

EST/LA presents the world premiere of

# THE **TWO STOP** MARKET

a play by David Johann Kim

directed by Tracey A. Leigh

**Previews May 2 & 3  
Opens May 4  
and runs through  
June 9, 2024**

**Atwater Village Theatre  
3269 Casitas Avenue,  
Los Angeles, CA 90039**

**Tickets @[estlosangeles.org](https://www.estlosangeles.org)**

produced with the support of

**LANPP**

**VENTUROUS**  
*Theater Fund*



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*On the verge of the '92 LA Riots.  
A Korean market.  
A murder scene.  
A store owner and  
a neighborhood teen-aged girl face off.  
When her wild card mother arrives,  
secrets from the past explode in this tiny store.  
History and histories go head to head  
as LA starts to burn.*

TWO STOP is a play about loss, the intersection of culture, family, addiction, history and redemption. The setting is the night of the LA Riots inside a Korean American-owned convenience store. Three lost individuals, a mother, a daughter and a found father-figure, find themselves battling the elements of rage and societal dysfunction, rediscovering one another and acknowledging love in their own idiosyncratic ways.

EST/LA will present TWO STOP in conjunction with Chalk Rep's production of PANG SPA, also penned by David Johann Kim. Both productions are made possible by Los Angeles New Play Project and the Venturous Theatre Fund, a fund of Tides Foundation, in addition to support provided by Center Theatre Group's Los Angeles Artists Residency program, part of CTG:Forward.



### ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

David's plays *TWO STOP* and *PANG SPA* were awarded the 2022 Los Angeles New Play Project Award and Grant. EST/LA and Chalk Rep's joint productions of both plays were also awarded a Venturous Theatre Fund Grant. *TWO STOP* was work-shopped in 2023 at The Inkwell Theater. *PANG SPA* was a semifinalist for the 2018 O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, Ashland New Play Festival and Bay Area Playwrights Festival and the final round of Dennis and Victoria Ross Foundation Playwrights Program.

David fell hard for dramaturgy when working on new plays as an actor with powerhouse dramaturgs Mame Hunt (at Berkeley Rep) and Morgan Jenness (NYSF's New Works Now Festival and NY Theatre Workshop's Dartmouth retreat). Mabou Mines' Ruth Malaczech asked David to be part of the writers group when she was devising *A Drop In The Ocean* in residence at New York Theater Workshop. Les Waters selected David to be part of the devising team for their Joint Stock-style production, Act 3 Sc 2 of *Life* at UC San Diego. He holds an MFA from UC San Diego and is a member of The Dramatists Guild, The Playwrights Union, Chalk Rep's Writers group, Playwrights ThinkTank, EST/LA's Playwrights Unit and is a co-founder of EST/LA's Ignite Project.

David spent the first half of his career in the theatre primarily as an actor. He originated lead roles in new plays including Han Ong's *Reasons To Live...*, Gabriel Garcia Marquez' *Innocent Erendira*, Milton Murayama's *All I Asking For Is My Body*, Larry Yep's *Dragonwings*, Alan Cook's adaptation of John Steinbeck's *East Of Eden*, Lynn Manning's *Up From The Downs*, and Jessica Hagedorn's *Holy Food*. He performed at theatres on both coasts including: The Public Theatre, NY Theatre Workshop, The Lark, Mabou Mines, Repertorio Espanol, La Mama ETC in NYC and Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Magic Theatre, Asian American Theatre Co. and El Teatro Campesino in California.





### **ABOUT THE DIRECTOR**

Tracey A. Leigh is an Obie Award and NAACP Theatre Award-winning actor with an extensive career in theatre-making and new work development. She has appeared on stages throughout the U.S. and internationally, including a Broadway National Tour and performances Off-Broadway at New York Theatre Workshop, Primary Stages, Signature Theatre, Soho Rep, P.S. 122 and La Mama Experimental Theatre Club; regionally at San Francisco's American Conservatory Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, the Guthrie Theatre, The National Theatre in Washington DC, The Denver Center, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company and ACT in Seattle; and at Southern California's South Coast Repertory Theatre, The Old Globe Theatre, The La Jolla Playhouse, San Diego Repertory Theatre, Boston Court Pasadena, Sacred Fools, Echo Theater Company, Lower Depth Theatre and Rubicon Theatre Company.

A member of Ensemble Studio Theatre Los Angeles since 2011, Tracey became Associate Artistic Director in 2012, then served as Co-Artistic Director with Gates McFadden from 2013-2014. During that time, she produced and directed numerous projects and festivals for the company while working at USC as a dramaturg for second year MFA playwrights. After stepping away from the company for several years, she became Artistic Director in 2021. Tracey continues to work as an actor, recently appearing in the co-production of *American Son* at Ensemble Theatre Company Santa Barbara/The English Theatre of Frankfurt and the Playwright's Arena/LGBT Center co-production of *THREE*, an adaptation of Anton Chekov's *Three Sisters*. She is also a proud member of Artistic Directors of Color Alliance, Greater Los Angeles ([adcalliance.org](http://adcalliance.org)).





