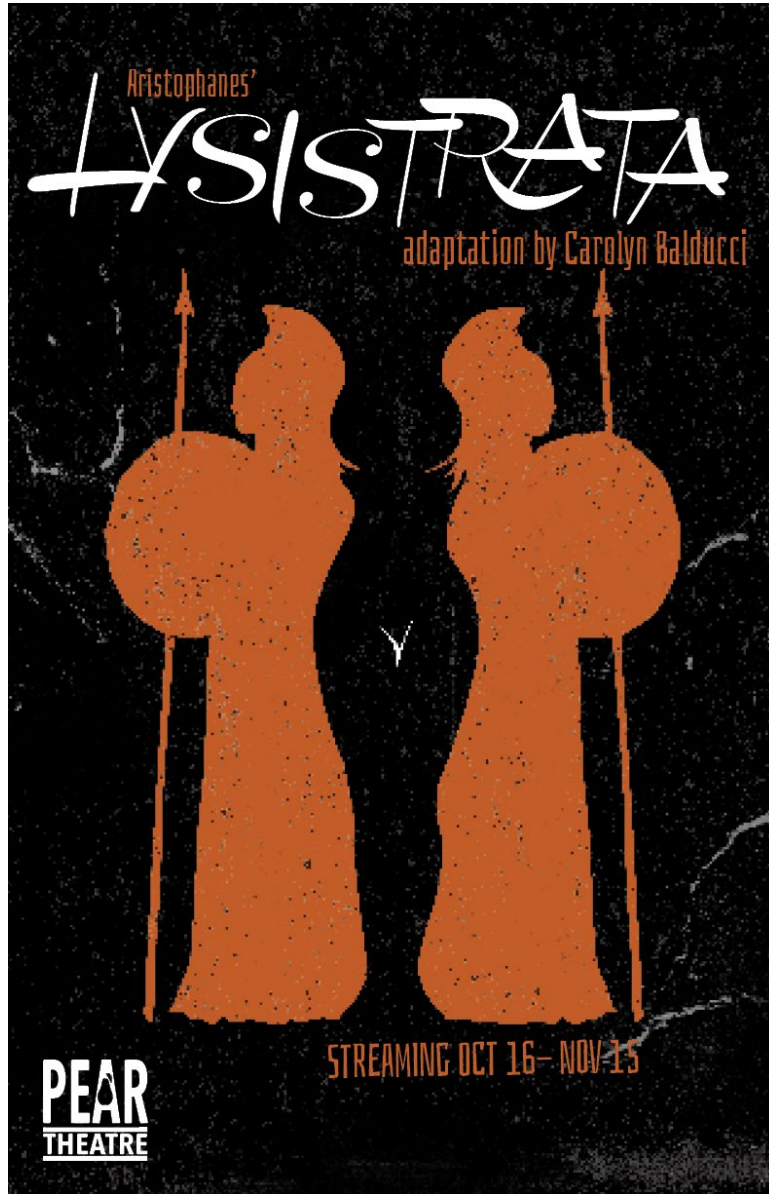


Pear Theatre Presents



Aristophanes' Lysistrata
adapted by Carolyn Balducci

About the Play

Aristophanes (c.446-386 BCE) is the only ancient Greek comic playwright whose works have come down to us, and yet we have only 11 of the 40 or so plays he wrote. Little is known of his life except what those plays suggest, but his comedies reveal much about Athens, which was in trouble when he wrote *Lysistrata* in 411 BCE. Athens had been an economic and cultural powerhouse heading a league of city states bordering the Aegean Sea, but by 411 BCE, it was in decline. Perhaps as many as a third of its inhabitants had died in a plague that lasted from 430 to 426 BCE, resulting in economic crises and distrust of the democratic government. In fact, a junta actually took over Athens for a short time in 411. Further, the Peloponnesian War, which had begun in 431, was going badly. Athens had lost an entire invasion force in Sicily in 415, and now its allies were defecting. Athens would never recover fully from its defeat by Sparta in 404 BCE. So plague, distrust of a democratic government, social upheavals, disastrous war, and international decline are the background that the original audience would have brought to seeing *Lysistrata*.

