



THEATER MU presents

MAN OF GOD

by **ANNA OUYANG MOENCH**

directed by **KATIE BRADLEY**

FEB 16 - MAR 6, 2022



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MAN OF GOD

by **ANNA OUYANG MOENCH**
directed by **KATIE BRADLEY**

CAST

Jen	LOUISA DARR
Samantha	SUZIE JUUL *
Kyung-Hwa	JANET SCANLON
Mimi	DEXIENG "DAE" YANG
Pastor	RICH REMEDIOS *
Jen, Kyung-Hwa, Mimi, Samantha (understudy)	MICHI LEE
Pastor (understudy)	SONG KIM

PRODUCTION TEAM

Stage Manager	LYNDSEY R. HARTER *^
Assistant Stage Manager	SUNNY THAO
Asst. Stage Manager, Wed. matinees	AJAH WILLIAMS
Scenic Designer	SARAH BAHR
Scenic Design Assistant	ALICE ENDO
Costume Designer	KHAMPHIAN VANG
Lighting Designer	WU CHEN KHOO
Lighting Design Assistant	MAGS SCANLON
Sound Designer and Composer	KATHARINE HOROWITZ
Sound Design Assistant	YUNZHU "JESSICA" CHEN
Properties Designer	KENJI SHOEMAKER
Dramaturg	JANE PEÑA
Fight Choreographer	ANNIE ENNEKING
Fight Assistant	SOPHINA SAGGAU
Cultural Consultant	SAYMOUKDA DUANGPHOUXAY
	VONGSAY
Production Manager	DAVID PISA
Technical Director	JOHN LUTZ
Head Electrician	JEREMY ELLARBY
Sound Board Operator	RICHARD GRAHAM
COVID-19 Safety Coordinator	STERLING MILLER
Wardrobe	ANGIE VO
ASL Interpreters	MICAH JANE DRAEGER
	ROSALINDA ESTRADA-ALVAREZ

Electricians: **DANTE BENJERDES, ALICE ENDO, PAUL EPTON, NICK FETTING, ANDY GLISCHINSKI, MAGS SCANLON**

Set Construction: **WHITLEY COBB** (carpenter), **TYLER KROHN** (carpenter), **ELY MATTSON** (painter)

Production Understudies: **AJAH WILLIAMS** (stage manager/assistant stage manager), **YUNZHU "JESSICA" CHEN** (sound board), **BRANDON SIECK** (wardrobe)

[^] fight captain

* member of the Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

Cover, from upper left, clockwise: Janet Scanlon, Suzie Juul, Dexieng Yang, Rich Remedios. Not pictured: Louisa Darr. Photo by Rich Ryan.

PLAY INFORMATION

SYNOPSIS: During a mission trip to Bangkok, the four members of a Korean Christian girls' youth group discover that their pastor has hidden a camera in their hotel bathroom. As they struggle to regain control, their communal rage and disillusionment fuel violent revenge fantasies.

Man of God was developed as part of the Martha Heasley Cox Virgin Play Festival at Magic Theatre in San Francisco under artistic director Loretta Greco.

RUN TIME: 90 minutes, no intermission.

CONTENT WARNING: Dramatized fighting and references to sexual abuse, eating disorders, drug use, and paedophilia.

FIND OUR QUIET SPACE: If you should need to exit the production at any point, there is a designated quiet space in our lobby for you to rest and find resources. This space is intended for patrons who need to take a break from sensory or emotional stimuli.

COVID-19 POLICIES: Thank you for providing your proof of COVID vaccination or negative COVID test result at the door! We ask you to continue wearing your mask throughout the theater, even when the house lights go down. While we have reduced audience capacity, there will be extra chairs set out for you to be able to socially distance.

SPECIAL THANKS

David Horn, Dr. Zeke McKinney, Roberta Pisa, Kim Sherva (MS, LAMFT) of Edges Wellness Center LLC, Tony Stoeri, Pheng Thao and ManForward, Mason Tyer, Dr. Alyssa Kaying Vang and Vanguard Mental Health & Wellness Clinic, Sadie Ward, Jessie Ware, Nancy Wong and Asian Women United of Minnesota, Children's Theatre Company, Jungle Theater, Pillsbury House Theatre, Ted Mann Concert Hall, University of Minnesota Opera, Walking Shadow Theatre Company

PERFORMANCE VENUE

Mixed Blood Theatre is a social justice organization that has used theater to disrupt injustice since 1976. The theater company is committed to catalyzing action and change through art, and its work is guided by deep community engagement and rooted in radical hospitality.

