

(AN AUDIO GUIDE FOR) UNSUNG SNAILS AND HEROES

By Julia Izumi



MTC TED SNOWDON READING SERIES

Directed by Natsu Onoda Power

November 17-21, 2020

THE CAST

(alphabetically)

AUDIO GUIDE.....	Satomi Blair
PUPPETEER.....	Melissa (Mel) Carter
XUE.....	Holly Chou
YASUKO.....	Natsuko Hirano
GOSSIP LADY (CHIE).....	Eileen Rivera
ATSUKO.....	Haley Sakamoto
FURUHATA/OFFICER CARL/MR. CARL/PROFESSOR CARL.....	Thom Sesma
GOSSIP LADY (RIIKO).....	Sue Jin Song
MR. ANCESTOR SNAIL.....	James Yaegashi
Stage Directions.....	Miyuki Williams

Stage Manager: Jereme Kyle Lewis

Cultural Consultant: Kiyo Kamisawa

Music Director: Robert Frost

Illustrations: Natsu Onoda Power & Caden Fullerton

Video Editor: Rocco DiSanti

Director of Play Development/Sloan Project Manager.....	Scott Kaplan
Literary Associate.....	Elizabeth Sharpe-Levine
Literary Assistant.....	Helena Pennington
Artistic Development Consultant.....	Jerry Patch
Artistic Producer.....	Nicki Hunter
Artistic Production Associate.....	Jasmine Johnson
Casting.....	Kelly Gillespie
General Management Assistant.....	Marie Fischer

TED SNOWDON has supported new plays and playwrights his entire career, working in both the commercial and non-profit sides of theater. His producing credits reach back to 1979's Tony Award-winning *The Elephant Man* and include more recent plays and musicals like *Buyer & Cellar*, *The Visit*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, *The Mountaintop*, *Reasons To Be Pretty*, *The Little Dog Laughed*, *Spring Awakening*, and *Souvenir*. With MTC he co-produced *Master Class*, *Time Stands Still*, and *LoveMusik*. He has long championed the arts and LGBT causes. He is on the boards of Primary Stages and the Glimmerglass Festival. Most recently he produced Allan Leicht's comedy about Wagner, *My Parsifal Conductor*, and Michael McKeever's play *Daniel's Husband* at the Westside Theatre. This past season, he was a producing partner on Broadway's *The Great Society*, starring Brian Cox as LBJ, and Charles Busch's hit *The Confession of Lily Dare*, which played to rave reviews in February at Primary Stages.

JULIA IZUMI (*Playwright*) is a writer and performer who makes plays, musicals, and several opportunities for dance parties. She has developed work through Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor, SPACE on Ryder Farm, Oregon Shakespeare Festival's Black Swan Lab, WP Theater, Barn Arts Collective's Hamilton Project Residency, NNP/Kennedy Center MFA Playwrights' Workshop, BMI's Librettists Workshop, the Great Plains Theatre Conference PlayLab, and Williamstown Theatre Festival. Her work has been presented at San Francisco Playhouse, Trinity Repertory Company, the National Asian-American Theatre ConFest, Dixon Place, FringeNYC, and Corkscrew Theatre Festival. Honors for her work include O'Neill Theater Center's NPC Finalist, the Kilroys List Honorable Mention, KCACTF's Darrell Ayers Playwriting Award, Theater Masters' Take Ten, NY Society Library's Emerging Women's Artist Grant and a Puffin Artists' Grant. She is a current member of the Clubbed Thumb Early-Career Writers' Group and will be featured in this season's Bushwick Starr Reading Series. MFA: Brown University. www.juliaizumi.com

NATSU ONODA POWER (*Director*) specializes in adapting non-dramatic texts into new works of visual theater, but sometimes also directs plays. Recent works (writing/adapting/directing) include *Thumbelina* at Imagination Stage; *The Lathe of Heaven* at Spooky Action Theater; *Alice in Wonderland* with National Players; *Wind Me Up, Maria!: A Go-go Musical* at Georgetown University; *Astro Boy and the God of Comics* at the Studio Theater and Company One Theater, Boston. Directing credits include Olney Theater Center; the Studio Theatre; Baltimore CenterStage; Mosaic Theater, among others. She is the recipient of two Elliot Norton Awards (for Direction and Production Design) and two Helen Hayes Awards (for Adaptation and Set Design). Onoda Power is a Professor of Theater and Performance Studies at Georgetown University.

