WILD BOAR

A play by CANDACE CHONG



THE U.S. PREMIERE

NOVEMBER 9 - DECEMBER 17, 2017

Written by CANDACE CHONG | Directed by HELEN YOUNG
Chinese to English Translation by JOANNA C. LEE and KEN SMITH
Adapted by DAVID HENRY HWANG



WILD BOAR

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By Candace Chong Chinese to English translation by Joanna C. Lee and Ken Smith, Adaptation by David Henry Hwang

Wild Boar was commissioned by the Hong Kong Arts Festival and received its world premiere (in Cantonese) in February 2012.

This translation of *Wild Boar* was commissioned, developed, and presented by Signature Theatre and the Lark Play Development Center as part of Contemporary Chinese Playwright Series in March 2013.

The use of cameras, video recorders, or audio recorders by members of the audience during the course of this production is strictly prohibited.

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CAST LIST

Christine Bunuan* | Tricia

F. Karmann Bajuyo† | Ruan

Fin Coe | Mu Ne, Yam

Emily Marso | Agent, Karrie, Sunny

Scott Shimizu | Johnny

Zhanna Albertini | Understudy for Agent, Karrie, Sunny

Harrison Hapin | Understudy for Mu Ne, Yam

Ian Michael Smith | Understudy for Johnny

Dwight Sora | Understudy for Ruan

Marie Tredway | Understudy for Tricia

- * Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.
- † Fight Captain

PRODUCTION TEAM

Malik Gillani | Producer

Jamil Khoury | Producer

Corey Pond | Associate Producer

Candace Chong | Playwright

Joanna C. Lee and Ken Smith | Translators

David Henry Hwang | Adapter

Helen Young | Director

Joshua Baggett* | Stage Manager

Yeaji Kim | Set Designer

Melissa Ng | Costume Designer

Lindsey Lyddan | Lighting Designer

Anthony Churchill | Projections Designer

Thomas Dixon | Sound Designer and Original Music

Katy Vest | Props Designer

Carol Ann Tan | Dramaturg

Dwight Sora | Fight Choreographer

Kelly Butler | Production Manager

Jason Pikscher | Technical Director

Brent Ervin-Eickhoff | Assistant Director

Bailey Howard | Assistant Stage Manager

Neal Javenkoski | Master Electrician

Andy Kloubec | Electrician

Sharon Krome | Marketing Coordinator

Al Gillani | Box Office Manager

Nick Johnson | House Manager

Sarah Ibis | Program Editor

Deann Baker | Video Coordinator and Editor

CAST BIOS



Christine Bunuan

(Tricia) is so excited to return to Silk Road Rising where she premiered her solo musical revue, *Christmas at Christine's*. She was recently seen as Mahi in *Honeymoon*

in Vegas at The Marriott Theatre. Her other credits include First National Tour of The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (David Stone Productions), Julius Caesar (Writers Theatre), Chimerica (TimeLine Theatre), Avenue Q (Mercury Theatre), A Christmas Carol (Goodman Theatre), Kafka on the Shore (Steppenwolf), several shows at Chicago Children's Theatre, Chicago Dramatists, and many more. She also made a guest appearance in Chicago PD (NBC) last season. Special thanks to Jamil, Malik, Corey, and Helen, family, friends, and of course, her partner in crime, Sean. For more, visit www.christinebunuan.com.



F. Karmann Bajuyo

(Ruan) is honored to be returning to Silk Road Rising, where he was last seen in *The Hundred Flowers Project*. Other Chicago area credits include work with Porchlight Music

Theater, Bailiwick Chicago, and TimberLake Playhouse. TV credits include *Powers* (F/X pilot). Film credits include *Critical Nexus, Bastard Son of a Thousand Fathers, Thanks Mom,* and *Grace on the Green Line.* Voiceover, on-camera, print, corporate performance coaching, and trade show presentation comprise the rest of his work. Much thanks to Jamil, Malik, Helen, Corey, and the rest of the Silk Road Rising team for this wonderful opportunity! Also, thank you to family and friends. Karmann is represented by Paonessa Talent. For more, visit www.karmannbajuyo.com.



Fin Coe (Mu Ne, Yam) is thrilled to return to Silk Road Rising, having previously understudied in *The Hundred Flowers Project*, as well as workshopping and providing voiceover for *The Four Hijabs*.

Fin is a part of The New Colony's ensemble and the head of Velocimancer Press. He would like to thank all of you for coming out to support new stories with new perspectives.



Emily Marso (Agent, Karrie, Sunny) is making her Silk Road Rising debut. Recent credits include *The Paper Dreams of Harry Chin* (TimeLine Theatre TimePieces Reading Series), *The Grapes of Wrath* (The Gift

Theatre), *Men on Boats* (understudy, American Theater Company), and *For The Love Of (or, The Roller Derby Play)* (Pride Films and Plays). An actor and teaching artist, she is a company member with Barrel of Monkeys and toured nationally as a company member with Child's Play Touring Theatre. Other Chicago credits include work with The Gift Theatre, Shattered Globe Theatre, Chicago Dramatists, Jackalope Theatre, and Living Room Playmakers, among others. Film credits include *Message Received* and *The Mortician*. Television credits include *Chicago Fire* (NBC). Emily graduated with a BA degree in theatre, political science, and Chinese from Northwestern University. She is represented by Paonessa Talent. For more, visit www.emilymarso.com.



Scott Shimizu (Johnny) is excited to be back at Silk Road Rising! After graduating from Northwestern University with a BA degree in theatre, Scott has had the good fortune to work with Court Theatre, the

Lyric Opera, the Marriott Theatre in Lincolnshire, Chicago Children's Theatre, and the Greenhouse Theatre Center, among others. Recent credits include the Ensemble in *Machinal*, Brother Luke in *Anything Goes*, and John Lee in *Porcelain*. You can see Scott again in Silk Road Rising's upcoming premiere of *Through the Elevated Line*. Love to my family and to Chad.



