

CPP Department of Theatre and New Dance presents



November 15-24, 2024

University Theatre

Building 25



CalPoly
Pomona



WE ARE PUSSY RIOT OR EVERYTHING IS PR

Written by Barbara Hammond

Directed by Bernardo Solano

Featuring

Sarah Boiko, Dom Carson, Aaron Courseault, Araceli I. Gonzalez-Monárrez,
Amber Lopez, Meleena Lopez, River Myaskovsky, Justin Ni,
Sadaf Sharif, Zachary Supancheck, Eleanor Yauney

Scenic Designer

Bernice Lopez

Costume Designer

Ivy Smith

Lighting Designer

Andre Lee

Sound Designer

Erin Bednarz

Projections Designer

Brian S. Newman

Music Director

Joseph Montoya

Stage Manager

Ava B. Ferreira

There will be no intermission.

WE ARE PUSSY RIOT OR EVERYTHING IS P.R. was commissioned by the Contemporary American Theater Festival, Shepherdstown, West Virginia (Ed Herendeen, Founder & Producing Director, Peggy McKowen, Associate Producing Director), which produced the world premiere in 2015.

WE ARE PUSSY RIOT OR EVERYTHING IS P.R. was developed at Emerson Stage at Emerson College.

Warning: This production includes fog and haze, gunshot sound effects, simulated violence, profanity, and possibly scary moments. Please take care.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

On February 21, 2012, five young women began a performance inside Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. The women were Pussy Riot, the Russian feminist punk band. Film of their being pulled off the church altar was combined with other performance footage of their song "Punk Prayer: Mother of God Drive Putin Away" and uploaded to the internet, immediately becoming a viral sensation.

Three prominent members of Pussy Riot, Maria Alyokhina, Nadya Tolokonnikova and Yekaterina Samutsevich, were soon arrested and held without bail. Their trial, which led to a conviction for "hooliganism motivated by religious hatred", was widely publicized and received international attention. Their sentence of two years in prison was protested around the world.

This play mostly occurs during the trial; in fact, almost the entire text is taken verbatim from court transcripts, interviews and other public comments. It travels freely between the court proceedings, flashbacks and moments of fantasy courtesy of a composite character in the form of a university history professor who has been imprisoned and who will never see the light of day again. Yes, it is reminiscent of dissident leader Alexei Navalny, who "mysteriously" died in a Russian gulag earlier this year. The actors in the play tell us that they are portraying Russian "yorodivyy" who in Russian history are the "holy fools", the Orthodox tradition of saints who strive with imaginary insanity to reveal the insanity of the world. Actors portraying yorodivyy portraying characters in a nightmare of unbelievable reality.

This play was written in 2015. It could have been written in 2024. Among many things, it's a cautionary tale for those of us here in the United States. We recently were lucky enough to meet Nadya Tolokonnikova at an event in Los Angeles. Minutes before, she told the audience that Vladimir Putin is afraid of democracy and begged us to vote on November 5th. And as playwright Barbara Hammond writes, the play is "about a narrow window of time where activist art, religion, and politics clashed on the world stage."

We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to be entertained, perhaps to reflect, and to consider what we can individually and collectively do to ensure we don't do this to our own citizens.

-Bernardo Solano, Director



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.

CAST

Katya Amber Lopez
 Nadya Sadaf Sharif
 Masha Meleena Lopez
 Sergei Dom Carson
 Guard / TV Host / Security 1 Aaron Courseault
 Prosecutor / Defense / Russian Language Professor /
 British Feminist Lecturer /
 Pussy Riot Member..... Araceli I. Gonzalez-Monárrez
 Devout Woman / Lieutenant /
 Anon Pussy Riot Member Eleanor Yauney
 Putin / Cossack / Doctor / Pussy Riot Member..... Justin Ni
 Reporter / Doctor..... River Myaskovsky
 Security 2 / Madonna / Judge /
 Anna Politkovskaya / Pussy Riot Member..... Sarah Boiko
 Pytor / Patriarch / Doctor / Pussy Riot Member. Zachary Supancheck