A NOTE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR...

Thank you for joining us during this special time for Theater Mu, as we return to in-person theater for the first time in over two years. Since we were last together, we've been grateful to be in many a virtual space with you. Yet nothing can replace the sharing of energy and emotion when the audience and the artists connect and imagine in the same house together.

As we at Mu move from infinite virtual space to one small hotel room in *Man of God*, playwright Anna Ouyang Moench deconstructs our notions of space and safety as four high school girls discover a hidden video camera in their hotel bathroom. In this feminist thriller and dark comedy, Moench confronts the power of the male gaze and what society has done to perpetuate it. Is justice possible? How can the girls find voice? What is their agency?

Man of God is a #MeToo story, but it's also an Asian American one. Underneath its universality is a specificity that forces us to scrutinize age-old views of Asian American women and how those stereotypes affect girls and impact them through adulthood. The pandemic and the rise of anti-AAPI violence, including last March's Atlanta murders, have placed even more urgency on these issues. Women reported nearly 70% of all anti-Asian hate crimes in 2020, and at least one in five AAPI women experience intimate partner violence.

So as the girls in *Man of God* struggle to find their voice, the world too searches for answers. How can we finally find justice in the 21st century? What is the path to long-lasting change? Will equity prevail?

Even after all this time, these questions persist. Yet we at Mu believe stories hold power. And through that work, we're amplifying and celebrating the voice of Asian American women. For the first time in our history, we're being led by two Asian American women. Our staff and the *Man of God* company are primarily artists of underrepresented genders. And backstage, we're nurturing the next generation of AAPI directors, designers, and dramaturgs, most of whom are women.

Thank you to all the artists who so courageously stepped into this brave new world with us to tell this sometimes difficult story. And thanks to all of you for joining us during this remarkable time.



LILY TUNG CRYSTAL



Lily Tung Crystal, Lyndsey R. Harter,
and Katie Bradley in rehearsal



A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR...

With *Man of God*, I was really interested in exploring this concept of safe space and what happens emotionally and physically to someone when that space is no longer safe. Even before pre-production work had begun with the designers, something I kept thinking about in my mind was sitting in this nice, cozy room and suddenly, you turn on the UV light and see all of the germs everywhere and how unnerving that is. How jarring that is.

So, with trauma and abuse, what happens to your senses when your reality is no longer what you thought it was? Do the sounds from the street become more ominous? Do the shadows become larger? Do you cling to the person next to you or do you start to distrust them, too? And to top it all off, you're also a teenage person who's just trying to survive high school and growing pains and might not have the vocabulary yet for something so mature.

In *Man of God*, we're watching these young women lose something that was secure and constant in their lives and what that loss does to their minds and bodies. Trauma manifests itself in people in so many different ways, and what this play does so well is examine how complex and multi-faceted this processing of trauma can be in these four young women.

KATIE BRADLEY

CAST



LOUISA DARR (JEN)

Louisa (she/her) is ecstatic to join the cast of *Man of God* in her first production at Theater Mu as Jen! Currently a senior at Edina High School, Louisa has performed in several theaters throughout

the Twin Cities such as the Guthrie Theater, Children's Theatre Company, Theatre in the Round, and Shakespearean Youth Theatre Company. Recently named a triple threat finalist through the Minnesota Spotlight program, she would also like to thank her amazing family for their unrelenting support!



SUZIE JUUL * (SAMANTHA)

Suzie (she/her) is so excited to be working with Mu again! Other credits include: *The Music Man* (Mrs. Squires) and *Grease* (Jan) at Chanhassen Dinner Theatres; *The Sound of Music* (Liesl U/S), *Pirates of*

Penzance (Mabel U/S), *A Christmas Story*, and two Cabarets at the Ordway; *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* (Eugenia D'Ysquith) at Old Log; *Reboot* (Bernice) and *Marie Antoinette* (Yolande Polignac) at Walking Shadow; *A Little Night Music* (Anne), *Into the Woods* (Little Red Riding Hood), and *Little Shop of Horrors* (Chiffon) at Theater Mu. Suzie is a graduate of Augsburg University. "Thank you Mom and Dad for your love and support."