Zhanna Albertini

(Understudy for Agent, Karrie, Sunny) is excited to be joining Silk Road Rising for the first time. She is a graduate of Loyola University, and was most recently seen in *By Association*

at MPAACT Theatre. She would like to thank SRR for their hospitality and her family for simply being the best!



Harrison Hapin

(Understudy for Mu Ne, Yam) is excited to be working with Silk Road Rising for the first time. Harrison is a graduate of the Columbia College theatre program with a focus in acting.

You may have seen him perform in *Romeo and Juliet* at Teatro Vista and *The Junglebook* with Lumas Theatre. You can also see him perform around town with his improv group, Adrenaline and Ignorance.



Ian Michael Smith

(Understudy for Johnny) is excited to be making his Silk Road Rising debut and super pumped to be working once again with the incredible Helen Young! Recently, he was the

bearer of bad news in Three Crows' *Trojan Women*, fighting the cartel in Mercy Street's *Luz Estrada*, and most recently the apologizing boyfriend for not doing the dishes...in real life (sorry, Katie). Favorite roles include Ralph in *American Hwangap* (A-Squared and Halcyon Theatres), Raul in *In Love and WarCraft* (Halcyon), and Michael in *Goldstar*, *OH* (American Theatre Company). Ian thanks Dad, Mom, Sean, Tim, and romantic companion/ business partner Katie Hunter for their undying support despite his many grumbles. You can find the moving pictures he makes with said romantic/ business partner at SpaceCampProductions.com.



Dwight Sora (Understudy for Ruan) most recently appeared in Strawdog Theatre Company's production of *Cybmbeline* and Chicago Children's Theatre's *Red Kite Treasure Adventure*. Past shows include *The Three Musketeers* (Lifeline Theatre),

Family Devotions (Halycon Theatre), and Twelve Angry Men (Raven Theatre). He understudied the Chicago premieres of Durango (Silk Road Rising) and Frank Galati's adaptation of Haruki Murakami's After the Quake (Steppenwolf Theatre). He also appeared as an onstage combatant in Romeo et Juliet (Lyric Opera Chicago) and is a past ensemble member of the educational troupes Imagination Theater and Erasing the Distance. On film, he had a small part in Red Dawn (2012), and can be heard portraying the voices of several WWII veterans of the Japanese-American 442nd regimental combat team as part of the interactive exhibits at the Go For Broke National Education Center in Los Angeles. All the best to his lovely wife, Czerina, and his son, Jack.



Marie Tredway (Understudy for Tricia) hails from the Bay Area and is a recent graduate of Carthage College with a BA degree in theatre performance. She is thrilled to be part of her first Silk

Road Rising production! Recent credits include an all-femme Saint Joan at Greenhouse Theatre, The Sacagawea Project with Theatre Unspeakable, Wherever You've Been at Three Brothers Theatre, The Playwright's Project with Artistic Conspiracy, Pericles with Muse of Fire Theatre, and The Valkyries, a Gorilla Tango Original. Much love and thanks to the cast and creative team, her husband Carl, and their two beautiful girls, Amaya and Alexis!

PRODUCTION TEAM BIOS



Malik Gillani (Producer) is Founding Executive Director of Silk Road Rising, a position to which he brings extensive experience in production, management, and business development. Malik is a

recognized leader in the creation of innovative arts programming that expands artistic access. Most notably, he conceived of and developed SRR's model for creating online video plays which are now being accessed across the globe. He established SRR's arts integrated education program, Myths to Drama, which was heralded as one of the finest elementary school arts education programs in the Chicago Public Schools system. He also developed and piloted a new arts education program for high school and middle school students in partnership with San Diego's Playwrights Project, called Empathic Playwriting Intensive Course (EPIC). Malik earned a BA degree in liberal arts from St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland, with an emphasis on the great books. He is a Kellogg Executive Scholar (Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University). Malik received an MA degree in nonprofit administration from North Park University. Malik has been a grant panelist for CityArts, Illinois Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Arts, Shakespeare in American Communities, and Chicago Community Trust's Fellowship Program. Malik is the recipient of the IBM Business and Technology Leadership Award, Changing Worlds Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Arts, and the Chicago Community Trust Fellowship Award.



Jamil Khoury (Producer) is Founding Director of Programming & Mission Trustee of Silk Road Rising. As a theatre producer, playwright, essayist, and filmmaker, Jamil's work focuses on Middle Eastern

themes and questions of Diaspora. He is particularly interested in the intersections of culture, national identity, and citizenship. Jamil has been Playwrightin-Residence at Knox College (Galesburg, Illinois), Valparaiso University (Valparaiso, Indiana), North Central College (Naperville, Illinois), and Benedictine University (Lisle, Illinois). His most recent play, Mosque Alert, received its world premiere at Silk Road Rising in the spring of 2016. It has since been translated into German, Russian, and Arabic and performed in Hamburg, Germany. Jamil holds an MA degree in religious studies from The University of Chicago Divinity School and a BS degree in international relations from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. He is a Kellogg Executive Scholar (Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University) and has been awarded a Certificate of Professional Achievement in Nonprofit Management. Jamil is the 2017 recipient of The University of Chicago Diversity Leadership Alumni Award, the 2015 recipient of the Community Leader Award from the Association for Asian American Studies, the 2013 recipient of the Kathryn V. Lamkey Award from Actor's Equity Association for promoting diversity and inclusion in theatre, the 2013 recipient of the ChangeMaker Award from South Asian Americans Leading Together, the 2010 recipient of the 3Arts Artist Award for Playwriting, and the 2003 recipient of the After Dark Award for Outstanding New Work (Precious Stones).

