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Lea Salonga...

From PAGE B1

are Hok, Feng, Steve Terada, Andy Luo and Lydia Paek), Tim said: "You don't automatically think of Asians doing hip hop. Quest is definitely breaking stereotypes about the Asian male. Yes, Asian guys can dance well. Some Quest members used to be part of a group called sickstep, which performed at our Next Big Bang Theater conference in 2006. Quest also performed at our theater as part of a Disney diversity seminar in December 2008."

The program also features appearances by *Dancing with the Stars* judge Carrie Ann Inaba and actress Amy Hill and additional performances by Ethan Le Phong and TAIKOPROJECT. Emcees are Fil-Am Tamlyn Tomita (*The Joy Luck Club*, *Karate Kid II*) and Francois Chau of the hit TV series *Lost*.

Lea's ex
 EWP's season closer, an evening of one-act musicals, *The Last Five Years* and *Marry Me A Little*, shows that the theater world is such a small, small world. Cast in *The Last Five...* is Lea's ex-boyfriend, Michael K. Lee, who is now married to Kim Varhola. We hear that they have a kid. Kim was in the revival of *Flower Drum Song*, which starred Lea. And so was Jennifer Paz, who appears with Michael in *The Last...*

"It will be great to see Paz again!" said Lea, who first gained international acclaim for her portrayal of Kim in *Miss Saigon*. "I haven't seen her since she got engaged (to Ty Kelly)." Jennifer

has played Kim, too, in various productions. Last May, she won an Ovation award from the LA Stage Alliance for playing Kim in an LA area production of *Miss Saigon*.

Another Kim

The Lea Salonga/*Miss Saigon* connection does not end there. *Marry Me A Little* features Jennifer Hubilla, who played Kim in a touring production of Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schonberg's epic musical in the UK. "We seem to be working with a lot of Kims lately," Tim noted. "When we look for artistry and celebrity, particularly in vocal musical performances, there is an elite group of actresses who have been given an extraordinary opportunity — they have all played Kim. If this credit is on their resume, you know that they have ... the ability to wow you."

Tim pointed out another coincidence: "We also have two Michaels performing in each show," referring to Michael K. Lee and Michael Dalager. "So each show has a Jennifer and a Michael. Michael Dalager is half-Filipino from San Diego. Both Jennifers have played the powerhouse role of Kim, with Hubilla playing the role in London and Paz playing in productions across the United States. Both are amazing talents—and for these one-act musicals with only two persons in each, you have to have talent, artistry and charisma because the audience is watching you for over an hour."

Both shows have Fil-Am Marc Macalintal as musical director. Another Fil-Am, Jon Lawrence Rivera, directs *The Last...*

Tim acknowledged the contribution of Fil-Ams in EWP productions. "The Filipino musical talent has become an exceptional community of artists and we are glad to be part of raising the visibility of very talented performers," he said. *Marry Me...* and *The Last Five...*, goes onstage

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