RICH REMEDIOS * (PASTOR)

Rich (he/him) is a Minneapolis-based actor, director, and teacher. His acting credits include Broadway productions of *An Inspector Calls* and *Love! Valour! Compassion!*

He has also performed at various theaters in the Twin Cities and around the country. Film and television work include *The Public Domain*, *To Say Goodbye*, *Drop Dead Diva*, and recurring roles on the daytime dramas *All My Children* and *As the World Turns*. Directing credits include *The Pillowman* for Theatre Coup d'Etat and the world premiere *Trust* at the Lab Theater. He was associate director for *Charles Frances Chan...*, *Today Is My Birthday*, and *You Shall Hear Me* for Theater Mu. He teaches all levels of acting at Augsburg University, Mu Training Institute, and in his studio Twin Cities Actor Training.



JANET SCANLON (KYUNG-HWA)

Janet (she/they) is delighted to be returning to Theater Mu. She recently graduated from the University of Minnesota in human physiology and is grateful to participate (safely) in theatre during COVID. Acting is truly her passion and her way of honoring herself and all others involved.



DEXIENG "DAE" YANG (MIMI)

Dexieng (she/her) is a Hmong American actress and teaching artist in the Twin Cities that graduated from Augsburg University, majoring in theatre with

concentrations in playwriting, dramaturgy, and directing. Dexieng has worked with Theater Mu in *The Korean Drama Addict's Guide to Losing Your Virginity* and *The Last Firefly*, and she has been an active participant in Theater Mu's Training Institute. Her other works include *Neighbors* at History Theatre and *Shul* at Six Points Theater. She is currently a company member of *Breaking Ice* with Pillsbury House Theatre.



SONG KIM (PASTOR U/S)

Song (he/him) grew up in Portland, Oregon, and has worked in different capacities with various companies in the Twin Cities and elsewhere. He has performed with Nimbus, Theater Mu,

History Theatre, and most recently appeared in Full Circle Theater Company's *The Empathy Project* at Park Square Theatre.



MICHI LEE (GIRLS U/S)

Michi (she/her) is overjoyed to be making her Theater Mu debut! She holds a BFA in musical theatre from Viterbo University. Her previous acting credits include: #7 in *The Wolves*, Spider in *James and*

the Giant Peach, the Ghost of Christmas Present in *A Christmas Carol*. When not performing, you can find her working as a vocal, piano, and musical theater instructor at Spark School of Music in Osseo. She would like to thank everyone at Theater Mu for providing a safe space for Asian American stories to be told. She would also like to thank her fiancé and two dogs for their unconditional love and support.

CREATIVE TEAM



ANNA OUYANG MOENCH

(she/her) is an award-winning playwright and screenwriter. Her plays include *Mothers*, *Man of God*, *Birds of North America*, and *Sin Eaters*. Her work has been produced at the Public Theater, Geffen Playhouse, the Playwrights Realm, East West Players, InterAct Theater, and many others. She has received fellowships from the New York Foundation of the Arts, the Jerome Foundation, and the Van Lier Foundation, and is an alum of UCSD's Playwriting MFA, the Public's Emerging Writers Group, EST's Youngblood, and Wesleyan University. Anna writes for *Severance*, coming to Apple TV+ on Feb 18, 2022.



KATIE BRADLEY (DIRECTOR)

Katie (she/her) makes her mainstage directing debut with *Man of God*. Previously, she has assistant directed at the Guthrie Theater (*Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*),

associate directed at Theater Mu (*peerless*), and directed a variety of play workshops and readings throughout the Twin Cities. Most of her professional career has been spent on the "other side of the table," as an actor. Based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, she has acted in several theaters around the country including the Guthrie Theater, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Indiana Repertory Theatre, and Wallis Annenberg

Center in Los Angeles. She has also performed in numerous productions at Theater Mu.



DAVID PISA (PRODUCTION MANAGER)

David (he/him) is excited to debut with Theater Mu as *Man of God's* production manager. David is the executive director and a founding member of Walking Shadow Theatre Company, where he

has served as production manager for more than 50 productions. David has worked as backstage crew and follow-spot operator at Children's Theatre Company since 2000, where he was the IATSE union steward for six years. He has been a contributing writer for Technicians for Change, a website whose purpose is to educate, connect, and empower entertainment technicians on workers' rights and protections including reasonable pay, safer practices, and legal worker classification. David is also a puzzle and game designer. He developed original, large-scale puzzles for Walking Shadow's immersive plays *1926 Pleasant*, *Saboteur*, *Cabal*, and *Reboot*. He created the award-winning local escape room UTOPIA, and has designed day-long, week-long, and one-room treasure hunts for various organizations and private commissions.