Corey Pond (Associate Producer) has been with Silk Road Rising since Yellow Face in 2011 and is thrilled to take on the role of associate producer for SRR's 15th Anniversary Season and beyond. Previous work at SRR includes co-curator of Semitic Commonwealth, production manager for everything since Night Over Erzinga, director for Yasmina's Necklace, and assistant director for ReSpiced and The Lake Effect. He holds a BA in theatre from Illinois State University where his studies concentrated on directing but also explored theater management and dramaturgy.



Candace Chong (Playwright) graduated from Royal Holloway, University of London with a MA in playwriting. She also holds a BA in psychology from the Chinese University of Hong Kong and an Advanced

Diploma in playwriting from the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. Besides writing, Candace

also translates plays from English to Chinese; her recent translation works include Skylight, The Shape of Things, Betrayal, and Titus. Candace is a recipient of the Best Artist Award (Drama) by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (2010). She was selected as one of Hong Kong's 25 most inspirational and influential women, and she is the winner of five Hong Kong Drama Awards (Best Script) for Alive in the Mortuary (2003), Shall We Go to Mars (2004), The French Kiss (2006), Murder in San Jose (2009), and The Professor (2014). In 2003 she was also awarded Outstanding Young Playwright by the Hong Kong Federation of Drama Societies. In 2004 she was awarded the Lee Hysan Foundation Fellowship by the Asian Cultural Council, which allowed her to spend 12 months in the United States. Candace's plays have been translated and presented in Seoul, Tokyo, Macau, Singapore, Shanghai, and Milan. Her latest works include Dr. Sun Yat-sen, on which she worked as librettist and which was presented in the Santa Fe Opera House, and the Broadway Production Chinglish, on which she worked as translator.



Joanna C. Lee (Translator) is a Hong Kong native who was educated at London's Royal College of Music and New York's Columbia University. After working for the Kurt Weill Foundation and the Grammy-

winning Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, she taught at the University of Hong Kong, where her post included an extensive 12-month oral history project documenting Cantonese opera singing around the world. She has written extensively (in Chinese and English) about musical styles from classical to pop for The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians and such magazines as Philharmonic (Beijing) and Songlines (UK), Music Lover (Shanghai), and Opera News (US). Her translations for the stage include the Cantonese performing script for David Lindsay-Abair's Rabbit Hole and dozens of supertitle translations in English and Chinese for the Hong Kong Repertory Theatre, the Hong Kong New Vision Arts Festival, and San Francisco Opera, among others. At the Hong Kong International Film Festival, she has translated for hundreds of filmmakers, from Peter Greenaway to Jackie Chan.



Ken Smith (Translator) is a critic and journalist who has traveled widely, covering music on five continents for a wide range of print, broadcast, and electronic media. He currently divides his time between New

York and Hong Kong, where he is the Asian performing arts critic for the Financial Times, a regular commentator for RTHK Radio 4, and the Englishlanguage editor for the Hong Kong Film Festival. A former music annotator for New York's 92nd Street Y, he has written program notes for Carnegie Hall, the Concertgebouw, Lincoln and Kennedy Centers, the BBC Proms, and the Barbican Centre, and his liner notes appear on recordings for Deutsche Grammophon, Sony, Bis, Ondine, Naxos, and others. A winner of the ASCAP Deems Taylor Award for Distinguished Music Writing, he is the author of Fate! Luck! Chance!...The Making of The Bonesetter's Daughter Opera. Two collections of his critical writings, spanning 20 years of musical interaction between China and the West, have been translated and published by Beijing Normal University Press.



David Henry Hwang (Adapter) is a playwright and librettist whose works include *M. Butterfly, Chinglish, Yellow Face, Kung Fu, Golden Child, The Dance and the Rail-*

road, and FOB, as well as the

Broadway musicals Elton John & Tim Rice's Aida (coauthor), Flower Drum Song (2002 revival) and Disney's Tarzan. David is a Tony Award winner and three-time Tony nominee, a three-time OBIE Award winner, and a two-time finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. He is also America's most-produced (living) opera librettist, whose works have been honored with two Grammy Awards. He also co-wrote the RIAA Gold Record Solo with the late pop star Prince. David is currently a Writer/Consulting Producer for the Golden Globe-winning television series *The Affair*, and his screenplays include Possession, M. Butterfly, and Golden Gate. He serves as Head of Playwriting at Columbia University School of the Arts, and as Chair of the American Theatre Wing, which founded the Tony Awards. A Broadway revival of M. Butterfly, starring Clive Owen and Jin Ha, directed by Julie

Taymor, has recently opened on Broadway, and his newest musical, *Soft Power*, with composer Jeanine Tesori and director Leigh Silverman, will premiere in May 2018 at Los Angeles' Ahmanson Theatre. David is Artistic Ambassador for Silk Road Rising, which has produced David's *Golden Child* and *Yellow Face*, and also commissioned him to write for their 2010 production of *The DNA Trail*.



Helen Young (Director) is grateful and excited for another opportunity to work with the good people at Silk Road Rising! Recent work at SRR includes *Great Expectations, The Hundred Flowers Project* (as assistant direc-

tor), and *Red Flamboyant* (as reading director). Other Chicago directing credits include the Jeff Recommended *American Hwangap* with A-Squared and Halcyon Theatres, *Tiny Dynamite* with Halcyon, and *Tea*—also Jeff Recommended—at Prologue Theatre. Helen also has several credits with TimeLine Theatre: *The Audience* (associate director), *The Paper Dreams of Harry Chin* (reading director), and *Chimerica* (assistant dramaturg). Other directing credits include work with Indie Boots, Polarity Ensemble, Artemisia, Broken Nose, and Artistic Home.