PRODUCTION TEAM

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Production Manager | Brian S. Newman |
| Director of Theatre Facilities | Jonathan Bastow |
| Technical Director | Kenneth Blenc |
| Costume Shop Manager | Lexy Perez |
| Faculty Design Mentors | Evan Bartoletti, Jesse Portillo |
| Acting Mentor/Vocal Coach..... | Sayda Trujillo |
| Assistant Director | Andrei McAllister |
| Dramaturg..... | Evan Graham |
| Assistant Stage Manager..... | Henry Fan |
| Assistant Stage Manager..... | Lily Barnes |
| Assistant Scenic Designer..... | Samantha Ng |
| Assistant Costume Designer | Teresa Acosta |
| Assistant Sound Designer | Nico Salazar |
| Assistant Video Designer & Content Editor | David Valdez |
| LX Programmer/Board Operator | Ellis Buongiorno |
| Audio Engineer | Nico Salazar, Macallan Snell |
| Spotlight Operator..... | Hailey Mitchell |
| Set Dresser | Matthew Schroeder |
| Scene Shop Assistant | Anthony Arzate |
| Scenic Painting Charge | Darcy Egebakken |
| Scenic Paint Crew | Meleena Lopez, Kyla McIntyre |
| | Haley Rodriguez |
| Deck Crew | Jackson Burton, David Rodriguez |
| Wardrobe Crew | Cherry Serrano, Lu Yeh |
| Props Crew..... | Chris Carillo, Hailey Mitchell, Troy Woodfin |
| Scene Shop Crew | River Myaskovsky, Ethan Serrano, |
| | Tedy Setlak, Itaka Ushijima |
| Costume Shop Crew | Jennifer Edwards, Aylin Galvan, |
| | Gianna Lin, Bella Petrone, Thomas Ramos |
| Electrics Crew..... | Mya Alvarado, Amber Lopez, |
| | Andrei Mcallister, Matthew Schroeder |
| House Manager | Isabel Sanchez |
| Box Office..... | Minh Tran |

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Teresa Acosta (Assistant Costume Designer) is a senior majoring in communication in the multimedia journalism option and minoring in theatre. She is also the Arts & Culture editor for *The Poly Post*. She transferred from East Los Angeles College where she earned a Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF) award for her makeup designs for *Skin of Our Teeth* in 2023. She would like to thank the entire cast and crew for welcoming her into the production, her team at *The Poly Post* and her family for all their love and support.

Erin Bednarz (Sound Designer) works in sound, music, production, and performance. Awards: LA Drama Critics Circle, Bay Area Critics Circle, Gregory (Seattle, WA), Broadway World (Regional). Press mentions: *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*. Off-Broadway: *MAC BETH* (Red Bull, Hunter Theater Project), *The Convent* (Rattlestick). California: *The Very Best People*, *Smile* (IAMA), Sara Porkalob's *Dragon Cycle* (Geffen Playhouse, Marin Theatre Company, Center Rep, Diversionary); *Lavender Men* (Skylight). Teaching: Pomona College, Cal Poly Pomona, NYU, Cornish College of the Arts, University of Washington. @play_pranks



Sarah Boiko (Anna Politkovskaya/Pussy Riot Member) is a first year Marketing Major planning to minor in Theatre with an emphasis in Acting at Cal Poly Pomona. This is her first show at CPP. Previously, she has performed *The Wizard of Oz* and *Alice in Wonderland*.



Dominick Carson (Sergei) is a transfer student in his second semester at Cal Poly Pomona, majoring in Theatre with an emphasis in acting. He is honored to be acting in his first production with the school, one year after he performed in his first live production with the Mt SAC Children's Theatre program.



