

Layer the Walls Part II was made possible by



“Presented by The 14Y Theater. Developmental support provided by LABA: A Global Laboratory for Jewish Culture.”

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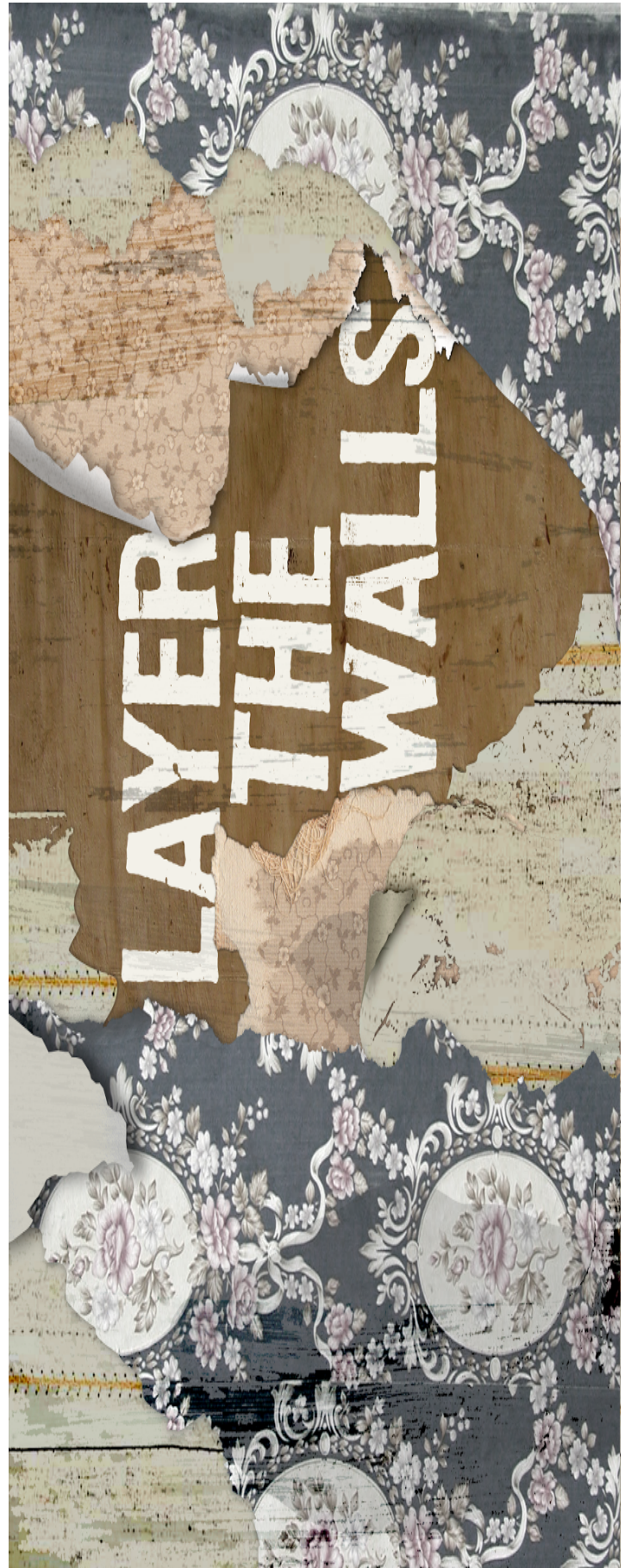
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Layer the Walls Part II is sponsored, in part, by the Greater New York Arts Development Fund of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, administered by Brooklyn Arts Council (BAC).

This project has been incubated by LABA: A Global Laboratory for Jewish Culture.

Please contact layerthewalls@gmail.com or call 646-591-7051 if you are interested in bookings/workshops about *Layer the Walls*.



Special Note



About Grand Pistachio

Grand Pistachio creates original theater for young people utilizing larger than life forms of puppetry, mask, and music. Our mission is to engage audience empathy and open new ways for young people to view each other, the world, and their role in it. We achieve this by highlighting the stories of everyday people - people who might not be in the history books or cultural records - as these stories help young audiences build empathy, see resiliency in action, and provide a broader sense of the world and how their own stories fit into that history. Through that lens we explore the hardships of Lower East Side immigrant families in *Layer the Walls Part I and Part II*, the untapped poetic potential within ourselves in *Blown Away By Poetry*, and the dangers of sanitation workers in *City of Trash*.

