

MIXED PRECIPITATION PRESENTS

THE PICKUP TRUCK OPERA

volume 1: the Odyssey

Performing throughout Minnesota, the traditional lands of the Dakhóta People

An original production, inspired by Homer's Odyssey, adapted by Scotty Reynolds, Gary Ruschman, and the entire artistic team, featuring the music of Claudio Monteverdi's 1639 opera, Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria (The Return of Ulysses to his Homeland, libretto by Giacomo Badoaro) and the tunes of Dolly Parton, Here You Come Again by Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil

Artistic and Production Staff

Staging Director - Scotty Reynolds and Jacob "Jäc" Miller

Music Director - Gary Ruschman

Choreography - Jacob "Jäc" Miller

Set, Props, and Puppet Design - Duane Tougas

Costume Design - Rhiannon Fiskradatz

Puppet Costume Design - Eleanor Schanelic

Puppet Movement Coach - Masa Kawahara

Audience and Access Services - Shoshana Freund

Media Content and Design - Joni Griffith

Graphic Design - Mayumi Tanaka

Anti Oppression and Wellness Facilitator - Akiko Ostlund and Asher Edes

Rehearsal assistant - Alex Yang

Grant Writing Support - Brent Herring

Special thanks to singer **Anna Hashizume** (Penelope / Minerva) and cello player **Nick Miller** for rehearsal and performance support during our preview performance at the Women's Environmental Institute.

Crucial production, operation, and driving support provided by **Jacob "Jäc" Miller**

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CAST LIST

Episode 1: Penelope and the Carnival of Menace

Penelope, Queen of Ithaca - Momoko Tanno

Three Suitors of Penelope - Rodolpho Nieto, Jacob Miller, Gary Ruschman, Sarina Partridge,

Servents of Penelope - Akane Niemi, Andrew Niemi,

Sova Meyer, Etta Meyer (for Northern MN Performances)

Musicians - Joni Griffith (violin), Jason Kornelis (cello), Gary Ruschman (guitar),
and Sarina Partridge (banjo) August 12th - September 12th

Episode 2: The Voyage of Ulysses

Neptune, God of the Sea - Rodolpho Nieto

Minerva, Goddess of Wisdom - Momoko Tanno

Ulysses, Hero of the Trojan War - Jacob Miller

Sailors aboard Ulysses' ship - Akane Niemi, Andrew Niemi, Joni Griffith,

Sova Meyer and Etta Meyer (for Northern MN Performances)

Polyphemus, a one-eyed monster - Jason Kornelis, Rodolpho Nieto

Circe, an enchantress - Joni Griffith

Musicians - Joni Griffith (violin), Jason Kornelis (cello), Gary Ruschman (guitar),
and Sarina Partridge (banjo) August 12th - September 12th

Episode 3: Telemaco Fights Back

Penelope, Queen of Ithaca - Momoko Tanno

Ulysses, her husband - Rodolpho Nieto

Telemaco, her son - Jason Kornelis

Suitors of Penelope - Jacob Miller

King Nestor of Pylos and King Menelaus of Sparta - Joni Griffith

Helen of Troy - Momoko Tanno

Servents of Penelope - Akane Niemi, Andrew Niemi,

Sova Meyer and Etta Meyer (for Northern MN Performances)

Musicians - Joni Griffith (violin), Jason Kornelis (cello), Gary Ruschman (guitar),
and Sarina Partridge (banjo) August 12th - September 12th

*Puppet Ulysses and Suitors of Penelope played by **Loki Embryn Graham** (at select performances)

*Penelope and Minerva played by **Anna Hashizume** (at select performances)

