

MIXED PRECIPITATION PRESENTS  
**THE PICKUP TRUCK OPERA**  
volume 1: the Odyssey



Performing throughout Minnesota, the traditional lands of the Dakhóta People

## CAST LIST

### **Episode One: Penelope and the Carnival of Menace**

Penelope, Queen of Ithaca - Momoko Tanno

Three Suitors of Penelope - Rodolpho Nieto, Jacob Miller, Gary Ruschman,  
Sarina Partridge, Loki Embryn Graham (at select performances)

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, Loki Embryn Graham (at select  
performances)

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

Neptune, God of the Sea - 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, Loki Embryn Graham (at select  
performances)

King Nestor of Pylos- Joni Griffith

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),  
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*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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## MUSICAL NUMBERS

### Episode One: Penelope and the Carnival of Menace

**Prologue** - Ithica 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** - Suitor One

**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 (alphabetically by 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](http://www.jonigriffith.com)


**Loki Embryon Graham (they/them) Puppet Ulysses, Suitor 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, Thais; 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](http://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.





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## CAST (continued...)

**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, Euryclia, 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](http://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.



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## CAST (continued...)

**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 (alphabetically by 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.



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## CREW (continued...)

**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.

**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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## **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:

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**THANK YOU!**

Thank you to these individual donors!

Spring 2020-June 2021

(Our apologies for any misspellings or omissions)

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