

BLENDED 和 (HARMONŸ) THE KIM LOO SISTERS

BOOK AND LYRICS BY JESSICA HUANG MUSIC BY JACINTH GREYWOODE

DIRECTED BY LILY TUNG CRYSTAL CHOREOGRAPHED BY RUSH BENSON INSPIRED BY LESLIE LI'S THE KIM LOO SISTERS, JUST US GIRLS

MAY 4-26, 2024







WELCOME





RICHARD D. THOMPSON

KAREN MUELLER



Happy spring and thank you for joining us for *Blended* 和 (Harmony), the story of Minnesota's Kim Loo sisters by Jessica Huang (The Paper

Dreams of Harry Chin) and Jacinth Greywoode. Co-producing this piece with Theater Mu has truly enriched the process from commissioning to staging, and we are grateful for the skill and dedication of the Theater Mu staff, led by Artistic Director Lily Tung Crystal and Managing Director Anh Thu T. Pham. This is our first full co-production with Theater Mu after collaborating in 2015. We hope you enjoy this heartwarming story of a family of fabulous entertainers who influenced music and beyond. It's a story of triumph in the face of adversity in a multicultural America.

As we close the season, please accept our gratitude for your unwavering support of the Theatre and our unique mission. We hope you will join us as a season subscriber. Season packages offer great flexibility and value while ensuring you do not miss any of next year's offerings. For more information, visit historytheatre.com.

Enjoy the show!

Richard D. Thompson, Artistic Director Karen Mueller, Managing Director



LILY TUNG CRYSTAL

ANH THU T. PHAM

Hello, and welcome to the world premiere of *Blended* 和 (*Harmony*): *The Kim Loo Sisters*, our co-commission

and co-production with History Theatre. This journey began back in 2017, and as the Midwest's largest Asian American theater company, we are thrilled to shine the spotlight on these talented Chinese Polish American women from Minneapolis.

Every season, Theater Mu strives to produce theater from the heart of the Asian American experience, and Jessica Huang and Jacinth Greywoode's new musical centers the experiences of mixed race Asian Americans in our community and examines Asian American representation in the entertainment industry, past and present. As you'll find out, their musical captures what it means to achieve your dreams while facing racism from the same people who laud you.

Thank you for joining us for this important story in Minnesotan and Asian American history. We hope to see you during Mu's 2024/25 season, which includes tigers, contemporary South Asian dance, two world premieres, and more. Keep an eye out for our season announcement at theatermu.org!

Lily Tung Crystal, Artistic Director Anh Thu T. Pham, Managing Director



Book and Lyrics by JESSICA HUANG Music by **JACINTH GREYWOODE**

Directed by LILY TUNG CRYSTAL Choreographed by RUSH BENSON Inspired by Leslie Li's The Kim Loo Sisters and Just Us Girls

THE CAST (in order of appearance)

Jenée	Kelsey Angel Baehrens*
Sophie	Suzie Juul*
Maggie	
Bubbles	Audrey Mojica
Mama	Ann Michels*
Papa/General Li	Ariel Estrada*
George White	J C Cutler*
Youlin	Ethan Yaheen-Moy Chan
Ann Miller	
Ensemble (Mu Acting Fellows)	Kyle Camay, Boomer Xiong





Kyle Camay





Audrey Mojica

Moy Chan





Audrey Parker



Ariel Estrada*

MUSICIANS

Music Director/Piano	Elise Santa•
Drums	
Woodwinds	Clay Pufahl•/ Jenny Slivinski•
Bass Kyle Baker•, Sarah Lahasky•, Kellie Nitz• (primary), Matt Peterson•, Murphy Smith•

UNDERSTUDIES

Fjaere Harder, Michi Lee, Sydney Lin, Abby Magalee*, Carl Swanson, Nelson Williams



* Appearing through an agreement between History Theatre, Theater Mu, and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

Member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, Inc.

Member of Twin Cities Musicians Union Local 30-73, American Federation of Musicians
Member of United Scenic Artists Local #829



Suzie Juul*

TIME / PLACE

1930s-1940s New York City, Minneapolis, Beijing, China and Various Locations

SONG LIST

ACT ONE

Four for the Price of One	Sophie, Bubbles, Jenée, Maggie
Farm Animals	Sophie, Bubbles, Jenée, Maggie
The Ones in the Dark	Jenée
Stage Door Johnnies	Sophie, Bubbles, Jenée, Maggie, Mama
Dear Lena (#1)	Papa
Grateful	Mama, George White
Worship Me	Bubbles, Youlin, Company
Ann Miller's Not Gonna Die in Obscurity	
Gold	Youlin, Jenée
Dear Shear Gim	Mama
The Shoemakers of Wielkopolska	Mama, Company
New York Yangtze (Chinatown Remix)A Encore!	

ACT TWO

Three for the Price of One	Sophie, Bubbles, Maggie
Pantages	Papa, Jenée
Dear Lena (#2)	Papa
To Please General Li	Youlin, Jenée
Where Are You Now?	Sophie, Bubbles, Maggie, Jenée, Mama, Papa
	Ann Miller
Battle Song	Jenée, Youlin, General Li
	Рара
Grateful (reprise)	George White, Mama
Why They Make a Bridge	Papa, Mama
	laggie, Bubbles, Sophie, Jenée, Youlin, Mama, Papa

SPECIAL THANKS

Pearl Bergad, Berkeley Repertory Theatre's Ground Floor, Chinese American Association of Minnesota, Guthrie Theater Properties, The Ha Family Lion Troupe, Ashley Hanson, Michal Kobialka, Leslie Li, Mortenson, Minnesota Opera Properties, The National Theatre for Children, New York Stage and Film, University of Minnesota Department of Theatre Arts and Dance, Ricardo Vazquez.

