



WHY NOT THEATRE COMPANY

THE CHEYENNE ARE LEAVING

BY
TANJA MASTILO

GUEST PRODUCTION
AT
TEATRET VED SØRTE HEST
13. NOV – 5. DEC 2020



Welcome to Why Not Theatre Company! Tanja Mastilo has previously written three, highly acclaimed plays for our theatre company and last year I asked her to write a fourth for us.

I was not disappointed. Tanja has a rare and refreshing talent for penning powerful, layered and thought-provoking texts. It is my pleasure to welcome you to the world premiere of **THE CHEYENNE ARE LEAVING!**

We are operating in incredibly trying and unsettling times at the moment, and there have been moments when we have all wondered if this show would ever even get to premiere because of COVID-19. So far, so good!

I am extremely proud of the team that has worked so hard to make this production possible. I am also immensely thankful to you for coming along to support us.
Enjoy!

Sue Hansen-Styles

Artistic Leader of Why Not Theatre Company



THE CHEYENNE ARE LEAVING

A DRAMA BY: **Tanja Mastilo**
DIRECTOR: **Nina Larissa Bassett**

ON STAGE : **Nathan Meister and Joe Young**
VOICE OF DOLORES: **Kerry Norton**
LOUDSPEAKER VOICE: **Sue Hansen-Styles**

LIGHT, SOUND and SET DESIGN: **Peter Rasmussen**
MUSIC COMPOSITION: **Barry Wesil**
COSTUMES: **Beáta Kublik**

LIGHT, SOUND TECHNICIAN: **Beáta Kublik**
PR: **Sue Hansen-Styles**
PHOTOS: **Aleksandar S. Mastilo**
GRAPHICS: **Mike Tylak, Beáta Kublik**

OUR SPECIAL THANKS TO:
Hay4You, Julie Rosendahl Jensen, Mikael Jensen
and all the wonderful staff at Teatret ved Sorte Hest



A NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

"NO ONE KNOWS WHAT IT MEANS TO BE BORN AND TO LIVE ON THE BRINK, BETWEEN TWO WORLDS.... TO LOVE AND HATE BOTH, TO HESITATE AND WAVER ALL ONE'S LIFE.

TO HAVE TWO HOMELANDS AND YET HAVE NONE. TO BE EVERYWHERE AT HOME AND TO REMAIN FOREVER A STRANGER."

-IVO ANDRIC

A few years ago my friends and I were talking about our greatest fears. Closed spaces, illness, losing loved ones, death... great fears were being raised like bets in a poker game, one after another. When it was my turn I said without hesitating - war! My friends looked at me, slightly surprised. One of them said it was a good answer. The other said he would never have thought of that.

Even though I was a child when the war started in ex-Yugoslavia, one of the things I remember vividly is that no one believed it would happen to us. Even at the beginning, when the first shots were fired, and we slept on the floor to avoid stray bullets, with the sound of bombs going off in the background - we still didn't believe. They, the grown-ups around me, thought it would pass. It would take a few days, and then surely common sense would prevail. It ended up lasting over 3 years.

War can happen anytime, anywhere and to anyone - and that's important to remember, especially in these troubled times we live in. All it takes is a crisis of any sort, and people will look for someone to blame. It's in our nature. And that instinct will always be used and manipulated by warmongers.

THE CHEYENNE ARE LEAVING is an attempt - an attempt to make something general very personal, and to remind us how war can completely destroy lives in so many different ways. How it can strip us of our freedom, our rights and our dignity and how easily we can become - as one of the characters in the play says - pawns in a chess game, strategically moved and sacrificed however it suits someone's agenda. And therefore also to remind us all to have nothing but compassion for those whose lives have been destroyed by war - by no fault of their own.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for coming to see our play. I hope you will enjoy it.

[Tanja Mastilo](#)

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

HEALING THROUGH THEATRE

How do you stay sane when bombs can obliterate everything you know in seconds? Do you leave, stay or fight? Can your imagination carry you to safety or should you confront reality head-on? *The Cheyenne are Leaving* is a compelling new play about two people coping with the pressures of being placed in the middle of a meaningless conflict. Two generations dealing with experiences of life, loneliness, love and loss in very different ways.

Though the outset of the play is universal, it speaks directly to our current situation, because the effects of power struggles on human life is ongoing. Years of tactical, disruptive rhetoric, growing inequality and blatant manipulations of truth have brought us to a point in time where contemporary Western societies face previously unimaginable prospects of tribalism, divided communities and even threats of civil war. Democratic values aren't set in stone, they can be revoked and overturned. War, displacement and abuse of power doesn't only belong to a distant past or a land far away but can happen here, next door, tomorrow.



Tanja Mastilo's new play has raised many important questions for me during our almost year long work together. It's always a huge privilege and incredible responsibility to be trusted with staging a new work.

The excitement of exploring something new and the eagerness to show the text the respect it deserves. With *THE CHEYENNE ARE LEAVING* these feelings are manifold, not only because the story is universal, but also because it is very personal. The love for these two very human characters trapped in a senseless war is so genuine and captivating. We just have to tell their story.

It struck me during our rehearsal process that the team was laughing and kidding around a lot. Initially it seemed counterintuitive when dealing with such serious and sensitive material but then I realised this was exactly the point. We wanted to smile together, and feel safe in the midst of the saddest of situations. It's a very human need.

Theatre has a very unique ability to process feelings such as pain, horror and sadness in a live situation together with our fellow audience members. We can rage against injustice and mourn the dead finally to return to the safety of our seats - to heal.

During the pandemic arts professionals all over the world are struggling, as their livelihoods are crippled due to restrictions. Yet their work nurtures our souls. We must all be careful and ensure that the physical body is protected but we mustn't forget the mind and soul needs care too. Thank you for caring for each other and yourself in the theatre.

Nina Larissa Bassett

NATHAN MEISTER - as NOEL

Nathan Meister graduated from Toi Whakaari: The New Zealand Drama School, in 2002. Since then he has worked extensively in both film, TV and theatre. Nathan's film credits include Peter Jackson's *The Hobbit*, Steven Spielberg's *The Adventures of Tintin* and James Cameron's *Avatar*. His debut lead role was in cult favourite *Black Sheep* directed by Jonathan King.

Nathan moved to Denmark with his wife and 3 children in 2013. This is Nathan's fourth Why Not Theatre production, after "Secrets" (2015), playing Nikola Tesla in Why Not's pop-up production "Mr Tesla Played" and "Mairead" at Teatret ved Sorte Hest in 2019.



JOE YOUNG - as LEON

Joe Young is a South African actor and writer currently living in the UK.

Having trained in South Africa, his work has focused on issues of post-colonial identities in contemporary South Africa, as well as exploring the process of writing about mental health and looking at the body as a site of knowledge.

Joe recently performed in the Reumert winning production "DarkNoon", by Tue Biering and Fix&Foxy, which played in Copenhagen. Why Not's talent scouts saw him in that production and subsequently tracked him down in the UK. This is Joe's first appearance in a Why Not production.





13. NOV - 5. DEC 2020
Monday-Friday 20.00
Saturday 17.00

VESTERBROGADE 150
1620 KØBENHAVN V

THIS PRODUCTION IS MADE POSSIBLE WITH THE
GENEROUS SUPPORT OF :

William Demant Fonden
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Knud Højgaards Fond
Aage and Johanne Louis-Hansen Fond
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Danske Dramatikere

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