Joshua Baggett (Stage Manager) is a Chicago based director and stage manager and is excited to be making his Silk Road Rising debut. Local credits include productions with Definition Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Porchlight Music Theatre, and Williams Street Repertory. Regionally, Josh has worked with Little Theatre on the Square, Apple and Oranges Arts, Tennessee Shakespeare Company, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, The Shakespeare Theatre Company, and Orlando Shakespeare Theatre. Selected event credits include Invictus Games Orlando, Pop Warner Cheerleading Competitions, and numerous projects with Disney Parks Live Entertainment. He has also served as a regional casting assistant with Disney Theatrical Group, coordinating annual auditions for Disney's The Lion King and Mary Poppins. For more, visit www.jbbcreative.com.

Yeaji Kim (Set Designer) is a set and media designer. Born and raised in South Korea, she came to the United States in 2012 for her MFA at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She has worked at

theatres across the USA, including Silk Road Rising, Remy Bumppo, The New Colony, Steppenwolf, Cerqua Rivera Dance, Spartan Theatre Company, HERE Arts Center, Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Bard College Fisher Center. Yeaji was the 2014 winner of the Best Student Exhibit at the Michael Merritt Awards, and received the Theatrical Design Excellence Honorable Mention in scenic design for the Kennedy Center Theatre Festival. For more, visit www.yeajikim.wix.com/yeajikim.

Melissa Ng (Costume Designer) is a theater designer and visual artist. Melissa was born in Hong Kong and raised in Singapore; she holds a BA from the University of Chicago and an MFA from the University of California-San Diego Her work focuses on creating pluralistic worlds in the theater and bringing a transnational perspective to projects. Selected costume design credits include *The Bitter Game* (Under the Radar, Public Theater NYC), *Men on Boats* (American Theater Company), and *Picnic* (American Theater Company).

Lindsey Lyddan (Lighting Designer) is happy to be returning to work at Silk Road Rising, where she lit Great Expectations last spring. She has worked with theatres all over the city including Haymarket Opera Company, Chicago Dramatists, Lookingglass Theatre, Steppenwolf, Drury Lane Oakbrook, Roosevelt University's Opera Program, the University of Illinois at Chicago, Adventure Stage Chicago, and the Cherub program at Northwestern University. This fall she was privileged to travel to Charleville, France for the World Puppet Theatre Festival where she was the associate lighting designer for Moby Dick. She received her MFA in lighting and scenic design from Northwestern University. She would love to thank her husband, Bill, for his support in all her endeavors. For more, visit www.lindseylyddandesign.com.

Anthony Churchill (Projections Designer) collaborates on media for theatre, events, and installations. Recent projections and media credits include work with Marriott Theatre, Porchlight Theatre, Theatre Wit, Stage Left, Museum of Broadcast Communications, Big Noise Theatre, 16th Street Theatre in Berwyn, and BoHo Theatre, of which he is a proud company member. Anthony has been nominated for two Jeff Awards for Projections: in 2016 for *Body of An American* (for which he was the winner) and in

2015 for *Ordinary Days*. When not working on plays, Tony enjoys sculpting tiny astronauts in peril, and playing projections with his band, Grape Juice Plus.

Thomas Dixon (Sound Design and Original Music) returns to Silk Road Rising, having previously designed and composed for Mosque Alert. He is an artistic associate at Steep Theatre where he has designed for Lela & Co., The Invisible Hand, Bobbie Clearly, Wastwater, Brilliant Adventures, A Brief History of Helen of Troy, Pornography, and many more. Other recent credits include Sex with Strangers (Cleveland Play House), Queen and The Whale (Victory Gardens Theater), peerless (First Floor Theater), The Legend of Georgia McBride (Cardinal Stage Company), and This Is Modern Art (Steppenwolf Theatre Company). Thomas is a member of the Theatrical Sound Designers and Composers Association, and he teaches at De-Paul University and Columbia College Chicago. For more, visit www.thomasdixonsound.com.

Katy Vest (Props Designer) is thrilled to be working with Silk Road Rising for the first time, Katy is a graduate of the University of Kentucky with a degree in theatre, concentrating in tech and design. Her Chicago credits include Collaboraction's Peacebook Festival (props designer), Shakin' the Mess Outta Misery (props designer), Billy Elliot (scenic artist), 6 Characters in Search of a Author (costume designer), and Tony n' Tina's Wedding (assistant costume designer). She is also a performer and one of the founding members of PS...Burlesque, Chicago's newest body positive nerd-lesque troupe. For more, visit www.katyvest.com.

Carol Ann Tan (Dramaturg) is a Singapore-born and Chicago-based director, writer, and dramaturg. Her work focuses on issues surrounding race and immigration, particularly those involving the Asian diaspora. She is an artistic associate with The Comrades. Directing and writing credits include *Domestic Departure* (The Director's Haven 2016 at Haven Theatre) and *Apartment Complex* and *Domestic Departure* (University of Chicago). *Domestic Departure* was awarded second place for the 2015 Olga and Paul Menn Foundation Prize in playwriting. Dramaturgy credits include *peerless* and *Two Mile Hollow* (First Floor Theater), *In the Wake* (The Comrades), and assisting on *The Audience* (TimeLine Theatre). For more, visit www.carolanntan.com.

