

THEATREWORKS SILICON VALLEY PRESENTS
WORLD PREMIERE

The Employee Dharma Handbook

By Geetha Reddy

Directed by Snehal Desai

A Kurjan/Butler Commission

July 8 – August 2, 2026 (opening night: Saturday, July 11)

LUCIE STERN THEATRE, PALO ALTO

PALO ALTO, CA (11 June 2026) — TheatreWorks Silicon Valley kicks off Season 56 with the World Premiere of *The Employee Dharma Handbook* by Geetha Reddy (*Safe House*, *Mahābhārata*). A bold, funny, and enlightening new work, this scintillating premiere was a favorite at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley’s 2025 New Works Festival and is a recipient of TheatreWorks’ Kurjan/Butler commission. Set at a Silicon Valley aerospace company, HR executive Val investigates a potential staffing issue amongst the lead engineers, suspecting sexism. She instead encounters simmering tensions of ancient origins amongst the company’s Indian immigrant employees bubbling over and threatening to derail the company’s upcoming rocket launch. Center Theatre Group’s Brindell & Milton Gottlieb Artistic Director **Snehal Desai** directs this gripping investigation of identity and desire, which features **Megan Suri** (Netflix’s “Never Have I Ever”), **Kapil Talwalkar** (Peacock’s “The ‘Burbs,” NBC’s “Zoey’s Extraordinary Playlist,” NBC’s “Night Court”), **Kunal Dudheker** (20th Century Studios’ *Ad Astra*, Marvel Studios’ *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings*), **Kathryn Smith-McGlynn** (20th Century Studios’ *Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials*), and **Ranjita Chakravarty** (Netflix’s “Never Have I Ever”). *The Employee Dharma Handbook* will perform **July 8 – August 2, 2026** (press opening: July 11) at Lucie Stern Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Single tickets (\$54-\$104, pricing inclusive of fees) and subscriptions to Season 56 are currently available. For more information the public may visit TheatreWorks.org or call **877-662-8978**.

“**Geetha Reddy** was one of the first artists commissioned through TheatreWorks Silicon Valley’s Kurjan/Butler commissions,” said TheatreWorks Artistic Director **Giovanna Sardelli**. “She is an extraordinary writer, and we are thrilled to support her. When she shared *The Employee Dharma Handbook* with us, and we in turn presented it to our audience as part of our New Works Festival last year, we knew she had written something bold and exciting. It’s a fantastic, multilayered story perfect for us and for our community.”

“*The Employee Dharma Handbook* is entirely a product of the TheatreWorks New Works development process,” said playwright Geetha Reddy. “A Kurjan/Butler commission, I began writing the play as part of the inaugural Susan Fairbrook Core Writers Group and developed it during TheatreWorks’ New Works Festival. This play is a Kafkaesque exploration of what happens when the codes of an ancient culture clash with the rules of corporate America.”

TheatreWorks is committed to creating an environment that is accessible for all audiences in its community. In collaboration with Gravity Access Services, TheatreWorks will offer audio descriptions to assist patrons who are visually impaired at the performance **1:00pm Sunday, July 19** (to utilize audio description, patrons should pre-register at **877-662-8978** after purchasing tickets). American Sign Language interpretation will be available for the performance **7:30pm Thursday, July 23** and open captioning (a screen displaying all dialogue and a description of sound effects) will be offered for the performance **1:00pm Sunday, July 26**. Assistive listening devices are offered at every performance with no advance registration required.

TheatreWorks will host a Backstage Banter pre-show conversation with artists from **6:15-6:45pm Thursday, July 9** and will hold post-show discussions with the cast following the **7:30pm Wednesday, July 15; 7:30pm Wednesday, July 22; and 7:30pm Wednesday, July 29** performances.

Director Desai has assembled a talented cast for this World Premiere. **Megan Suri** makes her TheatreWorks debut as Leela, an engineer. Suri was featured as Aneesa in Netflix’s “Never Have

I Ever,” created by Mindy Kaling and Lang Fisher. Other film/TV credits include New Line Cinema/Warner Bros. Pictures’ *Companion*, Sony Pictures Entertainment’s *Missing*, Netflix’s “Atypical,” Neon’s *It Lives Inside*, MarVista Entertainment’s “The MisEducation of Bindu,” Peacock’s “Poker Face,” Netflix’s “13 Reasons Why,” ABC’s “Fresh Off the Boat,” ABC’s “Modern Family,” ABC’s “How to Get Away with Murder,” Fox’s “Bones,” and New Line Cinema’s *Valentine’s Day*.

