



*For Immediate Release*

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## MO'OLELO PERFORMING ARTS COMPANY ANNOUNCES

*self (the remix)*

**Previews Begin February 25, 2010**

**Press Opening: Friday, March 5, 2010, 7:30 p.m.**

**Mo'olelo at The 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue Theatre, San Diego**

**November 16, 2009 - San Diego, CA** – Critically-acclaimed Mo'olelo Performing Arts Company will present Storyteller/Performance Artist/Def Poetry Jam Performer **Robert Farid Karimi** in his hip hop play *self (the remix)* as its next full production, running from February 25 – March 21, 2010, at The 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue Theatre in Downtown San Diego. Press opening will take place on Friday, March 5, at 7:30 p.m.

Directed by **Ellen Sebastian Chang**, *self (the remix)* mixes together stories, movement, and music to tell the tale of an American child of Iranian and Guatemalan immigrants growing up in California in the 1970s and 1980s in the shadow of the Iranian Hostage Crisis. Robert Farid Karimi, accompanied by a soundscape created by **DJ D Double**, tells a "remixed" autobiographical tale of a boy struggling to learn about manhood, nationhood, and neighborhood with the voices and music of his environment helping him along.

"As Robert likes to say, "The play includes issues of mixed race, issues of Iran, and issues of Michael Jackson," laughs Mo'olelo's Artistic Director Seema Sueko. "We are extremely excited to present Robert's work here in San Diego. His writing is poignant and funny, and his onstage talent is immense as he transforms into 23 characters and takes the audience on a journey through schoolyards, churches and discos."

Known for selling out its productions, Mo'olelo is currently booking groups and selling advance ticket vouchers to *self (the remix)*. Information is available at [www.moolelo.net](http://www.moolelo.net) or 619-342-7395.

### **About Mo'olelo:**

Mo'olelo Performing Arts Company is a socially-conscious theatre organization dedicated to broadening the scope of San Diego's cultural environment by telling powerful stories that are as diverse as the islands of Hawaii, by paying Equity wages to local actors and developing environmentally-friendly theatre practices. A recipient of the Patté, San Diego Theatre Critics Circle, McDonald Playwriting and the Anti-Discrimination Awards, its mission is to create new works based on research within various communities, produce lesser-known works by master and contemporary playwrights, and educate youth. *Mo'olelo* means *story* in Hawaiian. To learn more, visit [www.moolelo.net](http://www.moolelo.net) or call 619-342-7395.

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## Artists' Bios

**Robert Farid Karimi (Writer & Performer)** - Robert Farid Karimi is an interdisciplinary artist/activist/poet, multimedia humorist whose Iranian/Guatemalan hybrid heritage serves as a point of departure for his artistic/spiritual/political reflections. His works include *self (the remix)*, *The Cooking Show con Karimi y Comrades*, *Shaving time*, and *the Approximate Value of a Foot Bubbler*.

Karimi has collaborated with artists such as Guillermo Gomez Peña and Laurie Carlos; performances include the Edge of The World, Reverend of the DiscoChurch, and McMuertos. His awards include a National Poetry Slam Championship, an Alliance of Artists' Communities Midwestern Voices & Visions Award, a Verve Spoken Word Grant, numerous NPN Creation Grants and residencies, and the first primarily performance artist to be invited to the Kohler Arts/Industry Visual Arts residency. As artistic director of Kaotic Good Productions, Karimi directs film/theater and teaches workshops about comedy, mixed race issues, performance, and cross-cultural spirituality and is a popular public speaker.

A San Francisco Bay Area native and a UCLA graduate, Karimi's work has been featured from Alaska to Australia. Karimi's writings have been published in *Callaloo*, *Latino Literature Today*, and *Total Chaos: The Art and the Aesthetics of Hip Hop* by Jeff Chang.

A 2009 Creative Capital grantee, he is currently developing new episodes of *The Cooking Show* dealing with diabetes in communities of color, writing a new non/fiction verse collection and working on a new show *Farid Mercury*, an exploration of Persian masculinity through the lens of Queen pop star Freddy Mercury.

**Ellen Sebastian Chang (Director)** – Ellen Sebastian Chang is a director, writer and a creative consultant. Ms. Sebastian Chang was a cofounder and artistic director of LIFE ON THE WATER, a national and internationally known presenting and producing organization at San Francisco's Fort Mason Center from 1986 through 1995.

Ms. Sebastian Chang opened two successful shows in 2009 with Dan Wolf, Tommy Shepard and One Ring Zero (Brooklyn) "STATELESS a hip hop vaudeville experience and "Luxury Items" with 2009 Goldie Winner dancer Monique Jenkinson aka Fauxnique.

She has been fortunate to work with some of the most interesting artists and projects in the Bay Area and beyond. She recently co-directed (with Margo Hall) the West Coast premiere of Eisa Davis' "Bulrusher"; an East Coast tour of KALI YUGA: The Age of Chaos, her 2006 collaboration with Gamelan Sekar Jaya, Indonesian poet Goenewan Mohammed and spoken word/B-boy dancer Rashidi Omari Byrd; premiered "Walkin' Talkin' Bill Hawkins", about the first black DJ in Cleveland, Ohio written and performed by William Allen Taylor at the Dobama Theater in Cleveland Ohio and Henry Street Settlement in NYC, NY

Ms. Sebastian Chang is a recipient of funding from the NEA, Ford, Rockefeller and LEF Foundations, Arts Matter of New York, Zellerbach Family Fund and the California Arts Council.