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EL ÚLTIMO SUEÑO DE FRIDA Y DIEGO
(The Last Dream of Frida and Diego)

OPERAOMAHA.ORG/23-24
The Legend of Sleepy Hollow
by Washington Irving
October 6 – October 31, 2022

EVERY CHRISTMAS STORY EVER TOLD
(AND THEN SOME!)
by Michael Carleton, Jim FitzGerald, and John K. Alvarez
November 25 – December 18, 2022

What the Constitution Means to Me
by Heidi Schreck
February 2 – February 26, 2023

THE CHINESE LADY
by Lloyd Suh
March 30 – April 23, 2023

DANCE NATION
by Clare Barron
May 25 – June 25, 2023
DIRECTOR'S NOTES

"It is a beautiful thing to look at something long enough to really understand it. But it is so much more beautiful to be looked at long enough to be understood."

How can we be seen if we don't have the opportunity to be looked at? Yet, when the opportunity arises, to be looked at, how much of us are truly understood?

Afong Moy was the first Chinese woman ever to set foot in America. If I'm not mistaken, I do believe this is the first ever in Omaha: to present a beautiful play, written by a phenomenal Asian playwright, featuring two powerful Asian actors, telling the story of Afong Moy, here at the evocative BLUEBARN Theatre, in Omaha, Nebraska. This is nothing short of monumental.

The theme of this season is “choice” at the BLUEBARN, and for The Chinese Lady is CHOOSE RESILIENCE. I hope you will continue to choose live theatre, choose to be resilient, choose to walk with us, and choose to look at something, long enough to understand them.

Wai Yim, Director

WELCOME FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Greetings BLUEBARNERS!

Welcome back to the BLUEBARN Theatre, and of course a special welcome to any first-timers to our venue. If this does happen to be your first visit, today's play is but a small sample of the incredible breadth of works the BLUEBARN is proud to produce.

The Chinese Lady is a production fresh from The Public in New York City, having run there to great acclaim just about one year ago. It's another important piece in the body of works we bring to the stage - a piece with subjects as relevant, if not probably even more so, now than the time period in which this true story is set: 1830's New York. Combine a very important history lesson with some compelling social commentary and you have the formula to provoke us as audience members to think and consider how we can effect positive change in our world.

So thanks again for spending some time with us. We look forward to seeing you again. Enjoy the show!

Devin Fox, Board President
Presents

THE CHINESE LADY
by Lloyd Suh

March 30-April 23, 2023
Directed by Wai Yim

Brought from Guangzhou in 1834 as an “exotic oddity”, The Chinese Lady follows the true story of the first woman from China to enter America. Afong Moy is paraded around for the American public to indulge their voyeuristic curiosities by delivering a performance of her “ethnicity.” Over the course of 55 years, Afong Moy begins to challenge her views of herself, her culture in the hands of others, and her disconnect from her homeland while grappling with her search for her own identity in America.

This performance runs approximately 90 minutes with no intermission.

Please silence all cell phones, smart watches, and other noise-making devices.

The green tea cigarettes used in this performance are nicotine and carcinogen free.

Co-world premiere presented at Barrington Stage (Julianne Boyd, Artistic Director; Branden Huldeen, Artistic Producer), Pittsfield, MA, July 2018

Commissioned by and co-world premiere presented by Ma-Yi Theater Company (Ralph B. Pena, Artistic Director) in New York City

Developed with support of the Roe Green Award at Cleveland Play House.

BLUEBARN poster artwork by Sarah Rowe.
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Would you or your company like to sponsor a BLUEBARN production? Contact Heather at 402.345.1576 x6 or hhoyt@bluebarn.org.
"Footsteps of My Mother" is an art exhibition celebrating Asian American artists. The work tells stories about embracing one's heritage, honoring the journeys of those who came before, and negotiating identity in a world where you are seen as an "other."

Join us for a pre-show Q&A led by Jared Spence and featured artists who offer a wealth of united and varied experiences through their work.

