

# SUBLET SERIES @HERE

#HERE @HEREARTS



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Thank you for coming to the Persona Theater Company production of *Troy Too* a SubletSeries presentation. This program provides artists with discounted space and equipment, as well as technical support.

HERE also supports the work of artists at all stages in their careers through our HERE Artist Residency Program (HARP), which develops and produces the work of our 10 resident artists, and Visiting Artist presentations for adult and family audiences. Please check out our other performances and events at [HERE.org](http://HERE.org).

Like all the work at HERE, this SubletSeries presentation was curated based on the strength and uniqueness of the artist's vision.

We hope to see you HERE again soon.

Best,

*Kristin*

**KRISTIN MARTING**

Founding Artistic Director

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KNOW WHAT WE LOOK LIKE  
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# ***Troy Too***

**Written by Karen Malpede**

**Directed by Avra Sidiropoulou**

**Music by Vantias Apergis**

**Video by Michael Demetrius**

**Lighting and Space Design by Tony Giovannetti**

**Costumes by Sally Ann Parsons and Carisa Kelly**

**Assistant Lighting Designer Miriam Crowe**

**Stage Manager Neno**

**Fish Video by Artemis Tzvra Bulloch**

**Fish Speech director Christen Clifford**

**Fish and Poster Art by Biba Kayewich**

**With:**

**Lydia Koniordou as Hecuba**

**and**

**Tommie J. Moore, Di Zhu, Abigail Ramsay, Ilker Oztop, David Glover,  
Ethan Jones**

**Featuring: George Bartenieff, Fish, (audio), Illia Pappa and Anthi  
Savaki, as the Goddesses Plague & Profit (opening video)**

## ***Troy Too*, author's note:**

*Troy Too* was written because the director and theater historian Avra Sidiropoulou invited me to be the only American playwright in the collection she was editing, *Staging 21<sup>st</sup> Tragedies*. Avra said I could write an essay about my previous work or a short play. New York had just gone into lockdown, and I had been teaching Euripides whose rage at the Greek invasion and annihilation of the people of the island Melos inspired his play. "In candor, one can hardly call *The Trojan Women* a good piece of work, but it seems nevertheless to be a great tragedy," translator-poet, Richard Lattimore's summation gave me the permission to be messy and furious.

Much of the language in *Troy Too* was found: on the street while participating in the Black Lives Matter protests in the summer of 2020, from medical professionals, by compulsive reading, and listening to interviews, and, then, reworked from memory. Elijah McClain's last words are completely his. I wonder if Euripides "found" some of his language in similar fashion, listening to like-minded enraged and engaged citizens. Surely, he took from the communal rituals that were the source of drama, as I took from the collective chants of the pandemic, most especially, "I can't breathe," which unites the three plagues, racism, climate change and Covid from which we suffer and recurs in different ways throughout the play.

When I wrote this play, my partner in life and work, George Bartenieff, had been diagnosed with a serious cancer. We spent many nights together in the emergency room and in hospital during the pandemic. Nevertheless, George took part in the protests and he took the knee in silent vigils for George Floyd. He created unforgettable performances in my plays *Other Than We*, at LaMama in 2019, and on zoom for Columbia's Earth Institute in the summer of 2020, and *Blue Valiant*, in 2021, staged outside on a farm in 40-degree weather, and filmed. He was that kind of actor and activist who believed that creativity is life and art is about envisioning another way of being, and that along with acting his other avocation was to inspire and empower the creativity in others. In this spirit, we dedicate this production to George.

I wish especially to thank those who have been George and my collaborators over decades and who are involved in this production: Lydia Koniordou, Sally Ann Parsons, Tony Giovannetti, Carisa Kelly, Miriam Crowe, Di Zhu, Tommie J. Moore and Christen Clifford. I thank Avra Sidiropoulou, director and co-producer, who has worked with great artistry and tireless energy against all obstacles to bring this production to the stage. I thank Nina Kamberos, publisher of Laertes Books and Egret Acting Editions, without whom this production, and so much else, would not be possible, and Beatriz Schiller who has photographed all our plays since 1987. Thanks, too, to Edith Meeks, Executive Director of HB Studio, for her generous gift of rehearsal studio space, and to Basil Twist, who designed and animated The Beast in *Better People*, 1988, for bringing the production to HERE. Thanks to the new cast members: Ilker Oztop, David Glover, Abigail Ramsay, Ethan Jones, and our stage manager, Neno, Vantias Apergis, composer, Michael Demitrius, video, for their energy, commitment and talent, and to Biba Kayewich for her artwork. Completing a beautiful company, indeed.