Aaron Courseault (Guard / TV Host / Security 1) is a student at Cal Poly Pomona and thoroughly enjoys his time in theater. He has done many shows with the department including *Mr. Burns*, *As You Like It*, *Office Hour*, and two student led one act plays. His time with the department has helped him gain clarity on his future post graduation.



Araceli I. Gonzalez-Monárrezis (Prosecutor/Defense/Russian Language Professor/British Feminist Lecturer/Pussy Riot Member) a Visual Communication Design Major and Theatre Minor at Cal Poly Pomona. *We Are Pussy Riot Or Everything Is P.R.* is her first show at Cal Poly.

Henry Fan (Assistant Stage Manager) is a second year Theater Major with an emphasis in Technical Production and Design. He has also served as the Assistant Stage Manager for *8 Minutes Left*.

Ava B. Ferreira (Stage Manager) is a fourth-year Theater major with an emphasis in Design and Technical Production. She started at Cal Poly Pomona last fall as the assistant stage manager for Mojada also directed by Bernardo Solano. Before transferring, she went to West Valley College in Saratoga where some of her favorite credits include stage managing *Black Snow* and directing *The Good Doctor*. She is exceptionally proud of the cast and crew and all the countless hours of hard work they've put into this production. Thank you and enjoy the show!

Andre Lee (Lighting Designer) is a senior majoring in Theatre Design and Technical Production at Cal Poly Pomona, focusing on Lighting Design. He is a transfer student from Chaffey College with an AA-T in Theatre Arts. His previous credits include Projection Designer for *4.48 Psychosis* at Chaffey College. Most recently, he worked on *The Wolves* and *8 Minutes Left* as Lighting Designer and Assistant Lighting Designer respectively at Cal Poly Pomona. When not at school, he is still out and about seeing plays and musicals and is currently working at South Coast Repertory as an Electrician.



Amber Lopez (Katya) (she/her) is in her third year at Cal Poly Pomona. Amber's acting experience includes mostly stage productions, notably her most recent performance as #2 in CPP's production of Sarah Delappe's *The Wolves*. She would like to thank CPP's Theatre & New Dance department, her family, and friends for their endless support.

Bernice Lopez (Scenic Designer) is a fourth year theatre major with an emphasis in design and technical production, striving towards becoming a scenic artist within the film industry, but has an eye for scenic art in any and all aspects of entertainment. Her most recent university credits are as paint charge for *8 Minutes Left* and scenic designer for *The Wolves*. She has also procured outside credits as a scenic painter on productions such as *Cats*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, and *Anything Goes*.



Meleena Lopez (Masha) is a Theatre Arts major with an Acting Emphasis and is thrilled to be a part of this amazing production at CPP. Some of her favorite past performances include *The Wolves* (Soccer Mom), *Grease!* (Ensemble/Soloist), *Cinderella* (Ensemble/Soloist), and *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Mrs. Ostrovsky). She wholeheartedly thanks her director Bernardo for believing in her, and her stage manager Ava along with the rest of the crew for their hard work and dedication. Lastly, she thanks her family, friends, and cast for their continuous love and support, she wouldn't be where she is without them. She hopes you enjoy the show!

Andrei McAllister (Assistant Director) is a fourth-year theater major with an emphasis in general theatre at Cal Poly Pomona. This is her first full length play ever.

Joseph Montoya (Music Director) is a fifth year Theatre Major with an emphasis in Acting at Cal Poly Pomona. At CPP, he has acted in *Mojada* and *The Last, Best Small Town* and has served on props as an assistant for *Love & Information* and the prop lead for *The Wolves*. This is his first time as musical director and he thanks Bernardo Solano for the opportunity that he has given him. He has enjoyed every moment of the process and is excited to see the work that everyone has put in to make this show great!



River Myaskovsky (Reporter / Doctor) is a second year Theater Major at Cal Poly Pomona, with an emphasis in Acting. At CPP, he hasn't starred in any shows before *We Are Pussy Riot*, but he did work on the lighting crews for *The Wolves* and *The Last, Best Small Town* last spring. He's very excited for the experience, and can't wait for whatever comes next!