Saturday, April 8th | 7:00 pm, before the 7:30 pm show
Featured Artist: Thomas Halbur

Sunday, April 16th | 5:30 pm, before the 6 pm show
Featured Artist: Yuanjun Zhou Chen

The "Footsteps of My Mother" exhibit is on display to the public 45 minutes prior to show and M-F during Box Office Hours, 10 am-4 pm.

Afterwords with the Cast and Creative Team
Friday, March 31st | Following the 7:30 pm show

Please join in community with the cast and creatives of "The Chinese Lady". The play's director, cast, and creative team will discuss their process in bringing this story to the stage.

Exploration of Chinese Teas with Artemis Tea
Sunday, April 2nd | 1:30 pm, before the 2 pm show

Andrea Lawse with Artemis Tea will offer samples of tea of Guangzhou, and discuss the place and importance of Guangzhou in Chinese tea culture.

For full Engagement Info visit bluebarn.org/engagement
ANTI-RACISM | ANTI-OPPRESSION ETHOS

BLUEBARN Theatre owns that systemic racism is real, always at play, and intersects with multiple systems of oppression, and that all must be fought against wherever and however they show up - in our community, in our theater, in ourselves.

ANTI-HARASSMENT & INCLUSION
BLUEBARN Theatre is committed to fostering a culture of civility, dignity, and respect as a right and responsibility of all who walk through its doors. Employees, guest artists, volunteers and patrons are entitled to and responsible for maintaining an environment of mutual trust - free from intimidation, exploitation, harassment, and discrimination. Offensive, abusive, or unwelcome verbal or physical conduct will not be tolerated. Adhering to this standard is vital to the BLUEBARN's mission.

DIVERSE AUDIENCE PRACTICES PRINCIPLE
Hospitality has always been one of the BLUEBARN's core values. Welcoming you to this space is our great joy. You are invited to bring your full self to the experience. Audible reactions and responses are absolutely welcome. For some people this is church, for some a meditative space, for others an escape, and we invite you to respect the ways that others engage in the experience based on their individual or cultural practices. By gathering at the BLUEBARN, you have committed to a shared experience in community with others, free from etiquette shaming, microaggressions, and entitled behavior.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
The BLUEBARN Theatre stands in honor of the first inhabitants and our ancestors. We acknowledge the land on which The BLUEBARN stands — the unceded territory of the Umonhon (‘um AHHah”) and ochethi Sakoiwic, We acknowledge the painful history of genocide and forced removal from this territory. We honor the generations of stewards, and we pay our respects to the many diverse Indigenous peoples still connected to this land. Visit native-land.ca to discover the native land on which you reside or currently find yourself.
ACCESS

BLUEBARN Theatre is committed to ensuring that our boundary-breaking theatre is accessible to everyone. We are committed to easing cost barriers for young professionals and students. We are committed to providing low-cost, last-minute opportunities for anyone to see a show. We are committed to recognizing those that give the most in service to our community.

BLUCrew - Young Patron Development Program
Anyone 35 or under is eligible. Members receive rush pricing for most Sunday and Thursday shows throughout the season with no upfront cost. Contact Sydney at sreadman@bluebarn.org to join BLUCrew.

Rush Tickets
Every unsold seat. Every show. $20. Available only at the box office, 45 minutes before curtain. If we’re not sold out, you have a new way in.

Nebraska Educators, Healthcare Workers, and Military Personnel
$5 off all tickets. All the time.

Radical Hospitality
Sometimes you need a break. It doesn’t matter why. For pay-what-you-wish tickets to any show, contact Sydney at sreadman@bluebarn.org.

Assisted Listening Devices
These are available at the box office for mainstage productions. BLUEBARN also utilizes Listen Everywhere, a smartphone application that allows you to stream audio directly to your own headphones and Bluetooth compatible hearing aids. See our box office staff for assistance or scan the QR code provided.

An American Sign Language interpreted performance is offered for The Chinese Lady on April 13th, generously supported by the Nebraska Arts Council.

An Audio Description Service is provided through Outlook Nebraska upon request. Audio described performances fall on the 3rd Thursday of each run, when requested.

