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For immediate release.

**DANIEL VALDEZ AND ROSE PORTILLO RETURN TO “ZOOT SUIT”
JOINING JEREMY RAY VALDEZ, JEANINE MASON AND
THE PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED DEMIAN BICHIR**

Center Theatre Group’s “Zoot Suit” Plays Jan. 31 – March 12, 2017, At The Taper

Jeanine Mason, Rose Portillo, Daniel Valdez and Jeremy Ray Valdez will join the previously announced **Demian Bichir** in the cast of Center Theatre Group’s production of “Zoot Suit” at the Mark Taper Forum, which begins previews January 31, opens February 12 and continues through March 12, 2017. Written and directed by Luis Valdez, “Zoot Suit” is presented in association with El Teatro Campesino.

Actors **Daniel Valdez** and **Rose Portillo** are returning to “Zoot Suit” after appearing in the world premiere production at the Taper in 1978, as well as at the Aquarius Theatre in Hollywood, on Broadway and in the film. Valdez played the leading role of Henry Reyna, while Portillo played Della, his barrio girlfriend. The two will be reunited for this new production, with Valdez now playing Enrique Reyna (Henry’s father) and Portillo playing Dolores Reyna (Henry’s mother). Daniel Valdez will also music direct once again.

“It’s great to come back to where it all started 38 years ago. I’m looking forward to inhabiting the world of ‘Zoot Suit’ once again,” said Daniel Valdez.

“I’m over the moon. It was a dream come true the first time. It’s a dream come true the second time, to come full circle and to work with Luis at the Taper, where Gordon Davidson and Luis were so influential on my artistic career. I’m looking forward to sharing ‘Zoot Suit’ with a whole new crop of artists and audiences,” said Portillo.

Jeremy Ray Valdez, who will play Henry in the new production, is an Imagen Award-winner for “La Mission,” was featured in the Sundance film “All She Can” and has guest-starred in such series as “The Mentalist” and “Castle,” among many others.

Jeanine Mason, who will play Della, won season five of “So You Think You Can Dance” and recently appeared in ABC’s “Of Kings and Prophets.” She also played a recurring role on ABC Family’s “Bunheads.”

International stage and screen star **Demian Bichir** (Tarantino’s “The Hateful Eight,” FX’s “The Bridge,” Showtime’s “Weeds” and Soderbergh’s “Che”) was previously announced to play the indelible role of El Pachuco.

“Theatre has always created an extraordinary connection between artists and audiences,” said CTG Artistic Director Michael Ritchie. “Nowhere is that more clear than in the uniquely intimate space of the Mark Taper Forum. And that connection continues well beyond the curtain call in plays like Luis Valdez’s ‘Zoot Suit,’ which changed the cultural landscape when it premiered at the Taper almost four decades ago and will continue to offer a vital insight when it opens our 50th season at the Taper in 2017.”

“Zoot Suit” was originally commissioned and developed by Center Theatre Group, playing for nearly a year in Los Angeles first at the Taper from August 6 to October 1, 1978, then from October 10, 1978, through July 1, 1979, at the Aquarius in Hollywood. It went on to become Broadway’s first Chicano play, was made into a major motion picture and became a cultural phenomenon.

Nearly 40 years after its world premiere, original creator Luis Valdez will once again fill the Taper’s stage with a company of 25 actors, singers and dancers weaving fact and fiction together as they portray the events surrounding the infamous 1942 Sleepy Lagoon murder in Los Angeles. Filled with heart, sly wit and the infectious songs of Lalo Guerrero, “Zoot Suit” remains an urgent portrayal of the clash between generations in a Chicano family, the rifts between cultures in America and how racism and injustice can haunt a city and a society.

Center Theatre Group, one of the nation’s preeminent arts and cultural organizations, is Los Angeles’ leading nonprofit theatre company, programming seasons at the 736-seat Mark Taper Forum and 1600 to 2000-seat Ahmanson Theatre at The Music Center in Downtown Los Angeles, and the 317-seat Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City. In addition to presenting and producing the broadest range of theatrical entertainment in the country, Center Theatre Group is one of the nation’s leading producers of ambitious new works through commissions and world premiere productions and a leader in interactive community engagement and education programs that reach across generations, demographics and circumstance to serve Los Angeles.

Tickets to “Zoot Suit” are available by calling (213) 628-2772 or online at www.CenterTheatreGroup.org. Tickets range from \$25 – \$95 (ticket prices are subject to change). The Mark Taper Forum is located at the Music Center, 135 N. Grand Avenue in Downtown L.A. 90012.

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