Kapil Talwalkar makes his TheatreWorks debut as Krish, the mission manager. Talwalkar was featured as Tobin in NBC’s “Zoey’s Extraordinary Playlist,” Naveen in Peacock’s “The ‘Burbs,” Neil in NBC’s “Night Court,” and Dev in CW’s “Charmed.” His TV/film credits also include Roku’s *Zoey’s Extraordinary Christmas*, ABC’s “Station 19,” Apple TV’s “Maximum Pleasure Guaranteed,” Nickelodeon’s “The Loud House,” and ABC’s “Home Economics.” His stage performances include *Twelfth Night* at The Public Theater’s Free Shakespeare in the Park, which was broadcast in PBS’ “Great Performances” series, and productions at East West Players, Odyssey Theatre, and Rogue Machine.

Kunal Dudheker makes his TheatreWorks debut as Baasu, an engineer who receives a promotion. Dudheker’s TV/film credits include Marvel Studios’ *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings*, HBO’s “Silicon Valley,” Apple TV’s “Life by Ella,” FX’s “Better Things,” HBO’s “Hacks,” Pixar Animation Studios/Disney+’s “Dream Productions,” 20th Century Studios’ *Ad Astra*, CW’s “Crazy Ex Girlfriend,” CBS’ “The Big Bang Theory,” and Fox’s “New Girl.” He performs regularly at Upright Citizens Brigade and various comedy venues.

Kathryn Smith-McGlynn makes her TheatreWorks mainstage debut as Val, a concerned HR manager. Smith-McGlynn played this role in TheatreWorks’ 2025 New Works Festival reading. Her work includes performances in theatre, television, film, and voiceover. Her TV/film credits include co-starring as Dr. Crawford in the 20th Century Studios film *Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials* and roles in Universal Pictures’ *The Best Man*, Netflix’s “Pulse,” Fox’s “Deputy,” AMC’s “Better Call Saul,” ABC’s “Grey’s Anatomy,” NBC’s “Friday Night Lights,” Fox’s “The Cleaning Lady,” and Amazon Prime Studios’ “Hysteria.” She has acted onstage at American

Conservatory Theater, The Old Globe, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Capital Stage Company, Marin Shakespeare Company, San Jose Stage Company, and B Street Theatre Company.

Ranjita Chakravarty makes her TheatreWorks mainstage debut as CK, the chief technology officer. She played this role in TheatreWorks' 2025 New Works Festival reading. Chakravarty was featured as Nirmala on Netflix's "Never Have I Ever" and was seen in Netflix's "Running Point." Her film credits include *Perfect Mismatch* opposite Bollywood legend Anupam Kher, along with many independent shorts and feature films. She has performed and directed productions with Naatak, Bay Area Drama Company, and EnActe Arts. She participated in readings with National New Play Network's New Plays Festival and Ashland New Plays Festival. She retired in May 2025 as Director of Internal Audit at Stanford University, concluding a distinguished 27-year career in higher education while continuing to pursue her lifelong passion for theatre and performance.

The Employee Dharma Handbook features direction by **Snehal Desai**, scenic design by **Wilson Chin**, costume design by **Lisa Misako Claybaugh**, lighting design by **Amith Chandrashaker**, and sound design by **Erin Bednarz**. **Miller Liberatore** is assistant director, **Ely Sonny Orquiza** serves as dramaturg, **Sukanya Chakrabarti** serves as cultural consultant, **Vaishnavi Sridhar** serves as Telugu coach, and **Judith Nihei** is artist counselor. **Nick Carvalho** is stage manager with **Emily Anderson Wolf** as assistant stage manager.

Geetha Reddy (Playwright) is a playwright and filmmaker working in the Bay Area. Her play *The Employee Dharma Handbook* was commissioned by TheatreWorks and included in the 2025 TheatreWorks New Works Festival. Other plays include *Mahābhārata* (Oakland Theatre Project), *Far, Far Better Things* (Shotgun Players/ TheatreFirst), *Hela* (with Lauren Gunderson, TheatreFirst), *Safe House* (San Francisco Playhouse), and *Blastosphere* (with Aaron Loeb, CentralWorks). Reddy's plays *Me Given You*, *Girl in a Box*, and *On a Wonderverse* were part of the Playwrights Foundation's "In the Rough" reading series. She has been commissioned by TheatreWorks, San Francisco Playhouse, Oakland Theatre Project, Shotgun Players, Crowded Fire Theater, the Gerbode Foundation, and PlayGround. Reddy is a member of the Dramatists

Guild and an alumna Resident Playwright at the Playwrights Foundation.

