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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – November 20, 2019

## McCARTER ANNOUNCES NEW MUSICAL FOR THE 2020-2021 SEASON

***Bhangin' It**, a co-production with **La Jolla Playhouse**, is an exhilarating new musical set in the high stakes world of intercollegiate competitive Bhangra dance.*

PRINCETON, NJ: Musical theater returns to McCarter Theatre Center with the 2021 arrival of *Bhangin' It*, a large-scale uplifting new musical that will premiere in June 2021, following a production at La Jolla Playhouse in San Diego.

Brash, intoxicating, and joyous, *Bhangin' It* is a celebration of the traditions we inherit from yesterday and those we create for tomorrow. Intercollegiate Bhangra, a competitive “dance-off” of traditional Punjabi folk styles, is a high stakes game. Mary, a biracial college student, thinks she's got all the right moves on the Bengal Tigers Bhangra team. But to teammate Preeti, Mary is just not “Indian enough.” When Mary is abruptly booted off the Tigers, she and her roommate Sunita put together a team whose only criteria for joining is a desire to dance. With Nationals coming up, can this eclectic, ragtag group whip themselves into shape to take on the competition? Find out in this **brand new feel-good and dance-filled musical**.

*Bhangin' It* reinforces McCarter’s dedication to developing and debuting original work that resonates with contemporary audiences. Celebrating cultural influences seldom seen on the American stage, the show features timeless themes of love, joy, and acceptance.

*Bhangin' It* features a book written by 2018-2019 La Jolla Playhouse artists-in-residence **Mike Lew** and Bridgewater, NJ native **Rehana Lew Mirza** and music and lyrics by **Sam Willmott**. **Amy Anders Corcoran** will direct, having forged a significant track record of developing new musicals including the pre-Broadway, Broadway, and current national tours of *Escape to Margaritaville*. *Bhangin' It* was developed through the **Jerome Robbins Foundation** and [Project Springboard](#), and was the winner of the 2019 Richard Rodgers Award.

About this new endeavor, McCarter Managing Director Michael S. Rosenberg said, “As we look to the future for McCarter, I am thrilled to combine creative forces with these exciting young artists and our comrades at La Jolla Playhouse, to create something very special. This story is filled with youthful energy, fun, and fantastic dance from start to finish. We can’t wait to see it come to life on our stages.”

Casting, ticketing information, exact dates and additional projects for the 2020-2021 Season will be announced at a later date. Current McCarter Subscribers and Members will have first access to the best seats at the best prices.

**Mike Lew** (Co-Librettist) Previous collaborations with the La Jolla Playhouse include serving as the 2018/19 Artist-in-Residence and a commission for *The Colonialism Project* (both with Rehana Lew Mirza), and the west coast premiere of his play *Tiger Style!* (also at Olney, Huntington, and Alliance). His other plays include *Teenage Dick* (Ma-Yi at the Public, Donmar Warehouse, Woolly Mammoth, Artists Rep); *Bike America* (Ma-Yi, Alliance) and *microcrisis* (Ma-Yi, InterAct, Next Act). He and Ms. Lew Mirza are joint Mellon Foundation Playwrights-in-Residence at Ma-Yi Theater. Mike is a Dramatists Guild Council member, Tony voter, and New Dramatists resident. Honors: Lark Venturous and NYFA fellowships; PEN, Lanford Wilson, Helen Merrill, Heideman, and Keneda awards. Education: Juilliard, Yale.

**Rehana Lew Mirza's** (Co-Librettist) previous collaborations with La Jolla Playhouse include serving as the 2018/19 Artist-in-Residence and a commission for *The Colonialism Project* (both with Mike Lew). Her plays include: *Hatefuck* (2019 production at Colt Coeur and WP Theater; upcoming production at Round House in 2020); *A People's Guide to History in the Time of Here and Now* (Primary Stages commission; workshop production: AMDA); *Soldier X* (productions: Ma-Yi, Brooklyn College; 2015 Kilroys List; NYSCA/Lark commission); *Tomorrow, Inshallah* (Storyworks/HuffPost commission; production: Living Room Theater, Kansas City); *Neighborhood Watch* (NNPN/InterAct commission); and *Barriers* (productions: Desipina, Asian American Theater Company). Honors include: 2019 NYFA Fellow, Colt Coeur Company member, HBO Access Fellow, Lilly Award (Stacey Mindich "Go Write A Play"), and a TCG/New Georges Fellowship. She and Mike also share a Mellon Foundation National Playwright residency administered in partnership with Howlround at Ma-Yi Theater. M.F.A.: Columbia University; B.F.A.: NYU Tisch.

