



DIRECTED BY: KIM DOUTHIT

WRITTEN BY: MAGGIE LEE

Live Streaming: May 27, June 4, & 5 at 7:00 pm

Video On Demand Streaming: June 8 - 20

WHAT IS A “STAGED READING?”

A “staged reading” is a process every new script goes through—once the playwright gets the script in shape, director and actors are brought on to give it life. Hearing the play is a different experience from reading it and this gives the playwright some clarity as to what needs to be fixed. Sometimes, a reading is simply actors standing still with music stands purely so that the audience and playwrights can focus on the words, and sometimes, it has light staging so that it is easier to imagine the full production. Our reading is fully staged, but actors will have scripts in hand, sound and other effects will be read out loud (therefore imagined), and set and costumes will be suggestive just to give an idea as to where and who they are.

All that said, the audience plays a critical part in these performances. There will be a post show discussion where our playwright, Maggie Lee, will pose some questions to help finalize the script. Your fresh eye feedback will be very valuable before we mount the show fully this coming fall. And what’s most exciting is that your kids can say they originated these roles when the script goes out into the world beyond YTN to theatre like ours, which is one of our goals with this program.

SYNOPSIS:

The Sky Below, written by a Gregory Award winning playwright Maggie Lee, is a steampunk, sci-fi play like nothing you have ever seen on the YTN stage. High up in the sky, on the floating city of Firmament, 13-year-old Nellie starts to question her beliefs when her sister takes flight to find out if the legend of "the surface" is true. Is there such a place where wondrous creatures all exist together beneath the sky? Is Chancellor Rayne hiding something? Will a group of teenagers be able to crack open the truth for the citizens of Firmament?

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CAST LIST (In order of appearance):

Augie	Shruthi V.
Arden	Sadie J.
Nellie	Sophie C.
Aunt Tessa/Lady Corsair	Karenna S.
Chancellor Rayne	Anya S.
Britt	Sarah C.
Jori	Nora J.
Dio	Claire S.
Ephraim/Bingham	Luna B.
Miss Opal/Hana	Izzy F.

ACTOR'S BIOS (Alphabetical by first name):

Anya S. (Chancellor Rayne) Anya is very excited to be part of *The Sky Below*, her 4th show at YTN. An 11-year-old veteran student at Island Park Elementary, Anya enjoys all things arts including school band and singing. Her game master, ski wizard, best head-of-hair brother, Hayden, is her mighty ally in all other things. She wants you to know that playing the villain can be a fun and creative experience that brings out the best in people.

Claire S. (Dio) Claire is excited to be a part of *The Sky Below*. Claire loves cacti (really, really loves cacti), baking, skateboarding, singing, acting, dancing, and reading. Claire hopes that one day, things will be back to in-person, and that we can bring you theater ... live.

Izzy F. (Miss Opal/Hana) is 15 and a freshman at Mercer Island High School. She has consistently been doing performances, classes and camps through YTN since 5th grade- too many to count!! When she's not at YTN, Izzy enjoys creating art, watching anime, critiquing movies, singing, dancing, hanging out with her friends and her new favorite- experimental baking! Izzy is very thankful to be part of this performance!

Karenna S. (Lady Corsair/Aunt Tessa) is 12 years old and in the sixth grade at Islander Middle School (IMS) on Mercer Island. She is ecstatic to be performing in her sixth YTN show! Most recently, she played an ancestor and choreographed two of the dances in the IMS musical production of *The Addams Family*. In her free time, Karenna enjoys reading several books a week, learning many new languages, baking, lake sports, skiing, and snuggling with her bunny, Basil, and dog, Zaatar. She can't wait to be fully vaccinated so she can get back to gymnastics,

singing, dancing, traveling, and hugging her YTN family. She loves Broadway and can't wait to return to New York to see more shows!

Luna B. (Ephraim/Bingham) is 11 and finishing up 5th grade at Bellevue Children's Academy. *The Sky Below* is her third theater production, but her first with YTN. She thoroughly enjoyed getting to participate in a first run show and getting to watch how it evolved during the rehearsals. Apart from theater, Luna enjoys singing, as well as tap, jazz, and lyrical dancing.

Nora J. (Jori) is 13 and very happy to be part of her 7th YTN production. Recents include *Emma and The West* (Emma), and *Radio Drama 2018-2020*. Although this show has been very different because of stupid COVID, the experience hasn't been any less enjoyable. Outside of theater, Nora enjoys playing with her guinea pigs, video games, art, music, and Oxford commas. Enjoy the show!

