STOP KISS

By Diana Son

McKenna Theatre

Presented with permission from Dramatists Play Service, Inc.
As we near the end of a very dense semester I want to thank you for joining us in the theatre for this performance and for any of the other performances you may have attended. And I think I speak for all theatre companies, when I say that your participation as an audience member is truly appreciated.

On behalf of the students and faculty of the department, I want to welcome you to Stop Kiss by Diana Son, directed by theatre major Emma Reifschneider, stage managed by Cait Malczon, and produced with the support and participation of countless students and faculty. Again, we are thrilled that you have joined us in Mckenna Theatre which stands on the unceded land of the Munsee, Esopus and Lenape peoples.

This production, typical of two we present each season, is part of our PRAXIS Series. The Praxis Series offers majors in the Department of Theatre Arts as well as the SUNY New Paltz campus community an opportunity to develop, explore, and stretch their creativity and skills alongside of the Mainstage Production season. Praxis projects provide unique challenges and opportunities that enhance and expand student experiences, rather than duplicate those provided by the Mainstage shows.

The series is a combination of staged readings and two productions. This is often a vehicle for student written work, work with a social justice message, work from an underrepresented group, or new work still in development. Often, these projects are directed by guest artists or students as a way of furthering the experience.

As I have mentioned all semester, we have been able to rehearse, and now perform, this text by following the Campus COVID guidelines and practices as we continue to prioritize the health and safety of our students, faculty, local and campus communities. It may seem strange to watch actors with masks on, but please remember performance and masks have a long-shared history. It may not be ideal, but we must do all we can to protect our community, and I appreciate your understanding.

Lastly, I hope you all find some health, peace, and restorative moments as we close out 2021 and enter the new year.

Enjoy the performance, and I look forward to seeing you again later in the season.

Ken Goldstein
he/him/his
Chair/Professor of Design
Directors Note By Emma Reifschneider
Stop Kiss

*Stop Kiss* takes us on a journey of navigating the treacherous waters of a new relationship. What does that first laugh with a stranger feel like? What happens the moment you realize you would rather spend more time with this person than anyone else? What would you sacrifice to keep this person in your life?

Our two female characters dictate their own story, taking the reins to decide their own fate. Recognizing the validity of our identities is not an easy path, but one that we must go on to find our identity and community. Our story takes place in two worlds. The first is filled with excitement, unsure touches, and unexpected love. These moments are interrupted by our second world which is what ensues after a violent hate crime takes place. The attack and what proceeds is a reminder that what our two characters feel for one another is not always accepted in our society.

In the year 2020, 11,129 motivated hate crimes were reported. To this day the FBI still does not collect statistics on hate crimes against those with intersectional identities. New Paltz is a wonderful community in which one is safe to love who they wish; however, it is vital to recognize that the world does not always share the same ideals as our campus. There is still work to be done to ensure equal rights for everyone.

I am immensely grateful to bring Callie and Sara’s story to audiences and work to ensure that no matter your identity you feel accepted valid and true.
Dramaturgy Note By Danielle Cavalier

Stop Kiss
By Diana Son

This performance of Stop Kiss includes sensitive and potentially triggering material, including the discussion and description of a violent hate crime and offensive and discriminatory language. If you need assistance and support, please refer to the mental health resources listed below.

Diana Son wrote Stop Kiss to express the voices and stories of marginalized communities through the specific lens and experiences of the LGBTQ+ community. Inspired by her Asian American identity, many of Son’s works focus on expressing the voices of those whose stories and experiences continue to go unrecognized and unacknowledged within society. Son explained how she wanted to explore these themes and concepts through “a narrative that was not race specific.” Therefore, she decided to discuss these ideas through a story about sexual identity and love, motivating her to write Stop Kiss.

Son’s main motivation for this work was to tell a story of identity. Specifically, she wanted to express how identity is formed and shaped in relation to other people. Using the relationship that develops between Sara and Callie throughout the play, Son demonstrates how peoples’ relation to others can reveal new information about themselves and change how they view and understand their own identities. Additionally, as an Asian American identifying individual who struggled to merge the expectations and values of her heritage and of modern American society, Son chooses to demonstrate how societal values and norms can impact how people find, explore, and express their identities.

