



SUPPORT ARTISTIC INNOVATION

*Donate Now to Ensure New Plays
Can Flourish at TheatreWorks*

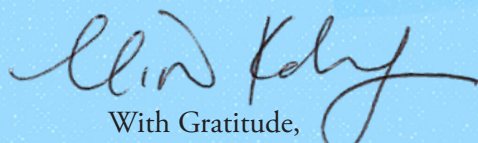
In 2010, I was about two years into my journey as a playwright. While writing my first musical, I was uncertain about how to make a career out of it. I remember watching the Tony Awards that year: *Memphis* won for Best Musical, and four regional theatre companies were thanked for contributing to the show's development. "TheatreWorks in Palo Alto" was one of them. I was familiar with TheatreWorks as a theatre company in the Bay Area, but this mention at the Tony's transformed my knowledge into an aspiration. I was going to work with TheatreWorks Silicon Valley some day.

Four years later, my aspiration became reality. I was invited to the TheatreWorks Writers Retreat to pen the first moments of what would become *The Four Immigrants: An American Musical Manga*. I was so nervous, sharing the opening number for a show with no subsequent scenes or songs or ending, curious how it would land with the room full of new works supporters. The response was incredibly enthusiastic! I came away from the retreat with a boost of confidence in my craft, and much gratitude to be able to try something new.

TheatreWorks continued to support the piece, and along the way, I was given space and time to explore and experiment. At the 2016 New Works Festival, we presented *three* public readings of *The Four Immigrants*, a luxury for a dramatist! One big change I made to the piece happened between readings two and three. The show had a framing device of four vaudevillians who would comment on the story, but it started to feel like they were getting in the way. However, cutting them from the show would take major script surgery that would stretch my abilities. But the New Works Festival is an opportunity to take big risks! So with a "now-or-never" attitude and the support of director Leslie Martinson and dramaturg Oona Hatton, I spent several hours combing through the script and removing all instances of the framing device. The result was a more focused and snappy version of the musical – one that was quite similar to its World Premiere at TheatreWorks in 2017.

I am honored to continue my journey with TheatreWorks as the inaugural Kurjan/Butler commissioned artist, working on *Happy Pleasant Valley: A Senior Sex Scandal Murder Mystery Musical*. Perhaps you caught a reading of it at the 20th Anniversary New Works Festival this past August! This year's Festival proved to be particularly poignant after the confusing pandemic dryspell, where I wasn't sure whether theatre – this artform I've poured my heart and soul into – would ever return. But the amazing turnout at the Festival and the encouraging response I received for *Happy Pleasant Valley* have helped me find my motivation and momentum once again. I am so grateful that thirteen years after watching *Memphis* win the Tony, I can call TheatreWorks not just my workplace, but my home.

My hope for this beautiful organization is that it can continue to develop and grow new works and new artists for years to come. Every piece that is considered canon now was a new work once upon a time. I know the leadership and staff of this company is dedicated to this vision of innovation alongside its commitment to bringing excellent productions of existing works of American theatre. But we cannot do it without you! Our supporters stepped up for our **Save TheatreWorks Now** campaign, and as we turn our eyes toward the future of TheatreWorks, we need your help to meet our annual fundraising goal which is critical to our ongoing success! **With your financial support, you enable TheatreWorks to continue investing in artists like me, and to bring vibrant, meaningful theatre to the Bay Area for years to come. Please donate today to help innovation and new works thrive at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley.**


With Gratitude,
Min Kahng