

2020-21 MSG THEATRE LAB
PLAY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
PLAYWRIGHTS THEATRE CENTRE

Termite
by
Meghna Haldar



**Before They
Cut Down
Our Tree**
by Jenna Masuhara



**A Funny Thing
Happened On
My Way to
Canada**
by Grace Chin



ABOUT THE MSG THEATRE LAB

vAct's MSG Theatre Lab is an annual play development program. Three playwrights are selected to receive professional dramaturgy for their new play culminating in a staged reading for further feedback from actors, directors and audience members. This year, vAct's MSG Lab is proud to present works by Meghna Haldar, Grace Chin and Jenna Masuhara.

The 2020-21 MSG Theatre Lab is
generously funded by

**The Department of Canadian Heritage
and Province of BC**

Please fill out the Dramaturgy Questionnaire and vAct Survey to
provide further feedback

CALL FOR PLAY SUBMISSIONS

Want to be a part of our MSG Lab Play Development Program?
We will be accepting submissions spring of 2021.

Please visit www.vact.ca for more details.

The MSG Lab readings are presented on the unceded traditional territories
of the xʷməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and
Səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

THE 2020-21 MSG LAB PLAYS

MSG TEAM

MSG Producer June Fukumura
2020-21 Emerging Dramaturg Davey Calderon

Termite

— Saturday, January 15 @ 7:00pm

CREATIVE TEAM

Playwright Meghna Haldar
Dramaturg Kathleen Flaherty
Director Paneet Singh
Cultural Consultant Saattvic

CAST

Chirag Naik, Adele Noronha, Nadeem Phillip, Munish Sharma, Parm Soor

A Funny Thing Happened On My Way To Canada

— Saturday, January 16 @ 7:00pm

CREATIVE TEAM

Playwright Grace Chin
Dramaturg Heidi Taylor
Director Jasmine Chen

CAST

Jaymee Mak

Before They Cut Down Our Tree

— Sunday, January 17 @ 7:00pm

CREATIVE TEAM

Playwright Jenna Masuhara
Dramaturg Davey Calderon
Director Anjela Magpantay
Cultural Consultant Sally Lee

CAST

Diana Bang, Angela Chu, Melissa Oei, Stephanie Wong



June Fukumura – MSG LAB PRODUCER

June Fukumura is a Japanese-Canadian inter-disciplinary theatre artist with a BFA in Theatre Performance from Simon Fraser University. June is the Co-Founder of New(to)Town Collective and also the Co-Artistic Director of Popcorn Galaxies. Additionally, she was the Assistant Dramaturg at the Playwrights Lab at the Banff Centre for the Arts in 2019 - 2020 and is the current Producer of vAct's MSG Lab. junefukumura.com



Donna Yamamoto – PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Since taking over the helm of vAct in 2013, Donna has devoted herself to the development of stage productions that are written and performed by Asian Canadian artists. Under her tenure, vAct has garnered three Jessie Awards and 21 Jessie nominations, for *Ga Ting*, *Empire of the Son*, *1 Hour Photo*, *The Ones We Leave Behind* and *Kuroko*. Donna was awarded the Vancouver NOW Representation and Inclusion Award at the 2016 Jessies for outstanding leadership in developing works by 3 Asian Canadian playwrights in The Cultch's 2015-16 season. That same year, she was chosen as the UBCP/ACTRA Women's Committee International Women's Day Honouree in recognition of her outstanding contribution to causes of social justice.



Kathleen Flaherty – DRAMATURG

Kathleen Flaherty is the Dramaturg at PTC and a former producer of drama and documentary for CBC Radio. Her directing and dramaturgy for the theatre began in the early 1980s. Her current projects include *Where the Devil Can't Go* by Veronique West and *Made in Canada* by Pedro Chamale.



Paneet Singh – DIRECTOR

Paneet Singh is a playwright and filmmaker whose work is largely inspired and informed by Sikh and South Asian culture and history. He is best known works for his two stageplays *The Undocumented Trial of William C. Hopkinson* and the critically-acclaimed *A Vancouver Guldasta*. Other film and theatre credits include *Flowers From Venables* (Director, Woodenbull Films 2020), *Guards at the Taj* (Director, 2019 Vancouver Fringe Festival). www.paneetsingh.com.



Saattvic – CULTURAL CONSULTANT

Recently migrated from India, Saattvic has acted in a Bollywood movie, an Indian TV soap, several plays and TV commercials. He has written, produced and directed short films and plays. He is a trained Indian classical musician and dancer. His current creative work aims at making ancient Sanskrit texts accessible to modern audiences. He is also a practicing economic consultant, with his own practice.

