



For Release: October 5, 2008
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THE OLD GLOBE TO PRODUCE

NEW MUSICAL *KINGDOM*

FEATURING A HIP-HOP/ROCK MUSIC SCORE

San Diego – Louis G. Spisto, Executive Producer of the Tony Award®-winning Old Globe, is pleased to announce that the Theatre will produce the new hip-hop/rock musical *KINGDOM*, with book/lyrics by Aaron Jafferis and music by Ian Williams, directed by Ron Daniels, for 14 performances, February 12 – 22, 2009 at The Lincoln High School Center for the Arts (Feb 12-15) and at the Old Globe Theatre (Feb 19-22).

KINGDOM fuses hip-hop and rock music to create a truly original score that chronicles the lives of Andres and Juan, two inner city friends who join the Latin King and Queen Nation searching for honor, power and respect. When tragedy upends their lives, the struggle for leadership of the Nation tears the two friends apart with devastating results. Inspired by true stories of gang culture, *KINGDOM* is a groundbreaking new musical that gives audiences a unique view into the world of two young men caught in a cycle of violence—helping to understand their lives, their hopes, their struggles, and the choices they make.

Earlier developmental versions of *KINGDOM* have garnered numerous accolades, including a 2008 Richard Rodgers Award, the "Most Promising New Musical" award at the 2006 New York Musical Theatre Festival and the "Outstanding New Musical" of the 2006 summer season designation by Talkin' Broadway. The production was chosen to represent the United States at the 2008 International Community Arts Festival in the Netherlands last March. It also received acclaim at the 2007 NAMT (National Association of Musical Theater) Festival of New Musicals showcase.

“When I saw the showcase at the NAMT Festival last year, I knew that this wonderful, well crafted musical represented a great opportunity for the Globe to connect with a new audience. What’s really exciting is that this new work, which has garnered so much acclaim throughout its initial development, is going to be performed both at the Globe and at a new state-of-the art 750-seat theatre in southeastern San Diego,” said Spisto. “The partnership between Lincoln High School and our creative team and staff will result in some amazing programs, as students, teachers, community residents and artists will work together throughout the development and performance schedule of *KINGDOM*. Students and artists in southeastern San Diego will be mentored by professional hip-hop theatre artists and create their own work as part of the residency.”

This production of ***KINGDOM*** is part of The Old Globe's first year of artistic programs in southeastern San Diego. The Globe recently acquired its 43,000-square-foot Technical Center at 5335 Market Street, and this has served as the springboard for an artistic hub in the community, with the creation and implementation of new plays, performances, partnerships and training programs for and with area students, residents and artists. The Old Globe will be offering eight free student and public performances of ***KINGDOM*** and a several week long series of workshops in classrooms and in the community for students and area hip-hop artists. They will be given the opportunity to work with the author and Old Globe teaching artists to explore the art and story of ***KINGDOM*** and explore elements of playwriting as hip-hop poetry, monologues and scenes. Students will also have the opportunity to create and perform their own original work.

Aaron Jafferis has performed his acclaimed hip-hop poetry at Madison Square Garden, the Kennedy Center, and the National Poetry Slam Championships, where he was the 1997 Open Rap Slam champion. His solo hip-hop play *No Lie* has been seen at the Nuyorican Poets Café, H.E.R.E., Passage Theatre, The International Festival of Arts & Ideas, and at high schools and colleges across the country. His hip-hop play *Shakespeare: The Remix* (music by Gihieh Lee) was commissioned by TheatreWorks (Palo Alto) and performed by TheatreWorks, St. Louis Black Rep, and Collective Consciousness. He wrote the book and English lyrics for Ruben Flores' Latin American Songbook series at Joe's Pub. He is currently working on *The Weird Sisters*, a hip-hop opera about young women surviving in the city. In 2007, Aaron was named one of "50 to Watch" by *The Dramatist*. He has received artist residencies from the MacDowell Colony, TheatreWorks, and Weston Playhouse. He has written poetry for the Urban Bush Women dance troupe and for *The Nation* and northeastern magazines. He received his BA in Arts & Social Change from the University of California at Berkeley, studied at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, and received his MFA in Musical Theatre Writing from NYU, where he was an Alberto Vilar Global Fellow in the Performing Arts.

