



IN CELEBRATION OF UNITY MONTH

**Silk Road Theatre Project's
Al Qasida Staged Reading Series
&
The City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations
proudly present**

A LANGUAGE OF THEIR OWN

**By Chay Yew
Directed by Jay Paul Skelton**

**A Staged Reading Followed by a Reception
and Discussion with Playwright Chay Yew**

**Co-Sponsored by the City of Chicago Commission on Human
Relations Advisory Councils on Asian Affairs and
Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, and Transgender Issues.**

**Sunday, September 21, 2003 at Dixon Chapel,
The Chicago Temple, First United Methodist Church**

**Artistic Director, Jamil Khoury ❖ Executive Director, Malik Gillani
www.srtp.org ❖ 312-236-6881**

WELCOME CHAY YEW!

Silk Road Theatre Project and the City of Chicago Advisory Councils on Asian Affairs and Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender Issues are honored to host internationally acclaimed playwright and director Chay Yew for today's Unity Month Celebration. We wish Mr. Yew an enjoyable stay in Chicago and look forward to many more visits to come!

HONORING UNITY MONTH

Unity Month is an initiative of the City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations aimed at promoting diversity and understanding between peoples. The September observance originated in 1992 to coincide with the anniversary of the 1963 Civil Rights March on Washington.

SPECIAL THANKS

Silk Road Theatre Project wishes to extend a heartfelt thanks to Naisy Dolar, Director of the Advisory Council on Asian Affairs and William Greaves, Director of the Advisory Council on Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender Issues, for co-sponsoring today's event. Much gratitude to both Advisory Councils for so generously hosting today's reception. Many thanks (as always!) to our gracious hosts, The Chicago Temple, First United Methodist Church, and in particular, Rev. Philip Blackwell, Carol Albrecht, Jackie Will, and Tracy Wise.



A Language of Their Own premiered in New York City on April 20, 1995, at The Public Theatre. An earlier version of the play was presented in Los Angeles on May 6, 1994 at Celebration Theatre.

A Language Of Their Own is a two-act play. The staged reading will last approximately 2 hours with one intermission. There will be a Q&A session with playwright, Chay Yew, immediately after the reading followed by a reception.

CAST

Oscar.....	Gordon Chow
Ming.....	Daniel Yabut
Daniel.....	Foo Nguyen
Robert.....	Erik Wetz

BIOS

CHAY YEW (Playwright) Plays include *A Language of Their Own*, *Porcelain*, *Red, Wonderland*, *A Beautiful Country*, *A Winter People*, Lorca's *The House of Bernard Alba* (adaptation) and *Question 27*, *Question 28*. Yew's work has been produced by the New York Shakespeare Festival's Public Theater, Royal Court Theatre, Mark Taper Forum, Long Wharf Theatre, Manhattan Theatre Club, La Jolla Playhouse, Wilma Theatre, Intiman Theater, Portland Center Stage, East West Players, Dallas Theater Center, Cornerstone Theatre Company and TheatreWorks (Singapore), to name a few. He is a recipient of the London Fringe Award, George and Elizabeth Marton Playwriting Award, GLAAD Media Award, APGF Community Visibility Award and the Robert Chesley Award. A member of New Dramatists and Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Yew is also an associate artist at the Mark Taper Forum.

JAY PAUL SKELTON (Director) most recently directed Bernstein's *Candide* for the Chicago Cultural Center and *The Marriage of Figaro* for Opera Theatre Highland Park. Other recent credits include *Two by Harry* with Cobalt, the Jeff Recommended production of *Death on a Pink Carpet* for Live Bait Theatre and the Reader "Critic's Choice" sketch comedy revue *Coyote Pretty* at Improv Olympic. Skelton received the 2001 Achievement Award Scholarship for Young Directors from the National Theatre Conference. In addition, Skelton received a 1994 After Dark Award for his direction of *Porcelain* at Eclipse Theatre.

GORDON CHOW (Oscar) was last seen in the Jeff award winning production of *Around the World in 80 Days* at Lifeline Theatre. He has also performed with Defiant Theatre, Griffin Theatre and in staged readings at Chicago Dramatists.

FOO NGUYEN (Daniel) Although this is Nguyen's first time working with Silk Road Theatre Project, he is no stranger to the stage. Having worked the comedy club circuit in Cincinnati since 1994, Nguyen finally found his way to Chicago. Nguyen is currently involved in Second City as a Conservatory student as well as a player at Danny's Skybox Theater.

ERIK WETZ (Robert) earned a BFA in theatre from Roosevelt University. Wetz has worked regionally with Missouri Repertory and with the Colorado and Heart of America Shakespeare Festivals. Recent Chicago credits include *They All Fall Down* with Lookingglass Theatre and a staged reading of *Icarus* at Teatro Vista.

DANIEL YABUT (Ming) Chicago credits include *Julius Caesar* at Strawdog Theatre and Theater on the Lake, the upcoming *Suffering City* at Collaboraction, and work with Pintig Cultural Group and the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Regional credits include *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* at Springfield Theatre Centre and the Minnesota Fringe Festival.

Silk Road Theatre Project (hereby referred to as "SRTP") was created to showcase playwrights of Asian, Middle Eastern, and Mediterranean backgrounds, whose works address themes relevant to the peoples of the silk-road and their Diaspora communities. Maintaining that theatre should entertain as well as educate and promote critical thinking, SRTP is committed to theatre that elevates human consciousness, expands representation, and challenges prevailing stereotypes. In giving voice to cultures and experiences long absent on the American stage, we aim to integrate those voices within the cannon of American theatre.

Al-Qasida Staged Reading Series. In Arabic, al-qasida means "the ode." Al-Qasida Staged Reading Series is Chicagoland's first and only staged reading series dedicated to showcasing silk road playwrights from the U.S. and around the world. In the tradition of the great epic poems and oral narratives that defined cultural values, sensibilities, and challenges in the lands of the ancient silk road, Al-Qasida Staged Reading Series promises to illuminate for Chicago audiences the contemporary treasures of a part of the world that is vast and diverse, and yet sorely misunderstood. Today's reading marks the inauguration of the series.

AL-QASIDA STAGED READINGS SERIES

Calendar of Upcoming Events

November 17, 2003 (Time TBA) - *TEA* by **Velina Hasu Houston**
The Chicago Cultural Center, 77 East Randolph St.

Four women come together to clean the house of a fifth after her tragic suicide upsets the balance of life in their small Japanese immigrant community in the middle of the Kansas heartland. The spirit of the dead woman returns as a ghostly ringmaster to force the women to come to terms with the disquieting tension of their lives.

May, 2004 (Date & Time TBA) - *36 VIEWS* by **Naomi Iizuka**
The Chicago Temple, First United Methodist Church, 77 West Washington St.

In a series of 36 interlocking scenes, Naomi Iizuka's new play explores the relationship between the imaginary and the real. Set in the Asian art world, the story focuses on the discovery of a one-of-a-kind Japanese pillow book, a diary of a court lady, that turns the academic field of Asian antiquity upside down

July, 2004 (Date & Time TBA) - *FITNA: CHAOS AS WOMAN IN THE ARAB WORLD* by **Jamil Khoury**
The Chicago Temple, First United Methodist Church, 77 West Washington St.

Depicts the lives of contemporary Arab women who defy tradition. A Kuwaiti, a Saudi, and an Egyptian - three interlocking lives, three very different stories. Conceived as a play within a play, Fitna gives voice to both the characters and the "actors" playing them.