Comedies were as much a part of ancient Athens' civic life as tragedies were, and they were similarly performed twice a year at religious festivals where they competed for prizes. And like the tragedies, comedies were presented outdoors by a handful of actors playing multiple roles. But while the tragedies are dignified dramas drawn from ancient legends, the comedies are rowdy, salacious, fantastical lampoons of contemporary figures and events. In the words of the Greek scholar Edith Hamilton, Aristophanes' "boisterous" and "scurrilous" plays were "the speaking picture of the follies and foibles of his day," satirizing politics, civic events, and celebrities. Logic is overturned, imagination takes flight, wishful thinking rules, and anyone can be a target.

In this play, our protagonist, Lysistrata, whose name means "de-mobilizer of armies," organizes women to engage in civil disobedience in order to bring about peace with Sparta. The specifics of Lysistrata's movement are unique, but the tactical actions are familiar elements of civic protest, including occupation of government property, peaceful demonstrations, confrontation with armed civilians, and major name-calling and mudslinging. The women are a disempowered minority group (minority because, however numerous they are, they have no direct political power). They are also "essential workers," though not for the reasons one might expect.

This production is faithful to the original but speaks to the present time, beginning with the translation, which approaches the astonishing vulgarity of the original. In ancient Greece, only males acted on stage, playing both men and women, while here the performers are all female, but they too play people of both genders. In the words of director Betsy Kruse Craig, the play focuses "on the power of the collective" while showing "empowerment of the female voice and an unabashed disdain for war and violence." Despite those serious concerns, the

play's uninhibited satire is a good tonic for our judgmental, self-righteous times. We need to laugh at ourselves as well as at our opponents.

—Susan Petit

Cast

Actors may be playing roles in addition to those shown here

Lysistrata **Cynthia Lagodzinski**

Kalonike **Nicole Martin**

Myrrhine **Becca Gilbert**

Lampito **Tyler Jeffreys**

Ismenia **Amitis Rossoukh**

Corinthian **Treya Dionne Brown**

The Commissioner **Natashia Deneé**

Kinesias **Samantha Ricci**

Head of the Old Man's Chorus **Samantha Ricci**

Head of the Old Women's Chorus **Treya Dionne Brown**

Production Team

Producer and Pear Artistic Director: **Sinjin Jones**

Director: **Betsy Kruse Craig**

Stage Manager: **Kelly Weber Barraza**

Set and Props Designer: **Kevin Davies**

Costume Designer: **Melissa Sanchez**

Publicity Director: **Stephanie Crowley**

Program Consultant: **Susan Petit**

Production Manager: **Kelly Weber Barraza**

Pear Technical Director: **Kevin Davies**

Videographers: **Sinjin Jones, John Beamer**

Note

Lysistrata was filmed under the most strict safety, testing, and social distancing protocols with all rehearsals taking place on Zoom. The Pear takes COVID-19 seriously and recommends all patrons stay safe and healthy under these extraordinary circumstances. We are excited to continue our commitment of presenting art to you during these challenging times.

Who's Who in This Production

Actors

Treya Dionne Brown (*Corinthian*) is a professionally trained film, stage, and voice actress. Her stage performances have brought to life characters created by authors ranging from Anton Chekhov to Tarell Alvin McCrahey. She recently starred as the main character in an original short film titled *My Sister's Soul*, set in Oakland, CA, with up-and-coming writer and director Aaliyah Filos and filmmaker Tajianna Okechukwu. She has recorded numerous voice-over projects, including the voicemail for William Carey University, a PSA for the San Francisco Fire Department, and various introductory theatre announcements. As a recent graduate of Academy of Art University in San Francisco, Treya has trained under award-winning professionals, including Academy-Award-winning producer and writer Jana Sue Memel. Currently, she is in the developmental stages of creative ventures toward new projects amidst the pandemic. To keep up with Treya and what she's doing, follow @treydionne on Instagram and check out her website at www.treyadionnebrown.com.

