

**MEDIA ALERT**



# NEW VILLAGE ARTS

## **New Village Arts Presents World Premiere of DESERT ROCK GARDEN, February 11 to March 13, 2022**

*Written by Roy Sekigahama, Directed by Yari Cervas*

**For Immediate Release**

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**Carlsbad, CA: (February 1, 2022)** — [New Village Arts](#) (NVA), North County's cultural hub, is presenting the world premiere of DESERT ROCK GARDEN February 11 to March 13, 2022. The production is a fictionalized historical story about a young orphan and a Japanese immigrant who forge a friendship in the Topaz War Relocation Center in 1943, revealing the inherent human ability to transform nothing — loneliness and barren desert — into something long-lasting and precious.

"I wrote DESERT ROCK GARDEN as part of the 2019 New Village Arts' Final Draft New Play Festival, and I am grateful to NVA for helping launch the world premiere of the full play this year," said playwright Roy Sekigahama. "The story is a memory play about belonging, family, and creating something beautiful out of nothing, and I hope it brings attention to the history of Japanese incarceration camps in the United States."

"We are so proud to share this second world premiere show in our 20th Anniversary Season," says Executive Artistic Director Kristianne Kurner. "I first read Roy Sekigahama's DESERT ROCK GARDEN in 2019 and was immediately drawn into this beautiful story of family and resilience in the most challenging of times. We are honored to bring the script to life with an incredibly talented group of theatre artists, most of whom are part of the AAPI community. This is a portion of American experience that has not been shared enough, and we are eager to encourage deeper understanding and conversation. We are also proud to have our first grant from the NEA in support of this thrilling new work."

DESERT ROCK GARDEN is directed by acclaimed Pilipinx director [Yari Cervas](#) and features Japanese American actor, filmmaker, playwright and arts activist [Lane Nishikawa](#) as Fuzzy and Chloris Li as Penny.

**Cervas** is a trauma-informed theatre director, teaching artist, and somatic worker exploring artistic expression through intuitive movement, music, sound production, spoken word poetry, illustration, and meditation. Inspired by a lack of Filipino voices in San Diego theatre they founded MaArte Theatre

Collective in 2018, and as the Artistic Director produced and directed nearly two dozen plays to create space for fearless Filipino storytelling. MaArte's work established Cervas as a many awarded director for the original docudrama *The Fire in Me* by Thelma Virata de Castro and the original one-woman show *Your Best American Girl*. At present, Cervas serves as a teaching artist with six different organizations, including the Performing Arts Workshop in San Francisco, offering skills in artistic expression to youth teaching original curriculum informed by anti-racism frameworks. They have had the pleasure of collaborating with organizations such as Amigos Del Rep, Asian Story Theatre, Blindspot Collective, Cygnet Theatre, Diversionary Theatre, the La Jolla Playhouse, Liyang Network, People of Interest, the San Diego Repertory Theatre, South Coast Repertory Theatre, TuYo Theatre, The Old Globe, MOXIE Theatre, and Westmont Festival Theatre. As an arts administrator, they served more than two years as the Business Manager of MOXIE Theatre in San Diego.

**Nishikawa** has a long history in American theater, having served as Artistic Director for the Asian American Theater Company in San Francisco for 10 seasons. His three one-man shows, *Life in the Fast Lane*, *I'm on a Mission from Buddha*, and *Mifune and Me*, toured over 50 cities across the US, Canada, and Europe and *I'm on a Mission from Buddha* was nationally broadcast on PBS. Nishikawa's first feature film, *Only the Brave*, tells the story of the 110th/442nd Regiment's rescue of the "Lost Battalion," Texans of the 141st Regiment who were trapped by the Nazis in the Vosges Forest in France. His most recent work is *Our Lost Years*, a documentary about the effects of war on the Japanese American community.

**Li** is a graduate of UC San Diego and attended the British American Drama Academy in Oxford. She recently appeared in the Berkeley Playhouse production of *In the Heights*, and at South Coast Repertory Theatre in *When the Mountain Meets the Moon*.

Film and theatre composer [Marc Akiyama](#) is creating an original score for the production incorporating traditional Japanese instruments with modern music and creating a soundscape for the barren Utah desert.

The opening night on February 19 will feature a commemoration to mark the 80th Anniversary of Executive Order 9066 resulting in the forced removal of 120,000 men, women, and children of Japanese ancestry to incarceration camps across America.

New Village Arts received its first grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in support of this thrilling new work, which is also supported by the California Civil Liberties Program and the City of Carlsbad Cultural Arts Office.