Kelly Butler (Production Manager) is a Chicagobased production, event, and project management professional who is very excited to join Silk Road Rising as their new production manager. Kelly previously worked with the Chicago Park District (Theater on the Lake 65th Season), Collaboraction (2017 Peacebook Festival, *Gender Breakdown, The Mars Assignment*), Pegasus Theatre Chicago (30th Young Playwright's Festival), and Nothing Special Productions (*Cat in Heat*). Kelly also worked in various capacities with NewMoon Chicago, Chicago Humanities Festival, Redmoon, Step Up Productions, American Theater Company, and more.

Jason Pikscher (Technical Director) is thrilled to be rejoining Silk Road Rising where he has served as technical director or production manager for numerous previous productions. Jason's fabrications have been seen across the country: at Houston Grand Opera, The Kennedy Center, Florida Grand Opera, Ford's Theatre, and Michigan Opera Theatre. In Chicago he has worked with Victory Gardens, Wildclaw Theatre, First Folio, Chicago Shakespeare, Marriott, Drury Lane Oakbrook, Harper College, North Central College, Rivendell, and Aboutface. Corporate displays include TLC, Animal Planet, Walgreens, and Microsoft. He is the resident technical director for the Broadway Series at the Paramount Theatre in Aurora, IL. Jason thanks his wife, Andrea, for her undying support, love, and tolerance of his work schedule. Jason is a proud Bradley University Alum.

Brent Ervin-Eickhoff (Assistant Director) is a Chicago-based director, writer, and educator. In addition to Silk Road Rising, Brent has worked with A Red Orchid Theatre, Mary-Arrchie Theatre Co., The Greenhouse Theatre, The Arc Theatre, The Public House Theatre, Something Marvelous, Whiskey Radio Hour, The Barrens Theatre Co., and The Burrowers. He is a founding member of Blue Goose Theatre Ensemble where he is Managing Director, and where he directed Herculaneum and Bison? Bison. Bison! as part of the Chicago Park District's Night Out in the Parks initiative. Brent graduated from Ball State University with degrees in direction and theatre education. Love to Jess for all her support and to Malik, Jamil, and Helen for this opportunity.



A CAUTIONARY TALE FROM A DISTANT SHORE

by Candace Chong, Playwright

In 2011, a news item in Hong Kong caught my eye: a theatre company rehearsing a play about June 4, 1989 (the day China unleashed its army on protesters in Tiananmen Square) received anonymous threats. I was shocked. I grew up in Hong Kong. It never occurred to me that the freedom of speech I enjoy as a creator would ever be under attack. As I did more research on the story, I began to ponder the question of press freedom. Before writing my initial draft, I interviewed many reporters and editors. These press professionals were convinced that freedom of expression had been eroding in Hong Kong and that the situation was only getting worse. I thought to myself, if we turn a blind eye to the problem, we won't recognize the city twenty to thirty years down the road. In my play, I tried to imagine such a scenario, set sometime in the future. Thus as a fable, *Wild Boar* is a cautionary tale. It sounds an alarm.

In the past six years, however, I have watched this absurdist play slowly morph into realism. The press in Hong Kong has become merely the mouthpiece of the government and big business. Threats facing the mass media have become more real and more brutal. Journalists in Hong Kong have had to resort to demonstrations and leaving their columns blank as a means of protest. As a playwright, I share their dejection and anger. I want to give voice to this vital pack of wild boars so that their roars resound in the city.

Today, this call has crossed the oceans, traversing 12,518 kilometers to Chicago. I believe the power of art will shorten the physical distance between us. Watching the fire from the other shore, will you feel the pain less acutely? I hope not. If this fable hasn't provided a proper warning for my own city, let its ending be a mirror for audiences elsewhere.

A bookstall for Mighty Current, the publisher that has seen five of its booksellers disappear. (Anthony Wallace, AFP)



A SILK ROAD ACROSS THE PACIFIC

by David Henry Hwang, Artistic Ambassador to Silk Road Rising and Adapter of Wild Boar



The American debut of Hong Kong playwright Candace Chong at Silk Road Rising represents the coming together of many communities. I met Candace in 2004 at the Lark Play Development Center in New York City. Not long out of drama school, she had received a grant from the Asian Cultural Council to study American theatre. She was then as she is today: funny, irreverent, fierce, and kind. I read a draft of her play *The French Kiss*, based on the true incident of a clergyman accused of sexual harassment, and was deeply impressed. Taking a story that could easily have been reduced to black and white, Candace unearthed its ambiguity, complexity, and humanity. We became colleagues and friends.

Candace has subsequently emerged as arguably the most important playwright Hong Kong has produced, a four-time winner of its Drama Award for Best Script. In 2008, when I decided to write a bilingual play in English and Mandarin, despite the fact that I don't speak Chinese, I knew whom I would approach as my translator. Happily, Candace agreed to work with me, and we enjoyed a wonderful collaboration on *Chinglish*, first at the Goodman Theatre, then on Broadway.

In 2013, as part of my residency at New York's Signature Theatre, I curated a Contemporary Chinese Playwrights Series, in partnership with the Lark. In a world where China and the U.S. find themselves increasingly interdependent, yet know so little about one another, I felt theatre could play an important role to forge new communities across the Pacific.

We selected one dramatist each from Beijing, Shanghai, and Taiwan. Representing Hong Kong, we invited Candace Chong, who chose her play *Wild Boar*. After going through a process to create English translations, we brought the authors to New York for public readings of their plays. It became my turn to translate Candace's work, based on a literal translation by our mutual friends and cultural experts, Joanna C. Lee and Ken Smith.

Wild Boar feels even more relevant today than in 2012, when it premiered in Hong Kong. Since Hong Kong's return to China in 1997, Hong Kongers have wondered if Beijing would curtail civil liberties and freedom of expression in the former British colony. When she wrote Wild Boar, Candace was growing acutely aware of self-censorship in the press, stemming from both political and economic pressure to avoid offending the Mainland.

