For immediate release

CASTING ANNOUNCED FOR THE REVISED PRODUCTION OF ANNA DEAVERE SMITH’S “TWILIGHT: LOS ANGELES, 1992” RETURNING TO CENTER THEATRE GROUP / MARK TAPER FORUM MARCH 8 THROUGH APRIL 9, 2023

Originally performed solo by Smith, “Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992” has been reimagined for a cast of five performers. Thirty years after its world premiere, Center Theatre Group will celebrate the West Coast premiere of the revised production by giving away 1,000 tickets to Angelenos.

Casting has been set for the West Coast premiere of the revised production of playwright Anna Deavere Smith’s transformative “Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992,” coming to Los Angeles at Center Theatre Group / Mark Taper Forum March 8 through April 9, 2023 and opening March 15, 2023.

The cast of the new take of “Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992” features an ensemble of actors including Hugo Armstrong, Lovensky Jean-Baptiste, Lisa Reneé Pitts, Jeanne Sakata, and Sabina Zúñiga Varela. “Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992” draws on more than 300 interviews with politicians, activists, police, jurors, shopkeepers, and countless other Los Angelenos to explore the uprising sparked by the acquittal of the men charged in the Rodney King police brutality case. Through the words of these real people, “Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992” delves into the long-simmering tensions that set the stage for the L.A. Riots and explores the immediate impact on individual Angelenos and the community as a whole.

To celebrate the homecoming of this groundbreaking production, and to ensure Angelenos can experience the story that is about and for the citizens of L.A., Center Theatre Group will be giving out 1,000 free tickets to various educational institutions, social justice organizations, and community groups.

“We are beyond excited to welcome Anna Deavere Smith back to the Mark Taper Forum, where her landmark play rocked Los Angeles 30 years ago, and offered an opportunity for the community to gather, grieve, and bond over one of this city’s darkest and most challenging times,” said Center Theatre Group Managing Director / CEO Meghan Pressman. “Today, the show is, unfortunately, as timely and relevant as it was back in 1993. As such, we want to ensure everyone in Los Angeles who wants to see this show is able to do so. We are proud to offer free tickets to students, community partners, and others to attend and see this iconic work that was made in Los Angeles for the people of Los Angeles.”

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Casting Announced for “Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992” – 2

The creative team for “Twilight: Los Angeles 1992” at the Mark Taper Forum, who are all Southern California-based creatives, includes Efren Delgadillo Jr. (scenic design), Samantha C. Jones (costume design), Brandon Baruch (lighting design), Jeff Gardner (sound design), Tru (original music), Yee Eun Nam (projection design), and Stephen Buescher (movement). Casting is by Nicole Arbusto, CSA, and dramaturgy is by Dorinne Kondo, Marcos Nájera, and Lindsay Jenkins. Shawna Voragen is the production stage manager. Erin Nicole Washington is the dialect coach and Sharifa Johka is an EDI Consultant. It has been previously announced that Los Angeles-based director and NAACP Best Director winner Gregg T. Daniel will direct the new production of “Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992” at the Taper.

Smith commented on the revision of the play for five performers, “…the work was never meant to be restricted to a one person show format. I wanted all of my works to be done by groups of actors, especially in schools and universities, or in communities where discussion might follow. Democracy is all about a variety of individuals working towards a goal. The cast of a play can exemplify that.”

Originally commissioned by Center Theatre Group where the solo show made its world premiere at the Mark Taper Forum in May 1993, “Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992”’s sold-out run in Los Angeles was followed by many successful revisions of the play, with each inviting a new group of collaborators. Those include a production at The Public Theater followed by a Broadway run and two Tony nominations; a national tour mounted at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre; a film produced by Ms. Smith and others in partnership with PBS; and the most recent reconceptualized production for five actors at the Signature Theatre in New York. New York Magazine hailed the reworked production as an “excellent revival. There’s a moral thrill in the work that will never fade,” while The New York Times named it a Critic’s Pick and called the production, “as necessary now as when Los Angeles was actively smoldering.”