ARTISTIC TEAM

Librettist	Jessica Huang
Composer	Jacinth Greywoode
Director	Lily Tung Crystal
Choreographer	Rush Benson
Music Director	
Arranger	Robert Elhai•
Co-Arranger	Jason Hansen
Story Consultant	Leslie Li
Dramaturg	Marisa Carr
Scenic Designer	
Properties Design Team	Ursula K. Bowden, Rebecca Malmstrom,
Costume Designer	Mathew J. LeFebvre [#]
Assistant to the Costume Designer	Caroline Zaltron
Lighting Designer	
Video Designer	Miko Simmons
Video Programmer	
Sound Designer	
Wig Designer	Emma Gustafson
Stage Manager	
Assistant Stage Manager	
Assistant Director (Mu Directing Fellow)	Wesley Mouri
Intimacy Coach	
Cultural Consultant	
Language and Dialect Coach	
Dialect Coach	
Chinese Translation	Patrick Chew, Annie Jin Wang

PRODUCTION TEAM

Stage Electricians	Shannon Elliot, Nick Fetting, Asa Gutow, Kurt Jung
	Mike Lee
Carpenters Jensen Bailey, Shawn B	ollinger, Tobias Gilbert, Ian Iosso, Phong Mai, Evan Sima
Scenic Charge	Erika Soukup
Scenic Artist	Danielle Buttgrereit
Costume Assistant	Meghan Kent
ASL Interpreters	Bethany Engstrom, Linda Gill
	Laurie Pape-Hadley
Open Captioner	Laura Wiebers

HISTORY THEATRE STAFF

HISTORY THEATRE STAFF	
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR	
New Works & Producing Associate	Laura Leffler
Production Manager	Lee Johnson*
Technical Director	
Master Electrician	
MANAGING DIRECTOR	Karen Mueller
Administrative & Marketing Manager	
Education Manager	Paul de Cordova
Development Director	Rob Thomas
Development Assistant	Molly Johnson
Grant Writer	
Audience Development Director	Chari Hall
Group Sales Manager and Volunteer Coordinator	
Audience Services Coordinator	
Front of House Lu Chen, Monique Franson, Janet Hall, Anne H	
Marketing Director Marketing Consultant	

ABOUT THEATER MU



Theater Mu (pronounced MOO) is one of the largest Asian American theater companies in the nation and the largest in the Midwest. Founded in 1992, Mu tells stories from the heart of the Asian American experience, presenting a fusion of traditional and contemporary

artistic influences, which range from classics to up-and-coming voices in our community. Theater 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 STAFF

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR	Lily Tung Crystal
MANAGING DIRECTOR	Anh Thu T. Pham
Development Director	Wesley Mouri
Marketing Director	Lianna McLernon
Programs Manager	Morgen Chang
Office & Literary Manager	Jane Peña
Mellon Foundation	
Playwright-in-Residence	Saymoukda Duangphouxay Vongsay
SSRC ARCC Research Fellow	kt shorb

THEATER MU BOARD

Ruthie B. Johnson (chair), Elizabeth Hang, Jon F. Jee, Curtis Klotz, Gabrielle Ryan, Nonoko Sato, Lily Tung Crystal (ex-officio), Anh Thu T. Pham (ex-officio)



from above left, clockwise: Amy Rondeau Photography (3, 5), Brian Rogers (7), and Rich Ryan.



LILY TUNG CRYSTAL

The Kim Loo Sisters. Larry Ching. Dorothy Toy & Paul Wing.

Most of the world may not know these virtuosic artists by name, but people certainly know the performers to whom they're often compared. At the height of their popularity, each act was respectively referred to as: the Chinese Andrews Sisters, the Chinese Frank Sinatra, and the Chinese Ginger Rogers & Fred Astaire (even though Toy was Japanese American).

From these performers on the Chop Suey Circuit, to Chinese opera singers, to current-day actors, Asian Americans have been fighting for a true and equitable place in entertainment since the mid-1800s.

The fact that *Blended* 和 (*Harmony*): *The Kim Loo Sisters* chronicles a story from nearly 100 years ago, yet remains remarkably relevant today, is a testament to its social and artistic power. Librettist Jessica Huang and composer Jacinth Greywoode have created this beautiful and revelatory family story set in the swing era—one that's both grand and intimate, joyful and heartbreaking—and they've infused it with an exciting modernity that brings it into the 21st century and gives voice particularly to the mixed-race Asian community.

It's inspiring that this new musical addresses complicated questions of race, identity, and artmaking with such heart and innovation. The show also reminds us, though, that there is still much work to be done, as nearly a century later, Asian American performers today continue to grapple with the very same questions the Kim Loo Sisters contended with in the 1930s.

How do we find home as Asian Americans? As artists of color, what must we sacrifice to have a life in the theater? How do we create the art we want to see in the world when opportunities seem so few? And can we find a world where audiences know us for our own work, our own identities? As second sister Maggie says in *Blended* \Re (*Harmony*), "We're not trying to be like everyone else. We're trying to do what everyone else gets to do."

And when will the fight be over? "I just thought that when we got to Broadway, we'd finally be done fighting for our place," says third sister Jenée, to which Mama replies, "No, moje córunie. It means you are just stepping into the battle."

At Mu, we step into the battle every day. As this era's generation of Asian American artists, we stand on the shoulders of the AAPI performers who came before us, including Alice*, Maggie, Jenée, and Bubbles Louie, the Kim Loo Sisters.

*Alice is referred to as Sophie in the musical.