We strive to encourage young people to investigate their own stories and communities; and to generate a sense of awe and magic -- not only through artistry and puppetry, but also through inspiring stories of what individuals and communities achieve.

Our work has been performed at venues across the United States including: Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), Zeiterion Theater, Hudson Hall, New York Public Libraries, The Arsht Center. *Layer the Walls* was developed in support from the New Victory Theater's LabWorks program, The Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, Jim Henson Foundation, and ART New York. Our work was turned into a series of nine virtual programs with commissions from The Walton Arts Center, The Grunin Center for Performing Arts, Poway on Stage, Midwest Trust Center and the Brooklyn Arts Council. We reach +10,000 young people annually in person and our virtual programs have connected to over 30,000 students.

While visiting NYC's Tenement Museum, we learned that forty layers of wallpaper were found on the walls of an old apartment. Each piece had been applied by a new immigrant family in an attempt to make the space their own -- every layer filled with hopes, dreams, and incredible stories of survival. We created *LAYER THE WALLS* to honor these residents and showcase how they shaped the NYC we know today.

Layer the Walls Part I explored stories from over 100 years ago, but in *Part II* we were able to interview New Yorkers who have the lived experience of living in the Lower East Side and/or migrating to New York City. In particular Margaret Yuen, who shared her own story of discovering Chinese dancing as well as her father's story of arriving from China. Margaret's history has largely informed the Chinese story in our show and we are grateful for the guidance and inspiration she has provided.

We believe investigation into stories of the past will illuminate the larger struggles of immigration that have shaped and continue to influence our country today. Looking to the past can expose the damaging cycles of prejudice, exclusion, and injustice that are relevant in our current political climate.

Enjoy the show!

Special Thanks

In addition to the listed team members, *Layer the Walls Part II* has been made possible by the ideas, cheering, and support of many different artists, colleagues, and friends, including: The LABA program and team (Ronit, Laura, Chanan), Dan Friedman, Chana Pollack/The Forward, The 14th St Y Arts & Culture & Marketing team (Lindsey, Philip, Akia, Geo, Jaci), The 14th St Y security and facilities team, Ilanna Saltzman, Laura Lindsay, The Homecrest Senior Center, Adam Gitlin, Arlene Levinson, Rob Liu, Owen & Theo Liu, Mary Parker. And all of the folks who have been on the *Layer the Walls* journey since the theatrical layers first began in 2015, including The Jim Henson Foundation, New Victory LabWorks, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, Vlada Yaneva, Carrie Elman Larsen, Andrew Lewis, and Christine Cox.

Cast

Puppeteers/Performers (in order of appearance):

Rachel Sullivan, Liz Parker, Mery Cheung, & Zahydé Pietri

Artistic & Production Team

Created by: Rachel Sullivan, Liz Parker, David Quiñones, & Peiyi Wong

Director: Elise Thoron

Assistant Director & Production Manager: Margaret Baughman

Production Stage Manager: Jay Isaacs

Puppetry & Mask Design by Spica Wobbe

Original Music by Kathleen Tagg

Set Design by Peiyi Wong

Lighting Design by Sarah Johnston

Sound Design by Caroline Eng

Costume Design by Cat Fisher

Props by Sonya Plenefisch

Scenic Build: August Hunt

Choreography & Story Inspiration: Margaret Yuen

Production Assistant: Roberto Miranda

Assistant Lighting Designer: Andrew Wong

Assistant Set Designer: Maya Topping Weed

Assistant Sound Designer: Joe DiBernardo

Scenic Painters: Sonya Plenefisch & Shaina Yang

Outreach: Jay Isaacs

Voiceovers: Nicole Betancourt, Nathan Simpson, Jerry Soto, Margaret Yuen, Jay Isaacs

Audio Consultant: Elia Chuaqui

Cast, Creative Team & Crew Bios

Rachel Sullivan (Producer, Writer, Performer): At Grand Pistachio, Rachel serves as Artistic Director and is currently developing the company's next production, *City of Trash*, a puppet piece that explores the history and realities of sanitation and waste, for which she received a NYSCA individual artist fellowship. She is excited to be developing an in school *City of Trash* program with Zoellner Arts Center to be premiering in Fall 2023.

Rachel first began creating for family audiences while serving as Program Director of Urban Stages' outreach department, where she performed regularly at over 80 NYC public libraries and managed the touring roster. Since 2011, Rachel and Liz Parker have been

collaborating and touring their work, and having countless adventures along the way! Previously Rachel co-founded Honest Accomplice Theater and directed several productions which toured to college campuses. She also wrote and directed a video on gender for the NYC Commission on Human Rights' groundbreaking sexual harassment training module that is being utilized across NYC and California. Rachel has taught devising at Brandeis University. MA in Applied Theater: CUNY/SPS, BS in Theater: Northwestern University.