**Sam Willmott's** (Composer/Lyricist) projects include *Yo, Vikings!* and the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre's *Wake Up, Daisy!* (both with Marcus Stevens); the Emmy nominated HBO documentary *Song of Parkland, Standardized Testing – The Musical!!!!* and the mini-musical *Scarlet Takes a Tumble*. His written work has received the Kleban Prize, the Fred Ebb Award, a Jonathan Larson Grant, the ASCAP Foundation's Cole Porter and Harold Adamson Awards, MAC's John Wallowitch Award, and the Kennedy Center ACTF Musical Theater Award. He has written over 150 songs for the Korean English-language children's program, English Egg, and taught at Harvard University, Pace University's Musical Theater BFA, and Lincoln Center's Songwriting in Schools Program. [SamWillmott.com](http://SamWillmott.com).

**Amy Anders Corcoran** (Director) was the associate/resident director of *Escape to Margaritaville* for Christopher Ashley on the pre-Broadway tour and on Broadway, and directed the national tour which opened in Providence, RI in October. She also served as Mr. Ashley's Associate Director on Disney's *Freaky Friday*. Corcoran directs mostly new musicals, including the NYC off-Broadway and London premieres of *Unexpected Joy*. Her work has also been seen at Asolo Rep, Guthrie Theatre, Goodspeed, NAMT and American Conservatory Theater. Favorite directing credits include *21 Chump Street* (European premiere), *I Am My Own Wife* (NYC site-specific production), *Little Women*, *Smokey Joe's Café* and *CULT!*. Corcoran received the SDC Noël Coward Fellowship for Comedic Direction, mentored by Mark Rucker. A proud member of SDC, she holds a B.A. in Psychology with Honors from the University of Kansas and an M.F.A. in Directing from Penn State.

**McCarter Theatre Center:** Under the leadership of award-winning playwright and Artistic Director Emily Mann, Managing Director Michael S. Rosenberg, and Special Programming Director William W. Lockwood, McCarter's mission is to create world-class theater and present the finest artists for the community's engagement, education, and entertainment. Winner of the 1994 Tony Award® for Outstanding Regional Theatre, world premieres include Christopher Durang's *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* (2013 Tony® – Best Play); Tarell Alvin McCraney's *The Brother/Sister Plays*; Emily Mann's *Having Our Say*; and Danai Gurira's *The Convert*. Upcoming productions for 2019-2020 include Rachel Bonds' *Goodnight Nobody*; Anthony Shaffer's *Sleuth*; and Nathan Alan Davis' *The Refuge Plays*. McCarter brings artists from around the world to Princeton, including Andy Borowitz, The Moth, Gregory Porter, Roseanne Cash, and more. Education and outreach efforts serve tens of thousands through student matinees, in-school residencies, and adult classes. More at [mccarter.org](http://mccarter.org).

**La Jolla Playhouse** is a place where artists and audiences come together to create what's new and next in the American theatre, from Tony Award-winning productions, to imaginative programs for young audiences, to interactive experiences outside our theatre walls. Currently led by Tony Award winner Christopher Ashley, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse, and Managing Director Debby Buchholz, the Playhouse was founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire, and Mel Ferrer. Renowned for its development of new plays and musicals, as well as its biennial Without Walls (WOW) Festival, the Playhouse has mounted 103 world premieres, commissioned 52 new works, and sent 33 productions to Broadway—among them *Jersey Boys*, *The Who's Tommy*, *Memphis*, the currently-running hit musical *Come From Away*, and the upcoming *Diana*, set to open in March, 2020—garnering a total of 38 Tony Awards, plus the 1993 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. The Playhouse is also one of the few theatres in the country to annually commission and tour a brand new play for young audiences. More at [lajollaplayhouse.org](http://lajollaplayhouse.org).

### ***Bhangin' It***

Book by Mike Lew and Rehana Lew Mirza  
Music and Lyrics by Sam Willmott  
Directed by Amy Anders Corcoran  
Co-Production with La Jolla Playhouse  
June 2021 at McCarter Theatre Center

About the musical: *Bhangin' It* follows Mary, a biracial college student who thinks she's got all the right moves on the Bengal Tigers Bhangra team. But to teammate Preeti, Mary is just not "Indian enough." When Mary is abruptly booted off the Tigers, she and her roommate Sunita put together a team whose only criteria for joining is a desire to dance. With Nationals coming up, can Mary whip this eclectic, ragtag group into shape to take on the competition? Brash, intoxicating, and joyous, *Bhangin' It* is a celebration of the traditions we inherit from yesterday and those we create for tomorrow.

[Download creative team photos here.](#)

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