

Crowded Fire Theater and Golden Thread Productions

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Contact: Bethany Herron (415) 523-0034
bethanyh@crowdedfire.org

TRAILBLAZING PARTNERSHIP RESULTS IN MULTIPLE WINS FOR TWO EXEMPLARY BAY AREA THEATRE COMPANIES

San Francisco Bay Area - In a theatre ecosystem dominated by a mindset of scarcity and competition, **Crowded Fire Theater and Golden Thread Productions**, two prominent Bay Area theaters are seeing positive results from their deep and multidimensional partnership.

Led by two women of color – artistic directors Mina Morita and Torange Yeghiazarian – both Crowded Fire and Golden Thread have gained critical acclaim and national recognition. The companies have amassed a combined 44 years of history, in part by investing in strategic partnerships that are instrumental in creating a more sustainable existence rooted in San Francisco.

Golden Thread and Crowded Fire first shared administrative and rehearsal space at Z Space in 2003 and have several resident artists in common. In 2016, the companies came together on a three-year lease for 1,100 square feet of office and rehearsal hall in the same building complex as the Potrero Stage, where they are both Companies in Residence. Sharing space every day, they discovered a deeper alignment and more shared values than they had expected. In 2018, the partners applied for and received a consulting grant with La Piana Consulting, supported by Mayor London Breed's Nonprofit Sustainability Initiative, to explore additional ways they could unite to maximize their resources and deepen their impact in delivering on their missions. The Nonprofit Sustainability Initiative is administered by San Francisco's Office of Economic and Workforce Development.

To date, the strategic partnership between Golden Thread and Crowded Fire has accomplished three major wins:

- Shared office and rehearsal space, leased through 2022;
- A major co-production on a US premiere slated for February - April 2020;
- Shared staff member: an Operations Associate starting in September 2019, partially funded by the Kenneth Rainin Foundation.

Separately, the companies could only offer patchwork, part-time employment for Operations staff; but together, they have created a unique full-time role, a rarity in the small theater world.

“Golden Thread is deeply committed to community partnerships,” says **Golden Thread Artistic Director Torange Yeghiazarian**: “I’m thrilled with the results we’re achieving in our work with Crowded Fire. It has required us to be transparent, trusting, and respectful of each company’s particulars while holding space for our shared vision for a vibrant theatre community.”

“This past year has been a year of openness for us,” says **Crowded Fire Artistic Director Mina Morita**, “as we actively work to shift the genetics of our theater community into a more inclusive, sharing culture. Our artistic communities have always been shaped this way – now, with this partnership and other similar ones, we aim to encourage this dynamic at every level of our organization.”

The companies will be sharing more details about the artistic co-production in the upcoming month.

COLLABORATING THEATERS’ MISSION STATEMENTS

Golden Thread Productions is the first American theatre company devoted to plays from or about the Middle East, defined broadly and inclusively. We produce passionate and provocative plays and are a developmental catalyst and vibrant artistic home to artists at various stages of their career. We bring the Middle East to the American stage, creating treasured cultural experiences for audiences of all ages and backgrounds. goldenthread.org

Crowded Fire Theater’s ensemble produces poetic, bold theater created by new and contemporary artists. We seek to engage our community by producing adventurous work, innovative in structure, which addresses the diverse political and social concerns of our audiences. crowdedfire.org

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