SATOMI BLAIR (*Audio Guide*): Off-Broadway: *Mothers* (Playwrights Realm), *God Said This* (Primary Stages), *Kentucky** (Ensemble Studio Theatre), *She Kills Monsters** (Vampire Cowboys), *Solstice Party** (ART-LiveSource), *Land O'Fire** (JCTC), *These Seven Sicknesses** and *American Sexy** (The Flea Theater; former company member). Regional Theatre: *I Now Pronounce**, *God Said This** (Actors Theatre of Louisville); *Gloria* (The Dallas Theater Center, Woolly Mammoth); *Seminar* (WHAT); *Good Men Wanted** (Arena Stage). Television: "Pose" (FX), "Madam Secretary" (CBS), "The Village" (NBC), "Rescue Me" (FX), "Gurland Vs. Gurland" (Showtime). Additional Credits: Satomi attended Fordham University at

Lincoln Center and is a company member of Morgan Gould & Friends. Founder of 4Hawk Productions. 4hawkproductions.com
@satomib

**indicates a World/NYC Premiere*

MELISSA (MEL) CARTER (*Puppeteer*): Resident artist with the 4615 Theatre Company. Previous credits include *Thumbelina* and *Zomo the Rabbit* at Imagination Stage, *The Lady from the Village of Falling Flowers* at Spooky Action Theatre, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Othello*, and *The Great Gatsby* with the National Players, *Forest Treás* at Pointless Theatre Co, *Separate Rooms* and *The Infinite Tales*, at 4615 Theatre Co, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Prince George Shakespeare, and *Watergate... with Puppets* at AnyStage Theatre.
<https://www.makemelissacarter.com/>

HOLLY CHOU (*Xue*): NY credits include *These Seven Sicknesses*, *Office Hours*, *Future Anxiety*, *Cato*, and more at The Flea; *As You Like It*, *The Tempest*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and more with Hip to Hip; *The City That Cried Wolf* at 59E59; *File Under: Superwolf* at ARTNY; readings and workshops including Mia Chung's *This Exquisite Corpse* and *You For Me For You*, Allison Benko's *Another Mikado*, Itamar Moses' *Yellowjackets*, and David Murrell & Jeremy Karaken and Gordon Farrell's *The Lifespan of a Fact*. Television: "Untitled Jessica Gao Project," "Younger," "Elementary," "The Blacklist," "Looking at Christmas." Film: *The Big Sick*, *Shelter*, *Camp Wedding*.
www.hollychou.com

NATSUKO HIRANO (*Yasuko*) is thrilled be a part of this project! Originally from Fukuoka, Japan. Favorite credits, Off-Bway: *Sayonara*, *The Brothers Paranormal* (Pan Asian Rep). Regional: *Avenue Q*, *The King and I*, *Cats*. Thank you to Natsu, Kelly, and MTC for this opportunity!
www.natsukohirano.com

EILEEN RIVERA (*Gossip Lady (Chie)*) was last seen on stage in *Men on Boats* at Baltimore Center Stage, where she also performed in *The White Snake* and *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*. Off-Broadway credits include: *Beast* (NYTW), *Dogeaters* (The Public), *A Fable* (Rattlestick), *King Lear* (Cherry Lane Mentor Project). Regional credits include: *Tiger Style!* (Olney Theatre Center, Maryland), *Vietgone* (Studio Theatre, DC), *The Hour of Great Mercy* (Diversionsary, San Diego), *The Long*

Season (Perseverance; Juneau, Alaska), *The Comfort Team* (Virginia Stage Co.). Film: *Hold; Mildred, Daughter of Venus; The Barrelman Caper*. TV: “Law & Order,” “Law & Order: Criminal Intent.” Learn more at www.eileenrivera.com

HALEY SAKAMOTO (*Atsuko*) is a New York based actress originally from Kaneohe, Hawai'i. She trained at NYU Tisch School of the Arts at the New Studio on Broadway, The Classical Studio, and Stonestreet Studios. She is devoted to developing work that advocates for real diversity and accessibility. She was last seen in new works at Lincoln Center, The Bushwick Starr, and the Provincetown Tennessee Williams Theater Festival.

