chelsea has lived and made theatre among the peoples of the Midwest, Appalachia, the Mid-Atlantic, and now the West Coast. In 2016, she completed a Lila Acheson Wallace American Playwrights Fellowship at The Juilliard School. Her plays, which have been produced across the US and Canada, include *Airness*, *Everything is Wonderful*, *Tiny Houses*, *Ladyish*, and *Devour*. As a writer, Chelsea is extremely interested in humans as small-group primates, and what happens when the rules and value systems of our chosen groups cease to serve us. She reads a lot of books, watches a lot of documentaries, and listens to a lot of podcasts. Chelsea is an enthusiastic member of The Writers Guild of America, The Dramatists Guild, and The Kilroys. Current commissions: Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Geffen Playhouse, Cleveland Play House, Signature Theatre DC, as well as musical projects with Broadway producers Blue Spruce, Jeffrey Richards, and STK Productions.

THE FUTURE

WORLD PREMIERE

Written and Performed by Helder Guimarães

Directed by Frank Marshall

December 4 – January 31, 2021

Helder Guimarães is taking interactive at-home illusions into *The Future*. With a magician, perspective is everything—and in this show, participants will decide which version of events they prefer to see.

Guimarães' story takes us on a personal journey including stops at a high-stakes poker game and a pub in the south of France, as it explores the seedy underbelly of the gambling world. You never know what

intriguing mystery or long-kept secret may be revealed along the way. *The Future* marks the third collaboration between Guimarães and director Frank Marshall.

American Express is the Official Card Sponsor of *The Future*. American Express® Card Members can purchase tickets before the general public beginning Thursday, October 22 at 10:00AM (PST) through Thursday, October 29 at 9:59AM (PST) by visiting www.geffenplayhouse.org or calling 310-208-2028.

HOW IT WORKS

A mystery package will be shipped to each audience member in advance of their show, which cannot be opened until Guimarães gives permission during the performance. *The Future* will use the Zoom video conferencing platform with an initial audience capacity of 50 participants.

ABOUT HELDER GUIMARÃES

Helder Guimarães is a Portuguese-born performer, magician and creator of theatrical and immersive magic experiences. Recognized by *The New York Times* as “a master of illusions,” he is a World-Champion of Magic, two-time Parlor Magician of the Year by the Academy of Magical Arts and Ascanio Prize winner. Known for his unique approach to sleight-of-hand magic, storytelling and performance, Guimarães’ work has been featured at the Kennedy Center, TED Talks and Off-Broadway productions. His previous creations include *Nothing to Hide*, directed by Neil Patrick Harris, the Los Angeles sold-out *Borrowed Time* experience and the Off-Broadway theatrical *Verso*, directed by Rodrigo Santos. Using his knowledge of deception, Guimarães has consulted for major entertainment entities like NBC, Disney and Warner. As an example, he personally trained Oscar-winning actresses Sandra Bullock and Cate Blanchett for their roles in the movie *Ocean’s 8*. In 2019, Guimarães’ one-man show *Invisible Tango* made its world premiere in Los Angeles at the Geffen Playhouse. In their review of the production, the *Los Angeles Times* described him as “either a magician posing as a philosopher or a philosopher posing as a magician. But however you classify him, he’s excellent company in his new show, *Invisible Tango*.” Guimarães most recently sold out a 250+ performance run of *The Present* with Geffen Playhouse, as part of its Geffen Stayhouse banner. He currently resides in Los Angeles.

BOLLYWOOD KITCHEN

WORLD PREMIERE

Written and Performed by Sri Rao

Directed by Arpita Mukherjee

Produced in Association with Hypokrit Theatre Company

January 15, 2021 – February 21, 2021

In this interactive production, filmmaker and cookbook author Sri Rao invites us to prepare a homemade Indian meal along with him, drawing on the recipes that were staples at his family’s table. As we join him in cooking these delicious dishes in our very own kitchens, Sri interweaves the story of his parents immigrating to America, the joy and nourishment that Bollywood musicals brought to his whole family, and the culinary traditions they shared. Mouthwatering flavors come together with the colorful exuberance of Bollywood films to create a festive and fun virtual experience about rediscovering the comforts of home.

HOW IT WORKS

Bollywood Kitchen will offer multiple tiers of ticketing options that allow the audience to choose their own unique level of participation, including a livestream viewing-only option.

For audience members who prefer an interactive experience, a special “Bollywood Box” will be delivered to their doorstep in advance of the performance. Each box will include an assortment of specially curated Indian spices, a program, and other items they’ll need for the show. A shopping list of perishable items that are easy to find in a local grocery store will also be included to complete the dinner menu.

Interactive ticket tiers include a limited number of a premium “Chef’s Table” option, as well as a “Bollywood Box & a Show” option, which will not have a maximum audience capacity. A “Just Here for the Party” option is available for a viewing-only experience, also with no maximum audience capacity.

Chef’s Table

A limited number of audience members will virtually cook alongside and interact with Sri throughout the show, providing them with an opportunity to ask Sri questions and get tips along the way.

Includes:

Bollywood Box by mail

Program with recipes

Interactive Zoom ticket for the show

Autographed *Bollywood Kitchen* cookbook by Sri Rao

Limited-time private Vimeo link after the show to re-watch the performance

Bollywood Box & a Show

Audience members can choose to either prepare their meal in advance with the Bollywood Box ingredients, and enjoy it during the performance, or they can virtually cook with Sri in real time as they watch the show.

Includes:

Bollywood Box by mail

Program with recipes

Streaming-only ticket for the show

Just Here for the Party

This option is available to audience members who prefer a viewing-only experience.

Includes:

Digital recipes

Streaming-only ticket for the show

ABOUT SRI RAO

Sri Rao is a filmmaker based in New York City. He stands uniquely positioned at the intersection of Hollywood & Bollywood, as one of the few American-born screenwriters to have worked in the mainstream Indian film industry. He is currently making a series for Netflix titled *The Actress*, as well as developing several other series for Netflix and HBO Max. His production company is focused on creating content by and about South Asian Americans. In his book *Bollywood Kitchen* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), Sri combines his passion for Indian food and films by pairing Bollywood musicals with home-cooked recipes. www.newyorksri.com

ABOUT HYPOKRIT THEATRE COMPANY

Hypokrit Theatre Company’s mission is to disrupt the pedagogy of American theater, in order to create a more equitable and relevant theater. Based in New York City, Hypokrit exclusively develops work by

artists of color and is led and supported by minority communities, who across ethnicities, genders, and sexualities are united in their commitment to elevate multicultural talent and stories.

ABOUT GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

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 second productions, the not-for-profit organization 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 was founded by Gilbert Cates and is currently helmed by Executive Director Gil Cates, Jr., Artistic Director Matt Shakman and Board Chair Howard Tenenbaum. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen maintains extensive education and community engagement programs, designed to involve young people and the community at large in the arts. www.geffenplayhouse.org

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