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News Release

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LA Ovation Award Winner Moves On to NYC Reading

***Film Chinois*, winner of the 2007 LA Ovation Award for Best New Play, will be part of the 10th Annual TRU Voices New Plays Reading series presented by NYC's Theater Resources Unlimited (TRU)**

Burbank, CA – Grove Theater Center (GTC) is thrilled to announce that ***Film Chinois***, by Singaporean playwright **Damon Chua**, will be a part of the **Theater Resources Unlimited** 10th Annual TRU New Voices reading series in New York City on June 9th.

The TRU Voices New Play Series is produced by Theater Resources Unlimited. The reading will be produced by **GTC, Charles L. Johanson** and New York Producer **Jack W. Batman** and will be directed by **Kevin Cochran** who directed the world premiere at GTC which won the 2007 LA Ovation Award for Best New Play. *Film Chinois* was developed through GTC's New Play Initiative.

"The year, 1947. The city, Beijing. Location, a quiet restaurant in the Diplomatic District. A beautiful girl sits smoking. . . ." Thus begins *Film Chinois*, a mystery set in a city just ravaged by World War II and waiting imminent invasion by the communists. The beautiful girl is Chinadoll, an enigmatic woman with an unknown past and an even more uncertain future. Is she a communist? A nationalist? Or just an opportunist? Only time -- and a fateful encounter with an idealistic young American operative -- will tell.

"What I loved about this script," says GTC Artistic Director **Kevin Cochran**, "is that it treats the film noir style so honestly and directly. Then Damon takes this great backdrop of mystery and romance and creates a very moving portrait of people struggling to make the right choices at a very difficult time in history."

"What makes me so excited about having this script in our New Voices Series," added **Catherine Lamm**, TRU's Literary Manager, "is that it really grabbed me right away. The way Damon (Chua) creates the mood in his creative and well constructed revisiting of the 'noir' detective films of the 30's is sure to be a real crowd pleaser. I am also excited about working with GTC. Based on their track record with new plays, the partnership between our two organizations is very exciting." **Bob Ost**, TRU's Executive Director, echoed Catherine's sentiment; "I am pleased to be hosting a well-respected West Coast company, and look forward to this and future collaborations; and I love the coincidence that GTC's partner on this

production is Jack W. Batman, a TRU Advisory Board member and the producer of last year's extremely well-received TRU reading of *The Jesus Hickey*."

In addition to *Film Chinois*, two other plays have been chosen as a part of the series: ***American Whupass***, a rollicking satire of modern-day electioneering by **Justin Warner** and ***A Crooked Man***, an inter-generational drama by **Richard Kalinoski**. "Although we didn't set out to do so, we've created a series with a through-line of social relevance and conscience," said TRU Literary Manager **Catherine Lamm**.

The **TRU Voices Series** accepts submissions from emerging and established producers as well as directly from playwrights and TRU then matches them with a producer for the series. The **TRU Voices Series** track record is impressive. Shows that started in the series include *Pied-à-Terre*, which played off-Broadway at The Kirk, Theatre Row; *The Great American Trailer Park Musical* by Betsy Kelso and David Nehls, which enjoyed an off-Broadway run and is currently touring; and *Normal* by Yvonne Adrian, Cheryl Stern and Tom Kochan, which played a limited run in fall '06 at the Connelly Theater in the East Village starring Barbara Walsh. A finalist in the 2006 series (a previous West Coast import) "Missives" by Garret Jon Groenvald of San Francisco's PlayGround, recently went on to a full production at 59E59 Theaters.

Production Details:

The 2008 TRU Voices Series will take place at **The Players Theatre** 115 MacDougal Street (West of W 3rd) in New York City. Admission is FREE but reservations are required: 212.714.7628 or email trunltd@aol.com. The schedule of readings is;

American Whupass

Monday, June 2 at 7:00pm

Film Chinois

Monday, June 9 at 7:00pm

A Crooked Man

Monday, June 16 at 7:00pm

About Grove Theater Center (GTC): Founded by Kevin Cochran and Charles Johanson in 1994, Grove Theater Center (GTC) has presented over 100 professional theater productions employing members of SSDC (the union of stage directors) and Actors' Equity Association. We presented 12 seasons at the 172 seat GTC Gem Theater and the 550 seat Festival Amphitheater in Garden Grove, 5 summer seasons of Theater on the Green in our 246 seat theater in Fullerton and six seasons (so far) at the 99 seat GTC Burbank.

