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DATEBOOK

Stanford goes Public

Playwright **David Henry Hwang** ("M. Butterfly," "Golden Child") will be offering a sneak peek at his next play at Stanford University next month, long before the Bay Area gets to see a full production. But that isn't the biggest part of the news, and it isn't the fact that Hwang will be playing the lead role in the three staged readings of his "Yellow Face" on Feb. 12, 15 and 16.

Hwang's weeklong Stanford residency — working on the play with director **Leigh Silverman**, actors from New York's **Public Theater** and Public Artistic Director **Oskar Eustis** — marks the beginning of a new long-term play development partnership between the Public and Stanford. The program, which will be announced today, is intended to foster the creation of new plays and enhance diversity in American theater leadership.

The project consists of residency programs, a co-commissioning plan and a fellowship program at the Public through Stanford's **Institute for Diversity in the Arts**.

Stanford graduate Hwang's "Yellow Face," which opens in May in Los Angeles, takes off from his real-life, news-making protests against the casting of a white actor as the male lead in "Miss Saigon." His writer character then finds out that something similar has happened with his own new play. Hwang will also deliver a lecture on playwriting Feb. 13. Eustis and playwright **Stan Lai** will appear in a public discussion on racial and cultural diversity in the arts Feb. 15. All events are free, but reservations are recommended. Call (650) 736-4127 or go to www.publictheater.stanford.edu.

— Robert Hurwitt