Sensory Kits are available at the box office and the lobby is always available as a respite from the performance environment. Sensory Kits provided by Autism Action Partnership.

To request these or additional accommodations, or for more information, please call (402) 345-1576 or email Sydney at sreadman@bluebarn.org.
First, let me introduce some lessons about Chinese names: We put our Last name first, followed by our given names. We also make our given names up instead of inheriting them from classical or religious cannons. Our parents use characters with wishful and aspiring meanings in our names, hoping their children will get the very best as suggested in their names.

Afong Moy is such a beautiful name. The Chinese character "Fong" means fragrance and virtuousness. "Moy," which means plum, was presumably her last name. Although – is this her real name? The pronunciation of "Moy" also means "sister," which is a very common suffix in young females' nicknames. Besides, we do not even know whether her real name contains the character "Fong." Upon her arrival, the local newspaper described her as "Julia Foochee ching-chang king." The ambivalence in her name can only tell us one thing: We do not know who she is. From 1834-1850, we do not even know her name after we looked at her trapped in an exhibition for 17 years.

Besides Afong Moy, there were more objectified colored women in exhibits in the early 1800s Europe and the U.S. There was the "Hottentot Venus," who was brought to Europe from the Khoekhoe group in Western Africa. She was on display as a hypersexual attraction because of her steatopygic body. Her name is Ssehura. There was also "The Bearded Lady", an indigenous woman brought from Mexico to the U.S. and Europe, advertised as a hybrid between animal and human due to her appearance of Hirsutism. Her name is Julia Pastrana.
"Come to see things you've never seen before and heard before!" This may be how you found these colored, abnormal looking, yet hypersexual bodies in various performance venues. Besides these ladies, you may find wild elephants, dancing monkeys, and counting horses. White men with blackened faces acted out lazy, ignorant, and superstitious African Americans (Blackface Minstrelsy); Cowboys and Native Americans paraded on horsebacks on the great plains (The Wild West Show), racing to Europe from right here – from our very own Omaha, Nebraska (premiered here in 1883).

The Chinese Lady is a play about a play – what theatre scholars call metatheatre. I want to add more layers to its historical perspective: This play premiered in 2018, soon after the Trump administration took over America's political stage. This play has been celebrated nationwide post-COVID, in reaction to "Asian Hate," when the image of Chinese and even all Asians was once again condemned as filthy, virus-initiated. Furthermore, please do not forget that March 2023 is the two-year anniversary of the Asian-targeted hate crime, the mass shooting in Atlanta.

Today, we acknowledge what has happened on a historical stage; At the same time, we witness the gap of what remains unchanged, and unknown. Playwright Branden Jacobs-Jenkins writes in "An Octoroon," another contemporary work that echoes a theatre piece in the 19th century: "I don't know what a real slave sounded like. And neither do you." We as well don't know what Afong Moy sounded like. What she ate like. What she walked like on her bounded foot. We still don't even know what her real name is. This woman embodies our history as Asian/Americans: who have been looked at and yet overlooked.
CAST OF CHARACTERS
Afong Moy...............................................................Lisa Tejero*
Atung.................................................................Jimmy Nguyen

PRODUCTION CREATIVES
Director...........................................................................Wai Yim
Producing Artistic Director.................................Susan Clement
Dramaturg.................................................................Bindi Kang
Scenic Designer............................................................Bill Van Deest
Costume Designer.......................................................Izumi Inaba**
Production Manager & Props Design....................Amy Reiner
Sound Design.............................................................Bill Kirby
Lighting Design.....................................................Maya Pacana-Bredenkamp
Stage Manager.......................................................Madelyn Hubbard
Assistant Stage Manager........................................Cecilia Poon
Costume Coordinator.............................................Kerri Drake
Scenic Artist.............................................................Craig Lee
Sound Board Operator..........................................Mindy Cotner
Master Carpenter......................................................Shane Staiger
Electrician.............................................................Sally Grosenbach
Art Curator, Mammel Lobby.................................Jared Spence

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

** Represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.

BLUEBARN Theatre is an Associate Member of the National New Play Network.