THOM SESMA (*Furuhata/Officer Carl/Mr. Carl/Professor Carl*): COVID-era livestream performances include: *Take Me to the World: A Sondheim 90th Birthday Celebration; Richard II* (Public); *Paradise Lost* (Hudson Valley Shakespeare); *Misalliance* and *Mrs. Warren's Profession* (Gingold Theatrical Group); *Romeo and Juliet* (NAATCO); *One of Those* (Theater J) and multiple concert performances. Upcoming: *It's a Wonderful Life* (Connecticut Repertory Theatre). Select Broadway and Off-Broadway credits include: *Unknown Soldier, Superhero, Sweeney Todd, Arturo Ui, Pacific Overtures, Man of La Mancha, The Lion King, Miss Saigon*. TV credits include: “Instinct,” “Madam Secretary,” “The Good Wife,” “Person of Interest,” “Jessica Jones,” “Gotham” and many more. For more details, please visit thomsesma.com.

SUE JIN SONG (*Gossip Lady (Riiko)*): Off-Broadway: *The World of Extreme Happiness* (NYC premiere, Manhattan Theatre Club); *Iphigenia at Aulis, Exit the King* (Pearl Theater). Regional Theater: *The Arsonists, Marie Antoinette* (Woolly Mammoth Theatre). *Smart People, Hot 'n Throbbing* (world premiere) (Arena Stage). *Yellow Face, iHo* (Theater J); *36 Views* (Constellation Theatre); *Waiting for Tadashi* (world premiere, George Street Playhouse); *Shedding the Tiger* (world premiere, Sacramento Theatre Company); *Burn This* (Syracuse Stage). Film: *Steel Town, Pipe Dream, Someone Like You*. Television: “New Amsterdam,” “24,” “ER,” “Law & Order.” Education: MFA Acting NYU's Tisch School of the Arts.

JAMES YAEGASHI (*Mr. Ancestor Snail*): Broadway: *Breakfast at Tiffany's, A Naked Girl on the Appian Way, Take Me Out* (original cast). Off-Broadway: *Durango, Richard III, Take Me Out*, and others (The

Public); *The Oldest Boy* (Lincoln Center); *House Rules, I_NY* (Ma-Yi); *A Few Stout Individuals* (Signature); and *Macbeth* (TFANA). Regional: Long Wharf, South Coast Rep, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Kennedy Center, etc. International: Singapore Arts Festival, Edinburgh Int'l Festival, Donmar Warehouse, and Taganka Theatre. Film & TV: Robert Minoru on “The Runaways,” “New Amsterdam,” “Madam Secretary,” *Man on a Ledge, The Thomas Crown Affair*, etc. Interactive: Grand Theft Auto series, Bio Shock series, etc. James is also an award-winning filmmaker, a director, and translator.

MIYUKI WILLIAMS (*Stage Directions*): Miyuki was an ensemble member of Washington Shakespeare Theater where she undertook roles such as Titania in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Ma Joad in *Grapes of Wrath*, and Lady in Red in *For Colored Girls*. She was also part of the Source Theater. Most recently she performed with The Welders in Washington, DC. Miyuki is classically trained from DC's Shakespeare Theatre. She also studied at Labyrinth Theater Company in NYC. She is thrilled to be working with Natsu Onoda Power again and excited to be part of the MTC project.

JEREME KYLE LEWIS (*Stage Manager*): Broadway: *Caroline, or Change, The Height of the Storm, Bernhardt/Hamlet, M. Butterfly, Present Laughter, Our Mother's Brief Affair, Sylvia, Hand to God, The Trip to Bountiful*. Off-Broadway: *Continuity* (MTC), *White Noise* (Public), *Sugar In Our Wounds* (MTC), *Tiny Beautiful Things* (Public), *The Roads to Home* (Primary Stages), *The City of Conversation* (LCT), *The Madrid* (MTC). Regional: Williamstown Theatre Festival, Center Theatre Group, The Wallis, Arena Stage, Goodman Theatre, The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. Tours: *Grey Gardens, The Trip To Bountiful*.

