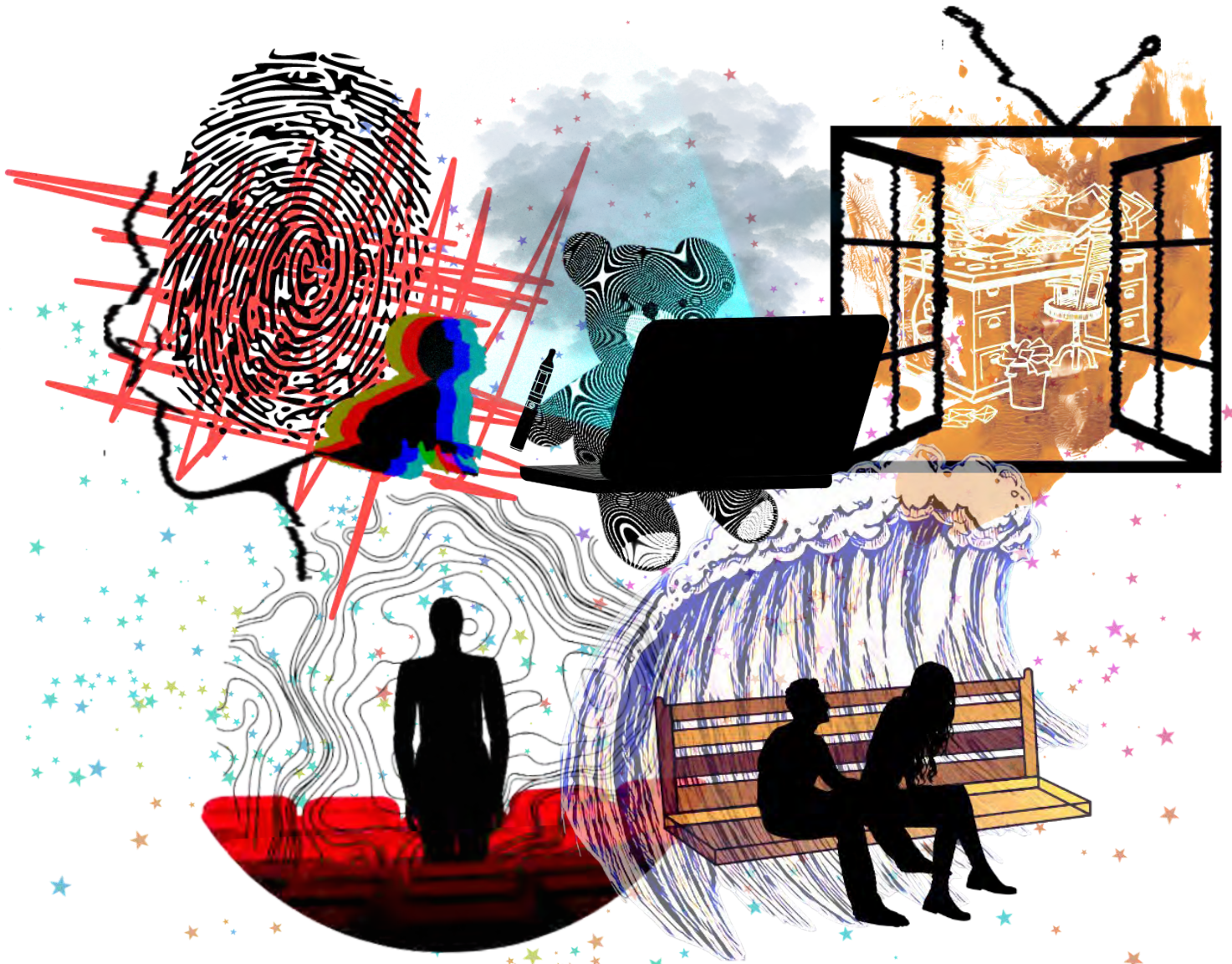




Centre for Drama, Theatre & Performance Studies  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



# DIRECTORS' SHOWCASE



## **BAŅUTA RUBESS, COURSE INSTRUCTOR**

Dr. Baņuta Rubess pioneered feminist theatre, and contemporary opera to national renown in Canada and Latvia. She has lived in four countries and writes in two languages. In Canada, she created groundbreaking works for Nightwood Theatre, Theatre Direct, and Tapestry New Opera Works. As Associate Artist at Theatre Passe Muraille, she threw open the doors to a new generation of theatre creators. In 1998, she moved with her family to Riga, Latvia. She created productions across the

country, ranging from an immersive version of *La Ronde* to an adaptation of *The Trojan Women* performed on a beach. For many years she was a regular columnist in the national newspaper. Baņuta returned to Toronto in 2012. A Rhodes Scholar with a doctorate in history from the University of Oxford, she recently acquired an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Guelph. She has been nominated for many awards and has won a few, including Best Play, Best Director, Best Short Story. She teaches theatre at the University of Toronto where she is lucky to mentor an amazing new wave of theatre makers.