Liz Parker (Writer/Performer): founded Grand Pistachio with Rachel, co-writing and performing *Layer the Walls Part I*. She has also traveled the country as an actor with a one person stage performance of Lois Lowry's 'The Giver' adapted by Elise Thoron. She has performed with Spica Wobbe's puppet company Double Image Theater Company at the La Mama Puppet Festival. Liz has a Master's Degree in Applied Theater and over a decade of experience as a teaching artist. She has taught, directed and performed in public schools, libraries, prisons, trauma-informed institutions, museums, summer camps and senior centers throughout the five boroughs. Liz has worked for Lincoln Center Theater, The New Victory Theater, The Museum of the City of New York, The Child Abuse Prevention Program, New York City Children's Theater, viBe Theater Experience and Young Audiences New York.

Mery Cheung (Performer) (she/they) is puppeteer, producer, and Arts activist born and raised in NYC. Cheung trained with puppet artists at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center's National Puppetry Conference in 2016 and 2017. She has since performed puppets by Chinese Theatre Works, Evolve Puppets, Owlicorn, Pedro Reyes, Boxcutter Collective, IbeX Puppetry, Puppetsburg, Greg Corbino, and Concrete Temple. Cheung is co-founder of puppetry collective Ladies of Mischief, whose work includes the puppet slam series *Puppet Spread* and a puppet musical for young audiences *Simon and His Shoes* at The Tank. She explores themes of identity, family, and mental health as an artist cohort in the 2022-23 Object Movement Puppetry Festival.

Zahydé Pietri (Performer) is a Puerto Rican actress and artist based in NYC. She has a BA in Drama from the University of Puerto Rico and has trained and been onstage in Puerto Rico, Ecuador, Perú and NYC. She used to fight with herself weekly as the sole voice of WWE's Female Division in Spanish on WWE's RAW and

SmackDown. Favorite roles include her work with the after-image, with Julia Cavagna's Las Pibas Theatre Company, and being mom to Chaplin (her pup, not the acclaimed silent actor/director).

Peiyi Wong (Set Designer) is a Los Angeles and New York-based scenographer and interdisciplinary artist. She holds an MFA in Scenic Design and Integrated Media from the California Institute of the Arts. Peiyi received her BA in Literature and Visual Arts from Columbia University. Her theater work has been shown at REDCAT, Automata, HERE Arts Center, P.S. 122, The Ontological-Hysteric Theater, The Chocolate Factory, Access Theater Gallery, The Brick, The Prague Quadrennial, and multiple other venues and institutions in New York, Los Angeles, Berlin, New Orleans, Indianapolis, and Mount Desert Island, ME. Film design work and art direction has been or is due to be screened at Tribeca, Toronto, and Asian-American International Film Festivals.

David Quiñones (Writer) is a spoken word poet, educator & creator currently residing in South Florida by way of The Bronx, NYC. He is the son of first-generation Puerto Rican parents and grandson of native Puertorriquenos. He graduated with a degree in Theatre & Africana Studies from Lehigh University and has since performed all over NYC & been in education for over a decade. He is very grateful and proud to be able to bring this story to life and keep the legacy of the Young Lords Party alive.

Elise Thoron (Director) plays have been produced in the United States, Europe, Japan, Cuba: Green Violin, music by Frank London, (Nine Contemporary Jewish Plays); Prozak and the Platypus, music by Jill Sobule (CD/graphic novella); Charlotte: Life? Or Theater? based on paintings by Charlotte Salomon, music by Gary Fagin. Recycling: washi tales with Japanese paper artist, Kyoko Ibe, and traditional Japanese musicians. Her Afro-Cuban Yiddish opera Hatuey: Memory of Fire with Frank London just had its North American premiere at Peak Performances, after a first production at Opera de la Calle in Havana. As Associate Artistic Director at American Place Theatre, Elise co-founded Literature to Life, a highly successful theater literacy program now in its third decade nationwide. For Lit to Life she adapted and directed Diaz's The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao (also at Book-it Theater in Seattle), Baldwin's If Beale Street Could Talk, Lowry's The Giver, and developed County of Kings with Tony award-winning

spoken-word poet, Lemon Andersen, which went on to the Public Theater and venues around the world.

