

2023 WAGNER NEW PLAY FESTIVAL

UC San Diego

ARTS AND HUMANITIES
Theatre and Dance



नेहा & NEEL

by Ankita Raturi

directed by Rosie Glen-Lambert

Sheila & Hughes Potiker Theater

May 30th; June 3rd, 7th, 8th @ 7:30pm

June 3rd @ 2:00pm

by Ankita Raturi

Directed by Rosie Glen-Lambert

CAST

Neha	Swarupa Ellamaraju
Neel	Seth Gunawardena
Arnav/Avatars	Sashank Kanchustambam

CREATIVE TEAM

Assistant Director	Jaz Johnson
Assistant Director	Diya Rao
Casting Associate	Sashank Kanchustambam
Intimacy Coordinator	Haia R'nana Bchiri
Scenic Designer	Raphael Mishler
Assistant Scenic Designer	Sparrow Naito
Costume Designer	Anabel Olguin
Assistant Costume Designer	Keegan Barquilla
Assistant Costume Designer	Faith Garcia
Lighting Designer	Shelby Thach
Assistant Lighting Designer	Sydney Primeaux
Associate Lighting Designer	Russell Chow
Sound Designer	Harper Justus
Assistant Dound Designer	Deeptha Bharadwaj
Dramaturg	Rishika Mehrishi
Production Stage Manager	Katie Davis
Assistant Stage Manager	Juhi Sabharwal
Assistant Stage Manager	Shaila Sarathy
Production Assistant	Aiden Meyndert

PIT CREW

Rachel Baum, Sarah Frazin, Kendehl Hill, Hannah Littler, Aiden Meyndert, Clara Williams

OUR CREW

Wardrobe: Yerli Bolainez, Diana Gawad, Celia Carton, Anjolie Olacheck, Cybil Hellerud
Light Board Operator: Humberto Rojo
Deck Crew: Samantha Cooke, Chelsey Andrade, Kristina Little
Sound Board Operator: Farimehr Seyednia
A2: Brandon Julien

CONTENT WARNING

Loud Noises, Flashing Lights

SUMMARY

Neha fears she has failed to pass her language and culture down to her seventeen-year-old son, Neel. A summer trip to visit colleges could be Neha's last chance, if only she can get Neel to visit the historic Hope Diamond and witness a piece of Indian history for himself. This play asks what we lose with every generation in America, and if it's ever too late to connect with your roots.

DEDICATION

This production is dedicated to Ankita's Nani, Kusum Joshi. And to every grandmother who works hard to stay close from a distance.

THE DIRECTOR

Rosie Glen-Lambert (she/her) is a second-year MFA Directing student. She is the Artistic Director and Founder of The Attic Collective, an award-winning Los Angeles based theatre company. Before beginning graduate school, Rosie served as the Literary Manager of Inkwel Theater from 2018-2022. Rosie received her BA from UC Santa Cruz. UC San Diego credits: The Winter's Tale, Machinal, limp wrist on the lever, The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity. Select other directing credits include: Spring Awakening, Curse of the Starving Class, Dead Dog's Bone: A Birthday Play, and The Last Croissant. See more at rosieglenlambert.com

THE PLAYWRIGHT

Ankita Raturi (she/her) writes in Hindi/Urdu and English about living between cultural identities and contending with the ongoing legacies of colonization. Her storytelling is shaped by migration, multilingualism, lineage, generational loss, queerness, and chronic illness. She is the 2022 Bret Adams and Paul Reisch Foundation's Ollie Award winner. Current commissions include: Artists at Play & A.P.A.F.T.; E.S.T./Sloan; Cygnet/Finish Line, South Coast Rep/Elizabeth George. Her work has been developed at Playwrights Realm, Cygnet Theatre, Artists at Play, The COOP, Atlantic Pacific Theatre, Theater Masters, Hypokrit Theatre Company, New York Shakespeare Exchange, Pete's Candy Store, and Natyabharati. Her devised work with Charlotte Murray has been produced at Fresh Ground Pepper, Corkscrew Theater Festival, Dixon Place. Ankita received her B.F.A. in Drama at NYU/Tisch and is a 3rd-year Playwriting M.F.A. candidate at UC San Diego. Instagram: [@ankitawrites](https://www.instagram.com/ankitawrites). Representation: Chris Till and Anne Sawyier, Verve.