Today, twenty years later, the relationship between Hong Kong and China has only grown more tense. Candace has put her activism where her art is. She voiced her support of 2014's Occupy Central/Umbrella pro-democracy movement, advocating for local candidates independent of Beijing and campaigning to be part of the process herself. Recently, as a spokesperson for the group Artists Action, she spoke out against government intervention into cultural content and creeping self-censorship.

Of course, in 2012, few would have predicted that such threats to civil liberties would soon infect our own country. In giving this play its American premiere, Silk Road Rising builds a road connecting Candace's community with our own. In our current national moment, *Wild Boar* has also become an American story.



IS THERE ANY NEED TO SELF-EXAMINE FURTHER?

by Helen Young, Director

Wild Boar circles themes that should concern us all: story, the "appropriate" storyteller, journalism, a journalist's responsibility, truth, and historical truth. Within this circle, what draws me into Wild Boar is this: what is it that compels a person or a group to choose self-censorship? As I circle deeper into this play, my own choices to self-censor start to gain focus. For example, early in my career, I chose not to report workplace sexual harassment for fear of losing my job. Today, my self-censorship is subtler and more insidious. I sometimes choose not to bring up in casual conversation, even in the company of friends with whom I feel safe, the merits of an unpopular viewpoint. My choices are for understandable goals. I needed to pay my bills in the former example and I wanted, out of friendship, for a jovial conversation to continue in the latter example. Is there any need to self-examine further?

This leads to a related question, also explored in this play. How often, as we grow in whatever power we are born with or acquire, do we contribute to exerting pressure that prevents an opposing voice from speaking up? Like the time I voted not to move forward on a job candidate, did his age and viewpoints figure too much into my decision for "bad cultural fit?" Again, my goal was understandable. I wanted to maintain the simpatico I find rare in the workplace. Again, is there any need to question further?

But the fact remains that when we choose not to speak up, or to extend different treatment to others based on how much they align with our understanding of the world, we end up cheating everyone of an essential deeper understanding. The immediate outcome may not benefit us. But longer term, more lasting and essential wants come within reach. I may have lost my job, but my voice could have added to mounting documented sexual harassment accounts, and perhaps have led to change. My friends and I could have deepened our appreciation for each other through healthy passionate debate. The bad "cultural fit" could have provided solutions to work problems the rest of us could not have seen.

It is inevitable that we end up playing roles on both sides of the equation. In our everyday experiences, we are not far from the Hong Kong of *Wild Boar*. We make choices to pursue life, liberty, and happiness. Some of those choices touch on self-censorship or the censorship of others. The challenge of *Wild Boar* is this: we must not forget to examine and reflect on those choices. We may be giving up a deeply held long-term gain for a short-term smaller good. And in the case of an ideal, once it's given up, it takes a fight to get it back.

The youth of Hong Kong represent a new generation advocating a break from Beijing. (Isaac Lawrence, AFP/Getty Images)



TRUTH WITHOUT BORDERS

by Jamil Khoury, Founding Director of Programming & Mission Trustee of Silk Road Rising



As theatre makers with a clearly defined mission, questions about subjectivity, positionality, and authorial voice illuminate our daily conversations. How does one's identity, whether rooted in culture or heritage or any number of other realities, shape the way we convey and receive messages? How does lived experience inform the way we hear stories? And how do truths and facts filter through consciousness, environment, and perceived self-interests?

Journalism is the answer presented in Candace Chong's *Wild Boar*, translated from Chinese into English by Joanna C. Lee and Ken Smith, and adapted by Silk Road Rising's Artistic Ambassador David Henry Hwang. The manipulation of journalism by political, economic, and social forces is of particular interest. On the one hand, the play asks us to ponder journalism as a duality—good and evil. On the other hand, it suggests something more fluid, less binary in its breakdown: journalism as information, and journalism as propaganda. The play contemplates whether or not such distinctions can and should ever be fully parsed. After all, isn't misinformation for the common good sometimes our best alternative?

If journalism is the "first rough draft of history," then how do objectivity and subjectivity coexist? If the news influences opinions, and opinions influence the news, then perhaps the line between reporting and editorializing is more malleable than previously defined. Furthermore, if the conveying of events and circumstances is ultimately an interpretative act, then when does the fourth estate stop speaking truth to power and instead become a proxy for that power? In democratic societies, these questions grow more nuanced and complex. Dictators view the control of perception as a no-brainer, a basic survival instinct. As Adolph Hitler said, "make the lie big, make it simple, keep saying it, and eventually they will believe it." On a less devious note, Plato ruminated that "knowledge is perception." Lee Atwater went on to say that "perception is reality." Thus, one person's absolute truth is another's fake news.

Or maybe we just live in an age of relativism gone wild and therapeutic excess. Maybe those of us living in less collectivist, more individualistic environments, have misinterpreted "the personal is political" to mean, "all politics are about me."

We love *Wild Boar* not only because it's smart, sexy, and topical, but also because, in a rare combination, it exudes both confidence and self-doubt simultaneously. It builds and unpacks all at once, seemingly unable to differentiate right from wrong without flip-flopping, which is part of the play's inherent strength. At a time when journalism, governance, nation-states, and citizenship all feel in flux, *Wild Boar* probes those feelings with an air of mystery, flirtatiousness, and whodunit intrigue. That the play is set in Hong Kong and is yet so analogous to the United States is testimony to worldwide encroachments on democracy and personal freedoms. It would seem authoritarian impulses know no borders. But as the Patti Smith song reminds us, "people have the power."

Thank you for trusting Silk Road Rising to tell this vital and daring story.