Natashia Deneé (*Commissioner*) is a multi-disciplinary theatre artist and musician hailing from Detroit, MI. Some of their favorite roles include: Ziltoid in *Ziltoid* (Adaptation), Helen of Troy in *On Smoke's Wing: An Adaptation of Trojan Women*, Maia in *Singularity* (Original work), and Bertrude in *Bertrude's Butcher Burlesque* (Original work). Natashia received their B.F.A. in Theatre Performance from Western Michigan University (2015) and an M.F.A. in Ensemble-Based Physical Theatre from Dell'Arte International (2018). They specialize in devising new work, mask performance, and movement-based explorations. Among their favorite pastimes are D&D, Banjo, Singing Saw, Heavy Metal, and Afrofuturist expression through theatre and music.

Becca Gilbert (*Myrrhine*) was last seen at the Pear (online) in *Pear Slices 2020*. She earned her B.A. in theater from UCSB, where she majored in directing, playwriting, and theatre and the community. Currently, she is a sixth-grade history teacher and is excited to combine her love of theatre and history in *Lysistrata*. Previous credits include multiple roles in *Pear Slices 2019* and in *Major Barbara* (Pear Theatre); #46 in *The Wolves* (City Lights); and Imogen in *Cymbeline* (Foothill College).

Tyler Jeffreys (*Lampito*) is a writer and fitness coach. Her “Spinally Free” brand specializes in blending three fitness techniques. She's been an active member of Social Justice Theatre ensemble US in the U.S. since 2017 and plans to keep the movement going. US is here, US been here, US will be here, emphasizing the Browning of America: “We been here.” Her recent quarantine performances include Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, performed reality-TV-style at Plethos Productions in Castro Valley and her original short film *Bored Games*, dropping this month! You can catch her teaching fitness classes via Zoom, cosplaying, and learning how to dance on roller skates. IG: @ty.anough

Cynthia Lagodzinski (*Lysistrata*) is from Livermore and works around the Bay Area as an actor and director. She was recently seen at the Pear as Kaitlyn in *Sojourn*. Other favorite roles include Mistress Page, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Silicon Valley Shakespeare; Lady Catherine, *Pride and Prejudice*, Livermore Shakespeare Festival; Truvy, *Steel Magnolias*, Chanticleers Theatre; Mrs. Antrobus, *The Skin of Our Teeth* and Mrs. Cheveley, *An Ideal Husband*, both at Douglas Morrisson Theatre; Lady Bracknell, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and Queen Elizabeth I, *Shakespeare in Love*, both at Las Positas Theatre, and Claire, *Proof*, Hillbarn Theatre. Cynthia holds a B.F.A. in acting and a Post Baccalaureate in directing from UC Santa Cruz.

Nicole Martin (*Kalonike*) is a Peninsula native, holds a minor in theatre from SFSU, and has acted in local theatres for most of her life. She was last seen as Susan Hendrix in *Wait Until Dark* (Coastal Repertory Theatre); Mary, the Lady of the Lake, in *SF Ghost Stories* (Magic Theatre); as Pasiphae in *Pasiphae* (Playwrights Center of San Francisco); and in multiple roles in *Pear Slices* (Pear Theatre). Other credits include the title role in *Jacqueline Kennedy: A One-Woman Show* (Notre Dame de Namur University), Elvira in *Blithe Spirit* (Palo Alto Players), Gabriella in *Boeing Boeing* (Palo Alto Players), Lucille in *House and Garden* (Pear Theatre), Dr. Zavala in *Distracted* (Portola Valley Theatre Conservatory), and Maria in *Lend Me a Tenor* (Hillbarn Theatre), which earned her a TBA Finalist Award for Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Featured Role. She thanks David, her husband, for supporting all her theatrical endeavors.