LYNDSEY R. HARTER * (STAGE MANAGER, FIGHT CAPTAIN)

Lyndsey (she/her) is grateful to be returning to Theater Mu for her sixth mainstage production with them.

REDWOOD

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DIRECTED BY **H. ADAM HARRIS**

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Previous Mu credits include: New Eyes Festival: *(Un)Scene, Today Is My Birthday*, Twenty-Pho Hour Playfest 2020, *peerless, The Korean Drama Addict's Guide to Losing Your Virginity, Charles Francis Chan Jr.'s Exotic Oriental Murder Mystery*, and *Flower Drum Song* (ASM). Other recent credits include *A Christmas Carol* 2021 (ASM) and *Dining with the Ancestors* at Guthrie Theater and *What to Send Up When It Goes Down* with Pillsbury House Theatre. She has also collaborated with Minnesota Opera, Theater Latté Da, New Dawn Theatre, Playwrights' Center, History Theatre, Park Square Theatre, and Great River Shakespeare Festival. Lyndsey is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association and serves on Equity's Twin Cities Liaison Committee, in addition to her work with the Minnesota Theater Accountability Coalition.



**SARAH BAHR
(SCENIC DESIGNER)**

Sarah (she/her) is a freelance costume and scenic designer for theater, dance, and opera. She is thrilled to be making her Theater Mu debut. Her designs have

been featured with companies including the Minnesota Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Jungle Theater, Trademark Theater, Ten Thousand Things Theater, Mixed Blood Theatre, Penumbra Theatre, Guthrie Theater, and Vail Dance Festival. In addition to serving as design faculty at Augsburg University and the University of Minnesota, she advocates for creating space and meaningful mentorship opportunities for emerging theater makers, along with equity among theater designers and technicians. She holds a design and technical theatre MFA from the University of Minnesota, a studio art MA from New York University, and a design and technical theatre BFA from University of Minnesota Duluth.



**YUNZHU "JESSICA" CHEN
(SOUND ASSISTANT)**

Jessica (she/her) is a theater and dance major student at Macalester College focusing on technical theater and design. She has worked on department productions

as assistant designer and is excited to be the assistant sound designer in her first professional production. She is very grateful for this opportunity to work with Katharine on *Man of God* and wants to thank Theater Mu for making it possible.



**SAYMOUKDA DUANG-
PHOUXAY VONGSAY
(CULTURAL CONSULTANT)**

Saymoukda (she/her) is an award-winning Lao American poet, playwright, public artist, and cultural producer. She's a recipient of a Sally

Award for Initiative from the Ordway Center for Performing Arts, which highlights those who cultivate and strengthen the state's artistic and cultural community. She's the author of the children's book *When Everything Was Everything* and is best known for her award-winning play *Kung Fu Zombies Vs. Cannibals*. Currently, she's the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation playwright-in-residence at Theater Mu, a McKnight Foundation fellow in community-engaged practice art, a Jerome Hill artist fellow in playwrighting, a Minnesota State Arts Board and Forecast Public Art grantee, and serves as a member at large on the City of Saint Paul Cultural STAR Board. Saymoukda also worked as a Thai cultural consultant and community liaison, dramaturg, and study guide author for the 2018 Theater Mu and Penumbra co-production of Prince Gomolvilas' *The Brothers Paranormal*. @refugenius



**ALICE ENDO (SCENIC
DESIGN ASSISTANT)**

Alice (she/they) is a senior at Macalester College, majoring in theater and dance. Previous experience includes scenic, lighting, and technical credits at Macalester as well as work with Theater Mu and Pangea World Theater. She is grateful to Sarah for her mentorship and to Theater Mu for the opportunity to be a part of this production!



