

Arts Club Theatre Company presents

THE GREAT LEAP

By Lauren Yee

April 25–May 19, 2019 (Media opening: May 1)
Goldcorp Stage at the BMO Theatre Centre

IN BRIEF The Arts Club presents the Canadian premiere of *The Great Leap* by **Lauren Yee**, a basketball story that ties a group of people together on an intrinsic level, playing at the **Goldcorp Stage at the BMO Theatre Centre** from **April 25 to May 19**. Tickets from \$29 at artsclub.com or the Arts Club Box Office at 604.687.1644

VANCOUVER, B.C. (April 12, 2019)—Up next at the Arts Club is **Lauren Yee's** *The Great Leap*. Set in 1989, this play follows Chinese basketball coach Wen Chang (**Jovanni Sy**), a quiet Party supporter, and Manford (**Milton Lim**), a kid with hustle from San Francisco's Chinatown who makes up for his short stature with tenacious baller skill. As the story jumps back and forth in time, tensions rise right up to the final buzzer and history collides at the leap for a 3-point shot. More than just a play about basketball, *The Great Leap* is a cultural exploration of family, sacrifice, and cultural and political difference.

The cultural and political difference in the play centres on the Chinese student demonstrations in 1986–89, which were inspired by widespread discontent with high-level government corruption, inflation, and growing income inequality. Demands to reveal the salaries and wealth of government officials, stop press censorship, raise the wages of intellectuals, and increase government spending on education led to a seven-week protest in Tiananmen Square. On June 4, 1989, the Chinese government ordered troops to circle the square and to open fire on unarmed demonstrators and journalists recording the event. It is unknown how many were killed, but the death toll is estimated to be near 10,000.

Director **Meg Roe** says, “In the early days of rehearsing this show, our company had a long conversation covering a myriad of questions and curiosities provoked by this beautiful play. I am very grateful for the opportunity to be a part of such an inspiring, run-and-gun company of artists, and I thank [Assistant Director and Cultural Creative Consultant] **Jasmine Chen** for her creative, potent, rigorous, and invaluable contribution to this production.”

Artistic Director **Ashlie Corcoran** says, “I fell in love with this play immediately after reading it. The characters have heart, the plot continues to twist and turn, and the political ideas are present without being didactic. I love the athleticism—in the overt writing of the piece, but also within its structure, as it takes temporal and geographic leaps.”

“Punctuated with bluster...asserts a quiet, beautifully unexpected power” —*The Denver Post*

STARRING

Toby Berner (Saul), **Milton Lim** (Manford), **Jovanni Sy** (Wen Chang), **Agnes Tong** (Connie)



CREATIVE TEAM

Meg Roe (Director), **Heipo C.H. Leung** (Set Designer), **Stephanie Kong** (Costume Designer), **John Webber** (Lighting Designer), **Alessandro Juliani** (Sound Designer), **Chimerik 似不像** (Projection Design Team), **Sammy Chien** (Projection Design Director), **Shang-Han Chien** (Art Director), **Andie Lloyd** (Assistant Video Designer), **Ivan So** (Assistant Graphic Artist), **Agnes Tong** (Movement Coach), **Caryn Fehr** (Stage Manager), **Geoff Jones** (Assistant Stage Manager), **Jasmine Chen** (Assistant Director and Cultural Creative Consultant),

SHOWTIMES

Tue–Thu at 7:30 PM, Fri & Sat at 8 PM, Wed at 1:30 PM, and Sat & Sun at 2 PM

ABOUT THE ARTS CLUB

The Arts Club, one of the largest not-for-profit theatre companies in the country, is the principal gathering place for the theatrical arts in British Columbia. Comprising three unique venues across Vancouver, the Arts Club welcomes more than a quarter million guests annually, tours provincially and nationally, and engages students and artists alike through educational and professional programs.

Above all, the Arts Club is dedicated to the advancement of local artists telling stories from around the globe and, in particular, those of our region. From this, we believe that culture expands, an understanding of differences is nurtured, and art bursts forth. The Arts Club was founded in 1964 and is currently led by Artistic Director Ashlie Corcoran and Executive Director Peter Cathie White.