"Think where a (wo)man's glory begins and ends, And say my glory was I had such friends." W.B. Yeats.

**Karen Malpede**

**Karen Malpede (playwright)** Co-founder [Theater Three Collaborative](#), is the author and often the director of 22 plays, performed in New York (TNC, LaMama, Classic Stage, 4<sup>th</sup> St Theater-NYTW, Irondale, Gerald W. Lynch, Signature Theatre, HERE,

etc.), and in London, Berlin, Paris, Veroli, Italy, and on tour in the US and Germany and Austria. *The Beekeeper's Daughter*, *Prophecy*, *Another Life*, *Extreme Whether* are published in the anthology [Plays in Time](#) (Intellect, University of Chicago, 2016), [Other Than We](#), is also available, with Tony winner Beth Malone, on Earth Institute, Columbia University and [Blue Valiant](#), with Kathleen Chalfant, at Farm Arts Collective is on film, Both are published by [Egret Acting Editions, 2019, 2021](#). [Dinner During Yemen](#), *I Will Bear Witness: The Diaries of Victor Klemperer*, Obie Award, *Kassandra*, an adaptation of the novella by Christa Wolf, directed by Lydia Koniordou and other plays. She met George Bartenieff in 1987 when her close friend, Judith Malina, directed her play *Us*, in which he starred and for which he won an Obie. In 1995, Bartenieff and Malpede founded [Theater Three Collaborative](#) with Lee Nagrin. They collaborated in life and art until his death in July 2022. She is author/editor of seven books on theater, including *People's Theater*, *Three Works by the Open Theater*, *Women in Theater: Compassion and Hope*, *Acts of War: Iraq and Afghanistan in Seven Plays*, numerous essays in *The Kenyon Review*, *Indypendent*, *New York Times*, *Dark Matter*, *Torture Magazine*, etc., on subjects ranging from theater in Egypt to ecology to the US torture program to grief, and the author of works of short fiction. She is working on a nonfiction book about being a cancer caretaker for several extraordinary people. She is a McKnight National Playwright's fellow, and recipient of NYFA award for playwriting.

**Avra Sidiropoulou (Director)** Artistic Director of Athens-based [Persona Theatre](#) Company and Associate Professor of Theatre at the Open University of Cyprus. Her work has travelled in various parts of the world, including Greece, Cyprus, Turkey, the UK, the United States, Iran, Italy and elsewhere. She has published extensively on directing theory and practice, contemporary performance and dramaturgy and is the author of *Directions for Directing. Theatre and Method* (Routledge 2018) and *Authoring Performance: The Director in Contemporary Theatre* (Palgrave Macmillan 2011). She is the co-editor of *Adapting Greek Tragedy. Contemporary Contexts for Ancient Texts* (CUP 2021) and editor of *Staging 21 st Century Tragedies: Theatre, Politics and Global Crisis* (Routledge, 2022). She was a Visiting Scholar at Columbia University, the Martin E. Segal Centre at CUNY, MIT, the Universities of Leeds and Surrey, the Institute of Theatre Studies at Freie University, the Berlin and a Japan Foundation Fellow at the University of Tokyo. Avra's most recent directing works include Sophie Treadwell's *Machinal* at the Cyprus Theatre Organization (2022) and *Enter Hamlet* (her script) at the Verona Shakespeare Fringe Festival (2022). In 2020 she was nominated for the Gilder/Coigney International Theatre Award by the League of Professional Theatre Women.

**Lydia Koniordou (Hecuba)** is recognized as one of Greece's most renowned classical actors and directors. In 2020, she was seen around the world as the Queen of Persia when the Greek National Theater live-streamed their production of *The Persians* from the theater at Epidaurus. She is directed *The Persians* for the National Theater, in version that was seen at City Center, after its run in Greece. She directed Karen



Malpede's adaptation of Christa Wolf's novella *Kassandra* for students at the Tisch School of the Arts, New York University in 1996, and the two have been friends and colleagues since. She has starred in many productions of the National Theatre of Greece and directed with the Municipal Theatres of Volos and Patras. She has also offered lectures and seminars on her method in various drama schools all over the world, including the Shanghai Theatre Academy. She has taught at the National Theatre of Greece, the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, the School of Fine Arts at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and private drama conservatoires. She has received many awards for her work in the theatre and served as a former Minister of Culture for Greece. She is a finalist for the Gilder.Coigney International Theatre Award.

