



CalPolyPomona DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE & NEW DANCE PRESENTS



# THE THANKSGIVING PLAY

WRITTEN BY LARISSA FASTHORSE

DIRECTED BY KATIE ANVIL RICH

\$5 General Admission | VIRTUAL

**NOV 30-DEC 5**

Tuesday - Saturday 7:30pm, Sunday at 2pm

INFO & TIX: [CPP.EDU/~CLASS/THEATRE-NEW-DANCE](http://CPP.EDU/~CLASS/THEATRE-NEW-DANCE)

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# THE THANKSGIVING PLAY

Written by Larissa FastHorse

Directed by Katie Anvil Rich

Featuring

Samantha Kernaghan, Celina Rong, Tedy Setlak, Luke Teerling

Set Designer

Jack Shellenbergar

Costume Designer

Katelyn Lopez

Lighting Designer

Jesse Portillo

Sound Designer

Melanie Lopez

Stage Manager

Lexie Secrist

**Warning: The sound of gunshots is used in this performance.**

"The Thanksgiving Play" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.  
[www.concordtheatricals.com](http://www.concordtheatricals.com)

Playwrights Horizons, Inc., New York City, produced the World Premiere of  
"THE THANKSGIVING PLAY" in 2018

"THE THANKSGIVING PLAY" was commissioned and originally produced by  
Artists Repertory Theatre, Damaso Rodriguez, Artistic Director Sarah Horton,  
Managing Director Portland, Oregon"

The Department would like to dedicate our Fall production season to the memory of  
Connor A. Chuateco.

# CAST

Logan ..... Samantha Kernaghan  
Jaxton ..... Tedy Setlak  
Cadan ..... Luke Teerling  
Alicia ..... Celina Rong

## ADDITIONAL CREATIVE TEAM

Assistant Scenic Designer ..... Connor Chuateco  
Assistant Lighting Designer ..... Adrien Gibson  
Assistant Stage Manager ..... Elisa-Belle Tremblay

## PRODUCTION TEAM

Production Manager ..... Brian S. Newman  
Director of Theatre Facilities ..... Jonathan Bastow  
Technical Director ..... Kenneth Blenc  
Costume Shop Supervisor ..... Vanessa Poveda  
Assistant Production Manager ..... Ariana Michel  
Scenic Artists ..... Arely Del Toro  
..... Kelly Tsan  
Properties Artisans ..... Randi Reyes  
..... Hailey Hill  
Light Board Operator ..... Robert Li  
Audio Engineer ..... Jorge Macias  
Run Crew ..... Serena Gonzalez  
Wardrobe Crew ..... Franzetta Dorsey, Shawn Lollis, Julie Valdez  
Scene Shop Crew ..... David Gonzalez, Jalen Jenkins,  
..... Athena Ramirez, Rossy Sarabia, Chelsea Sykes,  
..... Amber Torres, Jason Truong  
Costume Shop Crew ..... Serena Gonzalez, Samantha Kernaghan,  
..... Sofia Levi, Katelyn Lopez, Chelsea Sykes, Julie Valdez  
Electrics Crew ..... Claudia Arias, Flora Chen  
..... Jonathan Fang, Kevin Gonzalez, Jason Gonzalez  
Publicity Crew ..... Robert Li, Peter Adeleke

## SPECIAL THANKS TO

The staff and students at MediaVision-Cal Poly Pomona.

# DIRECTOR NOTES

As a person of Cherokee and Chickasaw descent and an active member of the Indigenous Theatre Community, I have been a fan of Larissa's *The Thanksgiving Play* for quite some time. The world changes rapidly these days. A play's relevance can quickly fade in these times marked by TikToks of yester-week. But like Thanksgiving Day "You're Welcome Day" leftovers, *The Thanksgiving Play* has only gotten better with age.

The characters of Logan and Jaxton were, in many ways, the guiding lights for this production. They embody all that doesn't work when it comes to white allyship. They are condescending and self-righteous, but – at the end of the day – we can't write them off (would that we could!) Because the thing is: they're trying. They're not doing a great job, but they're definitely trying.

Logan and Jaxton are doing their best to do the right thing with the knowledge they have and their very, very limited experience. Being white and woke is better than being a bigot...but it's not better than doing the actual work of reading Indigenous people's work, supporting actual Indigenous people and communities, talking to and asking questions of actual Indigenous people, and not allowing yourself to settle for the all-too-common: "I just don't know any Native Americans."