CENSORSHIP IN HONG KONG AND BEYOND

by Carol Ann Tan, Dramaturg

Though *Wild Boar* is a play born from the specific socio-historical context of Hong Kong, it possesses broader relevance to modern American audiences for the way it interrogates freedom of expression, censorship, and government-press relations.

Hong Kong was once a British colony, following China's defeat by Britain during the Opium Wars. In 1898, to solidify its control over Hong Kong, Britain leased additional land from China — known as the New Territories — and promised to return the land in 99 years. But returning only the New Territories to China would have caused disruptive uncertainty over property rights and contracts; so, in 1997, Britain transferred sovereignty over Hong Kong to China under the "one country, two systems" principle, where Hong Kong maintains a largely independent political, legal, and economic system from China. This agreement, known as the Sino-British Joint Declaration, is set to expire in 2047, 50 years after it was first implemented. Beyond 2047, Hong Kong's future is deeply uncertain: will it become a full part of China, or will it continue to enjoy a degree of autonomy?

Fearful of losing the right to self-determination, an increasing number of Hong Kongers have begun pushing for greater democracy. For example, every year on the first of July (the anniversary of Hong Kong's 1997 handover to China), Hong Kong activists hold a protest addressing political concerns like universal suffrage and freedom of expression. But in recent years, China has begun censoring pro-democracy perspectives in the media — in violation of the "one country, two systems" principle. These measures raise concerns about Hong Kong's immediate status as an independent region, and perhaps foreshadow China's eventual intentions concerning its relationship with Hong Kong.

To that end, China may be employing physical violence and intimidation tactics. Since the 1990s, a series of unsolved attacks have been carried out against journalists and media owners who take pro-democracy stances. A notable example occurred in February 2014 when Kevin Lau, the editor-in-chief of the Hong Kong daily newspaper *Ming Pao*, was stabbed multiple times. His two assailants admitted to being offered HK\$100,000 each to "teach Lau a lesson," though they would not name who they were working for.

More covertly, China has also applied economic pressure to discourage print and digital publishers alike from taking pro-democracy stances. For instance, starting in November 2013, companies backed by mainland China began pulling their advertising from the free daily *AM730*. Officially, these companies claimed to be changing their advertising strategy — but the close timing of the withdrawals suggested that political motivations were actually at play. *AM730* had relied on these companies to provide HK\$10 million in advertising fees per year.

As a result, Hong Kong is seeing a growing culture of self-censorship, where reporters downplay perspectives that could upset the government or advertisers in order to protect their personal and organizational interests. According to a 2012 survey by the Hong Kong Journalists' Association, 79% of respondents felt that self-censorship had increased since 2005. And, arguably, self-censorship is the most effective form of censorship out there. After all, outright bans tend to attract widespread

outrage, and sometimes even backfire by drawing more attention to controversial issues than they otherwise would have received. But if journalists and institutions are already producing work that serve the state's agenda, then the consequences of external censorship don't apply.

Because censorship violates the right to free expression, debates about the issue typically spark knee jerk outrage. The situation presented in *Wild Boar* is more complex. *Wild Boar* specifically asks whether the government has the right to withhold information from its citizens — especially when the government believes that the information would prevent people from acting in their best interests. Typically, in Western democracies, government transparency is a coveted ideal; we, the people, ostensibly elect public officials based on what we know of their policies and beliefs. Likewise, we can only exercise our democratic right to kick our leaders out of office if we know about the problematic things our leaders have done.



Hong Kong fans hold signs and banners at a World Cup qualifying match on November 17, 2015. (Bobby Yip, Reuters)

Government secrecy can be equally integral to democracy. We elect public officials so that they may represent us in creating and executing policy — including projects that may only be effective when kept secret, such as those that involve national security.

In short, democratic governance requires both transparency and secrecy. On one hand, governments are held accountable by an informed public — and mechanisms like a free press help protect the people's right to know. On the other hand, representative democracy can be achieved even if the people do not possess perfect information. So *Wild Boar* isn't simply preaching that government secrecy is *never* desirable; rather, it's asking: when does secrecy turn into paternalistic overreach?

In considering that question, *Wild Boar* also reminds us that every institution, including the free press, ultimately serves its own interests. As discussed earlier, the media's interests can be manipulated to encourage a culture of self-censorship. Even when left alone, the media's interests still may not align with that of the people. And we can use an example closer to home to illustrate this. During the most recent American presidential election, truth was often compromised for sensationalism, website clicks, and social media affirmation — a tradeoff made even by news outlets we'd typically consider reliable.

Democracies undeniably thrive on the free flow of information. But as *Wild Boar* points out, the news is never objective. Facts are never presented without interpretation. Consequently, it is our personal responsibility to critically and independently assess what we've been told.

THE HONG KONG HANDOVER: A 20-YEAR TIMELINE

July 1, 1997

After 156 years as a British colony, Hong Kong is handed over to the People's Republic of China under the Sino-British Joint Declaration. Under the "one country, two systems" principle, Hong Kong will retain independent political, legal, and economic systems until 2047.

May 24, 1998

Hong Kong holds its first post-handover elections.

September 2002

The Hong Kong administration proposes Article 23, which requires Hong Kong to "enact laws on its own" to protect national security. Specifically, Article 23 refers to treason against the Mainland Chinese government under certain circumstances.

July 1, 2003

500,000 demonstrators march to protest Article 23, claiming that the legislation would restrict freedom of speech. Eventually, Article 23 is withdrawn indefinitely.

April 11, 2004

China rules that democratic reforms in Hong Kong will need to be pre-approved by the central government — giving China the right to veto any moves towards full democracy.

July 1, 2004

200,000 demonstrators march to demand full democracy.