www.elisethoron.com

Margaret Baughman (Production Manager/Asst. Director) is a Chicago-based theatre artist and program manager at TikTok. Before the pandemic, directing credits include Oceanborn (Rave Theatre Festival), BURY ME IN MY LEGGINGS (Lady Fest), Ogygia (The Tank), and 24 Words (Steppenwolf - LookOut Series). They have been part of the Layer the Walls and Grand Pistachio team since 2017, following the show from The Tank, the 14th St Y, and on tour. They're thrilled to get to dig into new stories with Layer the Walls II. They are a proud member of Ring of Keys & an alum of The Theatre School at DePaul University. Their full portfolio can be found online: www.MargaretCBaughman.com.

Jay Isaacs (Production Stage Manager) is a New York City-based stage manager and production coordinator. They are an NYC native and have a BS in Psychology & Theater from Union College. Having joined the Grand Pistachio team in 2019 as a touring stage manager for LTW 1 and as a production associate for virtual content filmer during the early pandemic, they are ecstatic to be back with the team as the production stage manager for LTW 2. Selected Stage Manager credits include: The Tempest (Saratoga Shakespeare Company), Chaos Theory (United Solo), GIRL (Winterfest Theater Festival), and the US Open 2020 (USTA World Broadcast). Production coordinator credits: US Open 2022 (USTA World Broadcast).

Spica Wobbe (Shu-yun Cheng) (Puppetry & Mask Designer) is a puppetry artist originally from Taiwan. Her work has been seen in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, Holland, Germany, Israel, Austria and the U.S. Now based in NYC, she works as a puppetry designer, performer and educator. She established Double Image Theater Lab in 2011 to create cross-cultural productions that explore the world of the past and the present. She is a two time recipient of the Jim Henson Foundation grant and is a 2015 Sandglass Theater New Vision Series Resident Artist. Spica was the featured artist in "Shadow, Light... Hide & Seek Exhibit" at WenShand Theater in Taipei in 2015 and "Heaven of Puppets Exhibit" at Taipei Puppet Museum in 2016. Spica co-created The Memory Project with Karen Oughtred (2016), storytelling through visual arts, theater and puppetry for culturally diverse older adults. The project received LMCC SU-CASA (2017-2020),

Creative Learning grants (2017-2020) and Creative Engagement grant (2021). You can learn more about her work at <http://www.doubleimagertheaterlab.com> and about "The Memory Project" at <https://www.facebook.com/thememoryproject.storytelling>

Kathleen Tagg (Composer) is a New York-based pianist, composer, producer. She has performed on four continents, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center. With David Krakauer, she co-composed and produced the score for the film *Minyan* by Eric Steel (Berlin Biennale 2020) and the immersive multimedia concert experience with video designer Jesse Gilbert, *The Ties that Bind Us*, for Berlin's Boulez Saal. Commissions include a song cycle, *This Be Her Verse*, (words by Lila Palmer, commissioners: soprano Golda Schultz and Jonathan Ware; recorded for Alpha Classics) and *Please Dream: In his Words* for the Stellenbosch International Chamber Music Festival. *The Fretless Clarinet: Concerto for Klezmer Clarinet and Orchestra*, co-composed with Krakauer, (commissioners: Santa Rosa & Eugene Symphonies, Adele and John Gray Endowment Fund) premiered with the Santa Rosa Symphony/maestro Francesco Lecce-Chong, with European premiere at the Paris Philharmonie with Krakauer and Orchestre de Chambre Nouvelle Aquitaine/maestro Jean-Francois Heisser. Other works include *Keepers of the Flame*, an evening-length theatrical music event for Poland's Borderlands Foundation, and co-creation of *Mazel Tov Cocktail Party* (Table Pounding Records/ Label Bleu.) Her musical, *Erika's Wall*, with Sophie Jaff, received a developmental production by The Music Theater Company, Chicago. She was a 2014-2015 fellow of the Dramatist Guild and 2017 Con Ed Exploring the Metropolis Composer in Residence. www.kathleentagg.com

