



DEMAND PR

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**Rubicon Theatre of Ventura Announces First Show of
2022-2023 "Welcome Home" Season!**

**Ovation NAACP and Garland Award-Winner Chris Butler Stars in
TWILIGHT: LOS ANGELES, 1992**

by Anna Deavere Smith

Directed by Chris Butler and Jenny Sullivan

***Limited Engagement Opens on the 30th Anniversary of the Rodney King Verdict and
the L.A. Riots - Friday, April 29 at the Rubicon Theatre in Ventura!***

April 10, 2022 – Ventura, CA – **RUBICON THEATRE COMPANY**, Ventura’s non-profit professional theatre company, opens the company’s 2022-2023 Season on April 29 with an exclusive engagement of **TWILIGHT: LOS ANGELES, 1992** by **ANNA DEAVERE SMITH**. The production premieres on the 30th anniversary of the day the verdict was announced in an East Ventura County courtroom in the Rodney King Trial, triggering the LA. Riots - one of the largest social explosions of the 20th century. Lauded as a “masterpiece” on Broadway (*Newsweek*), the play goes directly to the heart of issues of race and class and is equal parts meticulously researched reportage and a stirring cry for reform.

Award-winning actor **CHRIS BUTLER**, whose credits include Broadway, leading roles with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and numerous television series, stars in the production, which is co-directed by Butler and **JENNY SULLIVAN**. **Rubicon Theatre is the only professional theatre in the world to produce this play on the 30th anniversary of this historic uprising.** **TWILIGHT: LOS ANGELES, 1992** begins previews on Wednesday, April 27; opens on Friday, April 29 at 8 p.m.; and runs through Sunday, May 15 at the Rubicon Theatre, 1006 E. Main Street in Ventura’s Downtown Cultural District. For tickets, go to www.rubicontheatre.org or call (805) 667-2900.

Background

One moment can change the course of history. On April 29, 1992, at 3:15 p.m., in Simi Valley, four police officers were acquitted of any wrongdoing after having been caught on video brutally beating and kicking Rodney King, an African-American motorist who had resisted arrest, long after he had been subdued. Within hours, South Central L.A. erupted in what has been described alternately as “the riots,” “the uprising,” and “the revolution.”

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Protestors blocked freeway traffic, attacked motorists, wrecked and looted numerous downtown stores and buildings and set hundreds of fires. More than 50 people were killed, more than 2,300 were injured. Thousands were arrested. Property damages totaled more than \$1 billion.

In the aftermath, playwright, scholar and actor Anna Deavere Smith interviewed hundreds of people to try to understand the complex issues that fueled the flames. She fused the varied accounts of what happened into an unforgettable theatrical experience that became ***TWILIGHT: LOS ANGELES, 1992***.

Says Rubicon Theatre Company Associate Artistic Director **STEPHANIE A. COLTRIN**, who serves as Executive Producer for the play, “Ms. Deavere Smith’s play is powerful, illuminating and moving, and we feel it a privilege and an awesome responsibility to tell this story at this time.”

“***TWILIGHT*** is a thrilling theatrical tour-de-force,” adds Rubicon Producing Artistic Director **KARYL LYNN BURNS**. “Chris has devoted himself to researching these characters and finding the humanity in each of them, regardless of their actions or choices. The production will have audience members on the edge of their seats and we hope it will provide an opportunity for healing and for reflection about where we have been, where we are now, and where we want to be as a community and a society.”