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MUSICAL NUMBERS

Episode 1: Penelope and the Carnival of Menace

Prologue - Ithaca in ancient times

Di misera regina - Penelope

Will He Be Waiting for Me? - Penelope and Ensemble

Ama dunque si si - Three Suitors try to win Penelope's affection

Il bel cedro odoroso - Suitors

Your Ole Handyman - Penelope and Ensemble

Ecco l'arco d'Ulisse - Penelope

Son vani, oscuri pregi, i titoli de' regi - Penelope

Ama dunque si si - Three Suitors

Episode 2: The Voyage of Ulysses

In questo basso mondo - Ulysses and Sailors

Big Wind - Ensemble

Superbo è l'huom ed è del suo peccato - Neptune

Duri e penosi - Circe

Shattered Image - Circe and Ensemble

Io vidi per vendetta incenerisi Troja - Minerva

When the Sun Goes Down Tomorrow - Ulysses, Minerva, Ensemble

Episode 3: Telemaco Fights Back

What Will Baby Be - Penelope and Ensemble

Recits for Telemaco and Penelope

O padre sospirato - Telemaco and Ulysses

Here You Come Again - Ensemble

Sospirato mio sole - Ulysses and Penelope

Slow to Catch On - Ensemble

Verdi spiagge / Light of a Clear Blue Morning - Ensemble

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CAST in order of last name :

Joni Griffith (she/her) Circe, Fiddle - is a musician, performer, videographer, and educator in the Twin Cities. She is a performing member of theatre companies Mixed Precipitation and Combustible Company - helping to devise new works performed across Minnesota and Wisconsin. As a multidisciplinary artist, her practice seeks to continually explore the transformative power of sound, story, and community. When not on stage or experimenting with writing music, she can be found on her bicycle filming videos about bike touring and commuting for her YouTube channel *Broadway Biker*. www.jonigriffith.com

Loki Embryn Graham (they/them) Puppet

Ulysses, Sutor Cover - is a Software Developer & Artist with a passion for social justice and equity work. Twin Cities credits include: Skip/Terry in *Remy Raygun of the Space Brigade* (MN Fringe), Troilus in *Troilus & Cressida* (Phoenix Theatre), *Lonely Soul/Puppeteer* in *Balloonacy* (Paul Coate/-Lakeshore Players), and *Annio* in *The Clemency of Tito* (Scotty Reynolds/Mixed Precipitation's Picnic Operetta), *Ulysses* in *Flora & Ulysses* (Paul Coate/Lyric Arts).

Anna Hashizume (she/her) Penelope, Minerva

cover - is a Japanese-American singer-actor based in the Twin Cities. Previous credits include: Artistry Theater: *Mary Poppins*; Open Eye Theatre: *LOG JAM! A Paul Bunyan Musical Spectacular*; Theatre Elision: *Of Art and Artists*; Lyric Arts: *Sense and Sensibility*; An Opera Theater: *The Sky Where You Are*, *In The Midst of Things*; Collective Unconscious Performance: *Into the Darkness*; Mixed Precipitation: *The Clemency of Tito's Tennis Club*, *Dr. Falstaff and the Working Wives of Lake County*, *Philemon and Baucis: Planet in Peril*; Minnesota Opera: *La Traviata*, *Thaïs*; Fargo-Moorhead Opera: *Speed Dating*, *Tonight!*; Lyric Opera of the North: *Rigoletto*. Anna also teaches voice in the Twin Cities and hosts a podcast called *Thank You Places* which can be found on most streaming platforms. www.annahashizume.com @annahashizume

Jason Kornelis (he/him) Telemaco, Cyclops, Cello

is a Minneapolis-based musician, performer, and voiceover artist. He has been a collaborator with Mixed Precipitation on numerous projects since 2013, including "Philemon and Baucis" and "Tonya and Nancy: The Opera". When not performing, Jason's hobbies include collecting instruments, searching for the perfect cup of coffee, and petting as many dogs as possible.

Sova Meyer (she/her) Youth Cover in Ely - is a rising 6th grader and loves dancing, singing, gymnastics, basketball, reading, engineering, and foxes

Etta Meyer (she/her) Youth Cover in Ely - is a rising 3rd grader and loves dancing, singing, cross country skiing, horseback riding, languages, and koalas.

CREW in order of last name:

Asher Edes (they/them) Anti-Oppression & Wellness

Facilitator - is excited to bring their love of nurturing collective wellbeing to support this production. Outside Mixed Precipitation, they organize movement practices for *Don't You Feel It Too?*, and study the intersection of arts and social change in TRCSTR. Asher's passion project is creating a curriculum called *Shmita Hives* to offer Jewish communities embodied and artistic tools for rest and transformation starting this September.