THE CAST

KELSEY ANGEL BAEHRENS* (she/her)

Jenée, (Dance Captain)

History Theatre & Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: National Tour: Lauren Yee's Cambodian Rock Band (understudy); Jeannette (associate director); KOA Theater: Kate Hamill's Pride & Prejudice (director); Playhouse Square: Lizzie: the rock musical; Hawaii Shakespeare Festival's Henry IV, part 1; National Tour: Theaterworks USA's The Magic School Bus; Eugene O'Neill Center's National Music Theater Conference: Asst to artistic director Alex Gemignani. Other: NYCLU: Artist Ambassador; Dueling Arts International: stage combatant. Training: Baldwin Wallace University. kelseyangelbaehrens.com IG: @kelseyangelb

KYLE CAMAY (he/him)

Ensemble

History Theatre & Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: Emerging Professionals Ensemble: *Ride The Cyclone*; Minneapolis Musical Theatre: *Analog & Vinyl, Hands on a Hardbody, Striking 12*; Open Window Theater: *Foshayl*; The Wildwood Theater: *Bare: A Pop Opera*; Youth Performance Co.: *Oh Freedoml*; The Zephyr Theatre: *It's A Wonderful Life*. **Training:** BA, Theatre Arts and Communication Studies, UMN-Twin Cities. IG: @justkyleforawhile

ETHAN YAHEEN-MOY CHAN (he/him) Youlin

History Theatre & Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: Bay Street Theater: Double Helix (Original Cast); Goodspeed Musicals: Double Helix reading; Winnipesaukee Playhouse: Sweeney Todd; LPAC: Working: A Musical; New York Theatre Festival/LATEA: Maddie: A New Musical; ARC Stages: Dismantling Prospero (Original Cast), Dramatist's Guild Foundation: Roxane, of Bergerac. Other: 54 Below, Green Room 42. Awards: Father Fame Association, NYSSMA Certification (Vocal Performance, Piano Performance). Training: BFA Musical Theatre, Western Connecticut State University; Advanced Regents Diploma in Vocal Music: Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School for Music, Art, and the Performing Arts. Thank you: The Mine Agency, Red Letter Entertainment! ethanymchan.com; IG: @ethanymchan

J C CUTLER* (he/him)

George White

History Theatre: The Great Society, All the Way. Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: Worked in Twin Cities theatre for almost 40 years. Over 50 shows at Guthrie Theatre. Most Recently Six Points Theatre: Uncle Phillips Coat, The Moneylender's Daughter (director). Training: Carleton College, The Juilliard School.

ARIEL ESTRADA* (he/him/his/siya)

Papa/General Li

History Theatre: Debut. Theater Mu: New Eyes Festival 2023. Off-Broadway: MBL Productions: A Persistent Memory; Letter of Marque: Double Falsehood; Lincoln Center Theater: Far East; Pan Asian Repertory Theatre: Shogun Macbeth, Cambodia Agonistes. Selected Indie/ Regional: Theatre for One: My Anniversary; Wakka Wakka: Made in China (NYT Critics Pick); La Mama ETC: All We Have Left; The Imbible (FringeNYC Encore Award). Film/ TV: No Loss Here, Title VII, Future Folk, Don't Let Me Drown; Osprey, Occupy White House Sprites, Tell Me A Story, Bull, Blue Bloods, The Americans, One Life to Live, Another World. Honors: NNPN Showcase and Commission Finalist, TIE Educator Advocate, artEquity BIPOC Leadership Circle, NYFA Emerging Arts Leader, TCG Rising Leader of Color. **Upcoming**: Perseverance Theatre: Ariel's *Full Contact*. arielestrada.com

SUZIE JUUL* (she/they)

Sophie

History Theatre: Glensheen, The Defeat of Jesse James. Theater Mu: Man Of God, A Little Night Music, Into the Woods. Theater: Guthrie Theater: Into the Woods; Children's Theatre: How the Grinch Stole Christmas; Chanhassen Dinner Theatres: Jersey Boys, The Music Man, Grease; Ordway Center for the Performing Arts: The Sound of Music, Pirates of Penzance, A Christmas Story; Old Log Theatre: A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder; Walking Shadow Theatre Co.: Marie Antoinette, The Coward. Other: Whirl Kids TV Show (Sparkhouse family). Training: Augsburg University. Upcoming: Theater Latté Da Next Festival: The Measures. The Children's Theatre: How The Grinch Stole Christmas. Thank you to Mom & Dad for your love and support. I love you!

MORGAN KEMPTON (she/her) Maggie

History Theatre & Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: Lyric Arts: Something Rotten!, The Wedding Singer, The SpongeBob Musical, A Chorus Line; Minnesota State University Moorhead: The Wizard of Oz, The Who's TOMMY, Noises Off, Reefer Madness, The Women of Troy; Straw Hat Players: Guys & Dolls, Last Five Years, Breaking Up Is Hard To Do, Plaza Suite, Disaster; Fargo Moorhead Community Theatre: Hairspray. Training: BFA Musical Theater, Minnesota State University Moorhead. Upcoming: Spotlight Showcase 2024 presented by PNC. Endless thanks to pops, mom, Chris & family, best friend Marley & friends, Team EDU for all their support. IG: @mleigh12

ANN MICHELS* (she/her)

Мата

History Theatre: Sweet Land the Musical. These Shining Lives, The Christmas Schooner. Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: Guthrie Theater: Dial M for Murder, Sunday in the Park With George, The Cocoanuts, My Fair Lady, The Primrose Path, Roman Holiday, A Streetcar Named Desire, A Christmas Carol, She Loves Me, The Pirates of Penzance; Chanhassen Dinner Theatres: Jersey Boys, The Prom, Footloose, The Music Man, Holiday Inn, Mary Poppins, Bye Bye Birdie, Easter Parade, Anything Goes; Ordway Center For The Performing Arts: Annie, White Christmas, Paint Your Wagon; Children's Theatre: A Wrinkle in Time, Mr. McGee and the Biting Flea; Jungle Theater: Hedwig and the Angry Inch; Theater Latté Da: Five Points, Parade, Sunday in the Park with George, Wings; Nautilus Music Theatre: Man of La Mancha, The Last Five Years; Illusion: The Cocoanuts. Old Log: Rancho Mirage; Theater De La Jeune Lune: The Magic Flute; Torch: Dangerous Liaisons; Buffalo Gal Productions: Broadway's Legendary Ladies. Other: Jazz vocalist, George Maurer Jazz Group.

AUDREY MOJICA (she/her) Bubbles

History Theatre: Debut. Theater Mu/MN Opera: The Song Poet. Theater: Children's Theatre Company: Alice in Wonderland, How the Grinch Stole Christmas, Annie, Matilda the Musical; Theater Latté Da: Next to Normal, Next Festival: Love Them First; MN Opera: Carmen 2022; Ordway Center for the Performing Arts: Annie. Training: Junior, St. Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists.