Snehal Desai is the Artistic Director of Center Theatre Group. Previously, he served as Producing Artistic Director of East West Players. A Soros Fellow and recipient of the Tanne Award, he was a member of the inaugural cohorts of the Theatre Communications Group SPARK Leadership Program and the Drama League Classical Directing Fellowship. Select directing credits include *Here Lies Love*, *American Idiot* (with Deaf West Theatre), *Allegiance*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Assassins*, and *A Nice Indian Boy*. He currently serves on the board of National Alliance for Musical Theatre.

TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, led by Artistic Director **Giovanna Sardelli** and Executive Director **Phil Santora**, presents a wide variety of contemporary plays and musicals and revitalizes great works of the past. Founded in 1970 by **Robert Kelley**, TheatreWorks has grown from a truly original Silicon Valley start-up to become one of the nation's leading professional non-profit theatre companies. TheatreWorks was honored as the recipient of the 2019 Regional Theatre Tony Award. TheatreWorks champions new work, offering artists support and a creative home as they develop new stories for the American theatre. Offstage, TheatreWorks' arts education programs in local schools and arts engagement programs in Silicon Valley neighborhoods uplift its audiences and strengthen community bonds. Onstage and off, TheatreWorks welcomes the mosaic of people that embody the Bay Area and beyond, celebrating the transformative power of theatre to ignite imagination, inspire conversation, and enliven souls.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: **TheatreWorks Silicon Valley** kicks off Season 56 with the World Premiere of *The Employee Dharma Handbook* by **Geetha Reddy** (*Safe House*, *Mahābhārata*). A bold, funny, and enlightening new work, this scintillating premiere was a favorite at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's 2025 New Works Festival and is a recipient of TheatreWorks' Kurjan/Butler commission. Set at a Silicon Valley aerospace company, HR executive Val investigates a potential staffing issue amongst the lead engineers, suspecting sexism. She instead encounters simmering tensions of ancient origins amongst the company's Indian immigrant employees bubbling over and threatening to derail the company's

upcoming rocket launch. Center Theatre Group’s Brindell & Milton Gottlieb Director **Snehal Desai** directs this gripping investigation of identity and desire, which features **Megan Suri** (Netflix’s “Never Have I Ever”), **Kapil Talwalkar** (Peacock’s “The ‘Burbs,” NBC’s “Zoey’s Extraordinary Playlist,” NBC’s “Night Court”), **Kunal Dudheker** (20th Century Studios’ *Ad Astra*, Marvel Studios’ *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings*), **Kathryn Smith-McGlynn** (20th Century Studios’ *Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials*), and **Ranjita Chakravarty** (Netflix’s “Never Have I Ever”).

WHEN: Previews: Wednesday, July 8 – Friday, July 10, 2026
Opening: 7:30pm Saturday, July 11, 2026
Closes: Sunday, August 2, 2026

SHOWS: Tuesdays: 7:30pm
Wednesdays: 2:00pm, 7:30pm
Thursdays & Fridays: 7:30pm
Saturdays: 2:00pm & 7:30pm
Sundays: 1:00pm & 6:00pm
(Note new times)

ACCESS: **Audio Description:** 1:00pm Sunday, July 19, 2026
Please register in advance, as service includes a pre-show talk 30 minutes before the performance.
ASL Interpretation: 7:30pm Thursday, July 23, 2026
Open Captioning: 1:00pm Sunday, July 26, 2026
Assistive Listening Devices available at every performance

EVENTS: **Backstage Banter pre-show conversation:** 6:15pm Thursday, July 9, 2026
Post-show discussions with cast: 7:30pm Wednesday, July 15, 2026; 7:30pm Wednesday, July 22, 2026; 7:30pm Wednesday, July 29, 2026

WHERE: **Lucie Stern Theatre**, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto, CA

TICKETS: Single tickets (\$54-\$104) and subscriptions to TheatreWorks Silicon Valley’s Season 56 are currently available. Pricing inclusive of fees and subject to change.

INFO: For information visit theatreworks.org or call **877-662-8978**

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PRESS: Contact Lauren Goldfarb, Carla Befera & Co., lauren@cb-pr.com

PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available:
<https://cbpr.co/press/employeedharmahandbook>