

SpeakEasy Theatre presents the West Coast Canadian Premiere of

## **The Shipment**

By Young Jean Lee

Vancouver, B.C. — A Provocative Comedy to Shake the “Woke”

Biting satire at its very best, *The Shipment* is a subversive modern minstrel show about Black identity meant to wake the world to the ridiculous narratives in dominant media. Five Black actors play a roster of characters that reads like a bad b-list of Black iconography: Video Ho, Crackhead John, Bad Cop, Standup Comedian, Drug Dealer Mama, Grandma from Heaven, and Record Company Executive, to name just a few. The brazen mash-up of these stereotypes with clichés, distortions, and brilliant sleights of hand all force us to go beyond the lampoon and shift the lens through which we perceive race in order to confront our own bias.

SpeakEasy Theatre Artistic Director **Kayvon Khoshkam** says, “The play does not judge, nor does it preach, rather it invites us in to share and listen. *The Shipment* is raw, challenging, and incredibly funny which is a perfect fit for the style of experience we have established for the company and our audiences. A night out with SpeakEasy is never what you expect, and you will always have a very good time.”

Noting his interest in Korean-American **Young Jean Lee** writing about Black identity, Co-Director **Omari Newton** says, “Conversations about race are often presented as a dichotomy. (“This is what Black people think, presented by a Black person,” etc.) and I was very intrigued to hear a thoughtful examination of the subject by an Asian woman. While “The Black” experience is of course unique, there is a shared experience of being considered “Other” by dominant culture. As an Asian person and as a woman, Young Jean Lee has experience with the many ways that systems of power exert their influence. As a Black man, I do as well. As a person of Middle Eastern heritage, Kayvon undoubtedly does as well. I’m interested in seeing how this melange of perspectives shapes our telling of the story.”

**Khoshkam** adds, “*The Shipment* (and content like it) is required at this time. The rise of hatred, racism and classism is a global concern which has a disturbing fury in its stride. We knew that we had to make this piece happen whatever the cost. We want SpeakEasy to establish itself as an active member in the dialogue over diversity and representation, and to take a leadership position in fostering socially conscience content.”

“Cultural images of black America are tweaked, pulled and twisted like Silly Putty — a subversive, seriously funny new theatre piece” — *The New York Times*

“An insightful piece about black identity politics that is daring, provocative, and very, very funny” — *Theatre Mania*

### **CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM**

Cast: **Andrew Creightney, Chris Francisque, Omari Newton, Adrian Neblett, Kiomi Pyke.**

Directed by **Kayvon Khoshkam** and **Omari Newton**, Set Design by Markian Taraskiuk, Lighting Design by **Itai Erdal**, Stage Managed by **Sarah Maberley**.

Produced by **Markian Tarasiuk**

<b>TICKETS &amp; PERFORMANCE DATES</b>
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November 22 - December 2, 2017 at The Culture Lab (1895 Venebles Street). Preview: Nov 22. Opening: Nov 23. Nov 22 - Dec 2 at 8PM; Nov 25 and Dec 2 at 2PM. Tix from \$22.50 at <a href="http://thecultch.com/events/the-shipment/">thecultch.com/events/the-shipment/</a>
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<b>MEDIA CONTACT</b>
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For media interviews please contact Publicist Amy Lynn Strilchuk at <a href="mailto:amy@heartleft.com">amy@heartleft.com</a> High res images and videos are available at <a href="http://speakeasytheatre.ca/presslogin.html">speakeasytheatre.ca/presslogin.html</a> . Username: speakeasymedia. Password: theshipmentpress.
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**ABOUT YOUNG JEAN LEE**

Young Jean Lee has been called “hands down, the most adventurous downtown playwright of her generation” by the New York Times, “one of New York’s smartest, thorniest, and most knockdown hilarious playwrights” by The Guardian, and “one of the best experimental playwrights in America” by Time Out New York. She has written and directed nine shows in New York with Young Jean Lee's Theater Company and toured her work to over thirty cities around the world. Her plays have been published by TCG (Songs of the Dragons Flying to Heaven and Other Plays, The Shipment and Lear) and by Samuel French (Three Plays by Young Jean Lee). She is currently under commission from Plan B/Paramount Pictures, Lincoln Center Theater, Playwrights Horizons, and Oregon Shakespeare Festival. She is a member of New Dramatists and 13P, and has an MFA from Mac Wellman's playwriting program at Brooklyn College. She has received grants from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, Creative Capital, NYFA, NEA, NYSCA, the Jerome Foundation, The Fox Samuels Foundation, the Greenwall Foundation, and the Rockefeller MAP Foundation. She is also the recipient of two OBIE Awards, the Festival Prize of the Zürcher Theater Spektakel, a 2010 Prize in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a 2011 Guggenheim Fellowship, and a 2012 Doris Duke Artist Award.

**ABOUT SPEAKEASY THEATRE**

It's with great urgency our present culture needs the live experience to help connect, question and remember why we are alive. SpeakEasy Theatre is committed to creating an environment where communities come together to celebrate. We are driven to foster stories created by diverse artists who are immediate, honest and unforgiving. Founded in 2014 by Markian Tarasiuk, Mike Gill, Olivia Hutt, and Tom Krushkowski, SpeakEasy Theatre currently operates under the leadership of Kayvon Khoshkam (Artistic Director) and Markian Tarasiuk (General Manager).