Brian S. Newman (Projections Designer) is an Associate Professor and the Production Manager for the Department of Theatre & New Dance. Previous Credits include: Cirque du Soleil, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Utah Festival Opera & Musical Theatre, Merrimack Repertory Theatre, Hangar Theatre Company, Berkshire Theatre Group, The Rev Theatre Company, Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, among others. Brian received his MFA in Stage Management from the Professional Theatre Training Program at the University of Delaware and is a proud graduate of Louisiana State University.

Samantha Ng (Assistant Scenic Designer) is a second year Theatre Major with an emphasis in Technical Design and Production at Cal Poly Pomona.



Justin Ni (Putin / Cossack / Doctor / Pussy Riot Member) is a third year student at Cal Poly Pomona pursuing both acting and filmmaking. He has done various productions such as *I Hate Hamlet*, *Avenue Q*, and many more. He is extremely grateful to be a part of this production and met amazingly talented people within the cast and crew.

Matthew Schroeder (Set Dresser) is a SoCal native who is currently a fourth year student studying Theater Design and Technical Production at CPP, after switching from Mechanical Engineering. His passion for Themed Entertainment led him to work in the industry as a Park Decorator at Knott's Berry Farm. He has also served as a Special Effects Designer, Scenic Designer, Props Master, and Stage Electrician at CPP. In his free time, Matthew can be found visiting theme parks, hiking, doing photography, and designing and building various themed entertainment projects. Matthew would like to thank everyone who supported him during his time at CPP.



Sadaf Sharif (Nadya) is happy to return to the stage at Cal Poly Pomona, this time as Nadya in Barbara Hamond's *We Are Pussy Riot or Everything is P.R.* After nearly a decade of being on stage, some of her favourite previous credits include *Macbeth* (Lady Macbeth), *Electra* (Electra), *Comedy of Errors* (Adriana), *As You Like It* (Rosalind), and *The Revolutionists* (Olympe de Gouges). Sadaf would like to thank her friends, family, and former educators for supporting her. She hopes you enjoy the show, and begs you not to forget.



Zachary Supancheck is a first year Visual Communication Design Major at Cal Poly Pomona. This is his first production at CPP, however, he has acted in two past high school productions, *Sweeney Todd* and *Almost, Maine*.

David Valdez (Assistant Video Designer & Content Editor) is a fifth year Theatre major with an emphasis in Acting at Cal Poly Pomona. This is his first show working in projections for a production and he is very excited to be working on them! He has loved working with everyone so far and is very excited for everyone to come watch the show!



Eleanor Yauney (Anon Pussy Riot Member) is a first year Biology Major at Cal Poly Pomona, who also intends to Minor in Theatre. This is her first show at CPP, but she was in 10 shows in high school, the last one being *Footloose*.

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.

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE & NEW DANCE FACULTY AND STAFF

Sarah Krainin - Associate Professor, Department Chair

Bernardo Solano - Professor

C. Julian White - Professor, Movement and Acting

Jesse Portillo - Associate Professor

Brian S. Newman - Associate Professor

Dr. Joshua Truett - Assistant Professor

Sayda G. Trujillo - Assistant Professor

Laura Epperson - Assistant Professor

Adjunct Lecturers, Theatre

Evan Bartoletti • Tom Bryant • Colin Campbell • Melissa Chalsma

Doug Cooney • Michael Kachingwe • Nancy Kyes • Paulo Lima

Paula Weston Solano • Dylan Southard • John Sylvain • Jake Watchtel

Adjunct Lecturers, Dance

Zachary Groenewold • Jeremy Hahn • Manny Macias

Department Staff

Kenneth Blenc - Technical Director

Jonathan Bastow - Director of Theatre Facilities

Alyssa Martinez - Administrative Coordinator

Lexy Perez - Costume Shop Supervisor

Chelsea Sutton - Publicist