Tickets for “Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992” are currently on sale and start at $35. They are available through CenterTheatreGroup.org, Audience Services at (213) 628-2772 or in person at the Center Theatre Group Box Offices (at the Ahmanson Theatre) at The Music Center, 135 N. Grand Avenue in Downtown L.A. 90012. Performances run Tuesday through Friday at 8 p.m., Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sunday at 1 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Center Theatre Group, one of the nation’s preeminent arts and cultural organizations, is Los Angeles’ leading nonprofit theatre company, which, under the leadership of Managing Director / CEO Meghan Pressman and Producing Director Douglas C. Baker, and in collaboration with the four Associate Artistic Directors, Lindsay Allbaugh, Tyrone Davis, Neel Keller, and Kelley Kirkpatrick, programs seasons at the 736-seat Mark Taper Forum and 1,600 to 2,100-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. CenterTheatreGroup.org

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February 17, 2023

BIOS:

Hugo Armstrong (he/him) was seen most recently at the Pasadena Playhouse in “Uncle Vanya,” the Geffen Playhouse in “Power of Sail” and CBS’s “True Lies.” He has been with productions at Center Theatre Group, Sacred Fools, Theatre of Note, The Kennedy Center, LATW, The Echo, RedCat, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Boston Court Pasadena, and South Coast Rep. Other television includes “Bosch: Legacy,” “Cinema Toast,” “Blacklist,” “Room 104,” “For the People,” “Into the Dark,” “Fear The Walking Dead,” and “NCIS.” Movies include “Lucky,” “Coherence,” “Roman J. Israel, Esq.,” Daniel Martinico’s “OK, Good and Excursions,” “Love in the Time of Monsters,” “Drib,” “No Man of God,” “The Only One,” as well as the upcoming features “Dark Cloud,” “Mr. Limbo,” and “Rachel” by Victor Nunez. He is a CalArts grad.

Lovensky Jean-Baptiste (he/him) is thrilled to be making his debut appearance at The Mark Taper Forum. MFA alumni of UCLA’s Professional School of Theater, Film, and Television, Lovensky is a dynamic character actor mostly known as Udo on Fox’s “24,” a regular as Jey-Jey in Netflix’s “Startup,” and for voicing Placide in CD Projekt Red’s “Cyberpunk 2077.” Additional credits include recurring guest-star roles in NBC’s “Young Rock,” MGM’s “Mr. Mom,” TNT’s “Animal Kingdom,” Paramount’s “Mayor of Kingstown,” Netflix’s “The Upshaws,” TNT’s “The Closer,” David E. Kelley’s “Boston Legal,” Amazon’s “Mad Dogs,” and CBS dramas “Scorpion,” “NCIS: Los Angeles,” and “S.W.A.T.” Film credits include a leading role in Prime Video’s “Spiked.” His numerous stage appearances include the lead role in the US premiere tour of Athol Fugard’s “Victory, Icebergs” (U/S) at the Geffen Playhouse, and a duet opposite Tony Todd in Athol Fugard’s “The Island” at The Lucy Florence African American Cultural Center.

Lisa Renée Pitts (she/her). Lisa is ecstatic to be making her Mark Taper debut with “Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992!” She was most recently seen in “The Father” (Pasadena Playhouse/Critics Circle Award) opposite Alfred Molina. Broadway (u/s): “Sweat” by Lynn Nottage. Selected Off-Broadway and Regional Credits: “The Old Settler” (Primary Stages), “Valley Song” (MTC), “Funnyhouse of a Negro” and world premiere “June and Jean in Concert” (Signature Theater Company), “Tiny Beautiful Things” and “Doubt” (Portland Center Stage/Critics Circle Award), “La Ronde” (Williamstown Theater Festival), “A Raisin in the Sun” (Virginia Stage Company), “Watching OJ” (EST/LA), “Wait Until Dark” (Actors Co-op), and “Intimate Apparel” (San Diego Repertory Theater/Critics Circle Award). Lisa’s breakout film role came as Dr. Dre’s mother Verna in “Straight Outta Compton” (dir. F. Gary Gray). Recent Televison and Film credits: Stephen King’s “The Stand” (dir. Tucker Gates), “Baselines” (dir. Nate Parker), “XX” (dir. Karyn Kusama), and “True to the Game 1, 2 & 3” (Imani Media Group). Lisa is an award-winning voiceover artist having narrated over 100 titles spanning all genres. She holds a BFA degree from Rutgers University’s Mason Gross School of the Arts. Performances dedicated to Anthony Boykins. Lisareepitts.com