Rhiannon Fiskradatz (she/her) Costumes

- is a passionate multidisciplinary, weaving together the threads of her artistic practice in a tapestry that illustrates her own unique vision of the beautiful variety of people and places in her worlds. With her costume designer hat on, she works on theatrical productions, dance shows, circus, live music performance, music videos, immersive experiences and with private clients. She is an accomplished beadweaver, having been featured in *Beadwork* magazine. She manages a youth choir for *VocalEssence* and performs as a vocalist with local band *the Riff Rangers* and also as a solo singer/songwriter under the name *MaMa Faerie*. Rhiannon is over the moon to be part of another awesome Pickup Truck Opera!

Shoshana Freund (she/her) Access and Audience Services

Masanari Kawahara (he/him) Movement Consultant

- is a performer, educator and Butoh practitioner who incorporates puppetry, mask and movement into his work. His most recent puppetry work, for which he was a co-creator and performer, is *The Story of Crow Boy* (2016/2017/2018) for *In the Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theatre* (HOBT) where he is a core associate artist. He is a member of the Butoh group *Nenkin Butoh Dan*, which received a 2015 Sage Award for outstanding dance ensemble for *Fu.Ku.Shi.Ma*. Masanari Kawahara is a Playwrights' Center McKnight Theater Artist Fellow 2018-2019 and 2010-2011.

Akiko Ostlund (she/her) Anti-Oppression & Wellness

Facilitator - is a dancer, poet, puppeteer, performing artist, collage artist, curator, and activist. She began dancing as a tribal fusion belly dancer and cross-studies many dance forms such as salsa, bachata, hula, and tutting. She is also a student of Ragamala school and has trained in the classical Indian dance form of Bharatanatyam since 2014. She often collaborates with puppeteers in various projects includes *Barebones Halloween Extravaganza*, *Mayday Parade*, and *Puppet Cabaret* as well as projects with individual puppeteers. All of her works focus on community and reflect her voice as an immigrant woman of color. She is heavily invested in connecting with poc youth in her community. As a curator she regularly visits local high school showcases to familiarize herself with the new generation, and presents young artists in the shows she curates.

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Jacob (Jäc) Miller (they/them) Ulysses Puppet, Suitor 2, Choreography and Staging Director - Jacob "Jäc" Miller has been a part of Mixed Precipitation since 2014 as production intern, stage/production manager, and artistic leader. They are currently working towards their masters degree in Theology and the Arts at United Theological Seminary. Jäc has been involved in puppet shows large and small, dance shows, and other fun performances all over the twin cities.

Nick Miller (he/him) Cyclops & Cello Cover - loves making music and spending time outside, so naturally he loves any time he can spend with the Mixed Precipitation Operettas! He has been a singer and instrumentalist throughout Minnesota, Texas, and New York. He also keeps an active teaching schedule and loves discussing music at any time in any place with anyone!

Akane Niemi (they/them) Youth Performer, Euryclyia, Eumanus, Sailor

Andrew Niemi (he/him) Youth Performer, Eumanus

Rodolfo Nieto (he/him) Neptune, Ulysses, Suitor 1 is a singer, actor, composer, and lyricist residing in Minneapolis, MN. He performs regularly in the Twin Cities in Musical Theater and Opera, where he has performed with Theater Latté Da, Park Square Theatre, Minnesota Opera, History Theatre, and Mixed Blood Theatre, to name a few. Other work includes bilingual concerts of Mexican music and original compositions, which can be viewed on his YouTube channel. Rodolfo's recent composition, "The Minnesota Beer Song," has already reached 17k views on YouTube and is still growing. More at www.rodolfo-nieto.com.

Sarina Partridge (she/her) Suitor 3, Banjo - is a musician, song-leader and educator in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She feels most alive when learning, creating and sharing songs, and enjoys singing with a wide variety of music projects - Eastern European and Yiddish song, old-time music, community song-leading, and everything in between. Sarina has traveled to Montreal, to the island of Corsica, and to the Republic of Georgia to study with master folk singers, and has toured with the traveling ensemble Northern Harmony abroad and in the USA. She has a passion for connecting people with their own creativity and with community, and uses singing to help folks develop a sense of wonder for this wild world around us.

