
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 10, 2012

**LEONARD MANZELLA's "CAGES"
EXTENDED BY POPULAR DEMAND
THE MATRIX THEATRE ~ JUNE 8, 2012**

Trapped by their minds they find freedom in Cages

(Hollywood, CA) **LDG Productions** and producer **Gary Ward** are honored to extend the run of the hard-hitting prison drama and the world premiere of **Cages**, a play written by Leonard Manzella and directed by Jon Lawrence Rivera on Friday, **June 8, 2012** at The Matrix Theatre, 7657 Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90046. **Cages** will run Thursdays through Saturdays at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday Matinees at 4:00 p.m. through July 15, 2012. (Note: Alternate cast performs each Thursday).

Based on a true story, **Cages** is a gritty look into the rehabilitation of mentally ill prisoners by a Psychologist, fighting his own demons, the failing California Prison system, and healing. **Cages** is an examination of power struggles, freedom and human commonality. **Manzella** maintains "*Cages is a play about a culture struggling to acknowledge its own shadow while desperately searching for a moral compass.*"

Playwright **Leonard Manzella** began his illustrious career in the Italian film industry, wherein he worked with Marcello Mastroianni, Laura Antonelli, Rossano Brazzi, Klaus Kinski, and other greats. Upon his return to the United States, Manzella trained as a psychodramatist under the tutelage of renowned psychologist-criminologist Dr. Lewis Yablonsky earning a Master's Degree in social work from USC. **Cages** is based upon Manzella's psychotherapy work treating mentally ill inmates in a California penal facility. Manzella developed **Cages** at the Robey Theatre Playwrights Lab.

Director **Jon Lawrence Rivera** is the founding artistic director of the Playwrights Arena and a few of his acclaimed productions include **Bonded** (2012 GLAAD Award nominee), **The Sonneteer**, **Calligraphy**, **Ruby**, **Tragically Rotund**, and **Oedipus El Rey**. Mr. Rivera has been nominated five times for the coveted Ovation Award.

The **Cages** Cast includes: Steve Apostolina, William Stanford Davis, Daniel V. Graulau, Sasha Higgins, Matt Kirkwood, Jemal McNeil, John Nielsen, and Wiley B. Oscar. Alternate cast members will perform each Thursday including: Daniel Favela-Gary, Leslie Jones, Jerrell Lee, Josie Martineaux, Jon Powell, Anthony Sherritt, Richard Lee Warren and Andrew James Villarreal.

Tickets are available on-line at <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/245933> regular admission is \$25; Students, Seniors and Veterans is \$20; Groups of 10 or more please contact Ana Rodriguez at 323.514.4456 or ana@cagestheplay.com. For additional information about **Cages** call 323.514.4456 or go to www.cagestheplay.com.

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**LEONARD MANZELLA's "CAGES"
EXTENDED BY POPULAR DEMAND
THE MATRIX THEATRE ~ JUNE 8, 2012**

WHAT: **Cages** ~ Extension of the World Premiere of a new play

WHO: Written by **Leonard Manzella**
Directed by **Jon Lawrence Rivera**
Presented by **LDG Productions**, a **Gary Ward** Production
Produced by **Gary Ward**

WHERE: **The Matrix Theatre**, 7657 Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90046

WHEN: Re-Opens Friday, **June 8, 2012** at 8:00 p.m. Performances: Thursdays,
Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 p.m. with Sunday Matinees at 4:00 p.m.
Closing: **July 15, 2012**

ADMISSION: \$10 - Preview (June 7 only)
\$25 - Regular Admission
\$20 - Students, Seniors (55 +), Veterans, and Union Members
Groups of 10 or more (contact Ana Rodriguez at 323.514.4456)

RESERVATIONS: (323) 514.4456 or ana@cagestheplay.com

ONLINE TICKETING: <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/245933>

WEBSITE: www.cagestheplay.com

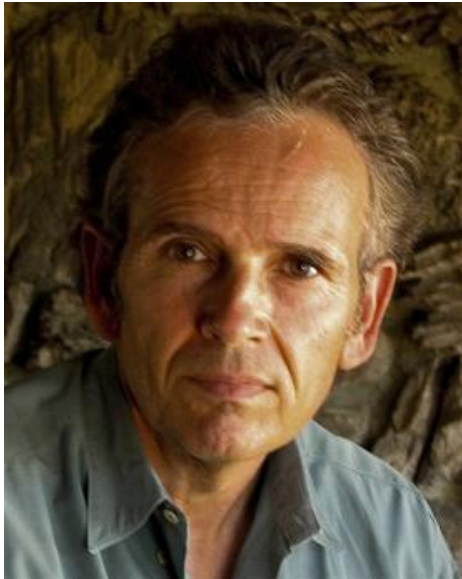
Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/cagesonstage

CAST: Steve Apostolina, William Stanford Davis, Daniel V. Graulau, Sasha Higgins, Matt Kirkwood, Jemal McNeil, John Nielsen, and Wiley B. Oscar.