**ANNIE ENNEKING (FIGHT
CHOREOGRAPHER)**

Annie Enneking (she/her) is a fight director, director, and musician. She has had a hand in crafting violence on most area stages—the Jungle, the Guthrie, Frank Theatre,

Dark and Stormy, New Native Theatre, Walking Shadow, Theater Latté Da, Ten Thousand Things, Park Square, and Mixed Blood among them. She's a fight instructor with Dueling Arts International and teaches at the University of Minnesota in the BA and BFA/Guthrie training programs. She has directed *Of Mice and Men* (Park Square), *Constance in the Darkness* (Open Eye Theatre), and co-directed *What I Want Now I Will Want Later* (Open Eye Studio),



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Directed
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Sueko



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She Kills Monsters (UMN), and *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (Theater Latté Da). She fronts the rock band Annie and the Bang Bang and was a 2010 Playwrights' Center McKnight theater artist fellow. She is honored to be part of the Theater Mu team for this production.



**KATHARINE HOROWITZ
(SOUND DESIGNER AND
COMPOSER)**

Katharine (she/her) is a theatrical sound designer and composer in Minneapolis, Minnesota. This is her fifth show with Theater Mu.

She has also designed critically acclaimed and award-winning shows for the Guthrie Theater, Creede Repertory Theatre, the Jungle Theater, History Theatre, Mixed Blood Theatre, Pillsbury House Theatre, Park Square Theatre, Great River Shakespeare Festival, Second City Theatricals, Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theatre, and many others. Katharine is a professional member of the Theatrical Sound Designers and Composers Association, and a 2017 McKnight theatre artist fellow at the Playwrights' Center. katsound.com



**WU CHEN KHOO
(LIGHTING DESIGNER)**

Wu Chen (he/him) is a 20-plus year lighting designer, stagehand, production manager, and labor organizer. He is based in Minneapolis and works internationally. He

co-founded the education program Technical Tools of the Trade, which aimed to train, connect and support people through the skills of technical theatre. He is a founding member of the Class & the Arts collective and the Mothership, both groups of workers organizing to build solidarity and hold space for critical engagement with issues of social justice including through the arts and entertainment industry. He shares his life with his partner Kristin and children Teng Jin and Yi Lian.



**JOHN LUTZ
(TECHNICAL DIRECTOR)**

John Lutz has been building and painting scenery in the Twin Cities in one capacity or another since 2005. He has spent 13 years as technical director and paint charge

for the University of Minnesota Opera program. He also engages in itinerant commercial fabrication. He built the Gjallarhorn, if you're into football. He is otherwise known as an avid gardener, orchardist, saxophonist, pianist, artist,

poet, baker, cook, outdoorsman, and home-maker. Someday, he will walk south and grow cabbages.



**STERLING MILLER
(COVID-19 SAFETY
COORDINATOR)**

Sterling (he/they) is happy to be keeping the cast and production team safe in his role as the COVID-19 safety coordinator. Sterling is a

healing interdisciplinary artist transforming within as well as the universe without. Stay safe everyone!



JANE PEÑA (DRAMATURG)

Jane (she/her) couldn't be more thrilled to make her dramaturgical debut with *Man of God*. Jane comes from a background in literary management and office administration, having

completed a string of literary internships and script supervisory and readership roles with the Playwrights' Center, the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, Goodman Theater, Campfire Theater Festival, Playwrights' Realm, and the National New Play Network. Jane has served as Theater Mu's office manager and literary associate since December 2020, and she looks forward to nurturing and expanding Theater Mu's community of artists through continued efforts in administrative and literary activities.



**SOPHINA SAGGAU
(FIGHT ASSISTANT)**

Sophina (she/her) is a local actor and theatre artist with a strong interest in stage combat. Annie Enneking has been her combat teacher and mentor for many years,

and it was a joy to help her choreograph on this project. She is a graduate of the University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theater BFA actor training program. Her most recent projects include performing and fight-captaining *Sherwood* at Yellow Tree Theatre and understudying for *Another Miracle on Christmas Lake*. She has worked locally with Park Square Theatre, Walking Shadow Theatre Company, the Playwrights' Center, Theatre Coup d'Etat, Girl Friday Productions, and regionally with Arkansas Shakespeare Theatre and Highland Center for the Arts. Upcoming, she will be assistant directing *Treasure Island* at Interlochen Arts Camp as well as overseeing *Imagine It*, a new

junior musical she is co-writing to premiere at the camp.



MAGS SCANLON (LIGHTING DESIGN ASSISTANT)

Mags (she/her) is incredibly grateful to be the assistant lighting designer for this production. This is her first show with Theater Mu. Mags is a freelance electrician and lighting designer in the Midwest and has spent her last few years working with the Medora Musical, the History Theatre, Wise Fool Theater, and Blue Water Theatre Company. In her free-time she enjoys oil painting, hand embroidery, beading, and making tiny dioramas that are way too tiny.