**George Bartenieff (Fish)** 1933-2022, had a long, legendary, generous career in the American theater, beginning on Broadway at age 14 in *The Whole World Over*, directed by Harold Clurman, the play in which Uta Hagen met Herbert Bergof. In 2019, Bartenieff performed the lead in the same play at HB Studio, to mark Hagen's centennial. He was Krapp in the first American production of *Krapp's Last Tape*, and Peter in *Zoo Story*. He played Prisoner # 6 in *The Brig*. He co-founded Theater for the New City, the Greenwich Village Halloween Parade and Theater Three Collaborative, and with Danny Simmons, curated the public art show in the Washington Ave., Clinton Hill subway station. He produced hundreds of new plays at TNC, including seven by Maria Irene Fornes, and many by cutting edge ensemble companies. He taught Shakespeare and The Painter's Project at HB Studio, and directed productions of *Waiting for Godot* and *Hamlet*. With his partner, Karen Malpede, he created the script for and role of Victor Klemperer in *I Will Bear Witness*, for which he won one of his four Obie Awards, and which toured the US and Europe. In 2017, they created short version of Part I, which toured to NYC living rooms. He played leading roles in all Malpede's plays from 1987 to 2021. He was most recently on Broadway as the Rabbi in *Fiddler on the Roof*, with Harvey Fierstein (whose *Torch Song Trilogy, Part I* premiered at George's Theater for the New City), and in *Merchant of Venice* with Al Pacino. He starred in the stage and film version [\*Blue Valiant\*](#) in 2021, with Kathleen Chalfant. He was a great actor, a great supporter of new plays, playwrights and theater groups, an inspiring teacher and director, a brilliant and generous man. He trained at Irwin and Maria Piscator's Children's Acting Studio, where he first acted with Judith Malina, at RADA and the Guildhall, in London. He is sorely missed by his family, including his son Alexander, granddaughter, Briana, stepdaughter, Carrie Sophia, by all who knew him and all who had the good fortune to see him on stage.

**David Glover (Elijah-Astyanax, Lover, Chorus, fight choreographer)** is a Barrymore Award winning actor, poet, playwright and director from Philadelphia. He is drawn to telling needed stories that challenge comfort and press at the potent roots of trauma and healing. Select theater credits include: *The Fever* (National Tour), *In the Penal Colony* (NYTW). The revival of *The Escape; Or A leap for freedom* (the first published play by an African American.) American premieres include; *The View* and *The*

*Radicalisation of Bradley Manning.* His artistic body of work centers on the complexities of Black life, love and liberation. His debut play *The Wanderer* had its world premiere and off-broadway debut at The Chain Theatre earlier this month. His debut book of poetry *Beneath My Body Armor* will be released later this month.

**Ethan Jones (Chorus)** Is an aspiring Theater Artist performer. I am a member of Epic players I have performed in a production of *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* with them. I also performed in Peter and *The Starcatcher* at NYU Educational Theater I specifically love Musical Theater and hope to do many more shows with Epic I aspire to continue my skills in Acro Yoga which I go to meetups in NYC Parks.

**Tommie J. Moore (Talthybius, Doctor, Lover, Chorus)** is the Founder of "Dare to be Black," a company that educates and protects the legacies of African-American Icons through theater and film. He is an actor, screenwriter, playwright and a director who has performed in over 30 plays. Mr. Moore graduated from York with a B.A. in Theater Arts/Communications. His film work includes; Robinson (rookie FBI agent) in the feature film "Al Qareem," Abraham in the film "The Lure." Dr.Mali in "Fly Angel Soul." And Farmer Bill in "Don't Stop Moving." In November 2019, Mr. Moore originated the character of "Tenaka" in Karen Malpede's production of "Other Than We," at La Mama Theater in NYC. In this production, he gratefully shared the stage with the Iconic George Bartenieff. Also, Mr. Moore originated the role of Bass Reeves, in the "2019 National Black Theater Festival's" number one play "Cowboy." Mr. Moore is well-known for writing and starring in his Regional one-man play "Dare to be Black: The Jack Johnson Story." And has most recently, written an one-woman production titled "Queen Bess," a play about Bessie Coleman. "Queen Bess" debuted in February 2023 and will run again in NYC this summer. Mr. Moore is dedicated to writing stage plays and screenplays focusing on African-American History. Please visit his website:

