

Free Outgoing

Written by
Anupama Chandrasekhar

Directed by
Snehal Desai

Thursday, February 16, 2017, at 7:15 p.m.
East West Players, Los Angeles

KNOW BEFORE THE SHOW

- East West Players is the nation's oldest continually operating theatre of color.
- Director Snehal Desai was named Artistic Director of East West Players in 2016. He has directed at theatres around the world, including The Public Theater, Yale Rep, Old Vic, and Ars Nova.
- Writer Anupama Chandrasekhar is a Chennai-based journalist-turned-playwright and the first Indian to be nominated for the *London Evening Standard's* Charles Wintour Prize for Most Promising Playwright, the Whiting Award, and the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize.

ABOUT THE PLAY

Free Outgoing was first performed at London's Royal Court Theatre in 2007. The play is set in Chennai, India. Deepa is a star student, loved by her teachers and her family. But when a sexual encounter with a boy in her class is captured on a phone camera and goes viral, Deepa becomes the target of her community's—and then the entire nation's—outrage. *Free Outgoing* explores the intersections of new technology and traditional values, sexuality, and culture.

EAST WEST PLAYERS

Established in 1965, East West Players has been hailed as the nation's leading Asian American theatre troupe for award-winning productions that blend Eastern and Western movement, costumes, language, and music. EWP has premiered more than 100 plays and musicals about the Asian Pacific American experience and has held more than 1,000 readings and workshops. Founded by nine Asian American artists who wanted opportunities to take on roles beyond the stereotypical parts they were being offered in Hollywood, EWP continues to provide unique opportunities for Asian American artists and is committed to advocating for more diverse representations of the Asian American experience on TV and across all media. EWP's main stage is the David Henry Hwang Theater, housed within the historic Union Center for the Arts in Little Tokyo, where it serves more than 10,000 people each year.

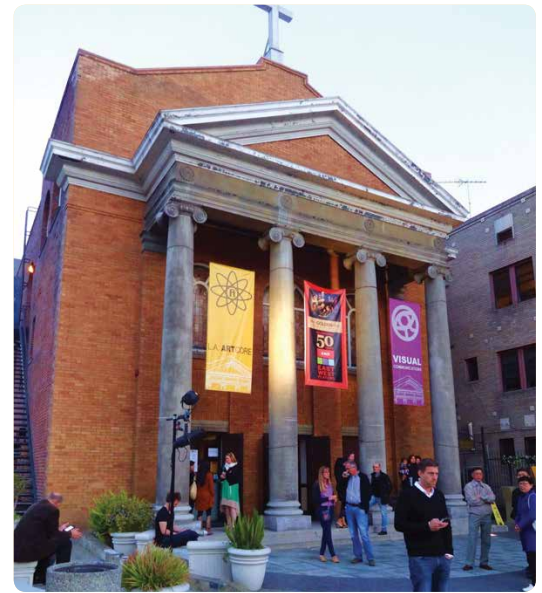
LITTLE TOKYO

L.A.'s Little Tokyo is one of only three official Japantowns in the United States. (All three are in California, the other two being in San Francisco and San Jose.) Founded in the early twentieth century, the area, also known as J-Town, was declared a National Historic Landmark District in 1995.

The area drew new Japanese immigrants in the early 1900s until the 1924 Exclusion Act halted immigration from Asian

countries. In 1941, there were approximately 30,000 Japanese Americans living in the area, but most of them were incarcerated in World War II internment camps, leaving their homes empty. A large number of African Americans, along with some Native Americans and Latinos, moved into the area during the war, and it became briefly known as Bronzeville. In 1944, more than 100 buildings in the neighborhood were condemned or ordered repaired or renovated, and many families were evicted and relocated to the Jordan Downs public housing project in Watts. After the war, due to the limited housing in Little Tokyo, many Japanese Americans returning from internment camps moved to nearby areas such as Boyle Heights. The 1970s saw a new wave of development in Little Tokyo, with new shopping plazas, hotels, and banks. During the 1970s and '80s, an unofficial arts district grew around Little Tokyo.

