

# A.C.T. AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

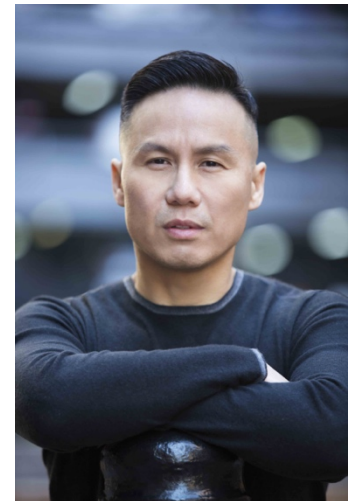
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## TONY AWARD WINNER BD WONG TO STAR IN BAY AREA PLAYWRIGHT LAUREN YEE'S *THE GREAT LEAP* AT AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER'S GEARY THEATER IN MARCH 2019

SAN FRANCISCO (October 11, 2018)—Following rave reviews and audience acclaim at off-Broadway's Atlantic Theater Company this past spring, **American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon** announced today that Tony Award winner and San Francisco native **BD Wong** will reprise his role as 'Wen Chang' in award-winning Bay Area playwright Lauren Yee's *The Great Leap*, performing at A.C.T.'s **Geary Theater** (415 Geary St., San Francisco) from **Wednesday, March 6, through Sunday, March 31, 2019**. [Additional casting will be announced at a later date.](#)

Says **Wong**: "I'm always looking for the rare work that's as moving as it is funny, that has characters who are people you've never met before but whom you somehow immediately feel familiar with. This play, kind of miraculously, gives me all of it. I love Lauren Yee's insightful vantage point that looks over family relationships and the unsettled scores such relationships keep, all wrapped up in a fresh athletic metaphor. It's a play that is so specifically Chinese American, yet somehow all-embracing—and that isn't an easy feat for a playwright. It is a gift of an opportunity to perform Lauren's play on one of the great regional stages in the country."



Adds **MacKinnon**: "*The Great Leap* was already going to be a celebration of San Francisco—a story set here, by a playwright from here, about a sport vital to here. We now add to that a homecoming for San Francisco's own BD Wong. I cannot wait!"

When a college basketball team from San Francisco is invited to China for an exhibition game in 1989, a smacking American coach prepares to take on his protégé—now grown and bent on crushing the Westerners. But after a public high school star from Chinatown joins the American team, his actions in Beijing become the

accidental focus of attention, escalating the fractured history between the coaches. Funny, urgent, and contemporary, this slam dunk of a sports drama from Yee—developed at A.C.T.’s New Strands Festival in 2017—explores cultural identity, global politics, and the collision of cultures and generations. Under the direction of two-time Obie Award winner **Lisa Peterson**, *The Great Leap* soars through time and leaps across continents from the hardball courts of San Francisco’s Chinatown to a Beijing on the brink of a revolution, building tension right up to the buzzer.

Born and raised in San Francisco, Wong is the only actor ever to have received all five major New York Theater awards for a single role—namely his performance in *M. Butterfly* (his Broadway debut): the Drama Desk Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award, the Theater World Award, the Clarence Derwent Award, and the Tony Award.

Wong gained notice on HBO’s critically acclaimed series *Oz* as the resilient prison priest (Father Ray) for the show’s six-season run. Then, for 11 seasons on the top-rated NBC series *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*, he played George Huang, an FBI forensic psychiatrist and expert on the criminal mind.

Wong co-starred in the NBC series *Awake*, in which he played John Lee, Det. Britten’s therapist in the ‘red reality.’ Other television credits include ABC’s *All-American Girl* (as Margaret Cho’s brother Stuart) and HBO’s telefilms *And the Band Played On* and *The Normal Heart*, as well as guest-starring roles on *Sesame Street*, *The X-Files*, *Madam Secretary*, *Nurse Jackie*, and *NCIS: New Orleans*. He has been seen most recently in two drastically different television roles simultaneously: as the nefarious Hugo Strange on *Gotham* and as the mysterious, trans-female hacker Whiterose on *Mr. Robot*. For his work on the latter, he received nominations for Emmy, Gold Derby Television, and Critic’s Choice awards.

Wong has appeared in more than 20 feature films, including *Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom*, *Jurassic World*, *Focus*, *The Space Between Us*, *Stay*, *The Salton Sea*, *Executive Decision*, *Seven Years in Tibet*, *Jurassic Park*, *Father of the Bride (1 & 2)*, and *The Freshman*. He can also be heard as the voice of Shang in the Disney animated films *Mulan* and *Mulan II*. He will next be seen in *Birdbox*.

Wong’s additional New York theater credits include *The Great Leap* at The Atlantic Theatre Company, *The Tempest*, *A Language of Their Own*, *As Thousands Cheer*, *Shanghai Moon*, and the Broadway revivals of the musicals *You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown* and Sondheim’s *Pacific Overtures* (the latter for which he received a Drama League nomination for distinguished performance). He produced and directed *The Yellow Wood* for the New York Musical Festival and Cindy Cheung’s *Speak Up Connie* for the All For One Theatre Festival, and co-wrote and directed *Alice Chan* for the La Jolla Playhouse POP Tour. He recently starred regionally in *The Orphan of Zhao* at La Jolla Playhouse and San Francisco’s A.C.T. In addition, he has starred in five productions of the one-man musical *Herringbone*, a project dear to his heart.

Wong published his first book, *Following Foo: The Electronic Adventures of the Chestnut Man* (Harper Entertainment), a memoir about the extremely premature birth of his son, in 2003.

Community service recognitions include those from the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, Asian AIDS Project, GLAAD, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Asian Arts Alliance, Association of Asian-Pacific American Artists, East/West Players, Second Generation Productions, Organization of Chinese Americans and APICHA. He sits on the boards of both the Actors Fund of America and Rosie's Theater Kids.

Wong holds an honorary M.F.A. from American Conservatory Theater.

Three-, four-, and five-play subscriptions are available and offer incredible savings, unparalleled access, exclusive benefits, and personalized customer service. Subscribers save as much as 50% off single-ticket prices. Students and educators are eligible to save up to half price on subscriptions, and senior discounts are available for certain series. A.C.T.'s competitive subscriber benefits include free ticket exchanges up to the day of your scheduled performance, guaranteed best seating, ticket insurance, access to convenient prepaid parking one block away from the theater, discounts for neighborhood restaurants, and the opportunity to subscribe to *Words on Plays*, A.C.T.'s in-depth theater guide for each show.

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