Alternate Cast Members will perform every Thursday:

Daniel Favela-Gary, Leslie Jones, Jerrell Lee, Jon Powell, Richard Lee Warren and Andrew James Villarreal.

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LEONARD MANZELLA

Playwright

From 1968 to 1983, Leonard Manzella lived in Italy and worked as an actor in the Italian film industry. His career as a leading man spanned over thirty films, with actors such as Marcello Mastroianni, James Mason, Harvey Keitel, Laura Antonelli, Rossano Brazzi, Joseph Cotten, Woody Strode, Farrah Fawcett, Henry Silva, Lorne Green and Klaus Kinski. Filming took him around the world, sparking his interest in the cross-cultural issues that affect human behavior and how some cultures appear to be more violent than others.

Manzella returned to the U.S. in 1983 and trained as a psychodramatist under the tutelage of renowned psychologist-criminologist, Dr. Lewis Yablonsky. He returned to Italy with Yablonsky in 1984, funded by the Vatican to pilot an experimental program teaching recovering heroin addicts the benefits of using psychodrama to beat their addictions. Inspired by that work, he went on to earn a master's degree in social work from USC in 1989 and has been a practicing psychotherapist ever since.

From 1991 to 1994, Manzella directed a psychodrama program at Charter hospital in Thousand Oaks, where he treated men, women and children for a variety of conditions, including anxiety, depression, substance abuse, eating disorders, domestic violence and child abuse. In 1997, Manzella directed a psychodrama program at the San Luis Obispo County Jail, where he became well-known for his work treating substance abuse among inmates. In 1999, he designed and directed the AVERT project, an emotional intelligence program aimed at teaching correctional officers empathy to avert institutional violence. Over the next decade, he produced and directed three documentary training films based on his efforts to curtail abuses of power in schools, homeless shelters, correctional facilities and departments of social services. In 2003, he contracted with the California Department of Corrections and began working with mentally ill inmates at state prisons, where he gained a deeper understanding of the dynamics of violence within our correctional systems.

Manzella's latest endeavor, this time as an emerging playwright, is CAGES, based on his work treating mentally ill inmates held in Administrative Segregation at a California state prison.

Manzella extends special thanks to Ben Guillory, Aaron Henne, Dylan Southard and all the members of the Robey Theatre Playwrights Lab for their input and steadfast creative support in the development of CAGES.



JON LAWRENCE RIVERA

Director

Mr. Rivera is a five-time Ovation Award nominee. He is the founding artistic director of Playwrights' Arena in Los Angeles and his productions have garnered over 100 local and international awards.

His most recent directorial accomplishments include: UNMERCIFUL GOOD FORTUNE by Edwin Sanchez, BONDED by Donald Jolly, THE SONNETEER by Nick Salamone, BLOOD WEDDING by Federico Garcia Lorca, CALLIGRAPHY by Velina Hasu Houston, ROAD TO SAIGON at East West Players, JACQUES BREL at the Colony Theatre and OEDIPUS EL REY by Luis Alfaro at the Theatre @ Boston Court.

Other works include: THE LAST FIVE YEARS by Jason Robert Brown, MISS SAIGON by Schönberg/Boublil, RUBY, TRAGICALLY ROTUND by Boni B. Alvarez, LAWS OF SYMPATHY by Oliver Mayer, THE JOY LUCK CLUB by Susan Kim, SEA CHANGE by Nick Salamone (2009 LA Weekly Award), THE THIRD FROM THE LEFT by Jean Colonomos (2008 NY Fringe Festival Award), HILLARY AGONISTES by Nick Salome (2007 NY Fringe Festival Award) and DOGEATERS by Jessica Hagedorn.

PRODUCTION TEAM

- Playwright..... Leonard Manzella
- Director..... Jon Lawrence Rivera
- Executive Producer Gary Ward
- Producer..... Ana Rodriguez
- Associate Producer Jemal McNeil
- Scenic DesignRobert Selander
- Lighting Design Adam Blumenthal
- Fight Choreographer Edgar Landa
- Casting Director Raul Staggs
- Sound Design..... Bob Blackburn
- Costume Design..... Mylette Nora
- Press Agent.....Publicity4you
- Stage Manager.....Daniel Reano-Koven