NNPN is an alliance of professional theatres across the country who are evolving and exploring the frontiers of the American theatre. BLUEBARN has long been Omaha's home for professional contemporary theatre, bringing diverse perspectives, new voices, and provocative work to our community. The National New Play Network has become the most powerful, growing force in new play development, production, and promotion in the nation.

BLUEBARN is committed to seeking out collaborative relationships with other NNPN member theatres, producing and supporting the work of the most dynamic emerging voices in contemporary playwriting, and promoting local artists on a platform with national reach.

To support New Play Development at the BLUEBARN, contact Susan at sclement@bluebarn.org. To learn more about NNPN and their programs, visit NNPN.org.
CAST BIOS

Lisa Tejero
Lisa Tejero first met Wai at Princeton's McCarter Theatre for Mary Zimmerman's The White Snake, and they have been friends and collaborators ever since. Lisa was recently in an all-female non-binary production of King John at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, where she appeared in Bring Down the House and The White Snake. She will be reprising her role in King John @ Actor's Theatre of Louisville this fall. Favorite projects of the over 100 plays that she has been a part of include Mary Zimmerman's Metamorphoses (Broadway at Circle in the Square); Argonautika (Lookingglass); Wit (Hypocrite Theatre); King Lear - as king Lear (BackRoomShakespeare); Cymbeline (American Players Theatre); Macbeth (Oak Park Festival). She is an artistic associate of Chicago's Lookingglass Theatre. Some theatres she has worked at include Berkeley Rep, Guthrie, Cincinnati Playhouse, Arena Stage, Court Theatre, Huntington, Mark Taper Forum, Milwaukee Rep, St. Louis Rep, Seattle Rep, Shakespeare Theatre Company DC, Goodman Theatre, and Steppenwolf.

Jimmy Nguyen - He/Him
Jimmy Nguyen is a Vietnamese-American actor originally from Omaha, Nebraska. He appeared in the BLUEBARN's Big Damn Door festival as "A-Wal" in The Emperor and The Fool. He has worked as a freelance actor at various theatre institutions across the country including The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.; The Black Hills Playhouse in South Dakota; Hope Summer Repertory Theatre in Michigan; and a world premiere of a new Asian-American musical called Gold Mountain at Utah Shakespeare Festival. Jimmy spent eight months in San Francisco as a scenic artist for Berkeley Repertory Theatre and was a student at the Dell'Arte School of Physical Theatre for their summer intensive, where he learned elemental movement, mask-work, and clowning. His identity as an Asian-American guides his practice and how he approaches his craft. As a kid seeing Asian-Americans in the media repeatedly portrayed as bullied school nerds, gas station clerks, laundromat workers, cab drivers, etc., he decided he wanted to change that narrative. Every day, he continues to challenge what it means to be an Asian-American actor. website: jimmynguyenactor.com
CREATIVE BIOS

Wai Yim - He/They - Director

Wai Yim is an actor, director, choreographer, and playwright. He is the Artistic Director of aetherplough in Omaha, and the Managing Director of Token Theatre in Chicago. Wai recently appeared in Mary Zimmerman’s *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci* at the Goodman Theatre, which toured to Shakespeare Theatre Company in D.C. and The Old Globe in San Diego. Chicago credits: *A Christmas Carol, The White Snake, The King of Hell’s Palace, Postnation, and King of the Yees* (Goodman Theatre); Chimerica (TimeLine Theatre); *ZAC EFRON* (Token Theatre). Regional credits: Mary Zimmerman’s *The White Snake* (The Old Globe, McCarter Theatre, Wuzhen Theatre Festival in China); *The Oldest Boy* (Unicorn Theatre); *Nomad Motel* (Horizon Theatre Company); In Omaha, he’s worked with The Rose, BLUEBARN, Omaha Playhouse, SNAP!, Shelterbelt, Nebraska Shakespeare, and Nebraska Theatre Caravan. Film: *North of the 10, Fatal Influence: Like, Follow, Survive*. TV: *Work in Progress, Power Book IV: Force, neXt, Chicago PD, The Chi, Patriot*. Social Medias: @whyym