CREW continued:

Gary Ruschman (he/him) Music Director - is a critically-acclaimed stage performer, conductor, and composer who works in a broad range of styles. His credits include appearances with NPR's Tiny Desk Concerts, Boston Pops, Kennedy Center, Festival Musique en L'Île de Paris, Birdland, and Minnesota Orchestra. His scores have been presented by BBC Two, Madison Square Garden, and C-SPAN. Gary's discography includes recordings with Cantus, American Bach Soloists, Zikzak, and two solo albums. He has been on the artistic staff of Mixed Precipitation since 2017, and serves in conducting posts at St. Timothy Lutheran Church of St. Paul, One Voice Mixed Chorus, and North Hennepin Community College.

Eleanor Schanilec (she/her) Puppet Costumer - is a costumer and writer who enjoys combining the historical with the fantastical. Recently she's costume designed She Kills Monsters, The Importance of Being Earnest, and The Goat:Or Who Killed Sylvia, as well as costume interning at The Children's Theater for their productions of Carrie and Mary Poppins Jr. Big thanks to my kittens, Dani and Zoe, who make sure to help with every sewing project!

Duane Tougas (he/him) Props and Puppets - has been bending the cardboard for 40 years. Known as "The Tool-Master of Brainerd", Duane migrated south to the cities from his childhood home in the north to pursue a career in the arts. He studied at the College of Visual Arts in St Paul and began working at Heart of the Beast in 1993 where he was the tech director and a staff artist. He has worked with a variety of theater and mask groups, traveling across the country and the ocean to participate in large scale pageants. He continues to be sought for his ability to rig just about anything. Duane also works with Barebones on the annual Halloween Extravaganza at Hidden Falls Park in St Paul.

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Momoko Tanno (she/her) Penelope, Minerva - is so happy to be performing with Akane and Andrew as a family who loves to bring joy and music! As a teenager, she grew up immersed in Schütz and Monteverdi, and rebelliously sang and played bass in a rock band, so this show is a dream come true. Momoko is also very grateful to be working with Mixed Precipitation on antiracism and other social justice work, learning each and every day together in this beloved community!

Kana Senn (she/her) Youth Cover in Rochester

CREW continued:

Scotty Reynolds (he/him) Producing Artistic Director - is a stage director, writer, and performer with a passion for theatrical events and social connectivity. His Theater company Mixed Precipitation, has been producing work since 2008, including eleven seasons of the Picnic Operetta, touring to community gardens, orchards, and farms throughout Minnesota. Since 2015 he was a staff artist at the Interact Center for Visual and Performing Arts creating original theater work with adults with disabilities. He is a 2017 recipient of the Minnesota State Arts Board, Artist initiative grant.

Special thanks

to those who have assisted us in our creative process
and provided space for us to perform and grow our project:

Alex Yang, Nora Rickey, Allan Christian and House of Balls, Susan Haas, Joel Sass, Kat Corrigan, Max Tougas, Tara Priolo, Chris Noel, Harper Hawley, Emilie Kosse, Luka Chelimsky, Lizz Windnagel, Alia Jeraj, John Hardy, Shannon Barber-Meyer and John Meyer, Roger and Sherry Reynolds, Steve and Kris Moyer, Amy and Alex Negrete, Johnnie Hyde, Ericka and Jack LaMar of Early Frost Farm, Eva Barr and DreamAcres, Susan Waughtal and Roger Nelson of Squash Blossom Farm, Pamela Hugdahl of Rochester Art Center, Heidi Nelson of the Paradise Center, Amy Sterns of the Historic Holmes Theater, Kris Lenkowski of Ramsey County Parks, the staff of Dodge Nature Center and the Women's Environmental Institute, Will Stensrud of the Kenwood Neighborhood Association, Nan Bailly and the staff of Alexis Bailly Vineyard, MaryLynn Pulscher of Minneapolis Parks and Rec, Karin DuPaul, Mike Grealish and the Friends of Swede Hollow.

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THANK YOU!

Thank you to these individual donors who gave \$50 or more
Spring 2020-June 2021
(Our apologies for any misspellings or omissions)

James Ahrens
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Arlene Goodman Alm
Rebecca Arenivar
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Tom Beach
John Berg
Ellen Blanchard
Lisa Boyd
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