



Sara Lyons

- This Emancipation Thing

Theater

DEC 9, 2023
4:30 PM, 6:30 PM, 8:30 PM

PRESENTED BY
REDCAT
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CalArts Theater
CaLARTS
California Institute of the Arts

We gratefully acknowledge that we operate on the traditional lands of the Tongva, Tataviam, and Chumash peoples—including the Gabrieleño, Fernandeño, and Ventureño; members of the Takic and Chumashan language families; and other Indigenous peoples who made their homes in and around the area we now call Los Angeles. We honor their ancestors past, present, and future, and recognize their continued existence and contributions to our society.

Sara Lyons

• This Emancipation Thing

Conceived and Directed by SARA LYONS, co-created with THE ENSEMBLE

Performed by JENNIFER JONASSEN, JACK MACCARTHY, STACI MIZE, CHENOA RAE,
MICHELLE SUI

Archival texts adapted by SARA LYONS from texts by Vivan Gornick; Shulamith Firestone;
Anonymous members of Redstockings (1969); Jamison Green; Supreme Court Justices Stephen
Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan; Lena Hill

Scenic Designer: EMILY ANNE MACDONALD

Media and Interaction Designer: JOSEPH AMODEI

Lighting Designer: CHU-HSUAN CHANG

Sound Designer: JONATHAN SNIPES

Costume Designer: LENA SANDS

Stage Manager: MACY E. KUNKE

Production Manager: CHRISTA TROESTER

Producer: NIKKI DILORETO

Producer: JESSICA HANNA

Producer: SARA LYONS

Fundraising Manager: SIOBHAN O'LOUGHLIN

Associate Sound Designer: YASMINE EL-TAYEB

Assistant Director: STACI MIZE

Scenic Fabricator: ALAN TOLLEFSON

Assistant Scenic Designer: YESSI GARCIA-GARIBAY

This premiere was also made possible by the creative contributions of Marian Gonzalez, Claire Edmonds, Alanna Blair, Patty Gone, Ginna Diaz, Lex Ryan, Heather Hewko, and all audience participants at prior performances, workshops, and rehearsals.

Developed with residency support from the Ucross Foundation and REDCAT.

This Emancipation Thing was created with support from the Arkay Foundation, the Eugene Mercy Faculty Development Fund at Lehigh University, and the Foundation for Contemporary Art.

Special Thanks to our Seed & Spark donors; Edgar Miramontes; Mo Siedor; Scottie Harvey; Marike Splint; Paul Outlaw; Lisa and Richard Lyons; Laura Flanagan; Lena Hill; Lizzie Borden; Lehigh University Department of Theater; Emily Lick, Gianni Bello, Cori Shindo, Aylin Guzman, and Savannah Noriega; Cameron Jaye Mock;

Ariel Bookman; Sylvie Sands Bookman; Stewart Blackwood; Daniela Lieja Quintanar, João Ribas, Diana Wyenn, Tony Shayne, Pete Pace, Jacques Boudreau, and the entire REDCAT crew; The Lesbian Herstory Archives; Redstockings Archive; all feminist ancestors past, present, and future.

Sara Lyons Projects is a sponsored project of Fractured Atlas, a non-profit arts services organization.

ABOUT THE WORK

Pull up a cushion, have a cookie, get comfortable. Speak if you like, or just listen: *This Emancipation Thing* is an invitation to connect, to resurrect the second-wave feminist consciousness-raising circle in a new theatre event led by an interracial, gender-expansive ensemble. How do our relationships, our desires, our relationships with our bodies vibrate between 1968 and 2023, across generations? Whether for an hour or for six, settle into a womb of listening and care as contemporary LA-based feminists of all ages and genders intervene in the past, collapsing time in a new kind of theater experience from director Sara Lyons. With reproductive rights slipping through our fingers, what wisdom must we awaken from the activists who ushered in *Roe v. Wade* (1973)? What of that past must we crumble — and how will we emerge from the rubble?

Please note: This Emancipation Thing contains nudity, mentions of suicide, and frank discussions of sex and gender-based violence.

Runtime: Approx. 60 minutes, no intermission

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Sara Lyons is a Los Angeles-based director who seeks to explode form and politic in critically embodied, often interdisciplinary new theater and performance works. Working frequently in adaptation, social practice, and new media as well as theater, their work has been presented nationally and internationally by The Kitchen (NYC), REDCAT, Los Angeles Performance Practice, OUTsider, SFX Festival (NYC), Ensemble Studio Theatre (LA), HERE Arts Center (NYC), La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club (NYC), Edinburgh Fringe, and more.