Even though Stop Kiss was written in the 1990s, the play has lost none of its relevance today. Although part of Son’s inspiration for Stop Kiss was the increasing amount of hate crimes occurring for different populations within the 1990s, her explicit setting of the story during “Now” demonstrates her belief that the play would be continuously relevant to the experiences of various communities within societies as time went on. Additionally, when researching information and statistics about hate crimes for the 1990s and modern times, or lack thereof for crimes against those with intersectional identities, it became evident and clear that the themes and messages of both discrimination and identity expressed within this work are continuously prominent within modern times. Therefore, this production of Stop Kiss brings you a story about love that addresses the various themes, issues, and ideas about identity, discrimination, and exploration, that continue to be prominent and relevant within our society today.
Director: Emma Reifschneider
Assistant Director: Aidan Pauer
Dramaturg: Danielle Cavalier
Production Stage Manager: Cait Malczon
Production Manager: Shannon Dodson

Set Designer: Joñi Honeywell
Costume Designer: Alexis Costa
Lighting Designer: Abby Rose
Sound Designer: Bennett Lin
Dramaturg: Danielle Cavalier
Hair & Makeup Designer: Arianna Tice

Cast:

Callie: Faith Bower
Sara: Abbe Schulties
George: Ben Gordiano
Peter: Parker Howland
Detective Cole: Alejandro Ramos-Bravo
Mrs. Winsley / Sara Understudy: Sarah Ficara
Nurse / Callie Understudy: Audra Furphy
George Understudy: Irving Zuniga
Technical Direction: Mackenzie Baird
Production Assistant: Alexandra Lombardo, Nolan Donohue, Gabriella Salerno
Assistant Costume Designer: Mariannna Oropallo
Assistant Lighting Designer: Maya Battistella
Assistant Sound Designer: LeeAnne Epstein
Wardrobe Supervisor: Chris Lunetta
Wardrobe Assistants: Summer Glodstein
Production Audio: Andrew Paolillo
A1: Samantha Strong
A2: Julia Senise
A2: Julia Dubinsky
Draper: Will Galarneau
Stitcher: Ashlie Morrison
Electricians: Keirsten Lamora, Ashley Hoffman, Max Rosenfield, Maya Battistella
Carpenters: Shannon Dodson, Dan Salzer, Mason Crowley, Nathan Benitez, Nechama Anolik, Katherine de Onis
Scenic Charge: Joñi Honeywell
Props: Mack Baird, Joñi Honeywell, Emma Reifschneider

VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO:
Donald P. Christian, President
Barbara G. Lyman, Interim Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs
Jeni Mokren, Dean of Fine & Performing Arts
Environmental Health & Safety
Scott Schulte, Director of Emergency Management
Russ Thompson, Box Office Manager
The Students and Faculty of The Department of Theatre Arts
2021-2022 Production Season:
For more information https://www.newpaltz.edu/fpa/theatre/productions/mainstage/

Play On Shakespeare’s **Macbeth**
By William Shakespeare Translated by Migdalia Cruz
September 11th at 8:00 and September 12th at 2:00

**The Wolves**
By Sarah DeLappe
Presented with permission of Concord Theatricals
September 30, September 1, 2, 14, 15, 16 at 8:00 and September 3 and 17 at 2:00.

**La fuerza de Antígona**
By Tlaloc Rivas
November 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20 at 8:00 and November 14, 21 at 2:00

**Stop Kiss**
By Diana Son
Presented with permission from Dramatists Play Service, Inc.
December 3, 4 at 8 and December 5 at 2:00

**Unnatural Acts**
Harvard’s Secret Court of 1920
Conceived by Tony Speciale
Collaboratively written by Members of Plastic Theatre
February 24, 25, 26 and March 3, 4, 5 at 8:00 and February 27 and March 6 at 2:00

**Songs for a New World**
Written and Composed by Jason Robert Brown
Presented with permission of Music Theatre International
March 31, April 1, 2, 7, 8, 9 at 8:00 and April 3 and 10 at 2

**Pages from a Love Manifesto**
Devised by Nico Torrez
April 29, 30 at 8:00 and May 1 at 2:00
DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS

2021–2022 MAINSTAGE SEASON

INFO+
TICKETS:
WWW.NEWPALTZ.EDU/THEATRE