



AGLA NIKE'S TIGER

by Claudia Barnett | directed by Deborah Randall

September 7 - October 1, 2017

VENUS THEATRE

AGLAONIKE'S TIGER

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A play in two acts - There will be one 15 minute intermission

Aglaonike's Tiger is dedicated to Tricia McCauley, the earth/star worshipper that we still call friend.

Orpheus: *I told you not to mention her name again. She almost ruined you, didn't she?
A woman who drinks, who walks the streets with a tiger on a leash, who puts ideas in
our wives' heads and scares young girls out of marriage.*

Eurydice: *But that's her religion, it's moon worship!*

- Jean Cocteau

SETTING

Thessaly, Greece, circa 200 BCE

CHARACTERS

Aglaonike played by Ann Fraistat

Tiger played by Matthew Marcus

Erichtho played by Deborah Randall

CHORUS

Chorus 1 played by Katie Hileman

Hekate, Astronomer 1, Witch 1, Spectator 1, Warrior 1, Passerby, Strix

Chorus 2 played by Katie Jeffries Zelonka

Selene, Astronomer 2, Witch 2, Spectator 2, Harry, Warrior 2, Tigress, Passerby 2, Hesper

Chorus 3 played by Amy Rhodes

Artemis, Astronomer 3, YiaYia, Witch 3, Spectator 3, Hegator, Passerby 3, Strix

PRODUCTION

Lights designed by Kristin Thompson

Sound designed by Neil McFadden

Set designed by Amy Rhodes

Costumes and props designed by Deborah Randall

Stage Management by Lynn Bruce

Graphic Design by Laura Schraven

Cover Illustration by Olivia Lightner

Puppet Bones by Matthew Pauli

Masks by Tara Carioso

Choreography by Alison Talvacchio

Front-of-House Myrrh

Special thanks to: Alan Scott, Paul Gallagher, Mallory Shear, and Daniel Mori
Please turn off all cell phones and uncrinkle all paper before the show begins

ARTISTIC TEAM

ANN FRAISTAT (Aglaonike) is celebrating her eighth show with Venus in *Aglaonike's Tiger*, having previously appeared in *dry bones rising*, *God Don' Like Ugly*, *We Are Samurai*, *No. 731*, *Following Sarah*, *Punk Rock Mom*, and *A Girl Named Destiny*. Ann is an actor, playwright, and director, and has worked with companies including We Happy Few, Flying V, Rorschach Theatre, Pinky Swear Productions, Pointless Theatre Co., Round House Theatre, and her own Fringe troupe, The Impressionable Players. In tribute to badass, real-life Aglaonike, she'd urge you to look up on January 31, 2018—Tiger will eat the moon, don't miss it!

KATIE HILEMAN (Chorus) was last seen at Venus in *Tunnel Vision* as Jill. She is a very proud UMBC BFA Acting grad and the Artistic Director of The Interrobang Theatre Company in Baltimore. Katie has performed with many local companies including Rep Stage, Maryland Ensemble Theatre, Single Carrot, and Iron Crow.

MATTHEW MARCUS (Tiger) makes his fourth appearance to the Venus stage in *Aglaonike's Tiger*. He is a writer/director/actor working primarily in the DC metro area and most recently wrote and directed *The Quantum Suicide of Sophie Miller*, an original work staged as part of the Capital Fringe Festival. "Thanks for coming!"

DEBORAH RANDALL (Erichtho) is a proud cum laude Theatre graduate of UMBC where she was awarded Alumni of the Year in 2012. Deb has toured through five states as a performer, both doing Shakespeare and contemporary solo works. She was a professional actor in DC for many years before she produced and directed an all female improv troupe, Venus Envy in the late 90's. Venus Envy turned into Venus Theatre in 2000. Deb is proud to be producing her 61st script since 2000. This cast and this play come with a kind of magic and the process has been a joyful one. For that she is so grateful! Special thanks to Jasmine the dog (Aglaonike's 17 year old AD) for watching the front door, or falling asleep in front of it, as the cast rehearsed. Big love to husband Alan, who is unfaltering in cheering her on to her next crazy idea.

