

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 8, 2023

CONTACT:

Rachel Bliss, Starlight
Communications Manager
rachel.bliss@kcstarlight.com
(816) 997-1151



Starlight Announces Broadway Veteran Baayork Lee to Direct *West Side Story* in 2024



Starlight will produce West Side Story August 20-25 as part of the AdventHealth Broadway Series.

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Starlight is pleased to announce that renowned director, choreographer, and Tony Award recipient Baayork Lee will return to Kansas City’s historic stage to direct the classic Broadway musical *West Side Story*, playing August 20-25, 2024. Previously, Lee choreographed Starlight’s production of *Miss Saigon* in 2013, which went on to tour at a number of theatres across the country, and *The King and I* in 2004.

Lee debuted on Broadway at just five years old in the original production of *The King and I* alongside Yul Brynner and was cast soon thereafter in George Balanchine’s original production of *The Nutcracker*. She performed in dozens of Broadway shows including originating the character of Connie in *A Chorus Line*, a role that was based on her life. Lee has directed and/or overseen Michael Bennett’s famed choreography of *A Chorus Line* for more than forty national and international productions of the show including productions on Broadway, in the West End, and a recent production in Spain starring Antonio Banderas. Her directing and choreography credits include *The King and I* and *Bombay Dreams* (national tours), Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *Cinderella* (NYC Opera), *Barnum* (Australia), *Carmen Jones* (Kennedy Center), *Porgy and Bess* and *Jesus Christ Superstar* (European tours), and she has choreographed multiple productions at Arena Stage and Washington National Opera. For PBS, Lee directed “Wicked in Concert.”

In 2017, The Broadway League awarded Lee the Isabelle Stevens Tony Award for her significant contributions to charitable causes. She co-founded a nonprofit organization, National Asian Artists Project (NAAP) with a vision to educate, cultivate, and stimulate audiences and artists of Asian descent through outreach programs.

“Baayork Lee is a Broadway great, and her work attests to it,” Lindsey Rood-Clifford, President +

MORE

C.E.O. of Starlight, said. “We were lucky to have her as part of our creative teams for *Miss Saigon* and *The King and I*, and we can’t wait for her to direct our upcoming production of *West Side Story*. She is one of the most well-respected members of the theatre community and will continue to raise the bar for a fantastic production of this classic show at Starlight.”

Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* is transported to New York City in the Tony Award-winning musical, *West Side Story*. Two young, idealistic lovers find themselves caught between warring street gangs, the “American” Jets and the Puerto Rican Sharks. Their struggle to survive in a world of hate, violence and prejudice is one of the most innovative, heart-wrenching and relevant musical dramas of our time. With a score by Leonard Bernstein and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, *West Side Story* has become one of the most memorable musicals and greatest love stories of all time.

Season ticket holders may renew their five-show season through December 8 and always get the best price on tickets, plus exclusive benefits like free parking, a “weatherproof” season, dining discounts and much more. Season ticket holders may also add to their experience by purchasing a dining package in the Applause Club on-site at Starlight. Enjoy a multi-course meal served buffet style just steps from your seats. Season ticket holders receive the best price to the chef-curated dining at Starlight. For more information on dining options visit www.kcstarlight.com/visit-starlight/dining-at-starlight/.

How to Purchase Season Tickets:

Season tickets are on sale now and available online at kcstarlight.com, by calling (816) 363-7827, or by visiting the ticket office at 4600 Starlight Road, Kansas City Mo., 64132. All Broadway performances begin at 8 p.m. For more information, including show content advisories, please visit kcstarlight.com.

Discount prices for groups of 10 or more are available by contacting Starlight’s group sales department at 816-997-1137 or groups@kcstarlight.com. Please note that kcstarlight.com is the only official ticket source for all shows in the 2024 AdventHealth Broadway Series. If you purchase tickets from another website or ticket broker, we cannot guarantee those tickets are legitimate.

About Starlight:

Opened as a theatre in 1950 and a nonprofit organization in 1951, Starlight is the largest and oldest performing arts organization in Kansas City, Missouri, and connects our community through live arts experiences that entertain, inspire, and engage audiences of all ages. Offering diverse programming year-round, Starlight presents Broadway musicals, concert events, and extensive community engagement programming, including classes, scholarships, and one of the largest high school musical theatre award programs in the nation. Located on 16 acres in Swope Park, the historic, city-owned venue is the second-largest outdoor producing theatre in the country with almost 8,000 seats.

Follow Starlight on social media @[kcstarlight](https://twitter.com/kcstarlight) and visit kcstarlight.com for more information.

Starlight is supported in part by the City of Kansas City, Missouri Neighborhood Tourist Development Fund.

###