## About EST/LA

### MISSION

Ensemble Studio Theatre Los Angeles is a company of artists who collaborate to create and develop original, bold, risk-taking theatre. Through the telling of diverse stories, we challenge our artists and our audiences to meet the moment; to see the world through a new lens, and explore our shared humanity.

### VISION & VALUES

As an incubator for dynamic and audacious new theatre, EST/LA provides a space where artists across all aspects of identity, perspective, and experience feel safe to create daring work that shakes people up.

As a company, EST/LA is dedicated to the discovery and development of new voices while continuing to support our member artists. We encourage all of our theatre makers to practice openness and curiosity; to wrestle with the things that make us uncomfortable; to delve into complex issues; to challenge the status quo by questioning assumptions; and to lift up those who've been traditionally marginalized as a result of those assumptions.

It is long overdue for our membership to accurately reflect the city in which we live and create. Ensuring that the broader LA community sees itself represented in our work and in who we are is essential for meaningful and transformational engagement -- with both our audiences and each other as artists. Embracing the enormous variety of human experience is imperative not only for the creation of impactful theatre, but for the future of EST/LA.



## CURRENT PROGRAMMING

### WRITING GROUPS

**New West Playwrights** Dedicated to fostering and developing the work of Los Angeles area playwrights 30 years of age and under through weekly meetings, readings, and workshop productions.

**Playwrights Unit** EST/LA's weekly development program for more established writers. Playwrights — EST/LA members and non-members — read and critique each other's work in a professional, supportive environment.

**The Ignite Project** Conceived in 2022, with the goal of engaging artists from the wider Los Angeles community, eight playwrights of various ages and lived experiences are selected to meet for 10 weeks to begin the process of writing new plays from scratch. Under the leadership of David Johann Kim, Jennie Webb, Makeda Deplet, Rosie Narasaki and Jacob Surovsky, the workshop culminates in a "First Flame" public presentation of fully cast 10-minute excerpts. To date, The Ignite Project has launched thirty-two new plays; several have gone on to receive full readings in our Winterfest new play reading festivals, and two were selected for our 2023 Development Lab. Now in its 5th Cohort.

### NEW PLAY DEVELOPMENT

**Sunday Best** EST/LA's long-running program which takes place on the 3rd Sunday of each month. After a coffee and bagels meet-and-greet, three writers bring in up to 45 minutes worth of material for feedback. Open to the community.

**Winterfest** EST/LA's signature new play reading festival provides an opportunity for our company members to initiate new, unproduced work in a lights-up, lights-down reading on our stage, and for company leadership to consider it for dramaturgy and further development. Plays may be either full-length or one-acts and are not required to be written by EST/LA company members. Once plays are accepted, playwrights are encouraged to continue working on their plays up until the reading, which is followed by audience feedback.

**EST/LA Development Lab** Funded through a 2023 Nonprofit Performing Arts Grant, the purpose of the lab is to take a script from its current draft to a draft that is ready for a full production. Each project undergoes its own unique process according to the needs of the play, the playwright and the company. To date, four plays have been developed through the lab, culminating in Check-In staged readings before a live audience. These plays are:

*Mira and the Whale* by Jacob Surovsky

*The Box* by Cat Davidson

*American Lie* by John Kwang Lee

*Rivers* by Laura Stribling





## CURRENT PROGRAMMING

### Other Programs

**EST/LA's Arts Education Program** Currently funded by two California Arts Council grants. EST/LA member teaching artists lead workshop series which teach students how to explore and examine the fundamental tools of performance art, alongside an additional literacy-building arts program focused on community building, identity and self-acceptance. We continue seeking opportunities to expand this successful program.

**True Story** Our once monthly storytelling evening conceived and curated by Lizzy Ross. Fostering the writing and performance of first-person narratives, True Story has grown the community of storytellers it serves by working alongside U. S. veterans organizations and support programs. In partnership with USC's Classics Department's Warrior Bards Program, the Ajax and Hecuba projects offer online explorations of classical Greek plays through themes such as transitioning from war to peacetime, the trials of homecoming and re-entering the larger community, PTSD, and the shift in identity from hero to civilian. These explorations can be found at [thelaprojects.org](http://thelaprojects.org)







## SUPPORT FOR THE PLAY “TWO STOP”

As many great works of art do, *Two Stop* shows us how public events affect private individuals, and how those individuals continue to strive and survive in the midst of often seemingly insurmountable odds and violence. The dialogue is taught, humorous, colloquial, tender, revealing and fully human. We learn about these unique characters as they learn about each other. Major issues of race, unemployment, drugs, intimacy, trust, empathy and more are explored in this piece of LA brought to life in *Two Stop*.

