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**LAURA GRIFFITH
JOINS THOM SESMA AND J. ELAINE MARCOS
AND THAI POP SUPERSTAR BIE SUKRIT
IN THE WORLD PREMIERE OF
WATERFALL
AN EPIC NEW MUSICAL**

*Book and Lyrics by Tony® Award winner Richard Maltby, Jr.
Music by Academy® Award winner David Shire
Co-directed by Tak Viravan and Tony® Award nominee Dan Knechtges
Choreographed by Dan Knechtges*

October 1-25, 2015 at The 5th Avenue Theatre

"Every scene in *Waterfall* is a visual delight"
(Variety)

"*Waterfall* is sumptuously breathtaking with an extraordinary director and ensemble."
(Broadway World)

"*Waterfall* is a must see musical."
(Beacon Media)

SEATTLE, WA (August 31, 2015) – Rehearsals start this week at The 5th Avenue Theatre for the sweeping new musical, *Waterfall*, featuring **Laura Griffith** (Broadway: *Sweet Smell of Success*, *The Light in the Piazza*), **Thom Sesma** (Broadway: *The Times They are A-Changin'*, *Man of La Mancha*), **J. Elaine Marcos** (Broadway: *Annie*, *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*), and Thai pop superstar **Bie Sukrit**. This epic new Broadway-bound musical love story features a distinguished international creative team and a cast of 20. Seattle is the second of two locales where this unique and exciting musical is being developed after completing a popular and critically successful run at the Pasadena Playhouse in June.

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Waterfall plays **October 1-25** (press opening Thursday, October 15) at The 5th Avenue Theatre (1308 5th Avenue, Seattle). For single tickets (starting at \$15) and information, please visit www.5thavenue.org, call the Box Office at (206) 625-1900 or visit the Box Office at 1308 5th Avenue in Downtown Seattle. Tickets may also be purchased at (888) 5TH-4TIX. Group ticket buyers (10 or more) may call (888) 625-1418.

Waterfall marks a groundbreaking collaboration between American and Asian theatrical artists. The musical, based on a contemporary classic Thai novel, *Behind the Painting* by Sriburapha, features book and lyrics by Tony Award® winner **Richard Maltby, Jr.** (*Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Miss Saigon*) and music by Oscar winner and two-time Tony® Award nominee, **David Shire** (*Baby, Big*, written in collaboration with Richard Maltby, Jr.) The production will be co-directed by Broadway and Thai theatrical impresario **Tak Viravan** and Tony® Award nominee **Dan Knechtges** (*Xanadu*, *Lysistrata Jones*) with choreography by Knechtges and music direction by **John McDaniel**. Casting for **Waterfall** is by **Stewart/Whitley**.

"We are honored to participate in this epic partnership between Thai entertainment industry and American producers as the show heads toward Broadway," said 5th Avenue Theatre Executive Producer and Artistic Director **David Armstrong**. "The nature of this **Waterfall** collaboration meshes perfectly with The 5th's commitment to the development of new musical theater works."

Director **Tak Viravan** says, "Our incredible cast and brilliant creative team are some of the very best this industry has to offer. We are so excited to take what we learned from the audiences at Pasadena Playhouse and bring **Waterfall** to the next level in Seattle. We think 5th Avenue Theatre audiences will be swept away by the beauty of this piece and the incredible journey it takes its viewers on."

Waterfall is an epic love story set in Bangkok and Tokyo between the turbulent years of 1933 and 1939, as a monarchy falls in Thailand and Japan is on the brink of war. A young Thai student falls in love with the American wife of a Thai diplomat, and the story of their forbidden love parallels history as the new democracy of Siam moves into the vortex of the increasingly pre-World War II Japan. With a gloriously romantic score, **Waterfall** is a modern love story of timeless scale.

About the Creative Team

Tak Viravan is the leading figure of Thailand's burgeoning theater scene, where he has directed 14 musicals and plays and has presented many international touring productions. **Waterfall** is adapted from an earlier musical, *Behind the Painting*, which Viravan directed in Thailand. He has also been a producer for several Broadway musicals, including the Tony-nominated revival of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* (2011) and *Nice Work If You Can Get It*. Viravan is one of the most prominent and influential figures of Thailand's entertainment industry, where he is also known as a television producer/director and for music and artist management.