About the New Play Initiative: From the beginning, GTC has worked to develop new plays for the theater. We've premiered 23 new plays including work by James McLure, Christopher Hart, David Paterson and Ron House. Nineteen of these plays have since been presented by other theaters across the country. Two (*Finger Painting in a Murphy Bed* and *Pieces of the Sky* by David Paterson) have been published by Samuel French. *Finger Painting* was also made into a movie which won an Audience Choice Award at Sundance. *Swiftly*, by Christopher Hart, was co-produced by multiple Oscar winner David Brown and workshopped at Manhattan Theater Club with Richard Dreyfuss in the lead role.

GTC's New Play Initiative (NPI) was started in 2004 to expand and formalize our work on new play development. The NPI is a three step development program in contest form. Semi-finalists receive a royalty cash prize and a reading of their plays. Finalists receive an additional royalty cash prize and a workshop production of their work. And finally, the winner receives a full production of the play.

The first NPI winner (*Capital*, by San Diego Playwright David Hogan) was hailed by the OC Register as “a tart and vicious Ortonesque diatribe.” The 2005 NPI play, *Blake. . .da Musical!* (by LA writers Rick Batalla and Henry Phillips), won the Los Angeles Ovation Award (called “L.A.’s most coveted theater award” by the Los Angeles Times) for Best New Musical. GTC’s 2006 production of *Straight Up with a Twist*, by Paul Stroili, garnered an Ovation nomination as Best Solo Performance (and recently enjoyed a successful run in NYC at The Players Theatre). And then in 2007, GTC’s production of *Film Chinois* was nominated for 3 LA Ovation Awards and won for Best New Play.

Other NPI plays include Sarah Treem’s *Empty Sky* (which went on to South Coast Rep’s Pacific Playwrights Festival and won the Reva Shiner New Play Festival); *Dusk* and *A Brief History of Penguins and Promiscuity*, both by James McLindon (both productions “Recommended” by the Los Angeles Times); and *The Accomplices*, by Bernard Weinraub, which premiered at The New Group and received a 2007 Drama Desk nomination for Best New Play.

About Jack W. Batman: Jack returned to the professional theatre in 2003 after a brief hiatus as one of a small team that founded and developed NYC’s sports and entertainment playground, Chelsea Piers. Producer - Broadway: *Enchanted April* starring Elizabeth Ashley and Molly Ringwald (2 Tony Nominations including Best Play, 2 Outer Critics Circle Awards). Off Broadway: *The Jesus Factor*, *Clean Alternatives* (also Edinburgh Festival – 2006 Fringe First Award), *Brian Dykstra: Cornered & Alone*, *Evensong* (Broad Horizons Theatre Company. Producer/Director - 12 ice shows starring Olympic and World figure skating champions plus 46 major public events (450,000 attendance) for Chelsea Piers. In development: the Kleban Award-winning musical *Barnstormer* by Cheryl L. Davis and Douglas J. Cohen. Jack was Casting Director for 200 Broadway, national touring and regional productions and is presently Executive Producer of the White Plains Performing Arts Center and Executive Director of Theatrical Consultants, Ltd. In addition, he is a producer of GAYFEST NYC which brings new plays and musicals to Off-Broadway. Jack is a graduate of the Commercial Theater Institute.

About TRU: Theater Resources Unlimited was founded in 1992 to providing information and a variety of entertainment-related services and resources that strengthen the business capabilities of producing organizations, individual producers, self-producing artists and other theater professionals. The company holds monthly seminars on a wide range of subjects important to producers conducted by panels of experts from both the commercial and not-for-profit worlds. TRU also publishes a print newsletter and a monthly email community newsletter. In addition, TRU served as the umbrella organization for a co-production by several of its member companies as a part of the first annual New York Fringe Festival. From that experience, the organization has expanded its production efforts by creating the TRU VOICES New Play Reading Series and the TRU VOICES New Musicals Reading Series. In 2001, TRU began giving annual scholarships to The Commercial Theater Institute, to encourage the development of aspiring producers, and most recently created a Producer Mentoring Program whose mentors are among the most prominent producers and general managers in New York Theater.

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