Bindi Kang - She/Her/Hers - Dramaturg

Bindi Kang is a dramaturg and scholar now resides in Lincoln, Nebraska. As a freelance dramaturg, she has developed new works with several artists at various cultural institutions, such as Nebraska Repertory Theatre, Yangtze Repertory Theatre of America, New York Chinese Opera Society and School of the Arts at Columbia University. She is a doctoral candidate in the Program of Theatre and Performance at City University of New York Graduate Center, after receiving her Master of Art in East Asian Languages and Cultures at Columbia University. Her artistic interest overlaps with her research specializations, which encompass Asian and American experience and representation in theatre and performances, theories of theatricality, theatrical practices in relation to social movement, performance of everyday life and especially its intersections with contemporary digital culture. She is also a temporary lecturer at University of Nebraska at Lincoln.

Maya Pacana-Bredenkamp - Lighting Design

Maya returned to her native Omaha in 2012. She received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Technical Theatre from the University of Nebraska-Kearney, an internship as Assistant Lighting Designer at American Repertory Theater at Harvard University, and Master of Fine Arts in Theatrical Design from Northwestern University. Her career began at Walt Disney World-Epcot as a lighting designer, and an Event Technical Specialist for Walt Disney Entertainment. Next, she was a Systems Project Manager for Barbizon Lighting in Orlando and Chicago. She joined Schuler Shook Theater Consultants as a Theater Specialist working on new and renovated performance spaces. Maya designed for several Chicago Storefront theater companies. Maya is very excited to return after making her debut at the BLUEBARN in November. She would like to thank her family for their support!
Bill Van Deest - Scenic Design
Bill is the resident lighting and scenic designer for Creighton Theatre where he's designed sets and/or lights for over 100 theatre and dance productions. Bill and his wife, Carol, are the resident lighting designers for American Midwest Ballet. Bill received Theatre Arts Guild (TAG) awards for his scenic designs for the BLUEBARN Theatre's *Night of The Iguana* (2002), the Shelterbelt Theater's *I Am My Own Wife* (2007), the BLUEBARN's *Seascape* (2008), and SNAP/Shelterbelt's *Cybouren Park* (2013). He also won Omaha Entertainment Awards (OEAs) for the scenic designs of *I Am My Own Wife* and *Seascape*, and Creighton's production of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, as well as for the lighting design of *The Crucible* at the Omaha Community Playhouse. Bill has been recognized by TAG with both the Theatre Educator Award (2004-2005) and the Norm and Louise Filbert Lifetime Achievement Award (2014), and by the Great Plains Theater Festival with the Lifetime Achievement Award. When not in a theatre or classroom, Bill relaxes with Carol at threecatsfarm.

Izumi Inaba - She/Her - Costume Designer
BLUEBARN Theatre: debut. Off-Broadway: *How To Defend Yourself* (New York Theatre Workshop). Recent regional: *Bald Sisters* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); *Fen* (Court Theatre); *A Wife of Salesman* (Milwaukee Repertory Theatre); *An American Dream* (Kentucky Opera.) Upcoming: *Last Night and Night Before* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company), *Clue* (Indiana Reparatory Theatre), and *Origin Story* (Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park). United Scenic Artists Local USA 829.

Madelyn Hubbard - She/Her - Stage Manager
Madelyn is an arts manager and theatre professional in Omaha, Nebraska, where she was born and raised. Madelyn truly loves the arts. Being a part of the process from the first design meeting to taking down the last piece at strike is what drives her every day to become a better professional. @lilmisshubbard

Cecilia Poon - She/Her - Assistant Stage Manager
Growing up in Hong Kong, Cecilia embraces her Cantonese Chinese immigrant identity in theatre and beyond. She’s been an avid backstage volunteer since 2010 with the Waterworks Players in Virginia, the Inland Valley Repertory Theatre in California, and the Omaha Community Playhouse. She is the Vice President of the Great Plains Theatre Commons Board. Performance credits: *A Christmas Carol* (Waterworks virtual play), *Mary Jane* (OCP play reading), *Smart People* (The UNION play reading), 1776 (OCP musical reading), *Beastary* (Fire Belly Rep), *The Emperor and the Fool* (BLUEBARN Theatre), and *Buried Phoenix* (GPTC Play Reading). Stage management credit: *Bye Bye Birdie* (IVRT). She thanks her family, friends, and peers in aging and mental health for believing in the power of art to connect, engage, and heal.