AUDREY PARKER (she/her)

Ann Miller

History Theatre: Teen Idol: The Bobby Vee Story. Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: Artistry: Some Enchanted Evening; Troupe America: Church Basement Ladies; Sidekick Theatre: Incident at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, The Pirates of Treasure Island; Marymount Manhattan College: 5 Lesbians Eating a Quiche (excerpt). Film: Killer Next Door. Upcoming: Artistry: Newsies. IG: @audrey.e.parker

BOOMER XIONG* (he/him)

Ensemble

History Theatre & Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: Guthrie Theatre: A Christmas Carol. IG: @boomerangxiong

THE MUSICIANS

ERI ISOMURA · (she/her)

Drums/Percussion

History Theatre: Debut. Theater Mu: Again. Other: Minnesota Opera MNiatures, Chim Lac, A Very Special Minnesota Garden; Lakes Area Music Festival: Ariadne auf Naxos; An Opera Theatre: Rape of Lucretia; Northern Lights Music Festival: The Magic Flute; Member: 10th Wave Chamber Music Collective, Heartland Marimba Ensemble, Champagne Confetti; Albums: "12 Months in Minnesota", "Musical Moments for Cello and Marimba," "Champagne Confetti." Teaching: former faculty St. Olaf College; President: Percussive Arts Society MN Chapter; Guest Clinician: Concordia College, Minnesota Percussion Association, MacPhail Center for Music, Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies, Minneapolis Music Teachers Forum. Training: Percussion BM St. Olaf College, MM Boston Conservatory. Endorsed by Koide Cymbals, Innovative Percussion. eriisomura.com IG:@eritempo3 10thwave.org

CLAY PUFAHL. (he/him)

Sub Woodwinds

History Theatre & Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: Chanhassen Dinner Theatres: Nunsensations; Orpheum Theatre: Beautiful The Carole King Musical, Motown, The Tina Turner Musical, Company, Funny Girl; Ordway Center For The Performing Arts: Singin' In The Rain, West Side Story, Annie, In The Heights, 42nd Street, Beauty And The Beast; Minnesota Children's Theater; Alive And Kickin'; Minnesota Orchestra: pops concert series; Jazz MN Orchestra. Other: Bon Iver, 22 a Million

ELISE SANTA. (she/her)

Music Director/Piano

History Theatre & Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: Ordway: Beauty and the Beast; Chanhassen Dinner Theatres: Beautiful: The Carole King Musical, Jersey Boys, The Prom, Footloose, The Music Man, Mamma Mia!; Norwegian Cruise Line: Six; Duluth Playhouse: Beauty and the Beast, A Grand Night for Singing; Lyric Arts: Bright Star, Urinetown, Nice Work If You Can Get It, ...Spelling Bee. London, UK: Greenwich Theatre: The Pajama Game; Karamel Theatre: London Road; Unicorn Theatre: Post-Grad Musical Theatre Showcase. **Teaching:** St. Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists, Cretin-Derham Hall. **Training:** MA Musical Direction, Mountview, UK.

JENNY SLIVINSKI · (she/her) Woodwinds History Theatre & Theater Mu: Debut.Theater: Lyric Arts: 9 to 5, A Chorus Line; Lakeshore Players Theatre:

Little House on the Prairie the Musical, Singin' in the Rain, The Little Mermaid; Minnetonka Theatre: Cabaret, Guys and Dolls, Grand Hotel, Chicago. **Teaching:** St. Paul Conservatory of Music, Sarah Jane's Music School, K&S Conservatory of Music, and MacPhail Center for Music. **Training:** BFA Music and Business Administration UMN-Duluth. **Upcoming:** Artistry: *Disney's Newsies*. iswoodwinds.com IG: @iswoodwinds

THE UNDERSTUDIES



FJAERE HARDER (she/her) Mama Understudy

History Theatre & Theater Mu: Debut. Theatre: Sidekick Theatre: Cinderella, Robin Hood, Shoemaker and the Elves; Troupe America: Church Basement Ladies #9: Lyric Arts: Little Women; Actors Theatre of MN: Miracle on Christmas Lake; St

Croix Off Broadway Theatre: *The Outsiders*; Long Lake Theatre: *That's Amore*; Masquers Theatre: *Matilda*.



MICHI LEE (she/her)

Bubbles/Sophie Understudy History Theatre: Debut. Theater Mu: Man Of God, Again (workshop), Lunar New Year Cabaret. Training: Viterbo University BFA Musical Theater. Thanks Corey, Jimmy, and Brandon for being my supportive boys!



SYDNEY LIN

Jenee/Maggie Understudy History Theatre: Debut. Theater Mu/Stages Theater Company: The Name Jar. Theater: MNSU Mankato: RENT, Something Rotten!, H.M.S Pinafore Marisol, HAIR, Sense and Sensibility; Clinton Area Showboat Theatre & Highland Summer

Theatre: Spongebob Squarepants the Musical! Awards: KCACTF Region V - Irene Ryan Finalist. **Training**: BFA, Musical Theatre Acting Minnesota State University Mankato. **Upcoming**: Highland Summer Theatre: *Grease* (choreographer); Wisconsin Shakespeare Festival: *Complete History of William Shakespeare* (abridged; swing); CLIMB Theatre, resident actor educator. sydneylin.net IG: @_sydneylin_



CARL SWANSON (he/him)

George White Understudy History Theatre: The Boy Wonder. Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: National Tour: NOËL the Musical; The Ordway: Beauty and the Beast; Children's Theatre Company: Cinderella; The Old Log Theatre: The Play That Goes Wrong, How I Became

a Pirate; Artistry: The Drowsy Chaperone, Crazy for You, The Pajama Game, Wit, Memphis; Trademark Theater: The Reunion Workshop; Lyric Arts: Something Rotten!, Bright Star, If/Then; Theatre Pro Rata: Silent Sky; Magnificent Bastard Productions: Sh!tfaced Shakespeare. Film: Sanctified, Road to Damascus, Marathon Mindset. Training: UW-Stevens Point. Upcoming: Guthrie Theater: Little Shop of Horrors. carldswanson.com IG: @carldswan