### **Schedule**

*Previews:* February 11-March 13

*Opening Night:* February 19 at 7:30 p.m.

*Performances:* February 20-March 13

### **Location**

New Village Arts  
2787 State St.  
Carlsbad, CA 92008

### **Ticket information:**

[www.newvillagearts.org](http://www.newvillagearts.org)

(760) 433-3245

**Cast**

[Lane Nishikawa](#)\* (Fuzzy)

Chloris Li (Penny)

\*Member of Actors Equity Association

**Director:** [Yari Cervas](#)

**Dramaturgy:** Shirley Fishman

**Stage Manager:** Nathan Waits

**Original Music and Sound Design:** [Marc Akiyama](#)

**Scenic Design:** Reiko Huffman

**Lighting Design:** Annelise Salazar

**Costume Design:** Jojo Siu

**Development Stage Manager:** Alex C Luong

**Cultural Consultant:** Michael Kurima

**Community Partners:** Japanese American Citizens League; Japanese Friendship Garden

**Sponsors**

- National Endowment for the Arts
- California Libraries Civil Liberties Program
- City of Carlsbad Cultural Arts Office
- Randy Pabst and Kathy Hagenbach

**New Village Arts 20th Anniversary Season 2021–22**

**DESERT ROCK GARDEN**

***WORLD PREMIERE PLAY***

February 11-March 13, 2022

New Village Arts, 2787 State St., Carlsbad, CA 92008

Written by Roy Sekigahama

Directed by Yari Cervas

**FINAL DRAFT NEW PLAY FESTIVAL**

April 1-3, 2022

New Village Arts, 2787 State St., Carlsbad, CA 92008

Produced by Farah Dinga

**INTO THE WOODS**

***STEPHEN SONDHEIM'S TWISTED FAIRY TALES***

Co-production with Oceanside Theatre Company

March 26–May 1, 2022

Oceanside Theatre Company at the Sunshine Brooks Theatre, 217 N. Coast Highway, Oceanside

Written by Stephen Sondheim & James Lapine

Directed by Kristianne Kurner

**Performance Days and Times**

New this season! Select Wednesday matinees at 2:00 p.m.

Thursdays: 7:30 p.m. (not available for performances at Oceanside Theatre Company)

Fridays: 8:00 p.m.

Saturdays: 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Sundays: 2:00 p.m. and select Sundays at 7:00 p.m.

### **Tickets and Subscriptions**

Single tickets for the 2021–22 season are \$30–\$59, or \$27 for previews. Discounts are available for seniors, military, students, and groups of ten or more.

### **COVID Safety Protocols**

Audience safety is our primary concern. All NVA staff, performers, ushers, crew, and volunteers are fully vaccinated.

Throughout this season all guests need to have a photo ID and either their physical CDC vaccination card, a picture of their vaccination card, or a digital vaccination record, until further notice. There must be at least 14 days elapsed from the date of the second dose for Pfizer or Moderna vaccines.

Any unvaccinated person must present a negative COVID-19 PCR test result taken within 72 hours of the performance date. Masks are required for everyone, regardless of vaccination status, for all indoor performances, events and activities.

*\*COVID guidelines subject to change. Visit [newvillagearts.org](http://newvillagearts.org) for most up-to-date information.*

### **About New Village Arts**

Celebrating 20 years of award-winning professional theatre, thrilling and unique visual arts, and thriving education and outreach programs, New Village Arts (NVA) has truly become the cultural hub of North County San Diego.

NVA attracts more than 20,000 patrons each year to experience professional theatre, currently presented in the heart of Carlsbad Village. In addition to full seasons of plays and musicals featuring some of the best artistic talent in Southern California, NVA hosts talkback discussions and other supplementary events designed to create conversation and cultivate community. NVA offers robust theatre programs in partnership with local schools and strongly believes that theatre and arts experiences should be accessible to ALL people, becoming a recognized leader in equity, diversity, and inclusion in San Diego. NVA has been fortunate to receive support from the City of Carlsbad and other local businesses, who recognize the importance of a resident professional theatre company as a crucial component of an inclusive and creative community. In turn NVA prioritizes serving its community by presenting works that respect its diversity, engaging every citizen with relevant and inspiring stories.

New Village Arts is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization listed under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS.

**New Village Arts, Inc.**  
**2787 State Street, Carlsbad, CA 92008 | 760-433-3245 | [www.newvillagearts.org](http://www.newvillagearts.org)**

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