<https://www.daretobeblack.com/>

**Ilker Oztop (Boy Arsonist, Chorus)** Hailing from Istanbul, Turkey, Ilker Oztop is a multilingual actor/performer who is fascinated by creating visceral and cerebral experiences with bodies and sound unabashedly. He trained with Studio Players (Istanbul), Teatr Zar (Wroclaw), SIT Company (New York), Suzuki Company of Toga (Japan), Attis Theater (Greece) and is thrilled to return to the stage after a 4 year hiatus due to the 'contagion'. Prominent appearances include Pozzo (Waiting for Godot), Raskolnikov (Crime and Punishment), Executioner (The Balcony), Horatian (The Horatian/Vandals), and William Wilson ([William Wilson, IMDB](#)). Ilker is also a [PhD-trained biomedical scientist](#) and he currently leads data science portfolio strategy for several clinical development programs at a pharmaceutical company.

**Abigail Ramsay (Andromache, Lover, Doctor, Chorus)** is a classically-trained actress, a graduate of RADA, London. She is a Theatre for Social Change facilitator, co-caretaker to exceptional parents, nascent writer, and arts project manager. Recently, she had the honor to spend two years in her ancestral home, Jamaica, first on a

Fulbright followed by an Embassy grant. Earlier this year, she had the honor to portray a Francophone Cameroonian asylum seeker in Cynthia Cooper's "I Was a Stranger Too" in St. Paul, MN. She works weekly with amazing young women at Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy Project in Brooklyn. Her first short essay has recently been published in *Heart Beating Beneath the Earth*, a collaboration between visual artist Jann Rosen-Queralt and various writers.

**Di Zhu (Kassandra, Lover, Chorus)** is a Chinese-American actress, pianist, and theater producer based in NYC. She has two dogs, loves classical music, and has yet to win a single argument with her magnificent mother. This is her fourth production with Theater Three Collaborative, for which she is very grateful! Select theater appearances include *Another Life*, *The Beekeeper's Daughter*, *Extreme Weather*, *Mozart and Salieri*, *Animal Farm*, *The Waiter and The Slut*, and *Mikhail Bulgakov's The Master and Margarita*. Film and TV credits include *Whiskey Tango Foxtrot* (with Tina Fey and Margot Robbie), NBC's *The Blindspot*, *A Beautiful Day In The Neighborhood* (with Tom Hanks) and *WeCrashed* (with Jared Leto and Anne Hathaway). She wishes to thank the cast and creatives for this wonderful journey! IG: @actressdizhu [www.whoisdi.com](http://www.whoisdi.com)

**Vanias Apergis (Music Composer)** is the Composer In Residence of the Athens-based Persona Theatre Company. He is the owner and director of **yellowroove** Music Group. He has composed and/or produced music for feature and short films, documentaries, TV, Theatre, Commercial Records, Video Games, and advertisements. He has served as a General Manager, Business Development Director, and Head of Music Publishing in various companies in the Greek music business ecosystem.

**Christen Clifford (Fish Speech Director)** is an artist and activist whose work centers around body politics. As an actor, she appeared in many productions in New York, Italy and London, of *The Beekeeper's Daughter* and *Another Life* by the eco feminist playwright Karen Malpede with Theatre Three Collaborative and she is grateful for the hundreds of hours in rehearsals and onstage with George Bartenieff. Clifford is co-curator (with Tom Cole) of the Experiments and Disorders series at Dixon Place, for which she made this audio tape of George as Fish in 2020. She teaches at The New School and lives in Queens and online at @cd clifford. More at [www.christenclifford.info](http://www.christenclifford.info)

**Michael Demetrius (Video Designer)** was born in 1989. Holding a dual US & Greek nationality, he also has roots in South Africa and Asia Minor. Through his work, Michael interconnects and links views, fears and hopes of the human soul. He is dedicated to the development and production of films, documentaries and TV series with a strong artistic gaze, addressing audiences worldwide. Michael holds a Master's degree with a specialization in acting and directing, Magister Artium in theatrical studies from the Open University of Cyprus having graduated with honours in June 2019. He earned a B.A. in film studies from the University of Greenwich, also with honours, having first a Certificate in Film & Television Studies from New York College, Athens Campus.