ABBY MAGALEE* (she/her) Ann Miller Understudy History Theatre & Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: The Ordway: Disney's Beauty and the Beast, In The Heights, West Side Story, Mamma Mial, White Christmas; Chanhassen Dinner Theatres: The Prom, Footloose; Yellow Tree Theater: Still Dance The Stars;

Old Log Theatre: *The Wedding Singer*. **Other**: Shapeshift Theatrical, Crash Dance Productions, Collide Theatrical. **Training:** BFA in Dance, BS in Deaf Studies, Towson University. abbymagalee.com IG: @abbymagalee



NELSON WILLIAMS (he/him)

Papa/General Li Understudy History Theatre: Debut. Theater Mu: Yellow Fever, I Am Sam, Internment Voices, Paper Angels. Theater: Illusion Theater: Amazing Grace, Family; Old Log Theatre: Sell the Cow. Theater: The Caretaker. Training: BFA, Theater, University of

Missouri-Kansas City; MFA, Theater, UMN-Twin Cities

THE CREATIVE TEAM

JESSICA HUANG (she/her)

Librettist

Jessica is a playwright and librettist whose work includes: Mother of Exiles (Venturous Award, Rosa Parks Playwriting Award, Paul Stephen Lim Playwriting Award), The Paper Dreams of Harry Chin (History Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre, San Francisco Playhouse, Bernice Stavis Award), and Purple Cloud (Theater Mu). Her popular audioplay Song of the Northwoods is available on Audible. She is developing an original television show with WBTV. Jessica is a Venturous Playwright Fellow at the Playwrights' Center, a MacDowell Fellow, Hermitage Fellow and fourtime Playwrights' Center fellow, and has been a member of Ars Nova Play Group, Civilians R&D Group and Page 73's Interstate 73. She is a graduate of the Playwrights Program at Juilliard. jessica-huang.com

JACINTH GREYWOODE (he/him)

Composer

Jacinth Greywoode is a Brooklyn-based composer and music director whose recent credits include: orchestrations and music direction for the off-Broadway revival of I Can Get It For You Wholesale at Classic Stage (2024 Lucille Lortel nomination for Best Revival) and arrangements and music direction for Leslve Headland's Cult of Love at Berkelev Rep. Jacinth also served as Associate Music Director for the New York City Center Encores! revival of Jelly's Last Jam (NY Times Critic's Pick), Associate Music Director for the Woolly Mammoth production of A Strange Loop (Pulitzer Prize for Drama), and Music Consultant and Arranger for Charles Fuller's Pulitzer Prize-winning drama A Soldier's Play, which was nominated for the 2020 Best Revival of a Play Tony Award. Black Girl In Paris, a new musical with AriDy Nox about the life of young Sally Hemings, was a 2023 O'Neill NMTC Finalist and was performed in concert at Joe's Pub in July 2022 after a residency at LAMDA in England in June 2022. BA in Music, Princeton University; MFA from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts; PhD in Music, Stony Brook University. jacinthgreywoode.com

LESLIE LI (she/her)

Story Consultant

Leslie is the producer/director of *The Kim Loo Sisters* documentary, which was a finalist at *The Paley Center* for Media DocPitch Competition, and the author of its companion book *Just Us Girls*. Her other written works include the historical novel *Bittersweet* (Tuttle Publishing) and the culinary memoir *Daughter of Heaven* (Arcade Publishing). Her award-winning novel *The Forest for the Trees* is forthcoming from Black Lawrence Press in September 2024. Her work has been supported by grants from the Manhattan Community Arts Fund, the Chinese Heritage Foundation, and New York State Council for the Arts. She lives in New York City and is delighted to have her mother and three aunts make their theatrical comeback in the Twin Cities in Jessica Huang and Jacinth Greywoode's heart-warming play.

LILY TUNG CRYSTAL (she/her)

Director/Theater Mu Artistic Director

Lily is a director, actor, and the artistic director of Theater Mu. She dedicates this work to the Mu community, the AAPI performers who came before us, and her late mother Rita who made it possible for her to have a life in the theater. Love and thanks. Mom. Lilv's recent productions include Lauren Yee's Cambodian Rock Band at Mu/Jungle; Saymoukda Duangphouxay Vongsay's The Kung Fu Zombies Saga and Susan Soon He Stanton's Today Is My Birthday at Mu; and The Humans at Park Square (Twin Cities Theater Bloggers' Favorite Play 2022). She also helmed David Henry Hwang's Chinglish and Flower Drum Song and Leah Nanako Winkler's Two Mile Hollow, all for which she was named a Theatre Bay Area Award Finalist for Outstanding Direction. As an actor/ singer, Lily has performed at theaters across the country, including Cal Shakes, Jungle Theater, Magic Theatre, Mixed Blood, New World Stages, Playwrights' Center, Portland Center Stage, SF Playhouse, Syracuse Stage, and Theater Mu. theatermu.org; lilytungcrystal.com

RUSH BENSON (he/him)

Choreographer

History & Mu: Debut. Theater: CDT: Jersey Boys, Footloose, Newsies, Mamma Mia, Holiday Inn; Ordway: Beauty & The Beast, 42nd Street, In The Heights, Jesus Christ Superstar, West Side Story, A Chorus Line; Theater Latté Da: The Ghostlight Series; Guthrie Theater: A Christmas Carol, The Music Man; Collide Theatrical: Skol, Wonderland, Dracula, Romeo & Juliet; Park Square: The Rocky Horror Show, Passing Through Pigs Eye. Other: Cabarave, Artistry, The Flying Foot Forum; choreography credits: Guthrie, CDT, Ordway, SteppingStone Theatre, Park Square, Collide Theatrical. Special Thanks to my partner and wife Renee Guittar, who reminds to put on my heels when choreographing for people wearing heels. IG/Twitter: @shutuprush TT: @rushandfriends

