



present

Warrior Class

By Kenneth Lin

Directed by Carol Ann Tan

Stage Manager

Kamren Smith

Production Manager

Melanie Kulas

Scenic Designer

Sydney Achler

Lighting Designer

Blake Cordell

Sound Designer

Erik Siegling

Costume Designer

Uriel Gomez

Props Coordinator

Derek Bertelsen

Technical Director

Brian Sprague

Technical Assistant

Paul Kaufmann

THE COMRADES

Derek Bertelsen, Nicholas Coso, David Coupe, Angela Horn, Raymond Jacquet, Melanie Kulas, Cydney Moody, Mike Newquist, Alex Nolen, Alison Plott, Carol Ann Tan, Becca Venable, Taylor Wisham

WARRIOR CLASS is presented by special arrangement with
Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York.

Produced by Second Stage Theatre, New York, NY in 2012,
Carole Rothman, Artistic Director.

Originally workshopped and developed in the 2012 Pacific Playwrights Festival
at South Coast Repertory

CAST

Nathan..... Scott Olson
Holly Alison Plott
Julius Ben Veatch

Please note: WARRIOR CLASS runs 80 minutes with no intermission.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



Scott Olson (Nathan) is thrilled to work with the Comrades for the first time. Most recently, he appeared in Exit 63's inaugural production of *Very Still and Hard To See*

and as Henry in City Lit's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Other recent roles include Bennett in *Travesties* at Remy Bumpo, Ben in Timeline's *The Normal Heart*, Bernard in Raven's *Red Velvet*, Dr. Worthing in *Porcelain* at Prologue Theatre, Sellers in *The Guilded Age*, and Zachary in *42 Stories* (Best Actor nomination, Broadway World Chicago) at City Lit, and Donny in *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* and Ben in *The Lyons* at AstonRep both directed by Comrades' Artistic Director Derek Bertelsen. Scott has also worked with American Theatre, Co., Level 11 Productions, Idle Muse, Midsommer Flight, and Mercy Street Theatre and will be seen this spring in *Corona* at Otherworld Theatre. When not on stage, Scott teaches acting in the Theatre Department at Columbia College where he has taught for the last 20 years.



Alison Plott (Holly) Alison is a founding company member with The Comrades and was last seen as Amy in *In the Wake*. Chicago: *Through the Elevated Line*, Silk

Road Rising (Jeff Nomination, Best New

Work); *Le Switch* (u/s), *About Face*; *The Vandal* (u/s), *Steep*; *Variations on a Theme*, Piven Lab Series; *Wit*, AstonRep; *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Mortal Audit*, The Arc; *Unbearable Lightness of Being*, Creative Wellness. Regional: *Or What You Will*, Oregon Shakespeare Festival; *Comedy of Errors*, New Swan Shakespeare Festival (CA); *The Learned Ladies* and *As You Like It*, Texas Shakespeare Festival; *Little Dog Laughed*, Theatre Out (CA); *The Wedding Singer* and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, SRT (CA). MFA Acting, University of California, Irvine; BA Theatre, University of California, Riverside.



Ben Veatch (Julius) is ecstatic to have this opportunity to work with The Comrades. He was most recently seen as Shivananda in *Merchant On Venice* (Rasaka

Theatre Company and Vitalist Theatre Company). Recent Chicago credits include *Our Town* (Redtwist Theatre), *Good for Otto* (u/s) (The Gift Theatre), *East of Eden* (u/s) (Steppenwolf Theatre), *Push Button Murder* (Side Project Theatre), and *Devil's Day Off* (Signal Ensemble Theatre). Ben has also performed with Stage Left Theatre, Factory Theater, Oracle Productions, and Promethean Theatre Ensemble, Ka-Tet Theatre, Will Act For Food, and New Millennium Theatre. Thanks to Anne for all her love and support.

CREATIVE TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

Carol Ann Tan (Director) is a Singapore-born, Chicago-based director, writer, and dramaturg. Her work focuses on issues surrounding race and immigration, particularly those involving the Asian diaspora. She is the resident dramaturg at Silk Road Rising, an artistic associate with The Comrades, and a 2017/18 Directors Inclusion Initiate with Victory Gardens. Directing/writing: *Domestic Departure* (Haven Theatre), *Apartment Complex*, *Domestic Departure* (University of Chicago). *Domestic Departure* was awarded second place for the 2015 Olga and Paul Menn Foundation Prize in playwriting. Assistant directing: *Mies Julie* (Victory Gardens), *You for Me for You* (Sideshow Theatre). Dramaturgy: *Vietgone* (Writers Theatre), *Wild Boar* (Silk Road Rising), *Two Mile Hollow*, *peerless* (First Floor Theater), *In the Wake* (The Comrades), and assisting on *The Audience* (TimeLine Theatre). www.carolanttan.com

Kamren Smith (Stage Manager) is thrilled to be managing The Comrades' stage for a second time and to work with such an amazing group of humans! His most recent stage managing credits include *Bangarang! A Neverland Reunion*, with InGen Productions, and *In the Wake*, with The Comrades. Since moving to Chicago in 2014, Kamren has worked in various other positions with Adventure Stage Chicago, Akvavit Theatre, Forth Story Productions, Haven Theatre, InGen Productions, The Ruffians, and Timeline Theatre. Much love and many thanks to his support system.