KENJI SHOEMAKER (PROPERTIES DESIGNER)

Kenji (he/they) is a props person and stage manager currently based in the Twin Cities. This is Kenji's third production with Mu, having previously worked on *peerless* and *Fast Company*. Recent theater: *Bina's Six Apples* (Children's Theatre Company), *Angels in America* (Macalester College), *What to Send Up When It Goes Down* (Pillsbury House Theatre), *Elf* (Stages Theatre Company), *The Unplugging* (New Native Theatre).



SUNNY THAO (ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER)

Sunny (she/her) is a proud youth worker and Hmong-American theater maker. She is thrilled to be making her Theater Mu production debut. Her previous ASM/SM experience is with Theater Mu's virtual playfests, Ambiance Theatre, and the Playwrights' Center. Her most recent work was with SEA Echoes Through Rivers as co-lead

artist with Lao theater maker Kaysona Syonesa. This project was proudly funded by CURA/ANPI and partnered with the City of Brooklyn Park. She holds a BA from Augsburg University with a concentration in playwriting, directing, and dramaturgy. Her works explore her relationship with her Hmong-American identity and the after effects of the diasporas within the SEA collective. In her free time, she enjoys crafting and co-hosting her podcast, *Beyond Friends*, with her close friends. Thank you for coming to the show and another thank you to her family and friends for their support and Theater Mu's generosity in inviting her into this project.



KHAMPHIAN VANG (COSTUME DESIGNER)

Khamphian (she/her) is a Twin Cities-based freelance designer-artist with a background in fashion, theater, and costume design. She approaches each project as an opportunity to give a visual voice to the characters and elevate storytelling through emotive and symbolic design. She has designed for multiple productions at Full Circle Theater Company and Walking Shadow Theatre Company. Previous credits with Theater Mu include *peerless* in 2020 and a multimedia installation for *Shine a Light* at Jungle Theater. She is delighted to be working on a live performance again with the production of *Man of God*.



AJAH WILLIAMS (ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER FOR WEDS. MATINEES, SM/ASM U/S)

Ajah (she/her) is a current senior at Hamline University and will graduate this May! She recently worked on *Sherwood* at Yellow Tree Theatre as the assistant stage manager, and she is glad to be working on her first production with Theater Mu!



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A daughter prosecuting a
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JELLY'S LAST JAM

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MUSIC BY JELLY ROLL MORTON

LYRICS BY SUSAN BIRKENHEAD

ADDITIONAL MUSIC AND MUSICAL ADAPTATION BY LUTHER HENDERSON

DIRECTED AND CHOREOGRAPHED BY KELLI FOSTER WARDER



THEATER MUSICALLY

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ABOUT THEATER MU

THEATER MU is the second largest Asian American theater company in the nation. Founded in 1992, Mu's continuing goal to celebrate and empower the Asian American community through theater is achieved through mainstage productions, emerging artist support, and educational outreach programs. Theater Mu is a member of the Consortium of Asian American Theaters & Artists, as well as a member of the Twin Cities Theatres of Color Coalition, proudly standing alongside New Native Theatre, Pangea World Theater, Penumbra Theatre, and Teatro Del Pueblo.

Theater Mu is co-led by Artistic Director Lily Tung Crystal and Managing Director Anh Thu Pham:



LILY TUNG CRYSTAL (she/her) is grateful to be collaborating with such talented and generous artists. Since arriving at Mu in August 2019, she has directed Jiehae Park's *peerless* and led Mu's virtual programming, including TwentyPho Hour PlayFest, Mu-tini Hour, and Mu's live film-theater production of Susan Soon He Stanton's *Today Is My Birthday*. This spring, she'll be directing the Mu/Jungle Theater co-production of Lauren Yee's *Cambodian Rock Band*. From 2010 to 2019, Lily was the founding artistic director of Ferocious Lotus Theatre Company. In the Bay Area, she directed the world premiere of Leah Nanako Winkler's *Two Mile Hollow* at Ferocious Lotus and David Henry Hwang's *Chinglish* and *Flower Drum Song* at Palo Alto Players. For all three shows, she was named a Theatre Bay Area Award finalist for outstanding direction. Lily is also an actor/singer who has performed in film and theater across the country. She is a YBCA 100 honoree, named by Yerba Buena Center for the Arts as a "creative pioneer making the provocations that will shape the future of culture."