## **SNEZANA PESIC, SET DESIGNER**

Snezana is a performance designer and educator. She has collaborated with companies such as the Canadian Opera Company, Canadian Stage, Confederation Centre of the Arts, Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, Banff Centre, Theatre New Brunswick, *Against the Grain*, *Ghost River*, *Obsidian*, *Odyssey Theatre* and *Native Earth*, among others. Snezana's work has been presented in numerous international exhibitions, including *World Stage Design* in (2009, Seoul; 2013, Cardiff) and the *Prague Quadrennial* (2007, 2015). In 2019, she designed and curated the Canadian National Exhibition at the *Prague Quadrennial*, where designer Michael Levine received Canada's first-ever PQ Award for Excellence in Performance Design. Snezana won the Betty Mitchell Award for outstanding lighting design and production, was nominated for a Prix Rideau Award, and was shortlisted for the Pauline McGibbon Award.

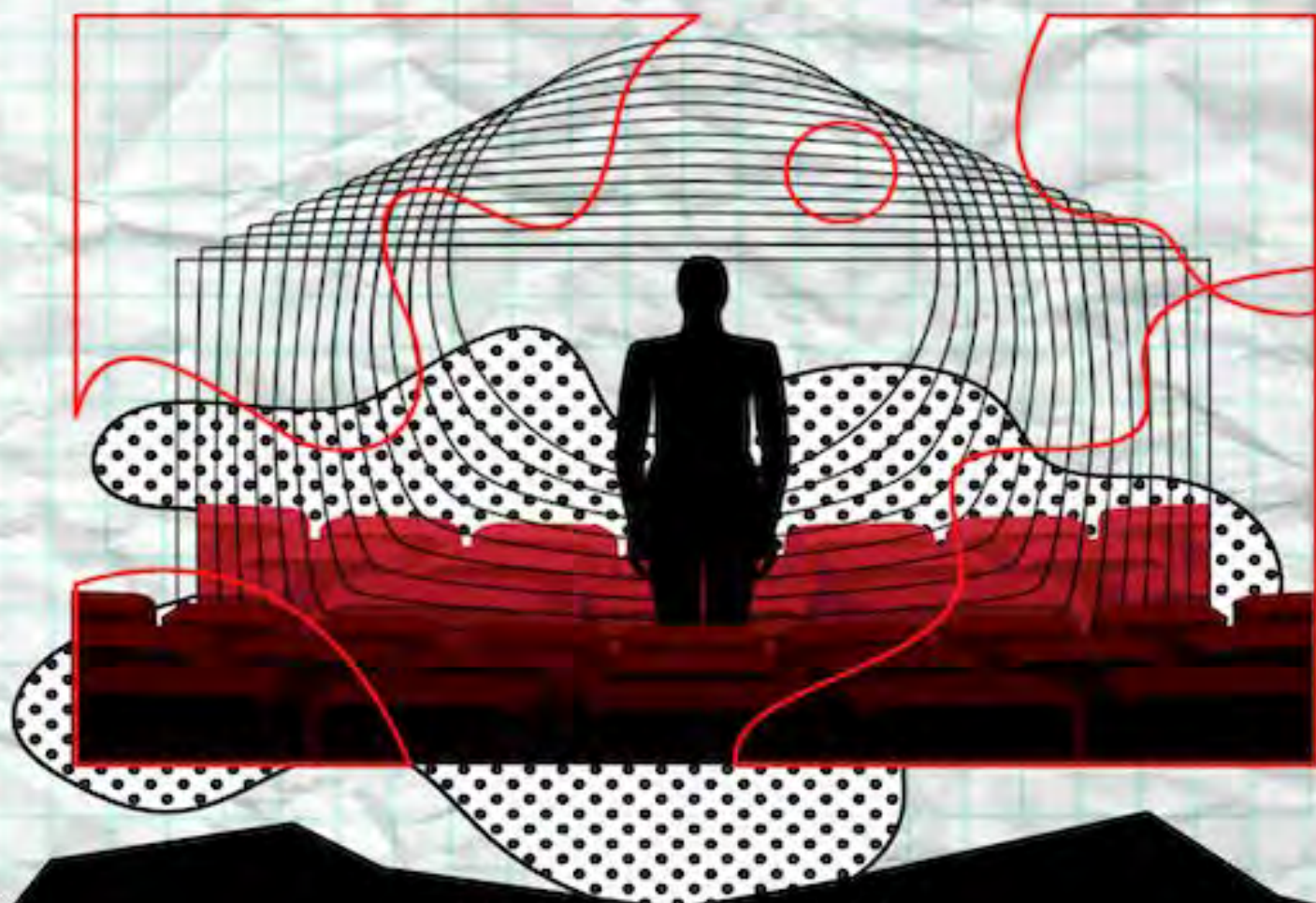


**HE SAID**

**YES / HE**

**SAID NO**

WRITTEN BY BERTOLT BRECHT



DIRECTED BY  
**OHRYONG OLIVIA KWON**

**DEC 2ND**  
**7:30 PM**

**DEC 3RD**  
**2:00 PM**

# Director's Note



Thank you so much for your interest in our stylized, presentational, didactic, playful, spontaneous, rebellious, and “strange” production, and thank you, also, for reading this program material. You might not have noticed but, for our show, the audience are the performers; and the performers are the audience. You are already part of us – there is no escape!

After watching our show, I wish that you, the precious members of the audience, would deem this not as "their" story but rather as "our" story. It is not the story onstage but rather that of offstage, which depicts the reality. Our endeavours in this production of constantly breaking down the fourth wall, blurring the boundary between the audience and the actor, as well as the boundary between the stage and the audience area, are all attempts to achieve that goal.

I wish that we, and by we I truly mean all of us, sit at the Playhouse on the show day and wonder: are we going in the right direction? Have we not been agreeing with ourselves too much? Deep down, do I actually agree? Do I give consent to the unquestioned custom? What is that custom? Does it actually seem reasonable? Have we been “saying yes”? Should we rather “say no”? If I can plant these questions of doubt in your unconscious mind, I would proudly call our show a success.