THE CAST

Swarupa Ellamaraju (Neha) is a product strategist in technology by the day and a professional actor by the evening. This is her first play with UCSD. She started her theatre journey while at grad school at University of Virginia. Swarupa is active in South Asian Community theatre with the Hamid Daudani group. She lives with her husband and two little girls in San Diego. Her family is very supportive of her acting pursuits as they think she has a flair for drama.

Seth Gunawardena (Neel) is a third-year theatre major. UC San Diego credits: Baal, The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity, As You Like It, Bach At Leipzig, and A Winter's Tale. Other Credits: Animals out of Paper at Chautauqua Institution.

Sashank Kanchustambam (Arnav/Avatars) is a fourth-year undergrad theatre major and econ minor from Hyderabad and Chandigarh, India. Regional theater credit: Come Fall In Love (Script Assistant). UC San Diego Department Credits: Man in love (ensemble), A Mid Summer Night's Dream (Flute/Thisbe). Backwaters (Mukul), Twelfth Night (Assistant Director), 50 boxes of earth (Script PA), Machinal (Lawyer for prosecution and Married Man), Bunny Bunny (PA). UCSD labs: AHC (Lab project choreographer), I - You (Customer/Little Boy/Guard 3). Playwriting credits: We were kids (Sparks Theatre Company), 45 minutes of Chaos (UCSD lab). Short film Credits: Nadartine (Actor-Director-Writer), Choice Creates (Actor), Re-Exam (Actor), and 98 days at a time (Writer-Actor), Wait (writer).

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Jaz Johnson (Assistant Director) is a fourth-year theatre major. UC San Diego credits: The Winter's Tale (Antigonus), Limp Wrist on the Lever (Ghost, WNPF '22), The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity (Assistant Stage Manager), Men on Boats (Assistant Director), Backwaters (Script PA, WNPF '21), Epicene: A Queer Extravaganza (Assistant Director), As You Like It (Jaques).

Diya Rao (Assistant Director) is a second year theatre major from Los Angeles, CA. This is her first UC San Diego production.

Sashank Kanchustambam (Casting Associate) is a fourth-year undergrad theatre major and econ minor from Hyderabad and Chandigarh, India. Regional theater credit: Come Fall In Love (Script Assistant). UC San Diego Department Credits: Man in love (ensemble), A Mid Summer Night's Dream (Flute/Thisbe). Backwaters (Mukul), Twelfth Night (Assistant Director), 50 boxes of earth (Script PA), Machinal (Lawyer for prosecution and Married Man), Bunny Bunny (PA). UCSD labs: AHC (Lab project choreographer), I_You (Customer/Little Boy/Guard 3). Playwriting credits: We were kids (Sparks Theatre Company), 45 minutes of Chaos (UCSD lab). Short film Credits: Nadartine (Actor-Director-Writer), Choice Creates (Actor), Re-Exam (Actor), and 98 days at a time (Writer-Actor), Wait (writer).

Haia R'nana Bchiri (Intimacy Coordinator) is a third-year PhD student. UC San Diego credits: Boxed (Dramaturg/Fight Captain), Winter's Tale (Dramaturg), Trojan Women (Dramaturg) and Uncle Vanya (Dramaturg). Selected recent credits:

THE CREATIVE TEAM CONT...

Selected recent credits: These and Those (Ayala/Dramaturg) with San Diego Rep; Eurycle (Director), Fefu and Her Friends (Emma), Circle Mirror Transformation (Theresa), and Peer Gynt (Solveig/Aase) at Brandeis; and interactive Hamlet (Director), Midsummer (Puck/Facilitator), and Taming of the Shrew (Kate), plus Julius Caesar (Decius/Fight Choreographer), Cymbeline (Director) and Henry VI Part III (Dramaturg) with the Public Domain Players, where she's also Director of Development, Intimacy Coordinator, and co-Fight Choreographer.