TERMITE – CREATIVE TEAM & CAST



Meghna Haldar– PLAYWRIGHT

Meghna Haldar is a storyteller, educator and screen based artist based in Vancouver whose work has screened at museums, conferences, festivals and art galleries in Taiwan, Britain, Ireland, North America, Guatemala and India. She has taught at ECUAD, Arts Umbrella and University of Texas at Austin and is an alumni of WIDC, NSI Features First, Melting Silos and the Wet Ink collective. Her essay "Dirt: A Social Mirror" was published in the book *From Conflict to Recognition: Moving Multiculturalism Forward* by Rodopi/Brill in 2012. An advocate for trauma informed care in the provincial child welfare system, she has been a jury member for Canada Council, BC Arts Council, DOXA, Praxis and Cineworks amongst others and is presently on the board of The Frank Theatre Company in Vancouver.



Chirag Naik– PERFORMER

Chirag Naik is a Vancouver actor having worked across Canada. He has had the pleasure of working with theatre companies across Canada including *Bard on the Beach*, *Ruby Slippers Theatre*, *Greenthumb*, *Western Canada Theatre*, the *National Arts Centre*, amongst many others. Notable film credits include *Upload*, *Rogue*, and *No Tomorrow*. He wants to thank you for continuing to support arts and theatre in a pandemic that has decimated the industry.



Adele Noronha – PERFORMER

Adele spent much of her childhood in second class berth of an Indian train. She is happy to visit it again during this reading. Adele has worked in various capacities on and off the stage with companies like *Bard on the Beach* (3 seasons), *Gateway*, *South Asian Canadian Historical Association*, *Carousel*, *South Asian Arts*, *PTC*, *Arts Club*, *Touchstone*, *Boca Del Lupo*, *Red Diva Productions*, *Upintheair*, *frank*, *Newworld* and *Pi theatre*.



Munish Sharma – PERFORMER

Munish Sharma is an actor, writer, and dancer. Originally from Regina, SK, Munish has called Vancouver home for over a decade. He his second show, Danceboy was featured at this years Tremors Festival presented by Rumble Theatre and Munish was also the Artist in Residency at Pi Theatre. Recent credits include: A Thousand Splendid Suns, The Orchard (After Chekhov), The Matchmaker (Arts Club); All's Well that Ends Well (Bard on the Beach); Bombay Black (Raghupriya Arts and Culture); Victim Impact (Theatre Conspiracy). Instagram @munisharma.com0



Parm Soor – PERFORMER

Parm was born in Punjab, India and raised in London, England. He studied Theatre at The University of Winnipeg. Stage highlights include The Arts Club productions of ‘A Thousand Splendid Suns’ ‘The Orchard’ and ‘The Humans’ at The Stanley Theatre and ‘The Men In White’ at The Granville Island Stage; As well as ‘The Coronation Voyage’ at The Vancouver Playhouse and The National Arts Centre in Ottawa.



Nadeem Phillip– PERFORMER

Nadeem attended Ryerson Theatre School, where he was trained by Ian Watson and Dr. Cynthia Ashperger. Noteworthy credits include the smash hit Beatles musical adaptation of Shakespeare’s As You Like It, and the award-winning musical Onegin. Nadeem is directing his focus towards culturally relevant work, striving to add non-colonial content to the Canadian theatre milieu. Nadeem currently resides on the land rightfully belonging to the Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat, and Anishnaabe.

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON MY WAY TO CANADA – CREATIVE TEAM & CAST



Grace Chin – PLAYWRIGHT

Based in Vancouver, BC, Grace Chin writes, edits, produces, and acts. She is also an arts administrator in the arts and culture non-profit sector, and a PGC and UBCP member. A commissioned playwright and optioned screenwriter, as a performer Grace has appeared on network and cable television, film, and streaming platforms. Grace is googleable.



Heidi Taylor – DRAMATURG

Heidi Taylor is a dramaturg/director, and Artistic & Executive Director at PTC, based on the traditional unceded, occupied territories of the xʷməθkwəy̓əm, Skwxwú7mesh, and Səlilwətał Nations. Recently dramaturged world premieres: Carmen Aguirre’s Anywhere But Here, Tetsuro Shigetatsu’s Kuroko, and Chicken Girl by Derek Chan. Currently: Derek Chan’s yellow objects, Zahida Rahemtulla’s The Wrong Bashir, Amber Funk Barton’s How to Say Goodbye, and Mermaid Spring, by Barbara Adler and Kyla Gardiner.



Jasmine Chen – DIRECTOR

Jasmine is a multidisciplinary artist whose work has engaged with communities across Canada in repertory festivals, independent theatres, regional and outdoor theatres. At the core of her work is her dedication to community building, storytelling, and interdisciplinary collaboration. She is a recipient of the Gina Wilkinson Award, Stratford Festival Jean Gascon Award, and the Toronto Harold Award. Jasmine is the Artistic and Community Producer at Gateway Theatre in Richmond, BC.