But most importantly, I hope you have fun watching this production. Especially because I have had so much fun creating this piece with my team. So, did you have fun? Did you think it was weird, different, and strange? Either case, I am content.

I sincerely would like to thank everyone who made this entire process possible. Now that I have gotten a glimpse of it, theatre truly was not a thing that you could do on your own regardless of how capable and confident you feel. I now realize how unfair it would be for someone to compliment “only” the director after watching a nice show. If you had a good impression after watching my production, which I hope is the case, it is only because I was lucky enough to meet a great team.

# Cast Biographies



## **ATHENA PARK, THE TEACHER**

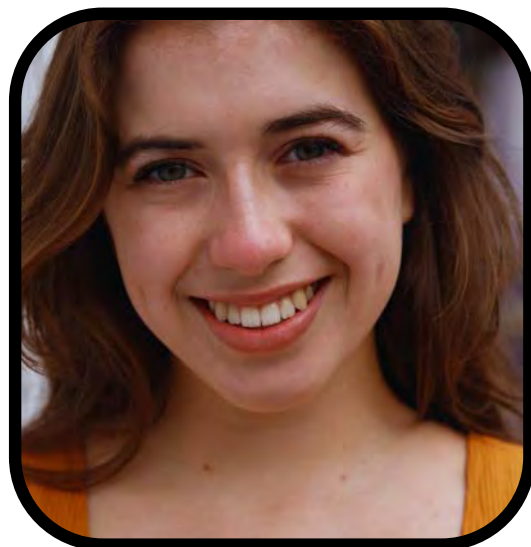
Athena Park is an award-winning actress, born on December 9, 2004. Athena is in her first year at the University of Toronto and is known for her work in film and television including *The Swearing Jar* (2021), *Ghostwriter* (2020) and *Holly Hobbie* (2018-2022). Athena has won four awards from the Joey Awards, Young Entertainer Awards, and the Young Artist Academy for her performances on *Holly Hobbie*, *Inconvenience*, and *Plan Z*, in addition to 10 nominations for multiple other roles.

Additionally, at the age of 11, Athena voiced numerous roles on *Bibleman: The Animated Adventures*.

Athena first appeared on screen at the age of eight in commercials and short films, while also working in theatre as an actress, singer and dancer in *Into The Woods* and *Snow White*. By working in theatre, Athena learned to act, sing and dance, leading her to become a triple threat. Her hobbies include riding her motorcycle and training towards her third-degree black belt in Taekwondo.

## **ELŹBIETA CHERNYAK, THE MOTHER / THE STUDENT**

Elżbieta (or Elizabeth) is a second-year student majoring in drama and cell and molecular biology, and is absolutely delighted to be in this year's Directors' Showcase! She acted in her first play at six years old and, since then, has fallen in love with all things theatre. She completed a two-year acting programme in Singapore, and now is a part of multiple shows at U of T. She is also a co-producer for UC Follies and has been acting in short films. She would like to extend a warm thank you to everyone for coming to see this show and having the opportunity to share art with you!





