



# Young Americans kicks off at Portland Center Stage

Preview performances set to begin February 11

Portland Center Stage presents the newest play from one of the most exciting playwrights in the country — the world premiere of Lauren Yee’s *Young Americans*, directed by Desdemona Chiang. Commissioned by PCS, *Young Americans* takes audiences on two road trips, traveling to and from Portland, 20 years apart. *Young Americans* begins preview performances on February 11, opens on February 17, and runs through March 26 in the Ellyn Bye Studio. *Young Americans* is a co-production with Pittsburgh Public Theater. Tickets are on sale now.



World Premiere of Lauren Yee’s *Young Americans*

Yee is a powerhouse playwright who continues to rank among the top-produced playwrights in the country. Prior to the pandemic closures, Yee was

slated to have 18 productions of her plays showing at regional theaters across the country. PCS’s production of this play is especially meaningful, not only because the play was commissioned by PCS, but because it will finally be making its world premiere af-

ter initially being postponed due to the COVID shutdown.

Among the many accolades from the press, Yee’s work has been hailed as “profoundly astonishing,” “whip-smart and very funny,” “thoroughly compelling,” and “exceptionally entertaining.” The *Chicago Tribune* called Yee “a talented, smart, and very funny writer.” DC Metro Theater Arts has said that her work “will have you laughing and thinking. It will linger in my memory for weeks and months to come.” Performink called her work “brilliant,” saying that “the ebb and flow of her storytelling is a joy ride, packed with humor and a self-awareness that embraces the audience.”

While Yee was working with PCS on the development of *Young Americans*, she spoke about the importance of supporting new work: “Every masterpiece out there, every piece of art that you love and that you accept as cannon was once a new piece. It was once a new play, it was a new musical, it was something that hadn’t existed before, and was brought into the world by art-

ists who hoped that it may become something new and add something to the conversation. We need to continue exploring who we are in this moment and think about what else we want to add to that cannon.”

**ABOUT THE PLAY**

This hilarious, heartfelt new play veers back and forth in time as it takes audiences on two road trips, across two generations. In one, immigrants Jenny and Joe drive from the East Coast to Portland, OR, trying to connect as a newly engaged couple. 20 years later, Joe and their adopted daughter, Lucy, set out on a similar cross-country adventure. With some unexpected detours along the way, Jenny and Joe traverse the strange territory of their new country, while their daughter, Lucy, pieces together their bitter-sweet family history. This beautiful comedy offers a fresh look at a U.S. road trip through the lens of the immigrant experience. Yee explores what home and belonging mean to those in transition — and the lengths we will go to for the people we love.

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