Jaymee Mak – PERFORMER

Jaymee has worked in over 30 film and stage productions, and is best known as the acerbic reporter Mackenzie on CW’s Supergirl. She also creates behind the camera, winning Best Film at Vancouver’s 2019 Run N’ Gun Competition. She wrote, produced and co-stars with Lee Shorten in “It’s Not You, It’s Not Me.”, a raw exploration of a mixed relationship between an asexual man and asexual woman.

Don’t miss out on what’s happening at vAct.

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@vactheatre

BEFORE THEY CUT DOWN OUR TREE

– CREATIVE TEAM & CAST



Jenna Masuhara – PLAYWRIGHT

Jenna Masuhara is a non-binary artist. They live on the unceded territory of the Squamish, Musqueam, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. Jenna graduated from SFU with a Bachelor of Arts in Communications with minors in Business, Publishing, and Dialogue in 2018. Jenna worked for Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre as their Operations and Communications Manager from 2018-2020 and is grateful to have the opportunity to now work with vAct as one of their MSG Lab Playwrights.



Davey Calderon – DRAMATURG

Davey Samuel Calderon is a theatre artist and settler on the unceded coast salish peoples: the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh nations. Co-Founder of New(to)Town Collective, an emerging theatre collective aspiring to provide experimental training workshops and creating new interdisciplinary works together. He is a director, curator, writer, producer, drag artist and dramaturg. Currently the Dramaturg, Public Engagement at PTC and the Co-Resident Curator for rEvolver Festival 2021.



Anjela Magpantay – DIRECTOR

Anjela is an immigrant from the Philippines and currently lives on the unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and Sel̓ilwítulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. She has worked internationally as a performer and collaborator in Hong Kong and across the UK. Recent credits include Walking at Night By Myself (A Wake of Vultures) The Wolves (Withaspoon Theatre and Pacific Theatre) Foreign Radical (Theatre Conspiracy). Anjela works freelance as an actor, director, clown, teacher and collaborator with various artists of different disciplines. Anjela is a Co-Founder of New(to)Town Collective and formally the Associate Producing Artistic Director of vAct.



Sally Lee – CULTURAL CONSULTANT

Sally is a settler on the unceded coast salish peoples: the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh nations. Sally found her home at the Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre during her co-op program with the Sauder School of Business. As a Korean born Canadian, she is excited to be a part of this team as a cultural consultant



Diana Bang – PERFORMER

Diana Bang got her start in performance with the Asian-Canadian sketch comedy group, Assaulted Fish, and continued her love of absurdist sketch comedy with The Lady Show, a comedy variety show. She was selected for VACT's MSG new play development lab in 2018 with her play, Possessed. You can watch out for her in the upcoming FX on Hulu series, Y: The Last Man.



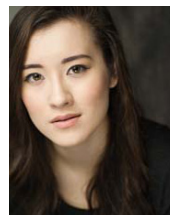
Angela Chu – PERFORMER

Angela's passion for acting began a few years ago in Calgary, inspired by her family. Her previous experiences include Theatre Replacement's production of East Van Panto: The Wizard of Oz as one of the ensembles. She was cast as Helga in Studio 58's production of Cabaret, and Amanda in Incognito Mode. She's one of the co-creators of Studio 58's and Newworld Theatre's co-production of The Porn Project. She's very excited to be joining this team!



Melissa Oei – PERFORMER

Melissa is a theatre actor and director born and raised in Vancouver on the traditional stolen lands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tseil-Waututh nations. Melissa has previously contributed to VACT's MSG Lab as an actor in Oh Sandra! by June Pang, i broke the ocean by Gary Mok, and The Boat People by Sangeeta Wylie, and as a director for Homecoming by Kamila Sediego and Seconds by Jamie Lam.



Stephanie Wong – PERFORMER

Born in Hong Kong, Stephanie Wong (she/her) is a multidisciplinary artist of Chinese Italian descent, now living on the traditional and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Squamish, and səliiwətaʔt (Tseil-waututh) peoples (Vancouver, BC). An acting graduate of Studio 58, she now works professionally as an actor, set designer, director, and collaborative creator. She is a core member of the emerging theatre collective happy/accidents, and has performed her work internationally.

vAct would also like to thank the following artists for their participation in our 2020-21 MSG Lab Workshops:

Praneet Akilla, Blossom Koh, Sanjay Talwar, Agnes Tong

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vAct's MISSION

Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre is dedicated to the development of professional Asian Canadian theatre artists through the production of new works. We envision a world where ethnic and cultural diversity is accepted and embraced by everyone. We embody this vision by creating vital Canadian theatre that celebrates difference.

vAct is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatre and engages under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement, professional artists who are members of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association

Produced with the co-operation of the UBCP/ACTRA"



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