Raphael Mishler (Scenic Designer) is a second-year MFA student originally from Mohican land, Albany NY. He creates visuals for live performance and has designed scenery for Clubbed Thumb's Winterworks, the New School, Dixon Place, ANTFest, NYU, HERE Arts Center, Amerinda Native Theater and Taylor Mac's Holiday Sauce (assoc.) UC San Diego Credits: Bunny Bunny, Dance Nation, Limp Wrist on the Lever, Fifty Boxes of Earth, In the Red and Brown Water, The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity, Men on Boats (asst). Puppet design credits include The Amateurs (Vineyard), Collective Rage...(MCC), and Tumacho (Clubbed Thumb, Drama Desk Award, Henry Hewes nomination). Raphael previously worked as a props designer for new plays. Highlights include the world premieres of Heidi Schreck's What the Constitution Means to Me (Broadway), Taylor Mac's 24 Decade History of Popular Music (Pomegranate Arts, St. Ann's Warehouse and International tour), Will Arbery's Plano (Clubbed Thumb), Dominique Morisseau's Pipeline (Lincoln Center), Marcus Gardley's The Box (The Foundry) and Jaclyn Backhaus's Men On Boats (Playwrights Horizons/Clubbed Thumb). He is a founding member of Brooklyn-based cultural organizing hub Building Stories, and is an associate artist with Clubbed Thumb.

Sparrow Naito (Assistant Scenic Designer) is a first-year theatre major and marine biology minor. UC San Diego credits: Bunny Bunny, By the Throat. Design credit: Placeholder

Anabel Olguin (Costume Designer) is a first-year MFA student from Phoenix, Arizona. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Education from Grand Canyon University. UC San Diego credits: blu (ACD), Dance Nation (ACD). Select credits: Trail to Oregon (Ghostlight Theatre), Luna and Solis (Brelby Productions), Freaky Friday (Maryvale High School), and Evil Dead the Musical (Brelby Productions).

Keegan Barquilla (Assistant Costume Designer) (she/her) is a third-year theatre major and film studies minor.

Faith Garcia (Assistant Costume Designer) (she/they) is a second year transfer theatre major and dance minor. Other credit: War of the Worlds (Long Beach City College Theatre)

Shelby Thach (Lighting Designer) is a recent MFA graduate from UC San Diego. She received her BA in drama with honors in lighting design and technology from the University of California, Irvine. Throughout her undergraduate and freelance careers, Shelby has worked on a variety of shows, ranging from plays, musicals, and dance concerts. UC San Diego credits: A Flea in Her Rear (ALD), BunBunny (ASD), Dance Nation (LD), Fifty Boxes of Earth (LD), Limp Wrist on the Lever (LD), winterWORKS '22 (ALD), Everybody (LD), Peerless (L/VD), Trojan Women: A Version (LD), winterWORKS '21 (LD), As You Like It (LD), Letters from Cuba (ALD). Select credits: The XIXth (ALD, The Old Globe), Come Fall in Love (ALD, The Old Globe), Lempicka (ALD, La Jolla Playhouse).

THE CREATIVE TEAM *cont...*

Sydney Primeaux (Assistant Lighting Designer) is a fourth-year theatre major focusing on lighting design. UC San Diego credits: *The Winter's Tale*, *Bach at Leipzig*, *Limp Wrist on the Lever*, *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*.

Russell Chow (Associate Lighting Designer) is a senior theatre BA. My main focus in theatre is lighting design, and tech in general. Please reach out to me if you have any questions about design classes, or about getting involved with any of the many student theatre organizations on campus.

Harper Justus (Sound Designer) is a first-year MFA student from Dayton, OH. She holds a BFA in Production Design from Ohio University. UC San Diego Credits: *The Winters Tale (SD)*, *Bunny Bunny (ASD)*, *Dance Nation (SD)*. Selected Design Credits: *Head Over Heels (Diversionsary Theatre)*, *The Ferryman (New Village Arts)*, *Natasha Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812 (Tantrum Theatre)*, *Pluto (Ohio University)*

Deepta Bharadwaj (Assistant Sound Designer) is a second-year bioengineering major and theatre minor. UC San Diego credit: *Dracula: A house of Lies (Director)*

Rishika Mehrishi (Dramaturg) is a Postdoctoral Scholar at the Department of Theatre & Dance, University of California, San Diego. In addition to her academic work, Rishika is also an artist, archivist, and dramaturg.