ANH THU PHAM (she/her) joined Theater Mu as its first Asian American managing director in July of 2020. Anh Thu is a 1.5 generation refugee from Viet Nam. She and her parents immigrated from Viet Nam to Minnesota in 1975. Prior to working at Mu, she worked at the University of Minnesota for 23 years, most of that in the Provost Office. She has served on the board of directors at Pangea World Theater, Ananya Dance Theater, and the New Arab American Theater Works. She has also worked with Mizna on its Arab Film Festival. A community activist and organizer at heart, Anh Thu has worked on a number of political campaigns and was a proud member of Rad Azns (Asian Pacific Americans for Black Lives Matter). She's happy to be a part of the Theater Mu family.



From left to right: Dexieng “Dae” Yang, Louisa Darr, Janet Scanlon, and Suzie Juul.

“As a 17-year-old girl, or to be honest anyone female-identifying in general, it’s scary how much of this play is so resonant. The awareness of the ‘male gaze,’ the reaction to this oppression, and the anger-fueled fire within—this is an important play because of its language surrounding sexual misconduct.”

—**LOUISA DARR (JEN)**

“Reading this script was like going back to high school and chatting with friends. It reads so true and so realistic. It can be difficult to capture the pace and speed at which teenage minds race.”

—**SUZIE JUUL (SAMANTHA)**

“You think because of the situation [in *Man of God*], you understand the world you are entering, but then the characters do things or say things that are so unpredictable that you have to constantly reassess what you think you know about the circumstances and how people should or would respond.”

—**RICH REMEDIOS (PASTOR)**

“On the surface, playing a teenager sounds like an easy task. However, I’d argue that being a teenager is sometimes the most complex times of our lives. All of the stakes are heightened; every experience is new.”

—**JANET SCANLON (KYUNG-HWA)**

“There is a lot that resonates with me as a person with this play, in particular, the little things that are almost ‘normal’ or that happen so often that I’ve become numb to them [like cat calling].” —**DEXIENG “DAE” YANG (MIMI)**



VICTORY, POWER, AND HEALING

After researching the history and social context of *Man of God* for the company, Dramaturg Jane Peña reflects on what stood out to her most.

When I was brainstorming ideas for what to write in response to *Man of God*, I was overwhelmed with choice from such an incredibly rich play. But out of so many themes one could spend hours discussing, what struck me the most is how Kyung-Hwa, Samantha, Mimi, and Jen are perfectly imperfect, and the vibrancy that brings.

When asked about her inspiration for writing *Man of God*, playwright Anna Ouyang Moench said in an interview with *Broadway World*:

“This is a play that asks people to examine the disparity between our fantasies and our reality, and that can be an uncomfortable thing ... I want our culture to be able to acknowledge the injustice of abuse and say to survivors: You made it through, and that’s enough. Victory doesn’t have to look like a girl with a gun.”

This play achieves exactly that. None of the girls react in a “perfect” way. Some of them are angry. Some of them are scared. Some of them want vengeance. Some of them just want to move on with their lives. They disagree with each other; they fight and argue. The audience, too, might disagree with them at times. This is a matter of survival, and survival might not look “nice” to the outside world. The point that Moench writes so skillfully and our brilliant creative team nails is that, having been forced into a horrific situation, each of the girls is autonomous in their reaction. They each take control—whatever control looks like to them.

That’s the thing about this play. In Hollywood, justice looks like revenge. The victim becomes that girl with the gun that Moench speaks of, refusing to disappear in quiet shame, as if refusing to take up the gun is in some way a passive acceptance of the trauma that has been inflicted.

But we in the real world know that's not how justice works. What if we don't want to be violent in return? What if we don't want to add murder to our already traumatic experience? What if we don't want to deal with the court system? What if we don't want this event to define who we are? The girl with the gun is not only unrealistic, but she risks teaching us that nonviolence is passive.

Instead, *Man of God* teaches us that taking revenge is not the only path to justice. In a reality in which survivors are discouraged from even reporting their assault, much less hoping for any kind of repercussions for the abuser, revenge fantasies simply will not help. But that doesn't mean the survivor is helpless.

