

Crowded Fire Theater

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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**Crowded Fire Theater presents Mia Chung's
YOU FOR ME FOR YOU**
A heart-wrenching and magical North Korean border crossing tale.

March 9-April 1, 2017
at the POTRERO STAGE (formerly known as the Thick House)
1695 18th St, San Francisco
(press opening Monday, March 13)

San Francisco - Crowded Fire Theater (CFT) Launching Crowded Fire's 2017 season of new and contemporary plays is the Bay Area premiere of Mia Chung's *YOU FOR ME FOR YOU* directed by M. Graham Smith. *YOU FOR ME FOR YOU* is an *Alice In Wonderland*-like tale of sacrifice, love, and patriotism told from the perspective of two sisters fleeing North Korea. When Minhee and Junhee are torn apart at the border as they attempt to flee the Best Nation in the World, each must race across time and space to be together again—navigating the perilous Land of the Free and the treacherous terrain of personal belief. *YOU FOR ME FOR YOU* was hailed by *The Washingtonian* as "...*(a) magical universe...a dizzying, sometimes surreal tale...endlessly creative...*" in its world premiere production at Woolly Mammoth Theatre in Washington D.C.

YOU FOR ME FOR YOU reflects Crowded Fire's uncompromising persistence in disrupting and complicating essential cultural conversations. Regarding this selection, Artistic Director Mina Morita states "This past year we witnessed extreme divisiveness in our country, along with a rise in bigotry that challenges our foundational identity as a nation of immigrants. I wanted to champion a piece that spoke to that. *YOU FOR ME FOR YOU* engages in a particularly timely interrogation of how individual identity is inextricably linked to nationalism. It asks us 'what is sacrificed in our fastidious blindness to systemic societal- and often government supported- injustices?'. Chung mixes humor, whimsy, and absurdism with the heart-wrenching pain that accompanies great sacrifice and sisterly love." Crowded Fire is proud to present the first Bay Area production of Chung's work, whose plays have previously been developed locally through both the Bay Area Playwrights Festival and Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor.

YOU FOR ME FOR YOU premiered in 2012 at Woolly Mammoth Theater in DC, in association with Ma-Yi Theater. Since then, it has received productions across the United States and in the UK. In preparation for the play's upcoming second publication, Chung is working with Crowded Fire and director M. Graham Smith during the rehearsal process. Of this opportunity, Chung states "It's a great boon to get to dive back into this play through Crowded Fire's production process as I make some final revisions. *YOU FOR ME FOR YOU* has been such an important writing teacher for me, and I feel so lucky to share the journey of this play with the Bay Area."

The Crowded Fire cast features an all local team including Kathryn Han (Minhee) and Grace Ng (Junhee), as the two sisters. Jomar Tagatac morphs into as many as 16 roles including the Smuggler. Elissa Beth Stebbins plays a range of women, all named Liz, whom Junhee meets in America. Julian Green rounds out the cast as the Man from the South. Designers include Maya Linke (scenic), David K H Elliott (lighting), Michelle Mulholland (costume), James Ard (sound), and Devon LaBelle (props).

YOU FOR ME FOR YOU runs at the Potrero Stage (formerly known as the Thick House), 1695 18th Street in San Francisco March 9 through April 1 (press opening Monday, March 13).

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BIOS:

Mia Chung (playwright) is the author of *YOU FOR ME FOR YOU*, *CATCH AS CATCH CAN*, *THIS EXQUISITE CORPSE*, and *SKIN IN THE GAME*. Recently, Mia was honored with the 2016 Stavis Playwright Award. *YOU FOR ME FOR YOU* had its UK premiere at The Royal Court Theatre in London (December 2015) and its world premiere at Woolly Mammoth Theatre (in association with Ma-Yi, supported by NEA; 2012). Past productions: *Company One*, Portland Playhouse, and Mu Performing Arts/Guthrie Theater. The play is published by Bloomsbury Methuen Drama. Mia's work has been supported by awards, fellowships, and workshops, including the Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Berkeley Rep Ground Floor, Civilians' R&D Group, Hedgebrook Women Playwrights Festival, Icicle Creek Theatre Festival, Inkwell, LAByrnth, NYTW, RISCA, Southern Rep, the Stella Adler Studio, and TCG. She is a member of New Dramatists, a Huntington Playwright Fellow, and an alumni member of the Ma-Yi Writers Lab and the Playwrights Realm.