Sydney Achler (Scenic Designer) is thrilled to be working with The Comrades again! She is a Chicago-based scenic designer and painter and an ensemble member with (re) discover theatre. Recent designs include *Godspell*, *She Loves Me*, *Middletown*, *A Chris Smith Carol*, *Complete Works of Shakespeare (abridged)*, *Stones in his Pockets*, *Our Town*, *DalekoArts*; *Clearing*, Commission Theatre; *Row After Row*, The Comrades; *For One*, (re) discover theatre; *Punk*, The New Colony; *Big Love*, Apple Valley HS; *Hamtown Races*,

Planet Ant Theatre. She received her BFA from Illinois Wesleyan University.

Uriel Gomez (Costume Designer) Design credits include the Chicago premieres of *The Wolf At The End Of The Block*, *Parachute Men* (Teatro Vista); *The River Bride* (Halcyon Theatre); and many more. He would like to thank Matt; as well as his friends, and family for all their support. For more information & designs please visit ugomez.com

Erik Siegling (Sound Designer) is excited to be designing sound for The Comrades for the first time. Here in Chicago, Erik composed and designed for Interrobang Theatre Project's productions of "Grace" and "The Goat". He has previously designed for Seattle Shakespeare Company, Oakton Community College and Fantastic Z Theatre. An accomplished actor as well, Erik has guest starred on the TV show Z Nation, has performed in theatres across the country, and has a B.A. degree in Theatre from Principia College.

Blake Cordell (Lighting Designer) has been designing in the city for only a couple of months now. Having moved here in January from Kansas where he studied music composition and theatrical design, he has worked with Pride Arts, Saint Sebastian Players, Collaboration, Brown Paper Bag, Her Story, Haven, and The Side Project. He is excited to make his debut with Comrades. Please enjoy the show! For more information on Blake, visit blakecordell.com

Brian Sprague (Technical Director) is a Chicago-based Freelance Theatre Artist. He received his Master of Fine Arts in Acting from Northern Illinois University and has studied/performed internationally at the Moscow Art Theatre and Adana State Theatre in Adana, Turkey. Some past Technical Directing credits include: *The Harvest* (Griffin Theatre Company), *Akeelah and the Bee* (Adventure Stage Chicago), *JB*, *Arms and the Man* (City Lit Theatre Company), *Invisible Hand*, *Birdland*,

Earthquakes in London (Steep Theatre), *You Can't Take it With You*, *Fair Maid of the West*, *Macbeth*, *African Company Presents Richard III* (Oak Park Festival Theatre), *Grace, The Goat: or Who is Sylvia* (Interrobang Theatre Project), *Happiest Place on Earth*, *Give It All Back* and *Truth and Reconciliation* (Sideshow Theatre Company).

Melanie Kulas (Production Manager) is excited to be working with The Comrades again! In Chicago, Melanie has worked as a stage manager with AstonRep, Circle Theatre, Pride Films & Plays, and Strawdog, to name a few. She travels to her alma mater each spring to work on the UW Varsity Band Spring Concert in Madison, WI. Recently, she even took part in WPR's

100th Anniversary Show, celebrating one of the oldest continuously broadcasting radio stations of any kind in the country. Melanie would like to thank her friends and family, especially her partner, Joe, for all of their support.

Derek Bertelsen (Artistic Director/Props Coordinator) currently serves as Artistic Director of The Comrades and Co-Artistic Director for AstonRep Theater Company. Directing credits include work with Pride Films & Plays, BrightSide Theatre, Timber Lake Playhouse, Shawnee Summer Theatre, Festival 56. Assistant directing credits at Bailiwick Chicago, Goodman, Steppenwolf Garage. A big thanks to Cat and the rest of the team. Love to Nelson.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

I pitched *Warrior Class* to The Comrades in the immediate wake of the #MeToo fallout. I admittedly thought the play, though written in 2012, might feel especially relevant if its production coincided with this year's midterm elections. But I certainly could not have predicted that this fall, we'd see explosive sexual assault allegations leveled against a Supreme Court nominee — one incidentally chosen by a president with similarly unacceptable past conduct.

While the events of *Warrior Class* may be different, the central questions raised are not. For one, should a person's eligibility for public office be affected by their behavior from decades prior? To be sure, people do change over time, and often for the better; but we also shouldn't dismiss the magnitude of a given crime. And if we elect public officials with a history of sexual violence, we're implicitly saying that it doesn't matter whether people have engaged in that kind of abhorrent behavior, as long as they change *for the better* when they're older.

So we shouldn't elect public officials with that kind of history, *provided* the allegations are true. Which leads us to the second question: What is the standard of proof required to determine if accusations of sexual harassment and assault are true, particularly if the incident occurred decades prior? After all, definitive proof can't exist — not for events that happened so long ago, and more importantly, in private.

Instead then, we're better off asking who the laws were written by, and who the law is really protecting. *Warrior Class* investigates how race might affect the final outcome, and whether we agree with the story's particular conclusion may be less important than confronting the real questions that Kenneth Lin's uncannily prescient script raises.

Carol Ann Tan, director
September 24, 2018