

Insight Colab Theatre presents an immigration story in the musical 'Say My Name'

By Mary Jeneverre Schultz



Photo Credit: Mindy Delmez, Mon Ami Mindy Photography

It's time to step up and be vocal. And to no longer be invisible. Let's share and honor the history of our ancestors, who have paved the way in American society.

These themes were highlighted throughout the musical, *Say My Name*, produced by Insight Colab Theatre at the People's Building in Aurora. Performed during the third weekend of January, the play had been postponed twice last year due to the pandemic.

The musical shares the narrative of Korean immigrant Seung-Min, who is studying for her naturalization test for the second time to become a US citizen, but she is haunted by ghosts, wanting the same dreams and goals.

The Cast

Talented female actresses took the stage to tell the stories of students alongside these haunted ghosts, who are urging for recognition in history.

Relevant to today's current issues, the plays pivotal moment exudes feelings of anxiousness and stress through its storytelling. For most immigrants, studying for the citizenship test can be nerve-wracking.

The audience could feel the immense worry expressed by the actress.

Each character showed unforgettable moments, making them stand out in both their singing and acting. Their voices carried in the theater space, such that they didn't appear to need microphones at all.

Huge applause to each gifted and talented actress in their individual performances --- Cecilia Min-Kyung Kim, Marielle Beazley, Jordan Lee, Samantha Saunders, and Natalie Connelly.

One male actor, Sean Guderian, supported the production in multiple roles: teacher, husband, faceless person.

Music and Set Design

The musical score was phenomenal. Songwriter and musician David Nehls is a genius. He composed a collection of songs, suitable for storytelling. It was amazing to hear all the music assembled just for this play. The tunes are catchy and memorable.

The one-man band and musician Alec Steinhorn performed his keyboard abilities and sound effects. His flow of music

was seamless from one transition to another.

The simplicity of the sets made it easy to transition between the scenes --- specifically the bedroom and the classroom settings. Behind-the-scenes production made the musical easy and pleasurable to view for all.

Production and Artistic Direction

Playwright and director Pang Yuan should take a bow for her first musical. The creativity flowed from paper and pen to a live musical. It is so exciting to see what the playwright will do for her next production.

Insight Colab Theatre hopes to create a show based on community members' stories. If you are interested in being a part of this process and if you'd like to share your own immigration story, e-mail InsightColabTheatre@gmail.com.

For more plays by Asian Americans and for Asian Americans, visit Insight Colab Theatre's website at insightcolab.org or follow them at [fb.com/InsightColab](https://www.facebook.com/InsightColab) or on Instagram [@insight_colab](https://www.instagram.com/insight_colab).

