



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 5, 2025

Contact: Erica Skarohlid,  
Marketing and Communication Director  
email: [eskarohlid@historytheatre.com](mailto:eskarohlid@historytheatre.com)  
phone: 651-461-4329

**History Theatre presents the World Premiere of R.A. Shiomi's  
SECRET WARRIORS March 29-April 19**

SAINT PAUL, MN – This spring, History Theatre proudly presents the world premiere of *Secret Warriors*, a new drama by acclaimed playwright R.A. Shiomi. This production unveils the untold stories of Japanese American (Nisei) soldiers who trained at Minnesota's Fort Snelling during World War II. Discover their compelling personal journeys and heartfelt love stories set against the backdrop of the war and the incarceration of their families. From the battlefields abroad to the struggles at home, this powerful play brings history to life through riveting storytelling and heartfelt performances. *Secret Warriors* is directed by Lily Tung Crystal and runs March 29-April 19, 2025- tickets on sale now!

"I hope *Secret Warriors* audiences come to learn about the courage, ingenuity and patriotism of the Japanese Americans who served in the Military Intelligence Service during World War II" said Playwright R.A. Shiomi. "Under incredibly difficult circumstances, they stepped forward to serve as translators and interrogators to save the lives of their fellow soldiers and shorten the war by years. After being wrapped in secrecy for decades, they should be recognized and honored as American heroes."

*Secret Warriors* delves into a powerful and often overlooked aspect of World War II history. The experiences of Japanese Americans—who served as translators and interrogators—are remarkable. These men were pivotal in saving countless lives and aiding the war effort. Not only were they fighting for their country, but they were also fighting against the injustices their own families faced. Including personal journeys and love stories enriches the narrative, adding a human dimension to the historical events.

"I have been fascinated by these men and their stories since I moved to Minnesota and am truly grateful to the History Theatre for giving me this opportunity to write a play about them." -R.A. Shiomi.

The cast features **Stephanie Anne Bertumen\*** (*Complicated Fun, The Debutante's Ball*), **Erik Ohno Dagoberg** (*The Boy Wonder*), **Song Kim** (*Paper Dreams of Harry Chin*), **Kendall Kent** (History Theatre Debut), **Josh Kwon\*** (History Theatre Debut), **Clay Man Soo\*** (History Theatre Debut), **Paul LaNave\*** (History Theatre Debut), **Tony Larkin\*** (History Theatre Debut), and **Rich Remedios\*** (*A Crack in the Sky*). Understudies include **Kayla Dvorak Feld**, **Benjamin Dutcher\***, **Ashley Horiuchi**, **Sherwin Resurreccion**, and **Keivin Vang**

The team includes **R.A. Shiomi** (Playwright), **Lily Tung Crystal** (Director), **Erik E. Paulson** (Scenic Designer), **Kenji Shoemaker** (Props Designer), **Meghan Kent** (Costume Designer), **Wu Chen Khoo**<sup>^</sup> (Lighting Designer), **Alice Endo** (Assistant Lighting Designer), **Fred Kennedy**<sup>#</sup> (Sound Designer), **Kathy Maxwell** (Video Designer), **Hayley N. Walsh**<sup>\*</sup> (Stage Manager), **Samantha Smith** (Asst. Stage Manager), **Annie Enneking** (Fight Choreographer), **Elena Glass** (Intimacy Coach), **Reiko Ho** (Pidgin Language Consultant), **Rio Saito** (Japanese Language Consultant), **Gunther Gullickson** (Technical Director), **Eva Sima** (Associate Technical Director), and **Nick Walberg** (Master Electrician).

\* Member AEA # Member USA 829 ^Member IATSE

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### R.A. Shiomi (Playwright)

History Theatre: Debut production at History Theatre. Theater: PLAYWRITING: Plays have been produced at Theater Mu, Pan Asian Repertory Theater in NYC, East West Players in Los Angeles and Park Square Theatre etc, including plays such as *Fire In The New World*, *Yellow Fever*, *Mask Dance*, *Tale of the Dancing Crane*, *Uncle Tadao*, *Rosie's Café* and *Play Ball*. DIRECTING: Theater Mu, Asian American Theater Company in San Francisco, InterAct Theatre in Philadelphia and Theatre Esprit Asia in Denver, Minnesota Opera and Skylark Opera for productions of *The Song Poet*, *The Mikado* (my own adaptation), *Yellow Fever*, *Caught*, *Me For You For Me*, *Into The Woods*, *Flower Drum Song* (David Hwang version) and *Yellow Face*. ARTISTIC DIRECTOR for Theater Mu from 1993 to 2014, and Co-AD at Full Circle Theater 2015 to 2024. Other: Writer for ENG series for CTV and Dance To Remember for CBC in Canada. Founder, leader, drummer and composer of Mu Daiko from 1997 to 2010. My plays have been published in several publications including Bold Words by Rutgers Univ. Press, Asian American Plays for a New Generation by Temple Univ Press and West Coast Plays and Love + Realasianships in Canada. Awards: Western Literature Association Artist of the Year, McKnight Distinguished Artist Award, Ivey Award for Lifetime Achievement, Sally Ordway Irvine Award for Vision, Award from State Council for Asian Pacific Minnesotans for Excellence and Innovation in the Arts. Project grants from MSAB and Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Training: BA University of Toronto, Teaching Diploma Simon Fraser University in Vancouver Canada. Upcoming: Pan Asian Repertory Theatre production of *Fire In The New World* in 2026.