Co-director and Choreographer **Dan Knechtges** received a Tony® Award nomination for his choreography for *Xanadu* on Broadway, where he also choreographed *The 25th Annual*

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Putnam County Spelling Bee, *Sondheim on Sondheim*, *110 in the Shade*, and *Lysistrata Jones* (which he also directed). Off-Broadway, his credits include *Clinton the Musical* and *Merrily We Roll Along* for Encores! His work has also been presented in Berlin, Germany and regional theaters, opera houses and concert halls throughout the US.

John McDaniel is a Grammy® and Emmy® Award-winning music director, composer, arranger, orchestrator and theatrical and record producer and is an artistic director at the Tony® Award-winning Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. His Broadway credits include *Bonnie and Clyde*, *Catch Me If You Can*, *Brooklyn*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Taboo*, *Chicago*, *Grease* and *Patti LuPone on Broadway*. He was the Music Director for TV's *The Rosie O'Donnell Show* and has guest conducted 15 symphony orchestras coast-to-coast.

The creative team also includes **Sasavat Busayaband** (Scenic Design), **Wade Laboissonniere** (Costume Design), **Ken Billington** (Lighting Design), **Dan Moses Schreier** (Sound Designer), **Caite Hevner Kemp** (Projection Design) **J. Jared Janas** (Wig, Hair, and Make-up Design), **Jonathan Tunick** (Orchestration) and **Greg Jarrett** (Dance Music Arrangements). The team also includes **Kenneth Ferrone** (Associate Director), **Jessica Hartman** (Associate Choreographer), **Mark Hartman** (Associate Music Director), **Christine Peters** (Associate Scenic Designer), **Lora LaVon** (Associate Costume Designer), **John Demous** (Associate Lighting Design), **Joshua D. Reid** (Associate Sound Designer) and **Lianne Arnold** (Associate Projection Designer). Stage management staff includes **Andrew Neal** (Production Stage Manager), **Rachel Bury** (Assistant Stage Manager) and **Lucy Kennedy** (Assistant Stage Manager).

Waterfall will be produced on Broadway by **Scenario Company Ltd.** and **Jack M. Dalgleish**. **Foresight Theatrical** serves as general managers. Production dates for Broadway will be announced once a theatre has been confirmed.

About the Cast

Laura Griffith (Katherine) returns to The 5th Avenue Theatre after playing Julie Jordan in *Rodgers and Hammerstein's Carousel* and The Lady of the Lake in *Monty Python's Spamalot*. She has also starred at The 5th in *The Music Man* (Marian), *A Room with a View* (Lucy) and *Candide* (Cunnegonde). Griffith recently played Maggie in the ACT - A Contemporary Theatre production of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. Her Broadway credits include *South Pacific*, *The Light in the Piazza*, *Sweet Smell of Success*, and *Rodgers and Hammerstein's Oklahoma!*

Thai pop superstar **Bie Sukrit** (Noppon) has makes his American stage debut in this collaboration between Pasadena Playhouse and The 5th Avenue Theatre. From his discovery in 2006 on the Thai television talent contest, *The Star*, Sukrit has become one of Thailand's most famous and recognizable young talents, starring on stage, screen and television. As a recording artist, his credits include several top-selling albums and sold-out concert tours. Sukrit created the role of Noppon in the musical *Behind the Painting*, the earlier version of *Waterfall*, and during the show's recent run at the Pasadena Playhouse.

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Thom Sesma's (Chao-Khun) Broadway credits include the original 1983 Broadway production of *La Cage aux Folles*, *Chu Chem*, *Nick & Nora*, *Search and Destroy*, *Man of La Mancha*, and *The Times They are A-Changin'*. Sesma's additional New York credits include the recent Off-Broadway production of *Craving for Travel*.

J. Elaine Marcos' (Nuan) Broadway credits include *The Wedding Singer*, *Sweet Charity*, *Wonderful Town*, *Flower Drum Song*, *Miss Saigon* and *A Chorus Line*. She also played the role of Lily St. Regis in the recent revival of *Annie* on Broadway. Marcos was critically lauded for her performance as Nuan at the Pasadena Playhouse.