Samantha Ricci (*Kinesias, Old Man's Chorus, Ensemble*) was last seen on the Pear stage as Warriorsgirl30 in *Spending the End of the World on OkCupid*. During the pandemic, she has channeled her creative energies into supporting her favorite theatre companies digitally. You can find her moderating Hillbarn's trivia games on Twitch every Wednesday night and hosting the Dragon's monthly online creepy storytelling show “Sleepless with the Dragon” (also on Twitch). She is a proud member of the Red Ladder Theatre Company, helping create distance-learning theatre workshops for incarcerated men and women. For more information about Sam and her work, please visit samanthakricci.com.

Amitis Rossoukh (*Ismenia/Ensemble*) is a Bay-Area based actor currently looking to find the middle ground between technology, accessibility, and real human connection. This is her first venture with Pear Theatre, and she is pleased to be working with such a delightful team. Previous credits include ensemble work for *ReOrient 2019* (Golden Thread Productions), Savannah Reich's *CaveMan Play* (FaultLine Theater), Barry Eitel's *Champagne* (6NewPlays), and Ariel Craft's & Oren Stevens' *MacBitch* (Breadbox Theater).

Production Team

Kelly Weber Barraza (Stage Manager) is excited to be working on this production of *Lysistrata*! She has been involved in all of the digital productions the Pear has presented since COVID-19 suspended the theatre's live performances. Favorite Pear productions include *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *What You Will*, *Uncle Vanya*, *August: Osage County*, and *Taking Steps*. Other favorite works are *The Bridges of Madison County* (South Bay Musical Theatre), *Yellow Face* (Los Altos Stage Company), *Bright Star* (Palo Alto Players), *The Oskar Education Tour* (TheatreWorks), and working with "The Misfit of Magic," Ed Alonzo of "Saved By the Bell" fame. Kelly is always grateful for the love and support of her theatre widowed husband, Michael, and their fur babies: Chumo, Kiyap, and Sopaipilla.

Betsy Kruse Craig (Director) is pleased to be directing this Pear production. Previously at the Pear Betsy directed *Pear Slices 2020*, *The Road to Mecca*, *Enemy of the People*, and *Major Barbara*, and she has appeared on the Pear stage in *Taking Steps*; *Hedda Gabler*; *Oh, Coward!*; *Arcadia*; *August: Osage County*; and *House and Garden*. She has also performed in *God of Carnage*, *Clybourne Park*, *The Addams Family*, and *One Man, Two Governors* for Palo Alto Players. Now living in Arizona, Betsy is the former Artistic Director of the Pear Theatre, and she also served as Program Director of the Arts for Stratford Middle Schools. Love to Vivian and Edith, her amazing daughters, and Michael, without whom none of these pursuits would be possible.

Kevin Davies (Set and Props Designer) is pumped to be working on this show with all the amazing people who have been assembled for this project. He is the resident Tech Director at the Pear. When he isn't at the Pear, you can find him at Silicon Valley Shakespeare, McNulty Speed Shop, or one of the many other Bay Area theatres. Local build credits include *Once on This Island* and *Mamma Mia* at Mt. Eden H.S. and *Avenue Q*, *La Cage*, *Grease*, and *Cabaret* at Sunnyvale Community Players. All work is dedicated to the memory of SFC James Grissom.

Melissa Sanchez (Costume Designer) Recent productions include *Grapes of Wrath* (LASC); *Jekyll & Hyde*, *Lizzie*, and *Cabaret* (CLTC); *Macario* and *La Muerte Baila* (TV); *A Doll's House Part Two* and *Act of God* (PAP); *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* (HB); and *The Circuit* (SCU). She has a B.A. in Technical Theatre with an emphasis on Costume Design from SFSU. She is also the Costume Rentals Manager at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley.

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Our heartfelt thanks go to all who have contributed to the Pear over the years. The donors listed here made their contributions since our move to the new space in the summer of 2015, while previous donations to the Pear are recognized on our website. (If you have any questions about your listing, please contact info@thepear.org.)

The Pear Theatre is proudly supported by SV Creates and the Los Altos Community Foundation



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