Ian Williams has written several original musicals, including *Kingdom*, *Story of an African Farm*, and *SkidZoeFranNya*, as well as writing original music for several plays. He received his BM in Music Composition from Eastern Washington University, and his MFA from New York University in Musical Theatre Writing. Ian also has written for and performed in various rock and jazz groups in New York City and in his native Washington state.

Ron Daniels was born and brought up in Brazil, where he was a founding member of the renowned Teatro Oficina, in São Paulo. He is an Honorary Associate Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company and a former Artistic Director of The Other Place Theatre, the RSC's experimental theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. His work over 15 years with the RSC includes many productions of Shakespeare plays such as *The Tempest*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* two productions of *Hamlet* (the first with Roger Rees and the second with Mark Rylance), *Richard II*, *Julius Caesar*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Henry V*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Pericles* and *Timon of Athens* as well as major new works by contemporary British playwrights David Edgar, David Rudkin, Pam Gems, Paula Milne, Naomi Wallace, Paul Thompson, Stephen Poliakoff and Anthony Burgess, with whom he collaborated on an adaptation of *A Clockwork Orange*, which had music specially written for the production by Bono and The Edge of U2.

At the National Theatre of Great Britain he directed Stephen Poliakoff's *Blinded by the Sun* and *Remember This* and in the West End he directed *Breaking the Silence* by Stephen Poliakoff, *Across From The Garden of Allah* by Charles Wood, *Camille* by Pam Gems, J.P. Donleavy's *The Beastly Beatitudes of Balthazar B.* and Olaf Olafsson's *The Feast of Snails*.

In 1991 he moved to the US and became the Associate Artistic Director of the American Repertory Theatre, in Cambridge, MA. His productions for the A.R.T include *Henry IV, parts 1 and 2*, *Henry V*, *The Tempest*, *Hamlet*, *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *The Seagull*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Threepenny Opera* as well as new plays by Naomi Wallace, Ronald Ribman and Stuart Greenman.

Ron now lives in New York and works as a freelance director. He has directed at the Long Wharf Theatre, the Yale Repertory Theatre, and The Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis. Other productions in the US include *Antony And Cleopatra* (The Shakespeare Theatre of Washington D.C.), Naomi Wallace's *One Flea Spare* for The Public Theatre of New York, *Havana is Waiting* by Eduardo Machado at the Cincinnati Playhouse, *Hedda Gabler* at the Dallas Theatre Centre and *Richard II*, *Richard III* and *Macbeth* for the Theatre for a New Audience in New York City. He recently directed *Points of Departure*, a new play by Michael John Garcés, for INTAR, a Latino theatre company in New York and a workshop of *The Suitcase Trilogy* by Han Ong, for the Ma-yi Theatre Company. Last summer he directed a production of *The Front Page* at the Williamstown Festival Theatre. Ron is currently co-writing a new musical based on the life of James Dean called *Rebel*.

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The internationally-acclaimed, Tony Award® -winning Old Globe is one of the most renowned regional theatres in the country and has stood as San Diego's flagship arts institution for 72 years. The Old Globe produces a year-round season of 15 plays and musicals on its three stages, including its highly-regarded Shakespeare festival. The Globe has become a gathering place for leading theatre artists from around the world, such as Tom Stoppard, Daniel Sullivan and Chita Rivera, among many others. Numerous Broadway-bound premieres and revivals, such as Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, The Full Monty and Damn Yankees, have been developed at The Old Globe and have gone on to enjoy highly successful runs in New York and at regional theatres across the country.