**Tony Giovannetti (Lighting and Space Design)** has designed lights for all TTC production since 1995, including the premier of *I Will Bear Witness* at Classic Stage Company, and most recently he joined us in Paris for our performances of *Extreme Whether* at ARTCop21 where he solved a variety of design problems. He has designed many productions for Meredith Monk, Lee Nagrin and others, working inside and at sight specific locations outside. He was head of the electrics department at the Metropolitan Opera and has designed lighting for numerous outdoor summer concerts. Bessie Award winner for lighting design.

**Sally Ann Parsons (Costume Design)** has designed costumes for all TTC productions since the original *The Beekeeper's Daughter* in Veroli, Italy, 1994. She worked with the downtown theater artist, Lee Nagrin, the third founder of Theater Three Collaborative, from her first work theater work in the late 60's to her last, *Behind the Lid*, directed and performed by Basil Twist, using Nagrin's recorded voice. Ms. Nagrin died in 2007 during the run of this production. The artists of TTC are staying at her restored house in Jeffersonville, Chimera House, courtesy of Street Dance Productions, Inc. Other credits include costumes for Daniel Nagrin's many solo works, including *The Peloponnesian Wars* and she was part of his experiment in improvisation, The Work Group. She costumed Don Redlich's company for many years, including a number of dances choreographed by Hanya Holm, designed many solo works for the performance artist Margaret Beals, as well as music theater works for Eric Saltzman. She owns and is the creative director of Parsons-Meares, Ltd, a theatrical costume shop established in 1980 with her husband, James Meares. She is a Tony Award honoree for Excellence in Theater.

**Miriam Nilofa Crowe (Assistant Lighting Designer)** This is at least Miriam's sixth production working with Tony and Theater Three Collaborative. Other work includes lighting design for the world premieres of *Teenage Dick* (Ma Yi + The Public) and *Kennedy* (St. Clements Church). In DC: *The Children* (Studio Theatre). In New York: *Mirrors* and *Charlie's Waiting* (Parity Productions), *Hurricane Party* (The Collective NY), *SeagullMachine* and *home/sick* (The Assembly), *This is Modern Art* and *Platonov* (Blessed Unrest), *6 Characters . . .* (Theodora Skipitares), *The Penalty* (The Apothetae), and *Symphony for the Dance Floor* (BAM). She has an MFA from Yale School of Drama, and is an adjunct professor at Tisch Drama and Lehman College.

**Carisa Kelly's (Costume Design)** passion for clothes and the stories they can tell began when she told her first grade teacher that she wanted to have "a store full of clothes" when she grew up. Over the last 20 years, her work has been seen on screens and stages around the world. Carisa's film credits include such award- winning films as *Don't Think Twice* (Mike Birbiglia) and *Diane* (Kent Jones), *Mother/Android* (Mattson Tomlin), and *Goodnight Mommy* ( Matt Sobel) starring Naomi Watts. Her theatre credits span international, regional, summer stock and Broadway and she has collaborated with Theatre Three for over a decade. She holds an MFA from Tisch School of the Arts.



**Biba Kayewich (Biljana Kajevikj, fish & poster art)** Born in Skopje, the Republic of N. Macedonia where she studied classical drawing and painting and graduated at the Faculty of Fine Arts. For 20 years she worked as a freelance designer, illustrator and artist on a variety of projects, as postal stamps designs, stained glass and marble floor design projects, illustrations and book cover designs. Also, she had solo and group exhibitions across the country as well as aboard, in Serbia, Bulgaria, Italy, Austria, Germany, Denmark, United Arab Emirates, South Korea and in the USA. She had some curators projects also. She was awarded for the book cover painting with the Gold and Bronze Medal at the “2016 Pub West Book Design Awards” and with the Silver Medal at the "IPPY" award (Independent Publisher Book Award). Her paintings and drawings are featured in private and public collections throughout Europe and the United States.

\*The ancient Greek text is from Euripides’ *The Trojan Women* and is sung in the mode of traditional Greek laments.

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