M. Graham Smith (Director) is a San Francisco-based Director, Educator and Producer. He is an O'Neill National Directing Fellow and an Oregon Shakespeare Festival FAIR Fellow. He's directed at HERE in New York City, and venues in San Francisco including A.C.T., Aurora Theatre, Central Works, The EXIT Theatre, PlayGround, Brava, The Playwright's Foundation, Cutting Ball Theatre, Berkeley Playhouse, Golden Thread, SF Opera, and New Conservatory & Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor. He directed the West Coast Premiere of *JERRY SPRINGER: THE OPERA* in SF with Ray of Light and *TRUFFALDINO SAYS NO* at Shotgun Players, winning Best Director for the Bay Area Critics Circle. He is thrilled to return to Crowded Fire where he directed *SHE RODE HORSES LIKE THE STOCK EXCHANGE*. Recent credits: *THE LADY ONSTAGE* at Profile Theatre in Portland, Oregon, *THE LIAR* at Occidental College in Los Angeles as an Edgerton Foundation Fellow, the World Premiere of Christopher Chen's *HOME INVASION* with 6NewPlays and *DEAL WITH THE DRAGON* at Edinburgh Fringe. He teaches at A.C.T.'s actor-training programs, Berkeley Rep School of Theatre and at Barcelona's premiere Meisner Technique program in Spain.

CAST:

JULIAN GREEN (Man from the South) trained at A.C.T (American Conservatory theater) in San Francisco. He has also studied under Patrick Russell, Dan Flapper, Francine Torres, and Nick Gabriel, among others. Recent appearances include Elegba in *THE BROTHERS SIZE* at Theatre Rhino, Kristopher in *MOMMA AT TWILIGHT* at lower bottom players, Keem in the film *THUG*, and various commercials. Julian has also appeared as Tito in 3GT's production of *LOW HANGING FRUIT*, as well as Sam in the stage production of *ENTANGLEMENT*.

KATHRYN HAN (Minhee) Theater credits include: Ana Smith in *THE BOOK CLUB PLAY* (Center REP), Aphra Behn in *OR*, (Dragon Theatre), Christmas Eve in *AVENUE Q* (Los Altos Stage Company), Gemze in *DU BARRY WAS A LADY* (42nd Street Moon) alongside comedian Bruce Vilanch, and Harper Pitt in *ANGELS IN AMERICA: PERESTROIKA* and Sarah King in *APPOINTMENT WITH DEATH* (Foothill Theatre). She studied musical theatre and Shakespeare at A.C.T. and dance at Stanford University.

Grace Ng (Junhee) Theater credits include: Miranda in *Bagyo*(TheatreFIRST), Jeannie in *HAIR* (Bay Area Musicals!), Estrella in *LIFE IS A DREAM* (The Cutting Ball Theater), Chava in *FIDDLER ON THE ROOF* (Berkeley Playhouse), Noreen in *FAULTED* (foolsFURY), Min Li in *WHERE THE MOUNTAIN MEETS THE MOON* (Bay Area Children's Theatre & 2014 Winner of Theatre Bay Area Awards). Grace holds a BA in Theatre Arts from San Francisco State University and has trained in New York's Circle in the Square and San Francisco's A.C.T.

Elissa Beth Stebbins (Liz) was seen most recently as part of the Shotgun Players repertory company in both *THE VILLAGE BIKE* and *CAUGHT*. Other recent credits include: the title character in *THE LITTLE PRINCE* at Marin Theater Company, Moretta/Lucetta in *THE ROVER* (Shotgun Players), Chorus Lead in

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ANTIGONE (Cutting Ball), Elizabeth Bennet in PRIDE AND PREJUDICE (Livermore Shakespeare Festival), and Patty in THE SECRETARIES (Crowded Fire), among others. Elissa graduated from Santa Clara University with a B.A. in Theatre and English, and has continued her training with Shakespeare & Company. She is a proud recipient of Theatre Bay Area's Titan Award, and is a TBA FACES honoree.
www.elissabethstebbins.com

Jomar Tagatac (Smuggler, etc) is excited to make his Crowded Fire debut. Recent roles include Perlita/General Ledesma in DOGEATERS (Magic Theater), Furtunado/Mata in MONSTRESS (A.C.T The Strand), Chip in VALUE OVER REPLACEMENT (Playground, Clarin(Segismundo u/s) in LIFE IS A DREAM (CalShakes) and Lin Bo in CAUGHT (Shotgun Players) Jomar holds a B.A in Theater from San Diego State University and an M.F.A in Acting from American Conservatory Theater.

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For Calendar Editors:

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directed by M. Graham Smith

March 9 - April 1 (Press Opening March 13)

Potrero Stage (formerly known as Thick House), 1695 18th St., SF

PERFORMANCES:

Wed-Saturdays 8 PM with Special Opening Night Performance on Monday, March 13, 8PM

Tickets: Prices range from \$10-\$35 progressively during the course of the run.

We offer Pay-What-You-Can Preview performances and student/senior/group rates.

Tickets: Visit www.crowdedfire.org for more information and to purchase tickets.

Box Office by phone (415) 523-0034 ext 1

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