This play was written in part to satirize the White Theatre-Gatekeepers who insisted that there weren't enough Native American actors to populate Native American stories. That is both false and a way of excusing institutional failures. But while tackling this story, I couldn't ignore the fact that while those gatekeepers failed both Indigenous communities and their own, they did not do so with consciously malicious intent. They were people "trying their best." They were Logan and Jaxton. That is what I wanted to explore in this production of *The Thanksgiving Play*. Most people aren't bigots. Most people are just trying their best. And that is often where racism and stereotypes thrive.

We started working on this show in the middle of a pandemic, when we had only seen Zoom-theatre for a year. Zoom-theatre is the theatrical "trying their best." Because, let's face it...it was never great. It was a bunch of passionate people doing their best to soldier on in the midst of complete chaos. And that became our ethos for this production of *The Thanksgiving Play*: trying our best. We went through many iterations – an all-Zoom production design, a full-audience design and the filmed version you are sharing in with us this evening/afternoon/morning/as you clean your apartment and view this to get credit for a class – but at each iteration's core, the goal was to explore the harsh reality of four painfully ill-equipped people trying their best. They won't get it right – in fact, they'll get it very wrong – but their hearts are in the right place.

And if any Logans or Jaxtons are out there in the audience...let me take a moment to appreciate you for your empathetic hearts and good intentions. But also let me encourage you to go meet a Native American human. Meet many. We're still here.

**-Katie Anvil Rich, Director**

# CAST



Samantha Kernaghan



Celina Rong



Tedy Setlak



Luke Teerling

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Adrien Gibson (Assistant Lighting Designer)** is so thrilled to be a part of *The Thanksgiving Play* as assistant lighting designer. She has previously worked on the student written production, *2020...*, as stage manager. Adrien has earned an AA degree from Chaffey College. She also works the theatre company, Full Circle Players, as a lighting designer and stage manager. She would like to thank her family for always supporting her goals and the girlie bestie pop baes for always being there for her and making the transition to Cal Poly easier.

**Katelyn Lopez (Costume Designer)** is a Technical-Theatre Major who has experience both on and off the stage. This will be Katelyn's first production as Costume Designer for *The Thanksgiving Play*.

**Melanie Lopez (Sound Designer)** is a fourth-year theater major at Cal Poly Pomona with an interest in Acting and Sound Design. Her past credits include *Fefu and Her Friends*, *Echo in Polaroid Stories* and *OG in Men on Boats*. She wants to thank her friends, family, and fellow designers for all their support.

**Sam Kernaghan (Logan)** is a fourth year theatre major at CPP. Previously she has been seen on the Cal Poly stage and virtually as Fefu in *Fefu and Her Friends*, John Wesley Powell in *Men On Boats*, Vivienne Kensington in *Legally Blonde* and The Earl of Kent in SCSF's production of *King Lear*. She is very excited to return to acting in person with the new adventure of film!

**Katie Rich (Director)** is an actor, director, and writer of Cherokee and Chickasaw descent based in Los Angeles, CA. Some of her favorite directorial projects include: *Haddon Park* (world premiere, Hollywood Fringe), *Slow Your Roll* (Native Voices), and *Buying Happiness* (Native Voices), as well as other collaborations at The Guthrie, The American Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, and American Conservatory Theater. Rich is an active ensemble member at Native Voices at the Autry, the Nation's only Equity Theater dedicated to the development of Native American, First Nations, and Native Hawaiian playwrights where she performs, directs, writes and manages the Literary Department. She is deeply grateful for the time and energy that the faculty, staff, and students at CalPoly put into this project. It has been an absolute pleasure collaborating with these young artists and she hopes you enjoy the show.

**Randi Reyes (Properties Artisan)** This is her first time as Props Lead. She is excited about being involved in this unique play, and she is excited for people to see the show. She has participated in four previous productions at Cal Poly Pomona: light-board operator for *Bee-Luther Hatchee*, master electrician for *References to Salvador Dali*, and assistant lighting designer for *Polaroid Stories* and ACT's *Heathers*.

**Celina Rong (Alicia)** is a fourth year Environmental Biology Major and Theatre Minor at Cal Poly Pomona. She has previously been in *Chicago* as Mona. When she isn't on stage, Celina enjoys forwarding her research in conservation and regenerative studies. This is her first production at CPP and she is excited to be back onstage in person!