In addition to *This Emancipation Thing*, recent projects include Sophia Cleary's *One & Only* (The Kitchen), an experiment in theater for an audience of one; Paul Outlaw's *BBC (Big Black Cockroach)*; and *BigBlackOctoberSurprise*, a Kafka-inspired live horror farce in which a white Tr*mp-supporting woman wakes up as a "monstrous vermin" — a Black man (REDCAT 2019). Sara's ongoing project *I'm Very Into You* is an original adaptation of the published 1995 email correspondence by feminist literary legend Kathy Acker and McKenzie Wark. Called "worth keeping an eye out for" by *American Theatre* magazine, *I'm Very Into You* is an ongoing queer archival performance project engaging queer and feminist artists in communities around the country.

Sara has received residencies from Ucross Foundation, Thymele Arts (2020 Resident Artist), PAM Residencies, and Los Angeles Performance Practice/Automata LA. Sara holds an MFA in Directing from Carnegie Mellon University and is an alum of the Hemispheric Institute's EMERGENYC program for artists working at the intersection of performance and politics at NYU. They have lectured at UCLA, Sarah Lawrence College, and Cal Poly Pomona, and their critical writing has been published by ContemporaryPerformance.com and Riting.org.

Emily Anne MacDonald returns to REDCAT as the Scenic Designer for *This Emancipation Thing*. She designs for Opera, Theater, Concert, and Dance throughout the United States and Europe. She is the co-creator and co-owner of Mac Moc Design, LLC with design partner Cameron Jaye Mock. Together they have designed for notable companies such as the Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe, LA Phil, San Francisco Symphony, Teatro Nacional de São Carlos, Opera Philadelphia, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Bard Summerscape, Latino Theater Company, The Cleveland Orchestra, The Juilliard School, SF Opera Merola, Ojai Music Festival, The Getty Villa, Opera Omaha, and Opera San Antonio. She is Head of Scenic and Costume Design at California State University, Long Beach.

Joseph Amodei (they/them) is a new media artist, theater designer, activist, and educator. Their work seeks to make material differences with and for people at the intersection of art, emerging technology, and community. Joseph grew up in North Carolina, where they received a BFA in Studio Art from UNC-Chapel Hill. Joseph completed their MFA in Video and Media Design at Carnegie Mellon. They are an assistant professor of Media Design in Lehigh University's Department of Theater. Recent work has explored immersive archive creation + Virtual Reality, mediated storytelling amplifying the Black history of the South, gameplay + gerrymandering, the HIV/AIDS crisis + performance of queer care, and Human Centered Design + issues of health equity. | jamodei.com

Jonathan Snipes is a composer and sound designer for Film and Theater living in Los Angeles. He teaches sound design in the theater and film departments at UCLA, and is a member of the rap group clipping.

Chu-Hsuan Chang is a Los Angeles based lighting artist working in live performance, and installation. In addition to lighting, Chu-hsuan's passions include puppeteering, model-making and lighting instrument design.

Lena Sands is an award-winning costume designer for live performance, installation and film. She uses a variety of materials and methods to create bold and distinctive visuals, and collaborates with ensembles and communities to investigate bodies, histories, and the divine. At REDCAT: *Untitled Communion* (CMPG); *Why Aren't You Watching the Children?* (film); *Substrata* (CalArts Dance). Other notable costume designs include SITI company's *Bacchae* (BAM, Guthrie, Getty Villa); Pat Benetar's *Invincible: The Musical*; Four Larks' *Frankenstein* (The Wallis); Jennifer

Koh and Davóne Tines's *Everything Rises* (Royce Hall, BAM); and CMPG's *Mariology* (Mixed Blood Theater). Lena's work in devised theater is highlighted in *Creating Costumes for Devised Theatre* by Kyla Kazuschyk (Routledge, 2023). Her work was displayed in Moscow for the exhibition "Innovative Costume of the 21st Century: The Next Generation." Lena was a 2021 CTG Sherwood Award finalist. She teaches costume design at LA Mission College. MFA CalArts.
| lenasands.com