KIYO KAMISAWA (*Cultural Consultant*), originally from Tokyo, is a dramaturge, poet, and an art translator. She is passionate about bridging multiple cultures and identities through theater and poetic arts. Her past credits include *Fiona's Fruitless Fable* directed by Haruna Lee (assistant director/dramaturg) for Japanese Playwright Festival, *Suicide Forest* (assistant director/wardrobe supervisor) directed by Aya Ogawa at Ma-Yi Theater, *N. Butterfly* (dramaturg/assistant director) directed by Non Kuramoto at The PIT, and *Yuya*: a modern adaptation of Japanese Noh Drama (director/playwright) at New York Theater Festival. She is

currently working as a dramaturg on *Yu: The Bath Play* by Non Kuramoto for New Ohio's Producer's Club. Contact: kiyo0725kblw@gmail.com

ROBERT FROST (*Music Director*) is an NYC-based music director, pianist, and educator. Select MD credits include *Half the Sky* (5th Ave/Theatre Latte Da); *Minor Character* (New Saloon); *Miss Blanche Tells It All* (NYMF); *We Live In Cairo* and *Cardboard Piano* (O'Neill Theater Center). As a pianist, music director, and educator, Robert has also worked with New Georges, New Dramatists, *The Cher Show* (Lab), Lincoln Center, Berkshire Theater Group, Arkansas Shakespeare Theatre, Arkansas Rep, Brown University, Hunter College, and Connecticut College. Robert serves on the faculty of New Studio on Broadway at NYU and The O'Neill Theatre Center's National Musical Theatre Institute.

ROCCO DISANTI (*Video Editor*): USA 829 Projection Designer with multiple on and off Broadway credits including; Broadway: *The Snow Geese*, *The Columnist*, *Wit*, *Collected Stories*, *Time Stands Still*, *The Nap*. Off Broadway: *Incident at Vichy* (Signature); *Desire*, *Lift*, *Inner Voices*, *Wide Awake Hearts* (59E59); *Completeness* (Playwrights Horizons); *A Second Chance* (The Public) and more. Regional: *Fly* (Florida Studio Theatre); *The Threepenny Opera*, *Spin*, *Company*, *A Second Chance* (Signature Theatre); *Kansas City Swing*, *Lift*, *The Adventure of Fishy Waters In Bed With The Blues* (Crossroads). Awards: Nominated for a 2012 Henry Hewes Design Award for *Completeness*.

We wish to express our gratitude to the Performers' Unions: Actors' Equity Association, American Guild of Musical Artists, American Guild of Variety Artists, SAG-AFTRA through Theatre Authority, Inc. for their cooperation in permitting the Artists to appear on this program.

Special Thanks: Michael Donnay, Bobbie Metcalfe.

Upcoming Readings:

December 1: **BALL CHANGE**

By **Brittany K. Allen**, Directed by **Margot Bordelon**

December 8: **AS IS: CONVERSATIONS WITH BIG BLACK WOMEN IN CONFINED SPACES**

By **Stacey Rose**, Directed by **Tiffany Nichole Greene**

December 15: **FRIENDLY MONSTERS**

By **Penelope Skinner**, Directed by **Nicole Charles**

For more information about the reading series and all of MTC's virtual programming, please visit the virtual page on our website, at manhattantheatreclub.com/virtual.

About the Ted Snowdon Reading Series:

Manhattan Theatre Club's reading series is named in recognition of generous support from Ted Snowdon, an MTC friend and co-producer who has championed new plays and playwrights his entire theatre career in both the commercial and non-profit sectors.

In 1999, MTC first launched a public reading series to help support the development of new works. The first year of the series featured David Auburn's *Proof*, which MTC went on to produce in 2001, and which garnered a Tony Award® for Best Play and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Between then and now, the reading series has helped develop more than 100 new plays, including Molly Smith Metzler's *Close Up Space* and Eleanor Burgess's *The Niceties*, which went on to full productions at MTC. Plays from this reading series that have been produced elsewhere in New York and around the world include Brittany K. Allen's *Redwood*, Paola Lázaro's *There's Always the Hudson*, Sharyn Rothstein's *Right to Be Forgotten*, Jen Silverman's *Dangerous House*, Nick Gandiello's *The Blameless*, Michael West's *The Chinese Room*, Halley Feiffer's *I'm Gonna Pray for You So Hard*, Ethan Lipton's *Tumacho*, Ayad Akhtar's *The Who and the What*, Penelope Skinner's *The Village Bike*, and Joshua Harmon's *Significant Other*.

From 2006 through 2016, the reading series was funded by the Ernst C. Stiefel Foundation, which contributed almost \$1 million in support of more than 65 new plays.