

**YOUNG STAR**

## **Bobby Garcia lends the West End some Eastern flair**

By Karen Bolilia (The Philippine Star) Updated May 07, 2010 12:00 AM



**Play by play:** Bobby Garcia makes the West End his new oyster.

MANILA, Philippines - It looks like the award winning, multi-hyphenate director extraordinaire Bobby Garcia will be switching addresses soon. He'll be packing his bags, boarding a plane, and jetting from Avenue Q to London's West End to direct the musical *Sacrifice*, after an Asian workshop production.

Produced by Toby Simkin and William Ong, written by Kenneth Clarke, Richard Daniels and Mark Troop, *Sacrifice* is the tale of Emperor Xuanzong of the prosperous Tang dynasty (618-907 AD) who brings Yang GuiFei, one of China's most beautiful women, into his court as a concubine. When they adopt China's greatest villain, the barbarian An Lushan, their fateful triumvirate creates China's greatest love story.

"I have known Bobby for years, and greatly respected his unique ability to retell a foreign story to Asian audiences with his Asian productions of *The King and I*, Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Cinderella* and *Hairspray*. I have been searching for a director with an Asian sensibility to tell our love story to western audiences. Bobby was the number one perfect choice," said Toby Simkin, lead producer.

Bobby Garcia has been serving up quality entertainment through his work in film, television, stage and live concert entertainment. Many of his shows have been staged throughout the Asian region, and his notable stage productions include *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Manila and Singapore), *Hairspray*, Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Cinderella* (Asia tour), *Dogeaters*, *Avenue Q* (Manila and Singapore), *The King and I* (Asia tour), Disney's *Beauty and The Beast*, *Baby*, *Urinetown*, *Dreamgirls*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Proof*, *Tick,Tick...Boom!*, *Hedwig and The Angry Inch*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *How I Learned to Drive* and *Rent* (Manila and Singapore). Concerts and TV Specials include *Lea Salonga: Your Songs*, *Lea Salonga: The Broadway Concert*, *Night of the Champions*, *The Prince of Pop* and *The Comedy Concert Queen*, *Lea Salonga: Songs From Home*, *Erik Santos Solo at the Coliseum* and *Lea Salonga: Home For Christmas*. He was also associate director for *Miss Saigon* and Hong Kong Disneyland's first show director opening the park in 2005. Upcoming and future projects include the Broadway-bound musical *Rue McClanahan's My First Five Husbands*, the US National Tour of *Cinderella*, *Xanadu* and *A Little Night Music* in Manila and Singapore.

Having a western team write the Chinese classic as *Sacrifice* certainly gives the upcoming project a fresh perspective and Bobby Garcia has been working with the authors for the past couple of months, developing the musical structure and characters in preparation for its London opening. A new demo recording which will be made available on the website in the summer of 2010 is in the works, and show dates for both the Asian workshop production and London opening will be announced on their website.

With all these projects lined up for Bobby Garcia, it seem like the phrase "All the world's a stage" has become a reality.

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