About the Playwright

ANNA DEAVERE SMITH (Playwright) is an actress, playwright, teacher, and author. She is credited with creating a new form of theatre, sometimes called “Verbatim Theatre” By looking at current events from multiple points of view, Smith's theatre combines the journalistic technique of interviewing her subjects with the art of interpreting their words through performance. In addition to ***TWILIGHT: LOS ANGELES, 1992***, Deavere Smith plays include *Fires in the Mirror*, *House Arrest*, and *Let Me Down Easy*. *Twilight: Los Angeles* was nominated for two Tony Awards. *Fires in the Mirror* was runner-up for the Pulitzer Prize. Her recent original work *Notes from the Field* looks at the vulnerability of youth, the criminal justice system, and contemporary activism. The *New York Times* named the stage version among The Best Theatre of 2016 and TIME Magazine called it one of the Top 10 Plays of the Year. HBO premiered the film version in February 2018. It was nominated for a Critics' Choice Award. In 2012, President Obama awarded Smith the National Endowment for the Humanities Medal. She is a recipient of the prestigious MacArthur Fellowship. Other awards include the prestigious 2013 Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize for achievement in the arts, the George Polk Career Award in Journalism, and the Ridenhour Courage Award. In 2015, she was named the Jefferson Lecturer, the nation's highest honor in the humanities. She has been given several honorary degrees including those from Yale, Juilliard, University of Pennsylvania, Smith College, and Spelman. Smith is also a television and film actress. Credits include such shows as Shonda Rhimes's new "untitled project", ABC's series “For the People” and “Blackish.” She also co-starred on Showtime's “Nurse Jackie” and was featured on the long-running series, “The West Wing.” Films include “The American President,” “Rachel Getting Married,” “Philadelphia,” “Dave,” “Rent,” and “Human Stain.” Smith is a Full Professor at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts where she founded the former Institute on the Arts and Civic Dialogue.

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About the Cast and Creative Team

CHRIS BUTLER (Co-Director/Actor) portrays 36 different characters in **TWILIGHT**. He most recently played Rayfield Moody in the television mini-series “Women of the Movement.” He played recurring characters on all seven seasons of CBS’s “The Good Wife” as well as its spin off “The Good Fight,” “Designated Survivor,” “True Blood,” “Major Crimes” and “24.” Butler has been a series regular on TNT’s “King and Maxwell” and several pilots and has guest-starred on more than 50 television shows and films. Chris made his Broadway debut as Noah in the Tony nominated production of *110 in the Shade* starring Audra McDonald. He won Ovation, NAACP and Garland Awards in Los Angeles for his work in the West Coast premiere of Dael Orlandermith’s *Yellowman* at The Fountain Theatre and *Stick Fly* at the Matrix Theatre. Chris spent four seasons with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival where he played the title role in *Othello* and Walter Lee in *A Raisin in the Sun*, among many others. For Rubicon, his appearances include Caesar in August Wilson’s *Gem of the Ocean* and McMurphy in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* (the latter directed by his *Twilight* Co-Director Jenny Sullivan). Other stage work includes South Coast Rep and The Old Globe. Originally from Charlotte, Butler received his B.A. in Dramatic Artist from UC North Carolina at Chapel Hill and his M.F.A. in acting from UC San Diego.