URSULA K. BOWDEN (she/her)

Properties Designer

History Theatre: A Unique Assignment. Theater Mu: The Kung Fu Zombies Saga. Theater: nimbus theatre: A Count Up to Christmas, The Red and the Bright, The Remarkable Life and Pathetic Afterlife of Elmer McCurdy, and over 20 other titles; UMN Theatre and Dance Dept: Pride and Prejudice, Troilus and Cressida, The Amateurs, Silent Sky, School for Lies, The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, She Kills Monsters; Open Door Community Theatre: School of Rock, The Little Mermaid; Park Square Theatre: Jefferson Township Sparkling Junior Pageant, The Pirates of Penzance. **Other:** Swandive Theatre, Theatre Pro Rata, Theatre Unbound, Six Elements Theatre, Drake University Theatre, Hamline University Theatre, 20% Theatre, Woodbury Community Theatre, Circus Juventas, Frank Theatre, Theatre Latté Da, Guthrie Theatre, Minnesota Opera. **Awards:** American Theatre Magazine featured for design, *Outopia for Pigeons*. **Training:** BFA Theatrical Design and Technical Theatre, Drake University. **Upcoming:** nimbus theatre: A Very Electric Christmas; UMN: F*cking A, Anne Boleyn; Open Door Theatre: Tarzan.

PATRICK CHEW (he/him)

Dialect Coach

History Theatre: Debut. Theater Mu/Stages Theatre Company: *The Name Jar.* Theater: Coached/consulted Pear Theatre, Stages Theatre, San Jose Stage Company, Masquers Playhouse, San Francisco Playhouse, Jungle Theater, ACT (San Francisco), Ten Thousand Things Theater, Palo Alto Players, Contra Costa Civic Theater, Jay Kuo Productions. Training: Linguistics and East Asian Languages (Chinese, Altaic languages) UC-Berkeley, *Hyperpolyglossia* by Michael Erard (author of *Babel No More*). Patrick's day-job is normally in tech, focusing on internationalization and localization, where language and tech intersect.

ELIZABETH M. DESOTELLE (she/her)

Intimacy Coach

History Theatre: The Defeat of Jesse James, Diesel Heart. Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: Chanhassen Dinner Theatres: Beautiful: The Carol King Musical, Jersey Boys; Six Points Theatre: The Money Lender's Daughter. Trainig: Consent Forward Artist Certification & Pathway to Certification with Intimacy Directors & Coordinators (IDC) in New York City. Over 150 hours combined in workshops & classes with IDC and Theatrical Intimacy Education (TIE) in North Carolina. bethdesotelle.com

ROBERT ELHAI. (he/him)

Arranger

History Theatre: Dirty Business (composer), The Defeat of JJ, Lord Gordon Gordon, Sweet Land, Glensheen (arranger). Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: Composed music for Jungle Theater's Little Women, Nautilus Music Theater's Twisted Apples, Fortune's Fool's Cold Planet, Warm Heart and Lady With A Lapdog, Theater Latte Da's C. among others here and nationally. Other: Orchestrated for everything from Metallica to the Metropolitan Opera. Awards: Tony and Drama Desk Nominations for The Lion King orchestrations, arranged for many Oscar, Grammy, and Emmy winning scores. Training: Carleton College, CCM, Yale School Of Music. Upcoming: Theater Latté Da: Johnny Skeeky. robertelhai.com

LINDSAY JOHNSON* (she/her) Assistant Stage Manager

Assistant Stage Manager History Theatre & Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: Theater Latté Da: Passage of Dreams; Collide Theatrical Dance Co: Seven Deadly Sins. Training: BA History & Theatre, UW-Madison.

MINA KINUKAWA (she/her) Scenic Designer

History Theatre: Debut. Theater Mu: The Kung Fu Zombies Saga, The Song Poet (w/MN Opera), Cambodian Rock Band (w/Jungle), and others. Theater: Jungle Theater: Every Brilliant Thing, The Oldest Boy. Theater: Theater Latté Da: Falsettos; Penumbra Theatre: Sugar in Our Wounds, RE-MEMORI; Pillsbury House and Theatre: Passage, bull-jean stories; Ten Thousand Things Theater: Twelfth Night; Full Circle Theater: Anon, Antigonick. Other: Set Design Blood the Last Vampire (feature film) Training: MFA, University of California, San Diego. Upcoming: East West Players: Unbroken Blossoms; Ananya Dance Theatre: Antaranga. Assistant Professor of Theater and Dance, Macalester College.

JOSEPHINE LEE (she/her)

Cultural Consultant

Professor of English and Asian American Studies, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities and the Editor-in-Chief of The Oxford Encyclopedia of Asian American Literature and Culture. Recent books: Race in American Musical Theater, Oriental, Black, and White: The Formation of Racial Habits in American Theater, The Japan of Pure Invention: Gilbert and Sullivan's The Mikado and Performing Asian America: Race and Ethnicity on the Contemporary Stage.

CANDREW MAYER[#] (he/him)

Sound Designer

History Theatre: Over 80 shows including I Am Betty, The Defeat of Jesse James, Not For Sale, Not in our Neighborhood!, Gloria: A Life, Dirty Business, Teen Idol: The Bobby Vee Story, All the Way, Watermelon Hill, Glensheen, Hiding in the Open, Tyrone and Ralph, A Piece of the Rope, Hmong! The CIA Secret Army. Theater Mu: Again, Today Is My Birthday, The Debutaunte's Ball, Circle Around the Island, Cowboy Versus Samurai, Happy Valley. Theater: Jungle Theater, Pillsbury House, Theater Latté Da, Illusion, Six Points, Lyric Opera Kansas City, Opera Colorado, Everyman (Baltimore), ACT (San Francisco), many others. Awards: McKnight Theatre Artist Fellow, Audelco Award for Carlyle Brown's Pure Confidence. Other: Producing Director, Acadia Repertory Theatre, Mount Desert Island, Maine.