Today, Little Tokyo has few Japanese American residents but is a heart of Japanese culture in L.A. Amid the many Japanese restaurants are the Japanese American National Museum, the Go For Broke Monument commemorating Japanese Americans who served in the U.S. military in World War II, the Aratani Theatre, and a row of historic buildings along First Street that gives visitors a glimpse of what the area looked like in Little Tokyo's early days. A Nisei Week festival is held each August at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, the largest Asian American cultural center of its kind in the United States. Little Tokyo is also home to the Geffen Contemporary, a branch of the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA).



East West Players, Los Angeles

SOCIAL MEDIA, CYBERBULLYING, AND SLUT-SHAMING

The ubiquitous presence of smartphones and social media has opened up unprecedented new avenues to shame and bully people—especially young women and trans, gender-nonconforming, and queer people—about their sexualities and gender identities. There have been numerous cases of non-consensual sharing of pictures of other people's bodies and even documentations of sexual assault that have gone viral. Sometimes described as “cyberbullying” or “slut-shaming,” these actions have led to social and familial problems and even suicide.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

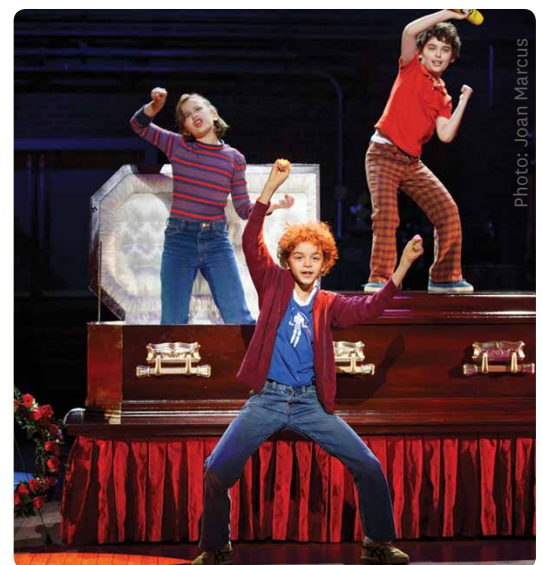
- 🟡 Do you think sharing a picture or video of someone else without their consent is an act of violence?
- 🟡 What would you do—or what have you done—upon witnessing cyberbullying or slut-shaming?
- 🟡 Can you think of other examples of a collision between new technology and traditional values?

IF YOU LIKED *FREE OUTGOING*, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT

- 🟡 Upcoming Visions and Voices theatre events such as *sSISTERSs: An Experimental Musical*, *The Hotel Play*, and the Experience L.A. trip to see *Fun Home*
Learn more at visionsandvoices.usc.edu
- 🟡 Upcoming East West Players productions
Learn more at eastwestplayers.org
- 🟡 Other local mission-driven theatre companies such as Artists at Play and the Latino Theater Company
Learn more at artistsatplayla.blogspot.com and thelalc.org
- 🟡 Anupama Chandrasekhar's plays *Disconnect* and *The Snow Queen*



sSISTERSs: An Experimental Musical, Feb. 23 and Feb. 24



Fun Home, Mar. 25

DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

Librarian **ANTHONY ANDERSON** has selected the following resources to help you learn more about tonight's performance and playwright Anupama Chandrasekhar. You can access electronic resources through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at libraries.usc.edu.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Asian American Culture on Stage: The History of the East West Players (1999)

By Yuro Kurahashi
Doheny Memorial Library: PN 2297 .E28 K87 1999

Contexts of the Dark Side of Communication (2016)

Elena S. Gilchrist-Petty (editor)
Doheny Memorial Library: HM 1166 .C696 2016

Disconnect (2010)

By Anupama Chandrasekhar
Doheny Memorial Library: PR 9499.4.C44 D57 2010

India Today: An Encyclopedia of Life in the Republic (2011)

By Arnold P. Kaminsky
Doheny Memorial Library (Reference Collection): DS 428.2 I535 2011

Routledge Handbook of Asian Theatre (2016)

Siyuan Liu (editor)
Doheny Memorial Library: PN 2860 .R68 2016

SELECTED ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

- Arts and Humanities Full Text
- International Index to the Performing Arts
- Literature Criticism Online
- Literature Resource Center
- LitFinder
- MLA Bibliography
- World Cat