**Lexie Secrist (Stage Manager)** is a senior at Cal Poly Pomona and this is the third show she has been involved in at Cal Poly Pomona. She was previously the ASM for *Fefu and Her Friends* and *Men On Boats*. She has enjoyed working on this show and hopes that everyone who watches it enjoys it too!

**Jack Shellenbergar (Scenic Designer)** is a 4th year student at Cal Poly Pomona and this is his fifth show. This is his first show as scenic designer and thanks to everyone that has helped him along this journey. He hopes you enjoy the show!

**Tedy Setlak (Jaxton)** is a theatre undergrad with experience in theatre starting back in 2016 at his high school. He has been involved in 14 shows so far, including playing Max in the CPP community-based play *Here and There*. He has worked hard on this show and hopes you enjoy it as much as he enjoyed helping to bring it to life with this wonderful cast and crew!

**Luke Teerling (Cadan)** is a fourth year at Cal Poly Pomona. His most recent work during this year and the last include *The Drowsy Chaperone* produced by Virtual Venue Theatricals as the Superintendent and *ZorroX2* produced by Cal Poly Pomona as Diego/Zorro. He is thankful for his friends and family that has supported him along the journey through his career. He is excited to finally perform in person after two years. He hopes you enjoy the show and is grateful for your attendance.

**Elisa-Belle Tremblay (Assistant Stage Manager)** is a freshman at Cal Poly Pomona, making this the first show she has been involved in thus far. She has absolutely loved working on this show and hopes that everyone loves watching it!

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We at Cal Poly Pomona respectfully acknowledge the original caretakers of this land, the Tongva peoples, and all of their ancestors, elders, and descendants, past, present and emerging. We also recognize this land known as Los Angeles County today is also home to many Indigenous peoples from all over, and we are grateful for the opportunity to live and work here as guests on these lands, the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Tongva.

## WELCOME TO THE CAL POLY POMONA DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE & NEW DANCE

**About Us:** Cal Poly Pomona's Department of Theatre and New Dance awards undergraduate degrees in theatre, emphasizing theatrical production and the "doing" of theatre. At the same time, the Department offers courses in all aspects of theatre, both artistic and academic. After completing the theatre major at Cal Poly Pomona, students are prepared to begin their careers or specialized training in professional theatre, television or film; to go for advanced training in graduate schools; or to go into teaching in high schools. We are proud to boast alumnus in numerous professional positions throughout the entertainment industry.

**Our Mission:** The Department of Theatre and New Dance provides opportunities within a diverse and inclusive environment to explore and develop meaningful, innovative ideas that engage the interdependence of process and creation. Students develop critical thinking and disciplinary excellence through experiential learning, collaboration and interdisciplinary practices to prepare them to be current and relevant artists. Students work within established and experimental processes utilizing trends in new technologies, community and contemporary performance practices.

We thank you for your attendance during this production, and we especially wish to thank the following for their support of the arts here at Cal Poly Pomona:

- Dr. Soraya M. Coley – President of Cal Poly Pomona
- Dr. Iris Levine – Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Dr. Sara A. Garver – Interim Dean of the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences
- The Cal Poly Pomona Foundation for its continuous support of our department



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# DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE & NEW DANCE FACULTY AND STAFF

**Bernardo Solano** - Professor, Department Chair  
**Linda Bisesti-Reidy** - Professor, Head of Acting  
**C. Julian White** - Professor, Movement and Acting  
**Sarah Krainin** - Assistant Professor, Head of Design  
**Jesse Portillo** - Assistant Professor  
**Brian S. Newman** - Assistant Professor

## **Adjunct Lecturers, Theatre**

Lily Bartenstein • Barbara Bragg • Tom Bryant  
Colin Campbell • Doug Cooney • Lisa Sanaye Dring • Joyce Hesselgrave  
Jill Holden • Michael Kachingwe • Nancy Kyes  
Paulo Lima • Richard Pluim • Paula Weston Solano • John Sylvain

## **Adjunct Lecturers, Dance**

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Zachary Groenewold • Jeremy Hahn • Manny Macias

## **Costume Shop**

Vannessa Poveda - Costume Shop Supervisor

## **Scene Shop**

Kenneth Blenc - Technical Director  
Jonathan Bastow - Director of Theatre Facilities

## **Theatre Staff**

Marie Maslowski - Department Secretary  
Chelsea Sutton - Publicist

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