JENNY SULLIVAN (Co-Director) has vast experience directing one-person shows. Solo productions include *The Year of Magical Thinking* with Linda Purl, *I Am My Own Wife* (Indy Award) featuring John Tufts, *Jackie Unveiled* (with Saffron Burrows) at the Wallis Annenberg and the Off-Broadway run of *Wiesenthal* (both by Tom Dugan), and the Rubicon production of *Darrow* with James O’Neil (now touring). Other Rubicon credits include *The Gin Game* starring JoBeth Williams and Joe Spano, *The Baby Dance: Mixed, Women Beyond Borders*, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, *Our Town*, *Steel Magnolias* (Indy Award), *The Mystery of Irma Vep* (2012 Ovation Nomination for Direction), *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Indy Award), *Spit Like a Big Girl*, *You Can’t Take It With You*, *Hamlet* (Indy Award), *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, *Tuesdays with Morrie*, *Defying Gravity*, *Happy Days*, *Art* (Indy Award), *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Indy Award) with Susan Clark and Bonnie Franklin, *The Rainmaker* with Stephanie Zimbalist and John Bennett Perry, *The Little Foxes* with Linda Purl and *Old Wicked Songs* with Harold Gould and Joseph Fuqua, and her own *J for J* with Jeff Kober and John Ritter (also in Los Angeles at The Tiffany). Other stage credits include *The Dresser* with Len Cariou and Granville Van Dusen at The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, *Steel Magnolias* at Laguna Playhouse; *Baby Doll*, *Good People*, *Dublin Carol* (Indy Award), *The Lion in Winter* (Indy Award) at ETC, and work with Access Theatre San Jose Rep and Williamstown Theatre Festival (six seasons). Sullivan directed Nora and Delia Ephron’s *Love, Loss, and What I Wore* at The Geffen Playhouse; and *The Vagina Monologues* for the Canon and Coronet theatres. She directed the World Premiere of Jane Anderson’s *The Baby Dance* at the Pasadena Playhouse, which then moved to Williamstown Theatre Festival, Long Wharf Theatre (CT Critics’ Directing Award) and the Lucille Lortel Off-Broadway.

The award-winning design team for **TWILIGHT: LOS ANGELES, 1992** includes Set Designer **JOHN IACOVELLI**, Lighting Designer **BRIAN GALE**, Projections Designer **DAVID MURAKAMI**, Sound Designer **RANDALL TICO**, Costume Designer **ABRA FLORES**, and Prop Designer **KEVIN WILLIAMS**. The Executive Producer is **STEPHANIE A. COLTRIN**. **JESSIE VACCHIANO** is Production Stage Manager.

History of the Production

TWILIGHT: LOS ANGELES, 1992 was originally commissioned by Center Theatre Group. It premiered in Los Angeles at the Mark Taper Forum in May of 1993, receiving unanimous critical acclaim. The production opened on Broadway in April, 1994, running for 72 performances. **TWILIGHT** received Obie, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards and two Tony nominations.

Schedule and Pricing

TWILIGHT: LOS ANGELES, 1992 previews on Wednesday, April 27 and Thursday, April 28 at 7:00 p.m. Opening night is Friday, April 29 at 8:00 p.m. with red carpet arrivals, a step-and-repeat and a pre-show reception beginning at 7:00 p.m. The production runs through Sunday, May 15. Performances are Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. (followed by a talkback), Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.; Fridays at 8:00 p.m.; Saturdays at 2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. and Sundays at 2:00 p.m. Ticket prices range from \$30.00-\$69.50.

To purchase tickets for **TWILIGHT: LOS ANGELES, 1992** or the company's 2022-2023 Season, call the Rubicon at (805) 667-2900 or visit rubicontheatre.org. Rubicon Guest Services is located at 1006 E. Main Street (Laurel entrance), and is open from Noon to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and Sundays. Single tickets for each of the shows are also on sale and available via the box office or the company's website: www.rubicontheatre.org.

Season tickets include special savings, guaranteed seating, ticket insurance, free exchanges (with 72 hours' notice), and advance notice of special events. Flex passes are also available at a savings.

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About Rubicon Theatre Company

Rubicon Theatre Company has been described as "the rising star of the Southern California cultural constellation." The not-for-profit professional regional has reached more than 480,000 attendees and 45,000 students. Rubicon serves area residents and visitors with innovative productions of classic and contemporary plays, as well as a wide array of educational programs and events. Acclaimed by critics and industry professionals, the company has received the L.A. Drama Critics Margaret Harford Special Award for "Sustained Excellence," a Drama Desk Award for the Off-Broadway production of *The Best is Yet To Come* and has won more than 20 Ovation Awards from the L.A. Stage Alliance.