AMY RHODES (Chorus) is a graduate of the UMBC Theatre Department, where she studied acting and design. She was most recently seen on stage at Venus as Candy File in *Rock the Line* and in various roles in *Garbage Kids*. Amy enjoys sharing the gift of theatre with the next generation and lives in Baltimore with her, husband, two kids, and their coffee business.

KATIE JEFFRIES ZELONKA (Chorus) is thrilled to be back onstage at Venus, having previously performed as Tierney in *Claudie Hukill*, Maddy in *Following Sarah*, Stephanie in *Light of Night*, and Caroline in *Raw*. Katie was last seen onstage as Ben Affleck in *Matt and Ben* with Flying V, where she is a company member. You can catch Katie again as The Virgin Mary in The Hub's *Peekaboo: A Nativity Play* in December.

CLAUDIA BARNETT (Playwright) writes weird, experimental plays about women and history and science. She has developed five scripts with Venus Theatre, where *Witches Vanished* premiered as part of the Women's Voices Theater Festival in 2015. She is a professor at Middle Tennessee State University and the author of *I Love You Terribly: Six Plays* (2012) and *No. 731 Degraw-street, Brooklyn, or Emily Dickinson's Sister: A Play in Two Acts* (2015), both published by Carnegie Mellon University Press.

E. LYNDA BRUCE (Stage manager) is joining Venus Theatre for a third time, after *Claudie Hukill* and *Grieving for Genevieve*. Other credits include *Night Seasons* and *The Lady with the Little Dog* with Quotidian Theatre, and *Crónica de una Muerte Anunciada* with Gala Theatre. *Al Todopoderoso, toda gloria*.

TARA CARIASO (mask maker Aglaonike's Tiger) is a Baltimore-based Mask Maker, performer, Founder of Waxing Moon Masks Company (www.waxingmoonmasks.com) and Everyman Theatre Teaching Artist. She works locally and across the US sharing new mask/physical theatre performance pedagogy for actors and non actors, most recently including new research in the fields of Archetypes for actors, Emotional Intelligence in elementary classrooms, and using masks for social justice play making. Her ongoing non-profit collaborative project, *Masks for Good* provides materials, performance curriculum, and opportunities for her B4 Youth Theatre students in Liberia, West Africa.

HEATHER HELINSKY (Dramaturg Aglaonike's Tiger) is a Philadelphia-based dramaturg who has been working professionally for over ten years, with an MFA from the A.R.T./Moscow Art Theatre Institute at Harvard. She's the resident dramaturg of Great Plains Theatre Conference, is a member of the O'Neill's Artistic Circle, reads for PlayPenn, Sundance, and Jewish Plays Project and serves as a Barrymore Judge for the Philadelphia theatre community. Nationally, her work has been seen at over 40 regional theatres, including the Denver Center and the Kennedy Center and mentors emerging dramaturgs through KCACTF. For more: www.helinskydramaturgy.com

NEIL MCFADDEN (Resident Sound Designer) marks his 25th show for Venus with *Aglaonike's Tiger*. His work has been heard in many area theatres over the past 30 years including Arena Stage, Round House Theatre (Resident Designer for 11 years), Studio Theatre, Flying V (company member), Longacre Lea, Everyman Theatre, Rep Stage, Woolly Mammoth Theatre, and many others. A ten-time nominee, he received the Helen Hayes Award for his sound design for Round House's *Heathen Valley*.

KRISTIN A. THOMPSON (Resident Lighting Designer) As Resident Lighting Designer for Venus, Kristin has designed lights for lots of shows on C street including: *Rock The Line*; *Garbage Kids*; *Witches Vanish*; *Light of Night*; *No.731 Degraw-Street*; *A Girl Named Destiny*; *Stenographer*; *Devil Dog Six*; *Zelda at the Oasis*; *Why'd you Make Me Wear This, Joe?*, and many more. Kristin is, also, currently a company member of Flying V. Other companies Kristin has designed lights for include: Happenstance Theatre, Howard Community College, Imagination Stage, Georgetown University, Round House Theatre, Carroll Community College, 1st Stage, Contradiction Dance, and many others. When not sitting in the dark designing, she spends her time with her two favorite people: her husband Paul, and her daughter Grey.