WESLEY MOURI (he/him)

Assistant Director

History Theatre: Runestone: A Rock Musical. Theater Mu: Flower Drum Song, A Little Night Music. Theater: Guthrie Theater: South Pacific, The Cocoanuts, The Music Man; Ordway Center for the Performing Arts: Beauty and the Beast, Jesus Christ Superstar, Broadway Songbook Series; Park Square Theatre: Hamlet; Children's Theatre Company: Cinderella; Artistry: The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee; Chanhassen Dinner Theatres: Hello Dolly, The Little Mermaid, Joseph... Dreamcoat, Bye Bye Birdie. Upcoming: Guthrie Theater: Little Shop of Horrors (Assistant Director).

RACHAEL RHOADES* (she/her)

Stage Manager

History Theatre: Teen Idol: The Bobby Vee Story, Dance 'Til You Drop. Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: Guthrie Theater: A Christmas Carol; Ordway Theatre: 42nd Street, Beauty and the Beast; Hennepin Theatre Trust: Girl's Only: The Secret Comedy of Women, Buyer & Cellar, The Real(ish) Housewives of Edina; Minnesota Dance Theatre: Loyce Houlton's Nutcracker Fantasy; Brownbody: Quiet As It's Kept, Tracing Sacred Steps; Penumbra: Weathering, Sugar in Our Wounds; Artistry: Songs for a New World, Little Women; Triple Espresso LLC: Triple Espresso: A Highly Caffeinated Comedy. Training: BA, Theatre Arts, University of Iowa. Upcoming: Hennepin Theatre Trust: Spotlight Showcase.

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MAGS SCANLON (she/her)

Lighting Designer History Theatre: Debut. Theater Mu: Man of God. Theater: Wise Fool Theater: Hamlet. IG: @the.mags.art

MIKO SIMMONS (he/him)

Video Designer

History Theatre: Dirty Business. Theater Mu: The Kung Fu Zombies Saga, Fast Company. Theater: Guthrie Theater: Macondo, Caviar on Credit, Postcards from Earth, Confluence; Park Square: Snow Queen; Old Log Theatre: Ghost, Jack & Beanstalk; Mixed Blood: House of the Spirits. Opera and Musical: Opera Works 52: MotherKing; Minnesota Opera: Salome; Disney: Beauty and the Beast; EMK Korea; Count of Monte Cristo, Wizard of Oz, Elisabeth Musical; Rudolf Musical Entertainment; ThreadsDance: Uncertain Reality; TU Dance: With Love; Earth, Wind, and Fire, Japan Intl. tour. Other: International, awardwinning Multimedia Artist, Projection Designer who has been innovating in the convergence of Film/Theatrical Production for more than 20 years.

MATHEW J. LEFEBVRE[#] (he/him)

Costume Designer

History Theatre: The Queens of Burlesque (set & costume), Farm Boys (set & costume), Axel & His Dog (set) Song Catcher, Inner-City Opera, Assassins, The Great Gatsby. Theater Mu/Penumbra: The Brothers Paranormal. Theater: Guthrie Theater: more than 20 productions since 1998 including A Christmas Carol, The Music Man, Pride and Prejudice, Sweeney Todd, 1776, She Loves Me; Penumbra Theatre Company: more than 20 productions since 2000 including Jitney, Fences, Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, Pipeline. Regional: Signature Theatre Company, New York Theatre Workshop, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Indiana Rep, Arkansas Rep, Seattle Opera, Opera Montreal, and Mixed Blood Theatre. Awards: 2014-15 McKnight Theatre Artist Fellowship, 2012 TDF-Irene Sharaff Award, 2015 Ivey Award. Other: Professor, Costume Design, UMN. mathewjlefebvre.com IG: @mathewj.lefebvre

LESLIE RITENOUR (she/her)

Video Programmer

History Theatre: Handprints, I Am Betty, The Defeat of Jesse James, The Root Beer Lady, Diesel Heart. Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: UMN-TAD: She Kills Monsters, Silent Sky. Training: U of MN-Twin Cities B.A. Theatre Arts; BS Psychology. Idritenour.com

KEELY WOLTER

Language and Dialect Coach

History Theatre: Sweet Land, the Musical. Theater Mu: Debut. Theater: Guthrie Theater: Dial M for Murder, 'Art', A Christmas Carol, For the People, The Importance of Being Earnest, Shane, Blues for an Alabama Sky, Sally & Tom, Vietgone, Sweat, Noura, The Great Leap; Theater Latté Da: Chicago, Hedwig and the Angry Inch, Five Points, Man of La Mancha, Six Degrees of Separation, Peter and the Starcatcher, Ragtime, Lullaby, Sweeney Todd, All Is Calm; Jungle Theater: Georgiana & Kitty: Christmas at Pemberley, The Wickhams, Miss Bennet, Lone Star Spirits, Le Switch, Constellations; Penumbra Theatre: benevolence, Wedding Band; MN Opera: The Fix. Training: Royal Central School of Speech and Drama; Viterbo University. keelywolter.com

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Kim Loo Sisters photo with Ben Blue when they all starred in George White's Scandals in 1939.

FROM PAGE TO STAGE **The Making of Blended 和** (Harmony): The Kim Loo Sisters

Blended 和 (Harmony) had its first public reading at the annual Raw Stages: New Works Festival in January 2022, but History Theatre and Theater Mu have been working with Jessica Huang and Jacinth Greywoode since the theater companies co-commissioned the show in 2018. What started as an idea from the Chinese Heritage Foundation's executive director Pearl Lam Bergad during Huang's 2017 world premiere at History Theatre, The Paper Dreams of Harry Chin, has turned into a huge show with more than 20 original songs, iconic choreography and costumes, and a production level worthy of the original Kim Loo Sisters.

