

N*VA NIGHTSKY THEATER PRESENTS

ANTHROPOLOGY

by Lauren Gunderson

April 16 - April 25

DIRECTED BY SARAH BACZEWSKI

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

It is hard to talk about *anthropology* without talking about artificial intelligence. And yet, I would argue this is not a play about AI.

It is a play about grief – about how we search for meaning and closure in the wake of profound loss, and how differently that search can look from person to person. In this play, AI is simply the tool Merril understands best, the language she speaks most fluently. It becomes her way of reaching toward something she cannot otherwise grasp – much to the shock and discomfort of those around her – as that tool begins to lead her somewhere unexpected.

In our rehearsal room, conversations about AI have been as varied as the people having them. Our team spans a wide spectrum: from those whose careers are deeply intertwined with this technology to those who approach it with skepticism or even alarm. Many of us find ourselves somewhere in between – aware of its rapid growth, uneasy about its ethical and environmental implications, and yet curious about its possibilities.



DIRECTOR'S NOTE CON'T

Playwright Lauren Gunderson resists offering easy answers. The AI in *anthropology* is neither hero nor villain; it shifts, as grief itself does, refusing to settle into something simple or easily defined.

I am deeply grateful to this extraordinary cast and production team for helping bring this story to life. Working on this play has also been a reminder of how much our own theater has evolved. The first production I directed with NOVA Nightsky Theater, *After the Storm*, took place in the parking lot behind this church, with the simplest of technical elements. With *anthropology*, we have had the opportunity to explore a much wider range of tools – blending old-school theatrical storytelling with new and sometimes surprising technologies.

Thank you for being here and sharing in this (entirely human!) experience with us. I hope the play resonates with you, challenges you, and perhaps leaves you with more questions than answers.



-Sarah Baczewski

SETTING

TIME: Now

PLACE: Northern California

FEATURING

ANGIE

Fosse Thornton

MERRIL

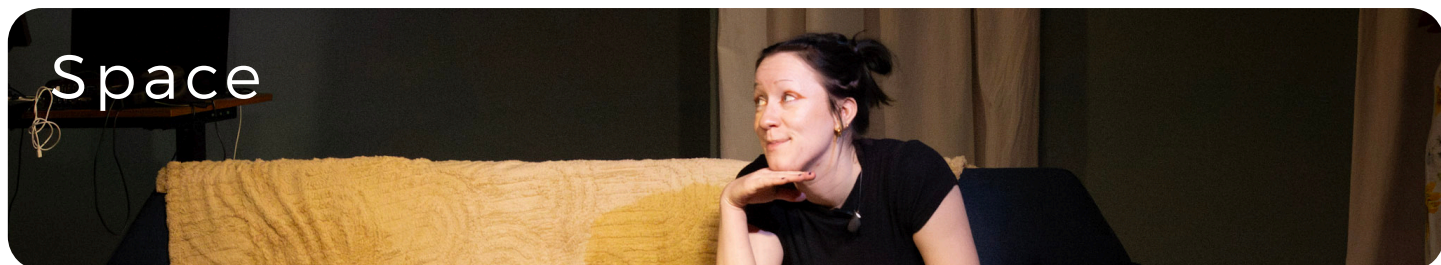
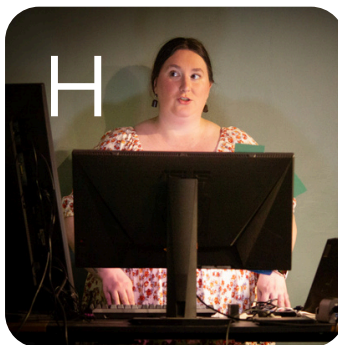
Elyse R. Smith

RAQUEL

Hannah Ruth Blackwell

BRIN

Mattie Cohan



TECH & CREATIVE TEAM

DIRECTOR	Sarah Baczewski
STAGE MANAGER	Sharon Kim
SCENIC DESIGN	Adam Ressa
LIGHTING DESIGN	Alex Eagle
ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGN	Adam Ressa
SOUND DESIGN	Nate Eagle
VIDEO DESIGN	Jeff Fitzgerald
SPECIAL EFFECTS DESIGN	Jeff Fitzgerald
	Alex Eagle
	Nate Eagle
BOARD OPERATOR	Alex Eagle
INTIMACY CHOREOGRAPHY	Jaclyn Robertson
PROPS	Cast & Crew
COSTUMES	Cast & Crew
PHOTOGRAPHY	Nate Eagle
LOGO DESIGN	Adam Ressa
PUBLICITY	Jaclyn Robertson



TECHNICAL CREW Sarah Baczewski
Hannah Ruth Blackwell
Mattie Cohan
Alex Eagle
Nate Eagle
Jeff Fitzgerald
Sharon Kim
Adam Ressa
Jaclyn Robertson
Elyse R. Smith
Fosse Thornton



READ CAST AND CREW BIOS ON
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

NOVA NIGHTSKY LEADERSHIP

PRODUCING
DIRECTOR

Jaclyn Robertson

ARTISTIC
DIRECTOR

Sarah Baczewski

DESIGN & TECHNICAL
DIRECTOR

Adam Ressa

ADMINISTRATIVE
DIRECTOR

Elyse R. Smith

COMPANY MEMBERS

JACLYN ROBERTSON
HANNAH RUTH BLACKWELL

ELYSE R. SMITH
FOSSE THORNTON



SPECIAL THANKS

Susan Loyd, Pastor Yena Hwang,
the entire Falls Church Presbyterian Church Family,
Nate Airey, & BB.

ABOUT US

NOVA Nightsky Theater was founded in late summer of 2021 by actor/producer Jaclyn Robertson and playwright/director Ward Kay. Both had worked in the local theater scene for years but wanted to bring something a little different to the community. While our first show was performed outdoors in the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have performed productions in all different types of venues, aligning with our mission of producing theater in unconventional spaces. Unlike other community theater companies that rely on grants or donations to operate, we rely on ticket sales to produce our shows. As such, we maintain tight budgets and create shows utilizing the amazing talents of our company members and casts.

100% of your ticket purchase goes into our company. Please consider joining us for future shows so we can continue to thrive.