## JAMES ERIC JUMAWAY, THE BOY

James stands against systemic racism within and outside the University of Toronto. He dedicates his performance on *He Said Yes/ He said No* to those who were denied opportunities due to their skin colour or socioeconomic background, silenced, and/or used as a token of diversity. May we all find ways within ourselves to speak up against discrimination and identify room for improvement to create diversity and equity, while challenging the status quo, and

acknowledge that diversity comes in many colours and socioeconomic backgrounds. James is taking a double major in theatre and human geography at the University of Toronto (St. George). Catch him next as Lugen on *Disasters at Sea: Ignition Point* (CTV & Paramount+). IG: jamesericjumaway

# Creative Team Biographies

## OHRYONG (OLIVIA) KWON, DIRECTOR

Ohryong (pronounced as Oh-ree-young) is an actor who also has a serious passion for directing, writing poems, and boxing. She made her debut in *The Suspicious Court Girl* (2019), a South Korean play. Once the youngest member of the South Korean professional troupe “H-Project,” her acting experience on stage includes *Romeo and Juliet* (2019), *The Flower Tomb* (2021), and so on. She also performed in Korean films such as *Take New* (2022) and *Those Who Won't Marry* (2021). She loves Brecht and

is an avid believer in the notion that art can change the world, making it a better place. To her, theatre has always been something that is (and should be) fun. Ohryong is afraid of fish and is fond of milk tea. Her childhood crush/role model was Peter Pan and her lifelong wish is to live by the sea. Currently, a fourth and final year student studying drama and philosophy at the University of Toronto, she is delighted to make her directing debut through this wonderful opportunity!





## **GABRIEL WOO, COSTUME DESIGN**

Gabe is a natural born shopaholic and has been costume designing since their second year of university, working on shows such as *Distant Early Warning* (Buddies in Bad Times), *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (VCDS) and *Tom, Dick and Harry* (TCDS). Gabe is very grateful for the opportunity to work on this show as they slowly complete their goal of having a costume monopoly on every show at U of T this year.

## **LISA ZHAO, LIGHTING DESIGNER**

Lisa (Lisha) is a second-year student studying drama and management. She is passionate about theatre and performing arts and has been actively involved in theatre works on and off campus. Lisa is currently the lighting design and technical support mentee at Shakespeare in Action, as well as the lighting department lead at 881 Drama Club. Lisa is thrilled to work with an amazing team on Ohryong's project, *He Said Yes/He Said No*.



## **QILIN YU, STAGE MANAGER**

Qilin Yu (he/him) is a current undergraduate student at the Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies at U of T, also studying psychology, and education and society. Being an international student from Beijing, China, Qilin has been involved in theatre back home, and is continuing his journey in Toronto. Beginning as an actor, Qilin is now exploring other possibilities in different roles related to theatre including directing and stage management. He is also a current

executive producer for St. Michael's College Troubadours. Past credits in Toronto: *Siranoush* (ASM, Factory Theatre), *Snow in Midsummer* (Wychwood Theatre), *Harabogee & Me* (PA, Shakespeare in Action), Toronto Fringe 2022, SummerWorks 2022 (volunteer). Past credits in China: *Peter, Cat, and His Wolf*



*Classmate* 彼得、猫和他的狼同学 (as the wolf, BONA Starlight Theatre), Aranya Theatre Festival (volunteer), *Wo Tou Hui Guan* 窝头会馆 (as Yuan Guzohong 苑国钟, The Sixth High School Students Chinese Traditional Culture Inheritance High-End Forum; as Wang Liben 王立本, Beijing Middle School Student News Agency), *Bei Jie Nan Yuan* 北街南院 (director, Xicheng District People's Drama Festival), *Thunderstorm* 雷雨 (as Zhou Chong 周冲, Xicheng District People's Drama Festival), *The Mousetrap* (as Christopher Wren, Xicheng District People's Drama Festival). Qilin is grateful for the opportunity to work on this fantastic production with an amazing team.

## Special Thanks

I would like to thank professor Baņuta Rubess (you are the one who recommended this play. Your advice on blocking during your visits to rehearsals was more than helpful, and of course, you are the one who has guided us throughout this process. Thank you so much for making all of this possible. Thanks to our wonderful TAs Ben and Michael, and

Professor Snezana Pesic for your beautiful set designs. Thanks to Professor Douglas Eacho for your encouragement and your visit during rehearsals. Thanks to Professor Pia Kleber for helping us contact the Brecht Estate. Thank you to Ariel in truly all ways and especially for your help in getting the rights for each play and tech. Thank you to Chris for all your great technical support and advice. Thanks to Tara, and all the members of CDTPS who have been incredibly helpful and supportive throughout the entire process. Valeria, thanks for the lovely poster, as well as the promotional video, and I also want to extend my thanks to my GOAT peer directors: Bo, Liam, Chloë, and Val. Sara and Yesol, your support meant a lot to me.