The cast of **Waterfall** also features **Eymard Cabling** (National Tour of *Miss Saigon* and International Tour of *The King and I*), **Jordan De Leon** (Drury Lane Theatre's *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, Kansas City Starlight Theatre's *Footloose*), **Steven Eng** (London West End's *The King and I*, North Shore Music Theatre's *Pacific Overtures*), **Rona Figueroa** (Broadway's *Miss Saigon* and *Les Misérables*), **Kimberly Immanuel** (Regional credits include *Crazy For You* and *Love's Labour's Lost, the Musical*), **Koh Mochizuki** as Ensemble (Broadway's *Mary Poppins* and *Aida*), **Rie Hatanaka** (Alvin Ailey Dance Company, Faune Dance Troup, Harmonia Opera Company at The Kennedy Center), **Lisa Helmi Johanson** (Off-Broadway, National and International Tour of *Avenue Q*), **Ryan Kim** (regional credits include *Sunday in the Park With George*), **Kenway Kua** (Broadway's *Wicked* and *The Frogs*), **Leon Le** (Broadway's *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark*, Theatre Under The Stars' *West Side Story*), **Celia Mei Rubin** (Broadway's *Matilda The Musical*, London West End's *Parade*), **Colin Miyamoto** (National Tours of *Beauty and the Beast* and *How I Became a Pirate*), **Darryl Semira** (Broadway's *Mamma Mia!* and *Bombay Dreams*), **Riza Takahashi**, (The MUNY's *The King and I* and *Thoroughly Modern Millie*), and **Kay Trinidad** (Broadway's *The Little Mermaid*, Off-Broadway's *Bare*).

Bie Sukrit and **Riza Takahashi** are appearing with the permission of Actors' Equity Association.

About The 5th Avenue Theatre

The non-profit 5th Avenue Theatre is acclaimed as one of the nation's leading musical theater companies and is especially renowned for its production and development of new works. Since 2001, the Seattle-based company has produced 17 new musicals. To date, nine (including the sensational hit *Disney's Aladdin*) have moved on to Broadway premieres, earning a combined 15 Tony Awards, including two for Best Musical (*Hairspray* and *Memphis*). The 5th Avenue Theatre is also known for its world class, critically acclaimed productions of musicals chosen from both the contemporary canon and the Golden Age of Broadway.

Unique in its Chinese-inspired design, this exquisite theater opened in 1926 as a venue for vaudeville and film. Today, under the leadership of Executive Producer and Artistic Director David Armstrong, Managing Director Bernadine C. Griffin and Producing Artistic Director Bill Berry, this non-profit theater company attracts an annual attendance of more than 300,000,

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including over 25,000 subscribers – one of the largest theater subscriptions in North America.

In addition to its main stage productions, The 5th Avenue Theatre is also committed to encouraging the next generation of theatergoers through its extensive educational outreach programs. For more information about The 5th Avenue Theatre, its season and its programs, please visit www.5thavenue.org.

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FOR CALENDAR EDITORS

WHAT: ***Waterfall*** is an epic love story, set in Bangkok and Tokyo between the turbulent years of 1933 and 1939, as a monarchy falls in Thailand and Japan is on the brink of war. A young Thai student falls in love with the American wife of a Thai diplomat, and the story of their forbidden love parallels history as the new democracy of Siam moves into the vortex of the increasingly anti-American Japan. With a gloriously romantic score, ***Waterfall*** is a modern love story of timeless scale starring **Laura Griffith** (Broadway: *Sweet Smell of Success*, *The Light in the Piazza*), **Thom Sesma** (Broadway: *The Times They are A-Changin'*, *Man of La Mancha*), **J. Elaine Marcos** (Broadway: *Annie*, *Priscilla: Queen of the Desert*), and Thai superstar **Bie Sukrit**.

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WHEN: *Previews Begin: Thursday, October 1, 2015*
Opening Night: Thursday, October 15 (press night)
Closing Performance: Sunday, October 25, 2015

SHOW Tuesdays & Wednesdays – 7:30 PM
TIMES: Thursdays & Fridays – 8:00 PM
Saturdays – 2:00 PM & 8:00 PM
Sundays – 1:30 PM & 7:00 PM

WHERE: **The 5th Avenue Theatre** (1308 5th Avenue, Seattle)

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Full Casting Announced for World Premiere of "Waterfall"

6 | Page

TICKETS: For single tickets (starting at \$15) and information, please visit www.5thavenue.org or call the Box Office at (206) 625-1900. Tickets may also be purchased at (888) 5TH-4TIX.

Special thanks to The 5th Avenue Theatre 2015/16 season sponsors Artsfund, U.S. Bank, *The Seattle Times*, and official airline Delta Air Lines

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