Jennifer Jonassen is a performance artist, director, choreographer, writer and clown. She is the founder and Artistic Director of Intrepid Dance Project which is based in her belief that everyone can dance. Jennifer most recently directed what is considered to be playwright Robert Patrick's last known play: *Entry & Exit* which was written for her & Intrepid specifically. She is a recent collaborator of Deufert & Plishcke at the Odyssey Theatre & Goethe Institute, and has studied at SIT Company's 2022 Finale Summer program. Jennifer's solo work has been performed at Los Angeles Performance Practice, Electric Lodge & Bootleg Theater. Other performance highlights include performing at CAP UCLA, Was Ist Das? & Boobie Trap variety shows, The Edwardian Ball & The Special Olympics. Jennifer dedicates her work to her mother Susan and her friend Mary Ellen: two second wave feminists in New York who fought tirelessly for Women's Rights.

Jack MacCarthy (he/they) is a gender-weird writer, performer, and professional queer. As a playwright, his work has been performed in ten states and three countries. As a screenwriter, they've won The Trans GNC Screenwriters Award and were an Austin Film Festival semi-finalist. As an actor, critics have called Jack "a terrific performer," "raw," "sassy," "moving," "really funny," "unapologetically candid," "fabulous," and "gifted with the power to connect with people." Jack is also a published YA novelist - look for *Squad* published by FSG - a proud birth parent, and Director of Communications for The Outwords Archive. Represented by Circle of Confusion.
| jackmacCarthy.com

Staci Mize is a freelance stage director and creator. Staci has diverse background in physical theatre, devised production, and music which has led her to work with such prestigious companies as Manual Cinema (Chicago), 600 Highwaymen (New York) among others. Staci formerly worked with the Public Theater as a production management intern and assistant during which time she worked with critically acclaimed artists including David Byrne, Choir Choir, Andrew Schneider, Toshi Reagon, Jessica Blank, Dickie Beau, and many more. Recent directing projects include: *QUAKE* (world premiere), *Les Mamelles de Tirésias*, *Antigone*, *Manic Pixie Nightmare Bitch* (world premiere), *The Feminine Urge to Disappear* (world premiere), *Gorgeous* (world premiere), *The Rake's Progress* (Assistant), *In a Word, Waiting for Godot*, *The Lesson*, *Sweeney Todd* (Assistant), *The Last 5 Years*, *Spiel* (Play), and more. Original works include: *The R Word*, *Plaything*, *Internal/External*, *To Be*, *Match*, and *In the Lights*. Staci would like to thank her family, both blood and chosen, for the endless support and encouragement to always "go bigger." This performance - as all of mine are - is dedicated to my angel mother.
| stacimize.com

Chenoa Rae is a gifted actress who is excited to be back for the production of *This Emancipation Thing*. Having previously starred in the play *Sept. 2022* at REDCAT, Chenoa is excited to be back on stage breathing life and digging deeper into her character for viewers to sit back and indulge. When not acting, you can find Chenoa on a hike, at a comedy show, attending an R & B concert, having recently seen Lauryn Hill or spending time with family. You can check Chenoa Rae in the independent film *Love* starring as Tara, which was recently screened at the 2023 Martha Vineyard Film Festival and Urban World. With the anticipated release for the short film *Clocked & Breaking News*, Chenoa is working hard to make her mark in Hollywood.

Michelle Sui is a multidisciplinary artist, performer, musician, and filmmaker from Los Angeles. They have performed in dance, theater, and music works at BAM, REDCAT, Walt Disney Concert Hall, MOCA, Hammer Museum, and Park Avenue Armory. Their multimedia practice exists at the intersection of opera, documentary, choreography and installation, and draws upon cinematic histories, language in translation, and the performance of femininity. Their work has been supported by Sundance, Center for Asian American Media, Foundation of Contemporary Arts, Rauschenberg Foundation, New York Foundation for the Arts, Bang on a Can, La MaMa, Litmus Press, and Poets and Writers. Their film *Street Angel*, on LA Chinatown, recently screened at Sinema Transtopia in Berlin, Germany, and is available for streaming on Aeon. They are currently working on a forthcoming film following queer activists, immigrants, and musicians in the American South, and the 10th year anniversary restaging of their experimental opera *Amur*.
| @michelle.sui