Much of the musical's research is derived from *The Kim Loo Sisters* documentary and its companion book, *Just Us Girls*, both created by Leslie Li, the daughter of the second youngest "Kimmie," Jenée. During the initial writing stages, Huang dug deeper and wider, interviewing Li, as well as doing research about the sociopolitical factors of the '30s and '40s. Who were *George White's Scandals*, or Ann Miller? How would being an Asian American in show business then be similar or different to the experiences now? How did the Chinese Exclusion Act and World War II affect Asian American life? As she reflected on these questions, they all boiled down to one thought in her mind: "Why don't I know about these women? What a gift it would have been being a young person of mixed Chinese Ukrainian descent to have these women as role models."

To make the story truly come alive, Huang knew it needed a particular sound. "When I was looking for a composer, I was asking around for someone who could write in the swing style, but also maybe incorporate Chinese music and Polish music and sounds of today," she says. "Jacinth can do all of those things and so much more, and he just builds this musical world that's cohesive and beautiful and surprising." Greywoode officially joined the project in 2020, and he fell in love with Huang's first drafts. As he puts it, "She's a brilliant playwright and really knows how to embody deeply compelling and real characters in her work, but also make them relatable—people who you just want to enjoy watching. And that's something very fun to work with and to be able to write songs for as well."

While the Raw Stages Festival included workshop periods for real-time revisions, Huang half-joked "that there wasn't a moment that wasn't rewritten, with one song undergoing no less than three transformations." Huang and Greywoode have continued to evolve this incredible new musical, making edits to the script and music throughout the entire rehearsal process.

"Because [Jessica and Jacinth] have created a show that is so innovative, it's inspired the designers and the other creative team in the room to also innovate," says Mu Artistic Director and production director Lily Tung Crystal.

Huang adds, "I want the world to know that the Kim Loo Sisters existed and that they were incredible, and that they brought so much life and joy to the arts world. ... They're the best sister act you've never heard of!"



A studio portrait of the Kim Loo Sisters, circa 1939.



On air performance by the Kim Loo Sisters late 1930s before they joined George White's *Scandals*.



OURTESY LESLIELI



JESSICA HUANG

WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO THIS PROJECT?

Jessica Huang (JH): My play The Paper Dreams of Harry Chin was a commission at History Theatre. Through that process we connected with the Chinese Heritage Foundation, and they had been producing a documentary fundraiser for Leslie Li (daughter/niece to the Kim Loo Sisters, author of Just Us Girls and The Kim Loo Sisters documentary). They approached HT and Mu, who approached me. But [what] really brought me was learning there were these four mixed Chinese and Eastern European performerswhich I am. I hadn't heard of them before and they were amazing. I found the fact of their existence and their career so inspiring. I saw myself in them and I wanted to be a part of their legacy.

Jacinth Greywoode (JG): The story of the girls and the world that they were in—both physically but musically. How exciting to work on a score that would be grounded in the swing era, which is always so much fun to work in. Then you have a playwright [with such an] insightful way of tying what happened in the 1930s to what, still, is going on today.

WHAT DO YOU WANT AUDIENCES TO TAKE AWAY FROM THE STORY?

JG: These amazing sisters and this amazing family have a story made for the stage. They lived such vibrant, cool, full lives. But also the importance of knowing yourself and knowing your identity and to being true to it.



JACINTH GREYWOODE

JH: That feels like the heart of it. Who are you? And learning that you don't have to do the same thing that your family does in order to belong to your family and influence your family.

JG: Know Thy Enemy, Know Thyself.

DO YOU HAVE ANY PERSONAL CONNECTIONS TO THE SHOW?

JG: If my mother had her druthers, we would be the Greywoode Family Band. Instead you get three doctors, a lawyer, and then a weird black sheep musician. [The] idea of a tight knit immigrant family finding a place in the states and also the challenges of growing together as a family hits home.

JH: The love stories of two immigrants in the US and the people that cross the globe to be with each other, and bravely step outside of their experience and then change and love someone very different from them. Those are always stories I'm drawn to and feel connected to.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SONG?

JH: I love so many songs. I think *The Bridge* is my favorite. I think the way that you put their whole lives into the music of that song, I cry every time, it's so beautiful.

JG: I will pick two. The first one is *Stage Door Johnnies* just because it does that thing that I love—being rooted in the swing era with some modern Hip Hop vibes to it which is a lot of fun. And then something completely different, *Gold*, because it slaps epically!

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\$500 – \$999 Anonymous Deb Albersman Paul and Jan Anderson Nikki Annoni Ronald and Joyce Beauchane Denise and Jon Beusen Rita and William Bourne Connie Braziel Mary Bennett Chris and Rita Brandt Darrel and Barbara Christoferson Karen and Jack Carter Janet Colliton Jeanne and David Cornish Ron Davis John Erickson Lucas Erickson Patricia Fair Mark Ferraro-Hauck Barb Frame Elaine Gaston and Mark T. Scannell Robert and Elizabeth Glesne Helen Grant John and Mary Grant Mindy and Roger Greiling Jolene Hunter Dr. Jo-Ida C. Hansen Robyn Hansen Jim and Colleen Haves Karin Holt Max and Marguerite Horn Stephen and Anne Johnson Veronica Johnson Paul and Debbie Knooihuizen Sandra Korlath Susan and Ron Kuhn Al Kvaal Lynn Kvalness Wendy and Gordon Legge Karen Lillev and David Hansen Rebecca Lindholm **Ruth Markowitz** Peg Meier Crystal K Meriwether Peter Moore Marilyn Nelson Tom and Janet Nelson Joan and Dick Niemiec Ben and B-J Norman Robert Perkins Kera Peterson^B and Steve Ferris **Rick Polenek and Terry McEowen** Debra and Larry Que Jeffrev Rainev Paul Robinson Lynn and Tom Rusch Tim and Kim Scanlan Paul Schumann Bonnie Scott Allan and Florence Seck Jennifer^B and Stuart Simek Virgina Simek Julianna and Roger Skluzacek Carolyn J Sorensen George and Julia Sutton Jon Thomas^B and Duchess Harris James Vogel and Jenifer Wagner Lori Walker Dorothy and Fred Waltz Julie Wang Craig Weflen Mary and Donald Weller Carol Westberg John Windhorst Peter and Sue Wyckoff Jo Zimmermann

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