Craig Lee - Scenic Artist
Mr. Lee has lived in the Midtown area of Omaha since 1985. His work has appeared on virtually every local live theatre stage since then, as well as in movies, television, and publications. He has worked with the finest designers in the area on countless shows and has painted indoor and outdoor murals all over Omaha. At his studio he has completed commissioned paintings, drawings, and production designs. He has taught scenic painting and worked with students on many university productions. He has proudly supported and collaborated with BLUEBARN Theatre for much of its existence and is extremely fortunate to call the talented, passionate professionals who work here some of his very best friends.
Mindy Cotner - Sound Board Operator

Mindy has been involved in Omaha-area theater since age 11, first appearing onstage as Lullaby League #2 in a production of *The Wizard of Oz*. After earning a B.F.A from the University of Nebraska Omaha Writer's Workshop, she came to roost in technical theater and discovered the joys of working on the "dark side." Favorite productions in her 18 seasons with BLUEBARN include *The 39 Steps*, *Spring Awakening*, and *Every Brilliant Thing*. She has also worked on several productions with the Ollie Webb Center's Art of Imagination, appearing onstage as the Banshee and Selkie Queen in *Fear Liath*, and running follow spot for *The White Gander* and *Morozko*.

RESIDENT CREATIVE BIOS

Susan Clement - She/Her - Producing Artistic Director


Amy Reiner - She/Her - Director of Production & Props Design

Amy joined the BLUEBARN in 2012 as Production Manager and Properties Master. Amy went to college at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln where she received a B.F.A in technical theatre with an emphasis on Scenic and Lighting Design. After leaving Lincoln, she spent three years freelancing in Los Angeles in the fields of film and television. Returning to her hometown of Omaha in 2000, she worked as Properties Master for 12 years at The Omaha Community Playhouse where some of her favorite shows were *Violet*, *The Battle of Shallowford* and *The Fantasticks*. Some of Amy’s favorite BLUEBARN shows include *Red*, *American Buffalo*, *the 39 Steps*, and *A Very Die Hard Christmas*!. In her free time Amy enjoys volunteering at a few places including HETRA, a Gretna based equine therapy program. She especially loves her fur children Ethel, Norman, Pearl and Rose, as well as her goldfish Elmer Fudd and Sylvester.

Bill Kirby - He/Him - Technical Director & Sound Design

Bill joined the BLUEBARN staff as the Resident Creative and Technical Director in 2019, after working as a freelance designer for the two previous seasons. Favorite BLUEBARN productions include *Venus in Fur*, *Wakey, Wakey*, *Indecent* (OEA Award for Outstanding Sound Design), and *Red Summer* (OEA Award). Before relocating to Omaha in 2017, Bill spent 10 years as the resident sound designer and head sound engineer at Princeton University's McCarter Theatre Center. Bill's favorite McCarter productions include sound designing the original workshop production of Danai Gurira's *Eclipsed* and serving as the production sound engineer for the world premiere of Christopher Durang's *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, which would go on to win the 2013 Tony Award for best play. Kirby has worked nationally and internationally, including productions at the New York Fringe Festival, LA's Kirk Douglas Theatre, the Wuzhen Grand Theatre in China, and the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis. Bill is a graduate of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Web: kirbysound.live
BLUEBARN Staff
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Producing Artistic Director

Erika Sieff  
Managing Director

Amy Reiner  
Director of Production & Properties Master

Heather Hoyt  
Development Director

Bill Kirby  
Resident Creative & Technical Director

Sydney Readman  
Front of House / Box Office Manager

Marti Baumert  
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July 1, 2021 - February 28, 2023

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Bill Kirby
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