Unlike the movies that Samantha, Jen, Mimi, and Kyung-Hwa are imitating when they imagine their ideas of justice, Moench is telling them, and all of us, that there is no solid idea of justice. I hope survivors and their allies in the audience walk away from the theatre knowing this: In the wake of your trauma, you don't have an obligation to do anything. Organ harvest or don't organ harvest, report or don't report. You survived. You are your own person. You are whole. Whatever you do to care for yourself is enough.

Below are some organizations that provide direct support and advocacy around many of the issues in the play:

ASIAN WOMEN UNITED OF MINNESOTA (AWUM) has a mission to end domestic violence in all forms. Services include a 24-hour emergency shelter; advocacy across legal, financial, and immigration issues; and increased community awareness. | 612.724.0756, crisis line 612.724.8823, awum.org

MANFORWARD brings together Southeast Asian men and masculine folks and organizes events around social justice, education, and healing, all with a focus on allyship. | man-forward.org

TRANSFORMING GENERATIONS was born out of a need for culturally relevant services for Hmong victim-survivors of gender-based violence. Besides raising awareness, it provides advocacy services, mental health services, trainings, support groups, and more. | 651.756.1579, transforminggenerations.org

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE FOR SELF EMPOWERMENT (WISE) has empowered immigrant and refugee women and girls for almost 30 years. Programs include youth self-empowerment workshops and academic support, as well as post-secondary and workforce preparation. | 651.646.3268, womenofwise.org

AWUM and ManForward lead our Community Matinee's post-show (Feb 27), while WISE and Transforming Generations lead our student matinee post-shows (Feb 23, Mar 2). Printed materials are available in the lobby from these organizations with similar causes: **TUBMAN, CORNERSTONE**, the **EMILY PROGRAM**, and **BREAKING FREE**.



MORE MU FOR YOU

We know it's been a bit since you've seen us in person. Here's a refresher of what's ahead this 2021/22 season:

SAVE THE DATE(S)

Up next is our New Eyes Festival in April, followed by the co-production of *Cambodian Rock Band* with the Jungle Theater (Jun 8-Jul 31). The first features a reading of *Kung Fu Zombies vs. Shaman Warrior* by Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Playwright-in-Residence Saymoukda Duangphouxay Vongsay, while the second mixes family history and the prosecution of a Khmer Rouge war criminal, all backed by a live band.

MTI RETURNS

Starting this March, we're continuing our Mu Training Institute (MTI) with a session of Community Monologues, a virtual class with Eric Sharp, and later this summer, artists can enroll in Acting for Song with Sara Ochs and Introduction to Scene Study with Katie Bradley. MTI classes are made for aspiring or working BIPOC artists; more info at theatermu.org/mti.

SECOND ANNUAL SUMMER CAMP

If you know a middle or high schooler who likes theater, sign them up for Mu Explorations Summer Camp in July! Our Asian American-centered theater camp has a three-week high school session and differently themed one-week sessions for middle schoolers to pick and choose from. Fill out our online interest form at theatermu.org/mu-explorations to be the first to know when registration opens!

Don't want *Man of God* to end?

Sip a coffee out of our Momu *Man of God* mug while cracking open a book from our reading list! Titles include the essay collection *Drag-on Ladies: Asian American Feminists Breathe Fire* and *Kim Jiyoung, Born 1982*, where one woman narrates all the little moments of misogyny that shaped her life.

Mu merch, *Man of God* or otherwise: bit.ly/MuMerch

Full reading list: bit.ly/MOGBooks



SAT MARCH 12 Doors: 7pm | Show: 8pm

MARISA MONTE at State Theatre

*Brazilian superstar and four-time Latin GRAMMY winner Marisa Monte is bringing her 2021 album *Portas* on a world tour!*

 HENNEPIN THEATRE TRUST

THURS APR 7 Doors: 6:30pm | Show: 7:30pm

ATA KAK with special guest at The Cedar

Funky hip-hop-house musician Ata Kak is embarking on his first US tour. The Ghanian singer/rapper will be visiting The Cedar.



FRI MAY 6 Doors: 7pm | Show: 8pm

KASSA OVERALL with special guest at The Cedar

Kassa Overall is at the intersection of avant-garde jazz, hip-hop, ... and something else. He's made his own lane.

 WALKER

FRI MAY 20 Doors: 7pm | Show: 8pm

VALERIE JUNE with Chastity Brown at Pantages Theatre

GRAMMY nominated artist Valerie June is returning to Minneapolis as part of her celestial tour, "The Moon & Stars."



2021/22 SEASON SPONSORS



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