Just prior to the pandemic, Rubicon transferred three shows to New York (*Wiesenthal* – Outer Critics Circle and Drama Desk Award nominations; *Lonesome Traveler* – Outer Critics Circle and Drama Desk Award nominations; and *Daddy Long Legs* (Drama Desk Award)). Rubicon has welcomed a steady stream of high-profile national and international actors and directors, including Bruno and Odiseo Birchir, Susan Clark, Dana Delaney, Conchata Ferrell, Bonnie Franklin, Harold Gould, Joel Grey, Larry Hagman, Bill Irwin, Stacy Keach, Jack Lemmon, Amanda McBroom, Ted Neeley, Paul Provenza, Linda Purl, Rondi Reed, John Ritter, Joe Spano, Bruce Weitz, Lillias White and others. Company members are George Ball, Joseph Fuqua and Jenny Sullivan.

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***Twilight: Los Angeles* by Anna Deavere Smith on the 30th Anniversary of the L.A. Riots**

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Based in Ventura's Downtown Cultural District, just blocks from the Pacific Ocean, Rubicon resides in a 185-seat historic church built in the 1920s. In this renovated historic landmark, audience members are never further than 10 rows from the stage on the main floor. (The balcony, which seats twenty, is available for private parties or corporate groups.)

True to the company's name and the vision of artistic directors Karyl Lynn Burns and James O'Neil, Rubicon has created an environment where commitment and risk are encouraged, and where artists are nurtured and respected. As a result, the company has gained a reputation for invigorating interpretations of the classics and for supporting the development of new works. Rubicon presents at least one World Premiere each season, as well as readings of works-in-progress.

Deeply rooted in the region it serves, Rubicon offers extensive outreach programs, including daytime matinees for high school students, after-school and weekend programs for at-risk youth, and summer musical theatre, drama and technical camps. More than 48,000 students have benefited.

A board of directors of prominent social and civic leaders governs Rubicon under the leadership of Doug Halter. The company is also supported by an advisory group of regional ambassadors and a volunteer auxiliary with nearly 200 members.

For more information about Rubicon Theatre Company, or to purchase tickets, call (805) 667-2900 or go to www.rubicontheatre.org. The theatre is located at 1006 E. Main Street in Ventura's Downtown Cultural District.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Additional photos are currently available under Media on the Rubicon Theatre website. Interviews are available with actor and director Chris Butler and director Jenny Sullivan. To schedule interviews, please contact Publicist David Elzer at (818) 508-1754 davidelzer@me.com or Karyl Lynn Burns at (805) 667-2912, x 224.

CALENDAR LISTING

TWILIGHT: LOS ANGELES, 1992

by Anna Deavere Smith

Powerful, illuminating and moving, this “masterpiece” (*Newsweek*) looks at the L.A. Riots of 1992 (sometimes called the L.A. Uprising or Rebellion), through the eyes of 36 characters of different characters who shared their stories with creator Anna Deavere Smith. The production won Obie, Drama Desk, Theatre World and Outer Critics Circle Awards on Broadway. **The production premieres on the 30th anniversary of the day the verdict was announced in an East Ventura County courtroom in the Rodney King Trial,** triggering the LA. Riots - one of the largest social explosions of the 20th century. *Twilight* goes directly to the heart of issues of race and class and is equal parts meticulously researched reportage and a stirring cry for reform.

Starring Chris Butler

Directed by Chris Butler and Jenny Sullivan

Previews:

Wednesday, April 27 & Thursday, April 28 at 7:00 p.m.

Opens:

Friday, April 29 at 8:00 p.m. (the 30th Anniversary of the L.A. Riots)

Runs:

Friday, April 29– Sunday, May 15, 2022

Performances are Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. (Talkback following), Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.; Fridays at 8:00 p.m.; Saturdays at 2:00 p.m. & 8:00 p.m. and Sundays at 2:00 p.m.

Ticket Prices range from \$30.00 - \$79.50

Rubicon Theatre Company

1006 E. Main Street in Ventura (at Laurel)

For tickets – visit www.rubicontheatre.org or call (805) 667-2900

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