

WOOLLY MAMMOTH

ANDROMEDA SHACK (2001)

RECENT TRAGIC EVENTS (2002)

MY MAMA AND THE FULL-SCALE
INVASION (2023) DJ COREY

WE ARE PROUD TO PRESENT
(2014) STAN BAROUH



DEAR MAMMOTHS,

I hope you had the opportunity to see Woolly's recent production of *MY MAMA AND THE FULL-SCALE INVASION* by the wonderfully talented Ukrainian playwright Sasha Denisova. I was fortunate to be able to portray the character of Mama and it was an amazing experience on many levels; from working with innovative Company Member Yuri Urnov to telling the true story of the devastation in Ukraine, it was transformative but it was only the most recent in a long line of impactful experiences I've had with Woolly Mammoth.

I remember the silence of the audience after the lights went down at the end of the 2002 production of *RECENT TRAGIC EVENTS* by Craig Wright, a moving story about the day after 9/11. There was a palpable feeling as people processed the story they just saw and remembered their own stories from that day. Over a decade later, while performing *WE ARE PROUD TO PRESENT: A PRESENTATION ABOUT THE HERERO OF NAMIBIA, FORMERLY KNOWN AS SOUTH WEST AFRICA, FROM THE GERMAN SUDWESTAFRIKA, BETWEEN THE YEARS 1844-1915*, I was witness to such visceral responses to playwright Jackie Sibbles Drury's story as audience members openly wept or walked out of the theatre. Given these experiences, it's been clear to me for a long time that Woolly's voice is an essential one, not only in DC's theatre community but the community at large.

Regional theatres like Woolly, that center community and collaboration, are at the heart of renewing the promise of American theatre. Even during uncertain times, Woolly Mammoth Theatre does not shy away from ambitious projects that tackle complex issues, push artistic boundaries, and foster inclusivity.

Every evening as I waited in the darkness for *MY MAMA* to begin, a remarkable moment occurred: Sasha's recorded pre-show announcement ended with her declaration, "Slava Ukraini!" (Glory to Ukraine) If there were Ukrainians in the audience that night, as there often were, they would call out the expected response, "Heroiam slava!" (Glory to the Heros). Hearing members of the

audience literally shout out their investment in the story we were about to tell was both exciting and profound. This is an experience that is unique to live theatre. Whether one is backstage, getting ready to tell the story or sitting in the house getting ready to experience it, in that moment we're about to be united by a single narrative.

**YOUR GIFT OF \$50, \$120 OR \$1,500 MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR WOOLLY
TO BE A LEADER OF THEATRE THAT IS ARTISTICALLY AMBITIOUS
AND UNAPOLOGETIC, NOW AND INTO THE FUTURE.**

ANDROMEDA SHACK (2001)

MY MAMA AND THE FULL-SCALE
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Having that connection that is so timely and done with such care is what Woolly strives to do. In this experience, we're not strangers and you the audience are not merely spectators, you are co-creators of a shared experience.

A DONATION OF \$1,500 TO WOOLLY MAMMOTH IS AN INTEGRAL NEXT STEP IN RENEWING THE PROMISE OF AMERICAN THEATRE.

Stories inspire and move us to action. Your stories and mine connect with Mama's story — and when we enter the Woollyverse together, we immerse ourselves in each others' stories. They may be unfamiliar in context or perspective, but the humanity of each story is crystal clear. It is that recognition of that humanity that we carry with us out into our communities. This becomes especially apparent through Woolly Mammoth's Connectivity programming, which includes Miranda Fellowships and collaborations with vital community organizations. Here's a snapshot of our Connectivity work at this moment:

- After completing her year as the New Work Miranda Family Fellow, Fatima Dyfan, — who worked with me on *MY MAMA* — continues to further develop her skills this season as a BOLD Rising Director, a mentorship program to train future artistic directors. The Miranda Family Fellowship at Woolly Mammoth is ensuring we extend our impact beyond the stage to support the careers of future leaders inside and outside of our doors.
- Locally, Woolly has formed partnering with organizations like SMYAL (Supporting and Mentoring Youth Advocates and Leaders) — an organization near and dear to my heart — to bring queer youth to see shows featuring LGBTQIA+ stories. They will also learn to craft their own stories for the stage as part of the Queer Solo Performance Workshop master classes with the playwrights whose work they experienced.
- Another of Woolly's exciting new partnerships is with the Arts Institute for Creative Advancement (AICA). AICA, an initiative of the DC Arts Education Alliance, offers intensive education and apprenticeship programs in technical theatre. Woolly welcomed two AICA students to work in Lighting and Set Design for *MY MAMA*. These programs prepare youth aged 18-24 for careers as theatre professionals. AICA students will work on every production this season!

Woolly is a testament that American theatre is not fading away; it is evolving, persevering, and ambitious. Your gift ensures that Woolly continues to collaborate with peer theatres like The Wilma in Philadelphia, break boundaries behind the scenes with the Miranda Family Fellowships and AICA, and create opportunities that remind us of the humanity we crave.

I HOPE YOU WILL HELP US ENSURE THAT THEATRES LIKE WOOLLY MAMMOTH HAVE THE RESOURCES THEY NEED NOT ONLY TO SUPPORT ARTISTS BUT ALSO TO ENGAGE WITH OUR COMMUNITY AND ELEVATE OUR SHARED HUMAN EXPERIENCE THROUGH THE ART OF LIVE THEATRE.



HOLLY TWYFORD

P.S. Thanks to our friends at the Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, we have a \$10,000 Match! Double your support of Woolly by making a tax-deductible gift now until December 31st. [Click here to donate today!](#)



STOP KISS (1999)

RECENT TRAGIC EVENTS (2002)