### Lily Tung Crystal (Director)

LILY TUNG CRYSTAL (she/her) is a director, actor/singer, and the artistic director of East West Players in Los Angeles. She is also the former artistic director of Theater Mu in Minneapolis-St. Paul and co-founder of Ferocious Lotus Theatre Company in the San Francisco Bay Area. As a director, her recent productions include the world premiere of Jessica Huang and Jacinth Greywoode's new musical *BLENDED 和 (HARMONY): THE KIM LOO SISTERS* (Mu/History Theatre); the world premiere of Saymoukda Duangphouxay Vongsay's *THE KUNG FU ZOMBIES SAGA* (Mu); Lauren Yee's *CAMBODIAN ROCK BAND* (Mu/Jungle Theater); Susan Soon He Stanton's *TODAY IS MY BIRTHDAY* (Mu); and Steven Karam's *THE HUMANS* (Park Square Theatre), which won the Twin Cities Theater Bloggers' Favorite Play 2022. She also helmed David Henry Hwang's *CHINGLISH* and *FLOWER DRUM SONG* (Palo Alto Players) and the world premiere of Leah Nanako Winkler's *TWO MILE HOLLOW* (Ferocious Lotus), all for which she was named a Theatre Bay Area Award Finalist for Outstanding Direction. As an actor/singer, Lily has performed at theaters across the country, including Cal Shakes, Jungle Theater, Magic Theatre, Mixed Blood, New World Stages, Playwrights' Center, Portland Center Stage, SF Playhouse, Syracuse Stage, and Theater Mu. [lilytungcrystal.com](http://lilytungcrystal.com); [eastwestplayers.org](http://eastwestplayers.org)

**Special Event: Opening Night Panel Discussion**

Japanese American Experience: From Migration to Internment, Service, and Beyond

March 29, 3:30-5:00 pm. Free, tickets required- [reserve here](#).

Find out more about the history and making of the world premiere of *Secret Warriors*. Join us for a talk about the Japanese American experience before Opening Night. We'll talk about early migration and WWII internment to post-war challenges of Japanese Americans. Hear from the creative team and people whose personal stories about the lasting legacy of these Americans and their important contributions to the country.

Panelists: R.A. Shiomi (playwright *Secret Warriors*), Matt Abe (descendant of Toshio William "Bill" Abe), Moderated by Richard D. Thompson (History Theatre Artistic Director).

**Ticket Information**

**Tiers 1-5:** \$25-64. **Students:** \$15. Additional discounts are available for seniors (available online) and patrons under 30 (must call to purchase). For tickets call 651-292-4323 or visit [historytheatre.com](http://historytheatre.com). Discount rates for groups of 10 or more. Call 651-292-4320 or email [groups@historytheatre.com](mailto:groups@historytheatre.com) to book a group. Discounts also available for Veterans.

**Pay What You Can Previews:** March 27 and 28 at 7:30pm. Pre-reserve for \$20 or PWYC at the door. Cash and credit accepted.

**Afterthoughts held following Sunday Matinees**

March 30, April 6, and 13. Free and open to all ticketed patrons get closer to the story on stage with a lively post-show talkback. Guest Speakers TBA. More info on the History Theatre website.

**Accessibility at History Theatre**

History Theatre strives to make all events accessible to all patrons. When purchasing tickets please alert the box office of any accommodation or assistance needed. Accessibility offerings include hearing enhancement receivers, seating for patrons with wheelchairs and their companions, accessible restrooms, Entrance on Cedar St., and elevator right to the theatre level for easy access. Contact the box office at 651-292-4323 for more information. [www.historytheatre.com/box-office/accessibility](http://www.historytheatre.com/box-office/accessibility)

- **Audio Description:** Saturday, April 12 2:00 p.m.
- **Open Captioning:** Saturday, April 19 2:00 p.m. and 7:30pm

#####

**History Theatre Mission:** History Theatre entertains, educates, and engages through creating, developing, and producing new and existing works that explore Minnesota's past and the diverse American experience. Its work provides a unique lens which links our past to the present, explores our common heritage, and illuminates our understanding of what it means to be American. [www.historytheatre.com](http://www.historytheatre.com)

**Land Acknowledgement:** History Theatre sits on the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary land of the Dakota people, for whom the land holds historical, spiritual, and political significance. We recognize and

honor the Dakota people, ancestors, and descendants, as well as the land itself, and all the sovereign Native nations in Minnesota and beyond. We recognize that this acknowledgement itself is not enough, and only serves as a first step towards decolonization.