

**LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE'S PRODUCTION OF
KRISTINA WONG, SWEATSHOP OVERLORD TO RUN
SEPTEMBER 20 – OCTOBER 16**

**PULITZER PRIZE FINALIST KRISTINA WONG PERFORMS HER
AWARD-WINNING SOLO SHOW ON THE POTIKER STAGE THIS FALL**

La Jolla, CA – La Jolla Playhouse's production of *Kristina Wong, Sweatshop Overlord*, written and performed by Pulitzer Prize finalist **Kristina Wong** (featured in the Playhouse's Digital WOW production of *Binge*), directed by **Chay Yew** (Playhouse's *Cambodian Rock Band*), will run **September 20 – October 16** (press opening: September 24) in the Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre. For tickets and information, please visit LaJollaPlayhouse.org.

The creative team includes **Junghyun Georgia Lee**, Scenic Designer; **Linda Cho**, Costume Designer; **Amith Chandrashaker**, Lighting Designer; **Mikhail Fiksel**, Sound Designer; **Caite Hevner**, Projection Design; and **Jess Slocum**, Production Stage Manager.

On Day 3 of the COVID-19 pandemic, Kristina Wong began sewing masks out of old bedsheets and bra straps on her Hello Kitty sewing machine. Before long, she was leading the Auntie Sewing Squad, a work-from-home sweatshop of hundreds of volunteers – including children and her own mother – to fix the U.S. public healthcare system while in quarantine. It was a feminist care utopia forming in the midst of crisis. Or was it a mutual aid doomsday cult? With hilarity and boundless generosity, *Kristina Wong, Sweatshop Overlord* invites the audience in on Wong's work building community in isolation, while reflecting on what we'd been through and imagining what we wanted to become.

In addition to being named a Pulitzer Prize finalist, *Kristina Wong, Sweatshop Overlord* was dubbed a *New York Times* "Critic's Pick" and received the 2022 Lucille Lortel, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards for Outstanding Solo Performance.

"During the pandemic, no artist I know pivoted as inventively and productively as Kristina Wong. She turned her frustration at not being able to perform into a supremely impressive moment of community building, as she assembled a posse of 'aunties' to make homemade masks for underserved groups. In the process, she confronted systemic inequality, kept people safe, and created this beautiful, funny and moving new show about all of it," said **Christopher Ashley**, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse.

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Kristina Wong is a performance artist, actor, comedian, writer and elected representative in Koreatown Los Angeles. Following its highly-acclaimed premiere at New York Theater Workshop, *Kristina Wong: Sweatshop Overlord* was a *New York Times* “Critic’s Pick.” Wong was then named a Pulitzer Prize finalist in Drama (2022). *Sweatshop Overlord* also garnered a veritable awards sweep this year including the Drama Desk, Lucille Lortel and Outer Critics Circle Awards. Wong’s other works have been presented across North America, the UK, Hong Kong and Africa. She’s been a guest on late night shows on Comedy Central, NBC and FX. As a published writer, Wong’s work is included in Routledge’s *Contemporary Plays by Women of Color*. Wong wrote the introduction for *The Auntie Sewing Squad Guide To Mask Making, Radical Care and Racial Justice*, published by University of California Press. She also had Artist Residencies at MacDowell, Hermitage, Montalvo and Ojai Playwrights Festival. Wong’s work has been awarded with grants from Creative Capital, The MAP Fund, Center for Cultural Innovation, National Performance Network, a COLA Master Artist Fellowship from the Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, nine Los Angeles Artist-in-Residence awards, Center Theatre Group’s Sherwood Award, and the Art Matters Foundation. She is currently developing a new work during her three year Artist-in-Residence at ASU Gammage. Other major projects include *Wong Flew Over The Cuckoo’s Nest*, *Going Green The Wong Way*, *The Wong Street Journal*, and *Kristina Wong for Public Office*. Other career highlights include the Visionary Award from East West Players, “Local Hero Of The Year” nominee from KCET/ PBS, Asian Pacific Honoree from Fuse TV and the Best Of Arts Los Angeles issue from *LA Weekly*.

Chay Yew directed La Jolla Playhouse’s acclaimed production of *Cambodian Rock Band*. His credits include Off-Broadway productions at The Public, Playwrights Horizons, NYTW, Signature Theatre Company, Rattlestick, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Playwrights Realm, National Asian American Theatre Company, Ma-Yi Theatre. Regional: American Conservatory Theater, Berkeley Rep, South Coast Rep, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Goodman Theatre, Denver Theater Center, Humana Festival, Kennedy Center, Mark Taper Forum, Long Wharf Theatre, Hartford Stage, Seattle Rep, Cincinnati Playhouse, Huntington Theatre, Portland Center Stage, Woolly Mammoth, Victory Gardens, East West Players, Writers Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Curious Theatre, Mosaic Theatre Company, Playmakers Rep, Round House, Teatro Vista, Laguna Playhouse, Geva Theatre, Empty Space, Cornerstone Theater, Singapore Repertory Theatre. Opera: Tanglewood Music Center, Los Angeles Philharmonic. Awards: Obie, Craig Noel, Drama-Logue awards.

La Jolla Playhouse is a place where artists and audiences come together to create what’s new and next in the American theatre, from Tony Award-winning productions, to imaginative programs for young audiences, to interactive experiences outside our theatre walls. Founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer, the Playhouse is currently led by Tony Award winner Christopher Ashley, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse, and Managing Director Debby Buchholz. The Playhouse is internationally renowned for the development of new works, including mounting 108 world premieres, commissioning 60 new works, and sending 33 productions to Broadway – among them the hit musicals *Come From Away* and *Jersey Boys* – garnering a total of 38 Tony Awards, as well as the 1993 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre.

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Fact Sheet

- WHAT:** *Kristina Wong, Sweatshop Overlord*
Written and Performed by Kristina Wong
Directed by Chay Yew
- WHEN:** **September 20 – October 16** (Press Opening: September 24)
Tue/Wed at 7:30pm; Thu/Fri/Sat at 8pm; Sun at 7pm; Sat/Sun at 2pm
- WHERE:** **Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse**
2910 La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla, CA 92037
- WHO:** Junghyun Georgia Lee, Scenic Design
Linda Cho, Costume Design
Amith Chandrashaker, Lighting Design
Mikhail Fiksel Sound Design
Caitie Hevner, Projection Design
Jess Slocum, Production Stage Manager

Background: On Day 3 of the COVID-19 pandemic, Kristina Wong began sewing masks out of old bedsheets and bra straps on her Hello Kitty sewing machine. Before long, she was leading the Auntie Sewing Squad, a work-from-home sweatshop of hundreds of volunteers – including children and her own mother – to fix the U.S. public healthcare system while in quarantine. It was a feminist care utopia forming in the midst of crisis. Or was it a mutual aid doomsday cult? With hilarity and boundless generosity, Kristina Wong, Sweatshop Overlord invites the audience in on Wong's work building community in isolation, while reflecting on what we'd been through and imagining what we wanted to become.

SPONSORS: Brian and Silvija Devine

TICKETS: LaJollaPlayhouse.org; (858) 550-1010

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