Katie Davis (Production Stage Manager) (she/her) is a first-year MFA student from La Crescenta, CA. She earned her BFA in Stage Management from University of Miami. UC San Diego credits: *A Flea in Her Rear (ASM)*, *Dance Nation (ASM)*. Select credits include: *Disney's The Little Mermaid*, *The Circuit (PCPA - Pacific Conservatory Theatre)*, *Disney's Beauty and the Beast, A.D. 16 (World Premiere)*, and *The Music Man (Olney Theatre Center)*.

Juhi Sabharwal (Assistant Stage Manager) is a second-year cognitive science major and theatre minor. UC San Diego Credits: *The Winter's Tale (ASM)*. Other credits include *Company 157's Embers Adrift (PSM)*, *I - You (PSM)* and *Muir Musical's American Idiot (PA)*.

Shaila Sarathy (Assistant Stage Manager) (she/her) is a fourth year Global Health and General Biology Double Major from Bangalore, India. UC San Diego Credits: *The Winter's Tale (PSM)*, *New Directions '22 (ASM)*, *Nonna Kills the President and Promithes, Promithes (ASM)*, *Twelfth Night (ASM)*, *Meladi Thive And Her Words Of Comfort, (PA)*. Non-UCSD Shows: *Heathers: The Musical (Producer)*, *American Idiot (ASM)*, *Big Fish (Production Assistant)*.

Aiden Meyndert (Production Assistant) is a first-year theatre major. UC San Diego (selected): *A Flea in Her Rear*, *Placeholder*, *Lark in By the Throat*. External credits (selected): *salty water (La Jolla Playhouse)*, *Sister Act (Broadway at the Gardens)*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *The Music Man (Rancho Cucamonga Community Theatre)*, *High School Musical (The Grove)*, *Prince Eric in The Little Mermaid (BE)*. Screen (selected): *Therapasaurus (2023 Triton Film Festival)*, *The Comedian (actor, director, writer)*. Biggest thanks to Mom, Rick, friends, and family.

THE PIT CREW

Rachael Baum (Pit Crew) (she/her) is a second-year undergraduate theatre major with an emphasis in acting from Encinitas, CA. UC San Diego credit: The Winter's Tale. Other credits: hey Ester and Rot (Company 157).

Sarah Frazin (Pit Crew) is a third-year theatre major and psychology minor. UC San Diego Credits include: Fifty Boxes of Earth (Nature Ensemble), Men On Boats (Bradley). Selected credits include: Circle Mirror Transformation ("LAB" at UCSD), The Tempest (Fair Play Theatre Company at UCSD), A Christmas Carol and Metamorphoses (South Coast Repertory).

Kendehl Hill (Pit Crew) (she/her) is a fourth-year theatre student. UC San Diego credits: Into the Woods, Placeholder (Costume Design), and Dracula: A House of Lies (Costume design).

Hannah Littler (Pit Crew) is a second-year theatre major. The last production she worked on at UCSD was Heathers: The Musical (ASM).

Aiden Meyndert (Pit Crew) is a first-year theatre major. UC San Diego (selected): A Flea in Her Rear, Placeholder, Lark in By the Throat. External credits (selected): salty water (La Jolla Playhouse), Sister Act (Broadway at the Gardens), Bye Bye Birdie, The Music Man (Rancho Cucamonga Community Theatre), High School Musical (The Grove), Prince Eric in The Little Mermaid (BE). Screen (selected): Therapasaurus (2023 Triton Film Festival), The Comedian (actor, director, writer). Biggest thanks to Mom, Rick, friends, and family.

Clara Williams (Pit Crew) is a second year sophomore at UCSD majoring in Theatre. She has previously been involved in two productions with Muir Musical, but has never done any shows with the department and has never performed in any crew-type capacity. She is thrilled to have this opportunity! She would like to thank Ankita for her generosity and joy, Sashank, Seth, and Swarupa for their immediate, open-hearted inclusion, Rosie and Katie for their patience and trust, and the rest of the team for managing so much behind the scenes so seamlessly. I love you Pit Crew team! It has been lovely.

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