Jeanne Sakata (she/her). Recent TV: Guest star/recurring roles on ABC-Shondaland’s “Station 19,” CBS’ “Magnum P.I.,” “NCIS Hawai’i,” “NCIS Los Angeles,” Disney+’s “High School Musical: -more-
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Anna Deavere Smith (Playwright) is a writer and actress. She’s credited with having created a new form of theatre. Her plays, sometimes called “docudramas,” focus on contemporary issues from multiple points of view and are composed from excerpts of hundreds of interviews. Plays, and films based on them, include “Fires in the Mirror” and “Twilight: Los Angeles,” both of which dealt with volatile race events in the 1990s; “Let Me Down Easy,” about the US health care system; and “Notes from the Field,” which focused on the school-to-prison pipeline. Her work as an actress on

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television includes “Inventing Anna,” “The West Wing,” “Nurse Jackie,” and “Black-ish.”
Mainstream movies include “Philadelphia,” “The American President,” “Rachel Getting Married,”
and “Here Today.” President Obama awarded Smith the National Endowment for the Humanities
Medal. She was the 2015 Jefferson Lecturer. She’s the recipient of the MacArthur Fellowship,
several Obie awards, two Drama Desk awards, the George Polk Career Award in Journalism, and
the Dean’s Medal from the Stanford University School of Medicine. She was a runner-up for the
Pulitzer Prize and nominated for two Tony Awards. She’s a University Professor at NYU’s Tisch
School of the Arts. She has several honorary doctorate degrees including those from Harvard,
Yale, Dartmouth, Spelman College, Prairie View University, Juilliard, and Oxford.

Gregg T. Daniel (Director). Denver Center Performing Art Center’s world premiere of Beaufield
Berry’s, “In The Upper Room.” August Wilson’s, “Radio Golf,” “Seven Guitars” “Gem of the
Ocean” and “A Raisin In The Sun” at A Noise Within Theatre (Ovation Nominee-Best Production
of a play), Lanie Robertson’s, “Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar & Grill” and Katori Hall’s “The
Mountaintop” at the Garry Marshall Theatre. West Coast premieres of Mfoniso Udofia’s, “Her
Portmanteau” at Boston Court Theatre, Tearrance Arvelle Chisolm’s, “Br’er Cotton” for Lower
Depth Theatre. With Rogue Machine Theatre, Lorraine Hansberry’s, “Les Blancs” (Ovation
nominated, Best Director), the L.A. premiere of Greg Kalleres’ “Honky” (nominated Best Director,
Comedy), Lorraine Hansberry’s, “A Raisin in the Sun” at A Noise Within (Ovation nominated, Best
Director) and a revival of Alice Childress’, “Wedding Band: A Love/Hate Story in Black and White”
for the Antaeus Company (Winner, Stage Raw Award–Best Revival, Best Ensemble). Regional
work includes, Samm-Art Williams' “Home” for the International City Theatre (ICT) and the New Jerseym premiere of Katori’s Hall, “The Mountain Top,” and Matthew Lopez’s “The Whipping Man” at Cape May Stage. He is a recipient of the NAACP Best Director award for the International City Theatre’s production of August Wilson’s “Fences” (nominated L.A. Drama Critics Circle,
Ovation, and StageScene LA awards). Gregg is a proud member of SDC and a Founding
Member/Artistic Director of Lower Depth Theatre He is married to actress Veralyn Jones.