September 12, 2004

Pro-China parties retain their majority in the Hong Kong legislative elections — but China is accused of creating a "climate of fear" to rig the results.

December 20, 2004

Chinese President Hu Jintao publicly rebukes Tung Chee-hwa.

March 10, 2005

Tung Chee-hwa resigns as chief executive. He is succeeded by Donald Tsang.

September 2005

Pro-democracy members of the Legislative Council make an unprecedented visit to the Chinese Mainland

December 2007

China says that it will allow Hong Kong to directly elect its chief executive in 2017 and its legislators by 2020.

September 7, 2008

In the Hong Kong legislative elections, prodemocracy candidates win more than a third of the seats, therefore retaining veto power over future bills.

May 2010

Five opposition MPs in Hong Kong resign to pressure China into granting Hong Kong full democracy, triggering their own by-elections — and are subsequently returned to their seats.

May 2010

The Democratic Party holds its first talks with senior Chinese officials since the Tiananmen massacre in 1989 to negotiate an electoral reform package.

July 1, 2012

Leung Chun-ying takes office as chief executive. He makes his inauguration speech in Mandarin, the language spoken in Mainland China, rather than Cantonese.

July 2012

A PRC-backed plan for "moral and national education" is to be introduced in Hong Kong schools by 2015. Thousands protest, likening the curriculum to brainwashing. Following intense backlash, Leung Chun-ying revokes the 2015 deadline.

June 2014

Hong Kong holds an unofficial referendum. More than 90% of its 800,000 participants vote to give the public a say in shortlisting candidates for chief executive. China condemns the referendum as illegal.

August 2014

China decides that only pre-approved candidates will be allowed to run in the 2017 election for Hong Kong's chief executive.

September-November 2014

In the "Umbrella Revolution," demonstrators protest Beijing's decision to limit voters' choices in the 2017 elections. They are met with tear gas and pepper spray from riot police.



A pro-democracy demonstrator with an umbrella, which Hong Kongers used to shield themselves from police pepper spray and tear gas. (Xaume Olleros, AFP/Getty Images)

2015

By the end of the year, five Hong Kong-based book publishers who sold material critical of the Chinese Communist Party would disappear — and subsequently turn up in Chinese custody.

August 2016

Six pro-independence candidates are disqualified from Hong Kong's upcoming legislative elections in September.

September 4, 2016

Hong Kong's legislative elections see the highest turnout since Hong Kong was first handed over to China in 1997.

November 15, 2016

The high court disqualifies two proindependence legislators from taking their seats in the Legislative Council after they refuse to pledge allegiance to China during the swearing-in ceremony.

March 26, 2017

Carrie Lam, deputy to Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying, wins the Electoral College to become Hong Kong's next chief executive.

June 2017

Chinese President Xi Jinping states that any attempts in Hong Kong "to challenge the power" of China are "absolutely impermissible."

July 14, 2017

Four more pro-independence members-elect of the Legislative Council are disqualified because of their mannerisms when taking their oaths to office. The pro-democracy camp loses its veto power in government.

August 2017

Three leaders from the 2014 Umbrella Movement are jailed.

ABOUT SILK ROAD RISING

MISSION

Silk Road Rising creates live theatre and online videos that tell stories through primarily Asian American and Middle Eastern American lenses. In representing communities that intersect and overlap, we advance a polycultural worldview.

HISTORY

Malik Gillani (a Pakistani American Muslim) and Jamil Khoury (a mixed blood Arab American Christian) founded Silk Road Rising in 2002 as an artistic response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Harnessing the power of theatre, they set out to challenge the ignorance and hatred that fueled both the attacks, and the anti-Muslim, anti-Middle Eastern, anti-South Asian backlash that soon followed.

Today, Silk Road Rising is the only U.S. theatre company dedicated to commissioning and producing works of Asian American and Middle Eastern American playwrights; and, more broadly, to cultivating empathy and understanding toward Silk Road communities. Over the past 15 years, we have worked with 77 playwrights to produce 34 plays and 66 staged readings in our theatre space in the Historic Chicago Temple Building.

To cultivate the next generation of storytellers, we provide in-classroom arts education to Chicago Public School students with EPIC (Empathic Playwriting Intensive Course). EPIC enables middle and high school students to express themselves, and to demonstrate empathy, through the art of playwriting.

Silk Road Rising has also created a "virtual theatre" with our library of online video plays, documentary films, and an animated short. This digital storytelling allows us to transcend our brick and mortar venue and engage global audiences in lively conversations.

ARTISTIC GOALS

- $1 \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{To advance the creation of and expand access to works of Asian American} \\ \text{and Middle Eastern American artists.} \end{array} \right|$
- $2 \left| \right|$ To deepen understanding of Asian and Middle Eastern cultures within the broader community.
- $\begin{array}{c|c} 3 & \text{To provide resources and learning opportunities that allow individuals} \\ \text{to explore, express, and embrace a more global perspective.} \end{array}$

VISION

Silk Road Rising understands that cultures are inherently linked. We seek the intersections of cultures without denying the specificities of cultures. And we strive to create a world that values art over ideology and inquiry over dogma.

CONTACT US

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To our gracious hosts at the First United Methodist Church at The Chicago Temple, who exhibit hospitality and generosity towards us on a daily basis, and provide us a space in which we can flourish and grow.

And thanks to **Jaq Seifert**.

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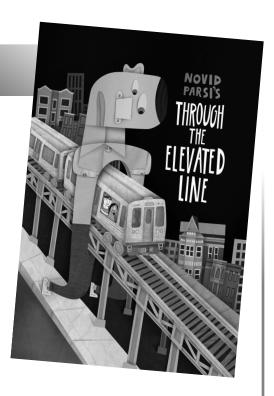
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