

PORTLAND STAGE

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NEWS RELEASE

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SCIENCE FICTION COMES TO PORTLAND STAGE WITH *LAST SHIP TO PROXIMA CENTAURI*, THE 2020 CLAUDER COMPETITION-WINNING PLAY BY GREG LAM

Portland, Maine— In an unprecedented season presenting five new works in its six-show subscription season, the theatrical world-premiere, science fiction play *Last Ship to Proxima Centauri* opened Friday, March 4, and will be on stage through March 20. A digital-on-demand production (a limited number of tickets on sale now) will be available from March 16 through April 3.

Last Ship to Proxima Centauri written by Greg Lam, won the grand prize in the 2020 Clauder Competition for New England Playwrights. The grand prize guarantees a full production at Portland Stage with a professional director, designers, and actors. Portland Stage also funded the Mandarin and Spanish translations for this multilingual script. English supertitles are displayed on a screen above the stage.

Greg Lam uses science fiction to examine the contentious issues of the day through the lens of an otherworldly situation, exploring themes of imperialism, systemic racism, and injustice in a faraway world that echoes our own. The play begins on a ship delivering 100,000 cryogenically frozen Seattleites to their new home planet, Proxima Centauri b, after leaving planet Earth inhabitable. They arrive 160 years late, directed by pilot Morris Emerson and Captain Adelaide Russell, to find a new colony with a radically different social structure descended from the people of non-European countries. Remembering episodes from Earth's history, the planet's residents view the ship full of Americans with suspicion.

The dark comedy has many moments of reverence for American pop culture as Tunde, a security guard and amateur US historian on Proxima Centauri, and his hard-hitting associate Paz give the audience ample opportunity to both laugh and wince. *Last Ship to Proxima Centauri* asks as many questions as it answers with nuanced characters with no clearly defined good or evil characters.

Even the Japanese-American Henry Hirano, whose ability to code-switch in White society affords him more freedom in the new colony than his White peers, gets questioned about his ancestors' treatment of the Chinese. The writing and the genre give viewers room for reflection and discussion.

CAST & ARTISTS

Morris Emerson Tom Ford*

Adelaide "Addie" Russell Marcy McGuigan*

Henry Hirano Kennedy Kanagawa*

Tunde/Control 2 Jamal James*

Paz/Control 1 Octavia Chavez-Richmond*

Director Kevin R. Free

Scenic Designer Germán Cárdenas-Alaminos

Costume Designer Haydee Zelideth

Lighting Designer Jamie Grant

Sound Designer Seth Asa Sengel

Stage Manager Myles C. Hatch*

Casting Director Jenn Haltman

**member Actors' Equity Association*

QUICK INFO

Live In-Theater Dates: March 2 – March 20, 2022

Digital Streaming Dates: March 16 – April 3, 2022

Conversation to enhance your experience: [FREE ONLINE HERE](#)

Run Time: 2 Hours, 15 minutes with intermission

Box Office Hours: Tuesday through Saturday • Noon to 5 pm and 2 hours before performance time

Box Office Phone: 207.774.0465

Box Office Email: boxoffice@portlandstage.org

Tickets Online: <https://www.portlandstage.org/show/last-ship-to-proxima-centauri-2022/>

PRICES In-Person: \$20-\$63. Discounts for seniors 65+ and students.

PAY-WHAT-YOU-CAN TICKETS AVAILABLE: Find rules and restrictions on the website. Digital

Streaming: \$25 online, or call the box office for Pay-What-You-Can.

RUSH35 Tickets: \$15 at the door for registered participants ages 35 and under.

ABOUT PORTLAND STAGE COMPANY

48th season

Portland Stage offers Mainstage performances, New Works, and Education programs. The 2021-22 Mainstage season is trying to maintain its regular schedule as safety and artists' unions permit, including one co-production musical with Maine State Music Theatre, six Mainstage productions, staged readings of its commissions, and Studio Series productions. PS promotes and celebrates the creation of new plays with an environment that supports the region's playwrights, builds bridges between its theater and national writers, and develops awareness of theater with three exciting initiatives: the Clauder Competition, the Little Festival of the Unexpected, and From Away,

a festival in collaboration with the International Writing Program (IWP) at the University of Iowa. This year, Portland Stage also celebrates its 12th season of the Susie Konkel Theater for Kids and the 100,000 student experiences it has provided in the last decade through its education programs. Subscriptions to Portland Stage are available. More than just a seat in the house, subscribers gain insider access, significant savings, and flexibility. Visit portlandstage.org to learn more.