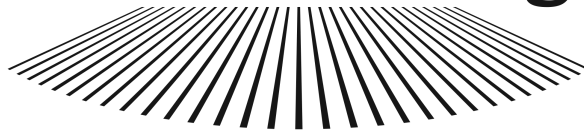


TheWesternStage



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Thanksgiving Play

By Larissa FastHorse

“Very, very funny. Larissa FastHorse’s *The Thanksgiving Play* skewers liberal pretensions with glee – this clever satire is something for which to be truly thankful.” –

Hollywood Reporter

THE STORY:

Good intentions collide with absurd assumptions in Larissa FastHorse’s wickedly funny satire, as a troupe of terminally “woke” teaching artists attempt to devise a play about the holiday’s origins that will give due respect to the continent’s Native peoples, often erased by its celebration, and find their efforts thwarted by competing interests, creative differences, and crippling liberal guilt. Can they find a way to celebrate both Turkey Day and Native American Heritage Month?

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

The Thanksgiving Play premiered off-Broadway at Playwrights Horizons in New York City on October 12, 2018.

THE AUTHOR:

Larissa FastHorse (Sicangu Lakota Nation) is an award-winning writer and 2020-2025 MacArthur Fellow. Her satirical comedy *The Thanksgiving Play* made her the first known female Native American playwright on Broadway, at the Helen Hayes under the direction of Rachel Chavkin. Her new plays in 2023 are *Wicoun* (Cornerstone Theater Company), *Democracy Project* (Federal Hall), *Fake It Until You Make It* (CTG Mark Taper Forum), *For the People* (Guthrie), and the national tour of *Peter Pan* (Networks). Selected past plays include *What Would Crazy Horse Do?* (KCRep), *Landless* and *Cow Pie Bingo* (AlterTheater), *Average Family* (Children’s Theater Company of Minneapolis) and *Teaching Disco Squaredancing to Our Elders: a Class Presentation* (Native Voices at the Autry), as well as numerous productions of *The Thanksgiving Play*, making it one of the most produced plays in America.

Larissa created the nationally recognized trilogy of community engaged theatrical experiences with Cornerstone Theater Company; *Urban Rez*, *Native Nation* and *Wicoun*. She and her collaborator, Michael John Garcés, spend years on each project in an Indigenized community engagement process. “The engagement itself is the art form.” These projects have earned them national funding and an appointment to Arizona State University.

Larissa’s company with Ty Defoe, Indigenous Direction, recently produced the first land acknowledgement on national television for the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade on NBC and continues to consult for them. They also consult for the largest theater organizations in the country.

Larissa also writes in film and television, most recently as a creator for NBC, Disney Channel, Dreamworks, Muse, Netflix and others. She is based in Los Angeles with her husband, the sculptor Edd Hogan, and represented by Jonathan Mills at Paradigm NY. She is especially honored to follow in the footsteps of the last known Native American playwright on Broadway, Lynn Riggs. hoganhorsestudio.com

Directed by: **Estrella Esparza-Johnson**

Assistant Director: **Jeffrey T. Heyer**

Stage Manager: **Mireya Pamatz**

Production Assistant: **Jacob Pareles**

Costume, Hair & Makeup design by: **Maegan Roux**

Scenic Design: **David Parker**

Lighting design by: **John Englehorn**

Sound design by: **Daniel Garcia with Dante Carballo**

CAST LIST (in alphabetical order)

Alexis Han-Holdren: Alicia

Caleb Pierce: Caden

Kelsey Woods: Logan

TBD: Jaxton

WHEN

September 30 October 1*; 6, 7; 14, 15; 20, 21*, 28, 29*

***2:00 pm matinees**

This show is presented in repertory with “4000 Miles” by Amy Herzog and patrons can choose to see a matinee of one show, break for dinner and return to the theater for an evening performance of this second on Saturdays!

WHERE

The Studio Theater in the Hartnell College Performing Arts Center (Building K), 411 Central Avenue, Salinas, CA.

TICKETING INFORMATION

Adult \$28; Seniors/Military/Teachers \$24; Students \$16 (Hartnell Students FREE); Youths (5-15 yrs) \$12; FLEX PASS: \$145 for 6 tickets. Group tickets available by contacting the TWS Box Office.

Online tickets and more information: westernstage.com or call (831) 755-6816. TWS Box Office is open Wednesday-Saturday 5:00-8:00pm. and one hour before curtain time on matinee Sundays. Leave VM to get callback within 24 hours.

ACCOMMODATIONS

This event is wheelchair accessible. Individuals requiring other accommodations should contact the ticket office at least one week prior to the event.

CURRENT COVID-19 INFORMATION

The Western Stage is not requiring COVID vaccine or proof of a negative test result at this time. Ticket holders are asked to not attend the event if they have COVID-19 like symptoms and have **not** tested for COVID-19; have been recently exposed to COVID-19; or have recently tested positive for COVID-19. This policy is subject to change based on an increased infection rate and or Hartnell College policy updates.

Mask policy in The Studio Theatre - In order to keep our unmasked actors healthy, we are requiring all patrons to wear masks while in the Studio Theatre due to the close proximity of the audience to the actors.

ABOUT THE WESTERN STAGE – ESTABLISHED 1974

The Western Stage (TWS) is a professionally managed, community-based theatre company and educational program that provides opportunities for the creative process and high-level artistic experiences. Led by its educational mission and believing that strong arts experiences are important for building innovative, creative, and resilient communities, The Western Stage endeavors to offer a robust variety of programs designed for personal growth and skill development that address the need for a safe space where students and theatre enthusiasts may engage in theatre production while working side-by-side with theatre professionals. Through its annual production season, The Western Stage endeavors to provide strong pathways and development for artists throughout the continuum of a career in theatre and its related performing arts. The Western Stage develops new works that speak to the history and culture of the Salinas Valley and provides educational opportunities for students of all skill levels to explore and develop their unique talent. www.westernstage.com

ABOUT HARTNELL COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT – ESTABLISHED 1920

The Hartnell CCD serves more than 17,000 students annually through its main campus in Salinas, the Alisal Campus in East Salinas, and education centers in King City, Soledad, and Castroville. Hartnell College is a Hispanic Serving Institution that provides associate degrees and certificate programs. It prepares students to transfer to four-year colleges and universities and to enter the workforce with necessary skills. Hartnell College is known for its innovative public and private partnerships that support world class education for STEM, career technical education, fine and performing arts,

humanities and social sciences, nursing and health sciences, and athletics. We are proud to be winners of the 2015 Innovation Award for CSin3 –a Computer Science collaboration with CSU Monterey Bay that leads to a bachelor's degree in three years. **We are growing leaders through opportunity, engagement and achievement.** For more about Hartnell CCD, visit www.hartnell.edu.