UPENDING ORDER IN THE ANCIENT GREEK UNIVERSE

By Heather Helinsky, dramaturg

The ancient Greeks studied the heavens to make rational sense of the world. Throughout the ages, an eclipse was feared; some even believed an eclipse was a sign of impending apocalypse. Having witnessed one, the 7th century B.C.E. Greek poet Archilocus declared: "Nothing in the world can surprise me now. For Zeus...has turned midday into black night by shielding light from the blossoming Sun, and now dark terror hangs over mankind. Anything may happen."

The sun was the source of all creation to the ancients. The Greeks saw the solar system as a ship with the planets as sailors and the sun as pilot. An eclipse disrupted the order of the world. Greek astronomers strove to find a scientific answer for this celestial event. But a woman who discovered the answer to this powerful celestial mystery? She must be a witch.

Like many women in history, we know little about Aglaonike's life in the 2nd century B.C.E. However, we do know the patriarchal response to her mathematical mind. Plutarch credits her as the sorceress who inspired a Greek proverb, "Yes, as the moon obeys Aglaonike" which was intended to mock Aglaonike's bold claim to call down the moon. He makes an example of her, a warning to women to avoid studying philosophy and astronomy. Leave science to the male mind.

On our hero's journey in *Aglaonike's Tiger*, the first obstacle that Aglaonike encounters is when she takes her ideas to the male astronomers. Her math, which may prove the male astronomers wrong, isn't even considered. In a culture which valued women for their silence, restricted their freedoms, and saw them as "incomplete males", Aglaonike is a challenge to their fundamental social structure and order in the universe.

According to playwright Claudia Barnett, "Though this play resembles ancient Greek drama, it differs in its portrayal of the female protagonist. Yes, the Greeks had strong women in their plays, but Clytemnestra kills her husband, Medea kills her kids, and even Antigone's a little scary. These characters read like warnings, reasons to keep Greek women at home. Aglaonike, in contrast, is a role model."

Artistic Director Deborah Randall, in choosing this play for Venus' 2017 season, shared that one of the many reasons she responded to the play was, "It's about feeling a reality that you cannot prove. Or, when you can, not being acknowledged for that either."

Rehearsing the show while the nation witnessed a solar eclipse on Monday, August 21st, reminded us that we're not unlike the ancients, looking up to the heavens to make sense of the universe. Americans looked up. Marveled. Tweeted. Joked about the signs pointing to an apocalyptic end of America. What else about this new play resonates with the times we live in?

2018 SEASON

63rd Woman Empowering Script

THIS LITTLE LIGHT

by Jennifer Faletto

Who am I? What am I? THIS LITTLE LIGHT explores the life of the same person over 400 years through the meandering mind of a Millennial who is waking for the first time to her human needs for meaning and understanding.

64th Woman Empowering Script

SPEED TWINS

by Maureen Chadwick

The Speed Twins unleashes an explosive and darkly comic conflict of desires and challenges us all to ask fundamental questions about identity.

Venus is a 501c3 nonprofit organization committed to setting flight to the voices of women with theatre for a lifetime. Venus is the only woman run theatre company in the state of Maryland and among the longest running women's theatre's on the globe.

It is the mission of Venus Theatre to set flight to the voices of women and children with theatre for a lifetime. We try to never produce the same play twice and have a deep belief that our adventurous audiences, who are always ready for a daring journey, will keep coming back to see what we're up to next. As of December 2016, Venus Theatre produced 59 plays that empowered women. Each year, Venus receives about 200 play submissions and chooses four to produce in the calendar year ahead.



The Ravens

by Alana Valentine | directed by Deborah Randall

November 2 - 26, 2017

TICKETS

venustheatre.org

Thursday Friday Saturday at 8, Sunday at 3

BOX OFFICE 1.866.811.4111 | 21 C Street Laurel, MD

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