Nikki DiLoreto is a creative leader, producer, and director with a passion for cultivating form defying stories with uniquely voiced artists. As a director and associate director, Nikki has worked on Broadway, Off-Broadway, The West End, and on regional theater productions across North America, including *SIX: The Musical*, the recent Tony-nominated Broadway revival of *Kiss Me, Kate* and Pulitzer Prize finalist *Soft Power*. She is a SDC Associate Member, an alum of the Williamstown Theatre Festival Directing Corps, a participant in the SDCF Observership Program, and received her BFA from Boston University and Master's from USC in Arts Leadership. While Nikki works on a great variety of genres in theaters across the nation, she is particularly dedicated to the continued development of new work and the new play & musical development process. She currently resides in Los Angeles and New York, and works around the country.
| nikkidiloreto.com

Jessica Hanna is a Los Angeles based Director, Producer and Space Maker. She is Producing Artistic Director of Outside In Theatre, a member of The Kilroys, Chair of SITI Company's Board of Directors and she co-founded and ran Bootleg Theater in Los Angeles for 12 years. She has produced hundreds of productions, workshops, events and happenings throughout Los Angeles and overseas. Directing Highlights: Justin Elizabeth Sayre's *Lottie Plachett Took A Hatchet* (Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2022, Los Angeles LGBT Center). *Three Little Girls Down A Well* (The Public Theatre Under The Radar Festival). *Deathplay* by Lisa Sanaye Dring (Circle X) and

Hungry Ghost (Skylight Theatre), *Priscilla: Queen of the Desert* (Ovation Winner, Celebration Theater). Opera: *As One* (Orlando Opera). Teaching: Acting at CalArts Film Dept and Viewpoints at CalState LA.

Christa Troester (she/her) is a versatile theatrical professional in Los Angeles. A recent USC graduate with a BFA in film and television production, she seamlessly navigates the realms of theatrical production management, stage management, and lighting technology. She excels in bringing diverse forms of entertainment to the stage. Notably, she has been a consistent and valued presence at REDCAT, having applied her expertise in various capacities over time (including NOWFest 2022 and 2023, *My Barbarian: Double Future*, *Houseboy*, and *TRADE/Mary Motorhead*). Christa eagerly contributes her skills to bring *This Emancipation Thing* to life – integrating her technical expertise with a passion for gender and sexuality studies.

Macy E. Kunke is originally from Lewisville, Texas. She is a graduate of Stephen's College and a current MFA resident at the California Institute of the Arts. She stage managed the premieres of *Boney Manilli* and *Scene with Cranes*, both at REDCAT. Recent credits include *Beautiful* (REV Theatre Co), *The Seagull* (FutureHome Productions), *Men on Boats* (CalArts), and the premieres of *Nicky and the Angels* (Hollywood Fringe) and *daughter* (CalArts). Macy is an award-winning playwright for her one-acts *The Appointment*, *Good Taste in Neighbors*, and *Paper Airplanes*. Her next play, an intimate and immersive horror-comedy titled *Unveiling the Veil*, will be produced in Spring 2024. | @max_e_kunke

Yasmine El-Tayeb is an LA-based sound designer and stage manager. She graduated from the College of Theater, Film, and Television at UCLA and has worked in film, theatre, and immersive storytelling in both sound and management. She recently lived abroad in Spain where she had the opportunity to collaborate on a few exhilarating pieces. This is Yasmine's first show at REDCAT and is thrilled to be a part of this production!

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The Feminist Art Program (1970-1975): Cycles of Collectivity

On view through February 18, 2024

In 1970, artist Judy Chicago pioneered a feminist model for art and education with her students at Fresno State College. Chicago was invited to collaboratively expand this program by Miriam Schapiro at CalArts in 1971, where they would go on to develop radical and now-influential forms of art, pedagogy, and performance. The program began a cycle of collective activity with the contribution of numerous students, faculty, artists, and designers, many of whom are now considered pivotal artists in feminist art history. Engaging with these initial moments and drawing connections with subsequent contributions, *The Feminist Art Program (1970–1975): Cycles of Collectivity* brings together these histories. Gathering material from institutional and personal archives, the exhibition joins these with new responsive artworks by CalArts alumni ak jenkins, Andrea Bowers, Gala Porras-Kim, and Suzanne Lacy. The exhibition presents an ever-growing contribution to art and pedagogy through a multiplicity of voices and identities, and an intergenerational collective of scholars, artists, activists, and curators.



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