Sarah Johnston (Lighting Designer): Selected credits: *The Brobot Johnson Experience* (The Bushwick Starr); *Squeamish* (Theatre Row); *Speak Up, Rise Up* (The Connelly Theater); *Brobot Johnson* (The Bushwick Starr); *Charleses* (The Brick Theater); *I'm Bleeding All Over the Place* (LaMama - Ellen Stewart Theater); *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg* (The Night Shift at IRT); *Acappella: The Musical*(NYMF); *Emily Climbs*; *Daredevil* (The Brick Theater); *The Harper's Play* (JACK); *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*; *Happily Ever*; *Miss Julie* (NWT); *The Downtown Loop*(3LD). Associate Lighting Designer: *Moulin Rouge* (Boston Colonial); *Jagged Little Pill* (ART); *Saint Joan* (MTC); *The Little Foxes* (The Samuel Friedman

Theater, MTC); *Joan of Arc: Into the Fire* (*The Public Theatre*); *American Psycho*(Gerald Schoenfeld Theatre); *The Humans* (Gerald Schoenfeld Theatre, Helen Hayes Theatre; Laura Pels Theatre); *Invisible Thread* (2econd Stage); *10 out of 12* (Soho Rep.); *Pretty Filthy* (Abrons Arts Center). Associate Creative Director: Drake. Sarah is a graduate of Brooklyn College. www.sarahjohnstonlighting.com

Caroline Eng (Sound Designer) is a New York-based sound designer and engineer. Selected design credits: *Crowndation: I Will Not Live to David* (National Black Theater), *The Fight* (Storm Theatre Company), and *GYNX* (Thespis Theatre Festival). Upcoming: *Grace, or the Art of Climbing* (Art House Productions) and *The Rainmaker* (Storm Theatre Company). Caroline graduated from Fordham College at Lincoln Center with a BA in English and theatre. Thanks to Rachel and Liz for all of their hard work and guidance.

Cat Fisher (Costume Designer) has designed over 100 shows for theater, dance, film, and television, is a 2008 member of the Lincoln Center Director's Lab, a New York State Counsel for the Arts awards recipient for design work at Abrons Arts Center, and has been recognized with an Outstanding Costume award, *Hamlet Bound and Unbound*, 2012 Midtown International Theatre Festival; 2011 Planet Connections Theatre Festival (Costume award, *The God Particle*); and, nominated for best costume in the 2018 London International Film Festival. Her work has been seen at 59E59; NYC Fringe Festival and many other NYC Festivals; The Prague Fringe Festival; The Producer's Club; Riverside Theatre, and is often favorably reviewed. Catherine (Cat) has IMDb credits for both acting and design, and is a founding member of Honest Accomplice Theatre.

Sonya Plenefisch (Props Designer) is a UK trained scenic and props designer & maker based in Brooklyn. In London, they were one of the twelve young up and coming designers whose work was exhibited at the National Theatre for the Linbury Prize for Stage Design 2017. Their most recent NYC productions include *Into the Woods* in Bay Ridge, *The House of Bernarda Alba* at the Gene Frankel Theatre, *Heist! Off-Broadway* at the Players Theatre, *Troilus & Cressida* at Under St. Marks, and *Their Food Tastes Better When They See Us Starving* (or, *Coriolanus*) at the Brick. www.sonyaplenefisch.com

August Hunt/Object Fabrication LLC (Set Build) was founded in 2018 in New York City. August Hunt, owner and key builder, hails from a family rooted in creativity and his alma mater, the prestigious The Cooper Union. He and his team have extensive experience in carpentry, construction, and fabrication for retail, theatre and the professional art world. They provide services for a wide range of clients from Saks Fifth Avenue, Christian Louboutin, 1906 New Highs, French Montana, Shantel Martin, The Cherry Lane Theatre, to The Barrow Group. We are excited to collaborate with Peiyi Wong yet again on another project, and Rachel Sullivan on her new rendition of Layer the Walls!

Margaret Yuen (Choreographer and Story Inspiration) has been at the forefront of promoting Chinese culture and dance for decades. She was named Chinese American Pioneer in the Arts in 1989 by Manhattan Borough President and awarded Dedication to the Arts by the Chinese American Council on the Arts in 1981. Ms. Yuen received a certification in Chinese Folk Dance Education from the Beijing Academy of Dance and studied with many masters in the field of Chinese classical, regional folk, opera and martial arts dances. A Native New Yorker, Ms. Yuen founded the Red Silk Dancers and uses her bilingual skills to perform, teach and conduct workshops for children, youth, and older adults throughout the tri states area. Ms. Yuen aims to pass down traditions; promote Arts in the Chinese communities and build bridges for cultural understanding. Ms. Yuen started engaging in the art of storytelling in 2000, sharing her personal stories and Chinese folk tales in various storytelling venues. She also started working with puppeteer Spica Wobbe in creating new works in 2018.