—**Dale Soules**, actress, *Orange Is The New Black*, *Buzz Lightyear.*, *Broadway: Hair*, *Grey Gardens*, *Hands On A Hard Body*, *The Magic Show*.

I want you to know that I read your play and it is incredible. It moved me. As a Black and Korean American woman, I feel so seen and this is such an important piece of work. Congratulations on this beautiful TRULY BEAUTIFUL play. It is a bridge and a reminder.

—**Suzen Baraka**, actress playing *Sunny* in *TWO STOP* at *Inkwell Theater*

All the twists and turns! I was leaning forward--I didn't relax for a minute! I'm a voice teacher as you know and I wasn't breathing very much! The reveals! A reveal a reveal! The aliveness of that terrible time as well. ...was so riveting! And there's so much history along with the present that the characters brought.

—**Eva Barnes**, actress & professor of Theatre and Voice UC San Diego Master of Fine Arts program

A harrowing play that grabs you and doesn't let you go as you watch the characters, in real time, barricade themselves in a convenience store as the LA riots get closer. However, the revelations inside cause small fires and explosions of their own and they may not be safe with each other. A suspenseful look at racism, family, and violence in America.

—**Ali MacLean**, award winning playwright

That was absolutely gripping, based purely on the text! ...I could not leave the screen! I see now from the previous play some of the themes that you work on, that are important to you. It's wonderful to see these threads that run through the work. The question of "what is family?" in this play is terribly important in these times. We need to be talking about family and community and I think this play is right at the millstone of that mission. You are creating an opus!

—**Margaret Shade**, actor, director, translator, cultural adviser. Work at *Bristol Old Vic*, *National Theatre*, *Edinburgh Fringe*, *BBC Radio Drama*.

It's the story of hope in the end but it's not at all sentimental. There's a toughness in these people's lives that makes the hope more earned.

—**Steve Dierkes**, playwright and head of *EST/LA's Playwrights Unit*

Making the present tense so present with the closed circuit cameras, I could visualize it so clearly, no matter how far they go into the past, the present moment is right there.

—**Doris Baizley**, award winning playwright and teacher

I wasn't around for any of these events but I appreciate how timely it feels! Not that the 90's aren't modern but this feels like this just happened last year!

—**Troy Leigh-Anne Johnson**, actress playing *G.G.* in *Chalk Rep workshop 2021*

This play really is a powder keg! The personal ricochets against the historic in it, jarring our understanding of that history. It gives a new understanding of things that maybe we thought we knew.

—**Eric Reyes Loo**, playwright and television writer/producer





## HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT “TWO STOP”



**When David asked if I would write a LANPP grant for *Two Stop*, I jumped at the opportunity.** As a company member, I'd performed in several presentations of the play in EST/LA's new play development programs, which received fantastic audience feedback. After I became the company's new artistic director in the wake of George Floyd's murder, it was clear to me that *Two Stop* not only had characters I'd never seen before onstage, but as a story of transformation, it would be perfect for EST/LA's first full production since the pandemic.

I'm constantly surprised by *Two Stop*'s immediacy; the writing is superb – the play crackles with intensity while being grounded in the deep humanity of each character. I am so excited to now be directing the play, and to share our production alongside Chalk Rep's production of David's other multi-award-winning play, *Pang Spa*.

Once LANPP announced that David won for two plays dealing with similar themes – *Two Stop* with EST/LA and *Pang Spa* with Chalk Rep – Chalk Rep's Artistic Producing Director Amy Ellenberger and I began looking for a way to present these two plays in conversation with one another. Together, we applied for and received a Venturous Theatre Fund grant, which supports ambitious, challenging new work for the stage. After months of looking at venues and searching for an additional producing partner, we decided to present the two plays on our own and in tandem at EST/LA's Atwater Village Theatre home. We are also thrilled to be receiving support as 2023-2024 resident companies in the new CTG:Forward program.

Even so, we are still in need of funds to produce *Two Stop*. Given changes in California labor law and the performing arts sectors' continuing recovery from the pandemic shutdown, small theatre producing budgets have more than tripled; this has resulted in a shortage of financial resources needed to properly realize *Two Stop* to its full potential.

If you can, please support this production by donating on our [website here](#). All donations we go towards production costs and artist payments. We so appreciate your help in championing this worthy story about our community, our humanity, and our Los Angeles.

[Click here to donate](#)