Sadie J. (Arden) is 15 and a sophomore at Mercer Island High School, she has been in many productions at YTN and her High school including, *The Lion King* (Nala), *Music Man Jr.* (Alma Hix), and *Emma* (Harriet). Sadie's days consist mainly of acting, singing, and dancing but when she is not involved with theater you can find her in the kitchen baking a variety of desserts or playing with her dogs Middy, Bella, and Zeke. She recently got invited to go to and compete IMTA (International Modeling and Talent Association) in July and she is super excited! Sadie had so much fun working this cast and she hopes to see everyone again!

Sarah C. (Britt) is 13 years old, and she is in 7th grade at Lakeside School in Seattle. Sarah has done several productions with Youth Theatre Northwest including *Mary Poppins Jr*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Monkey King*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Under the Hulder's Spell*, *The Tempest* and *Radio Drama*. She has loved being in *The Sky Below* with such a great director and cast! In her free time Sarah enjoys playing soccer and violin, boxing, baking, and playing with her dog Nelson.

Shruthi V. (Augie) is very excited to be a part of *Sky Below* this year. This is her 3rd show with YTN. It has been a blast. She is 13 years old and has been playing soccer competitively for her whole life. Other than that, she plays the piano and likes to do arts. She'd like to say thank you to her parents who have given her the opportunity to participate in theatre which she has learned to enjoy immensely over the past year. Now, she hopes you enjoy watching the show as much as she does!

Sophie C. (Nellie) is fourteen, and thrilled to be a part of this conservatory. Even during a pandemic, working with this script has been delightful. Aside from attending zoom calls to meet with her fabulous cast mates, Sophie has been performing ballet in her living room and attending school in her beanbag chair. This is Sophie's third conservatory with YTN, among the other ten shows she's been in at YTN; you may have even caught a glimpse of her in one of last summer's horror films "The Vanishing Tree". Whether you are watching this in person or from your couch, Sophie hopes you are at least mildly impressed by the show.

PRODUCTION TEAM:

Director	Kim Douthit
Playwright	Maggie Lee
Set Designer	Brian Jackson
Costume Designer	Natasha Gier
Stage Manager	Stephanie Bull
Camera Operator	Cory Southwell

PRODUCTION TEAM'S BIOS:

Kim Douthit (Director) is a YTN alumni who is happy to be back directing this new work, *Sky Below*. Some of her past credits with YTN include *The Little Mermaid*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, and *Sideways Stories From Wayside School*. She also directs Summer of Horror, YTN's annual horror shorts, this year going into year four of the program! She would like to thank the amazing cast for all of their hard work and Maggie for creating such a cool and interesting world!

Maggie Lee (Playwright) is thrilled to be embarking on a new theatrical adventure with YTN! Maggie is an award-winning playwright who enjoys creating diverse, imaginative new worlds on stage in genres like science fiction, fantasy, and horror. Her work has been produced in Seattle, New York, Seoul, Chicago, and San Francisco. Previous shows at YTN include the short horror film *The Vanishing Tree*, the modern PNW retelling of *The Monkey King: Journey Westbound*, and the kamishibai-inspired adaptation of *Through the Looking Glass*. She is currently the Resident Playwright at Macha Theatre Works, a board member of Rain City Projects (an organization supporting PNW playwrights), and a member of the Dramatists Guild.

Brian Jackson (Set Designer) has been with Youth Theatre Northwest since 2003 as the Technical Director and a set designer. He has also worked with Seattle theater companies such as Seattle Scenic Studios, The Group Theatre, On the Boards, The Bathhouse Theatre, 14/48, Northwest Actors Studio, and Theatre Schmeater. He is grateful to be a part of an amazing YTN staff and production company. He'd like to thank the production team, crew, and the talented cast for their hard work.

Natasha Gier (Costume Designer) has been costuming theatre productions since 2009, quite by accident. She has a degree in Fashion Design but realized her passions lay more in costuming thanks to a fortuitous internship at Youth Theatre NW. Lucky for her, they decided to keep her. Natasha has costumed over 25 shows; most recently ones like *Rent*, *The Stinky Cheese Man*, *Rikki Tikki Tavi*, *Rules of Comedy* and *The Reluctant Dragon*. When not designing a show, she can still be found behind a sewing machine, making custom costumes & corsetry, alterations and even the occasional bridal gown.

Stephanie Bull (Stage Manager) has had a great time working with *The Sky Below* cast! Previous YTN shows Stephanie has been a part of include: *Rikki Tikki Tavi*, *Spelling Bee*, *Princess and the Frog*, *Legally Blonde*, *Seussical Jr*, and *Avenue Q*. When she's not at YTN, she's singing with Mägi Ensemble or eating cheese.

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