

**FINBOROUGH | THEATRE**  
VIBRANT NEW WRITING | UNIQUE REDISCOVERIES

The European premiere

# INTO THE NUMBERS

by Christopher Chen.

Directed by Georgie Staight. Set and Costume Design by Isabella Van Braeckel. Lighting by Matt Cater. Sound and Composition by Benjamin Winter.

Presented by Arsalan Sattari Productions in association with Neil McPherson for the Finborough Theatre.

Cast: Elizabeth Chan. Timothy Knightly. Jennifer Lim. Amy Molloy. Mark Ota.

“Words... they have their limits. They aren’t the same as the things they represent.”

Commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Nanking massacre, as well as the first production at the Finborough Theatre building in its 150th anniversary year, the European premiere of **Into the Numbers** by multi-award-winning American playwright **Christopher Chen** opens at the Finborough Theatre for a four week limited season on Tuesday, 2 January 2018 (**Press Nights: Thursday 4 and Friday 5 January 2018 at 7.30pm**).

In December 1937, in Nanking, then capital of China, occurred one of the worst atrocities of the 20th century – the rape, torture and murder of 300,000 Chinese civilians and the systematic mass execution of soldiers by the Japanese army.

In 2004, Iris Chang, famed author of *The Rape of Nanking*, a chronicle of the massacre that brought it back into public consciousness, committed suicide at the age of 36. What begins as a standard lecture and interview with the celebrated author, soon descends into a surreal nightmare. As ghosts from her research appear, she tries desperately to find order in the midst of mental chaos.

**Into the Numbers** by the Obie Award and Dramatist Guild’s Lanford Wilson Award winning playwright **Christopher Chen**, is a thrillingly innovative theatrical exploration of the philosophical and psychological implications of researching genocide, as well as the toll media saturation plays in the process.

Director **Georgie Staight** returns to the Finborough Theatre after her four star (The Daily Telegraph) sell-out production of Carmen Nasr’s new play *Dubailand*.

Playwright **Christopher Chen** work includes *Caught* (La MaMa Theater, New York City, and Volta Festival at Arcola Theatre), *Home Invasion* (Site Specific with The Flight Deck, California), *The Hundred Flowers Project* (Crowded Fire Theatre, San Francisco), *The Late Wedding* (Hub Theatre, San Francisco), *Mutt* (La Val’s Subterranean), *Passage* (Wilma Theatre, Philadelphia), *The Window Age* (Central Works, Berkeley) and *You Mean to Do Me Harm* (San Francisco Playhouse). His honours include the 2017 Obie Award for Playwriting for *Caught*; the 2017 Dramatist Guild Lanford Wilson Award; 2017 Drama League Nomination for Outstanding Production for *Caught*; the 2015-2016 Sundance Institute/Time Warner Foundation Fellowship for Theater; the Paula Vogel Playwriting Award through which he was the 2013-2014 Playwright-in-Residence at the Vineyard Theatre New York; the Barrymore Award; PHINDIE Critics Award; the Glickman Award; the Rella Lossy Playwriting Award; shortlist for the James Tait Black Award; nomination for the Steinberg Award; second place in the Belarus Free Theater International Competition of Modern Dramaturgy; a MAP Fund Grant; a Ford Foundation Emerging Writer of Color Grant; and a finalist for the PONY and Jerome Fellowships. His current commissions include American Conservatory Theater, Aurora Theatre, LCT3, Manhattan Theatre Club, Oregon

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# Press Information

Shakespeare Festival and Playwrights Horizons. His work has been published by American Theatre Magazine, Dramatists Play Service, Theatre Bay Area and Theater Magazine Yale.

Director **Georgie Staight** returns to the Finborough Theatre after her sell out run of *Dubailand*, nominated for an OffWestEnd Award. Direction includes *Roosting* (Park Theatre), *White Light* (Arcola Theatre as part of PlayWROUGHT), *Flood* (Tristan Bates Theatre), *Safe* (Jermyn Street Theatre), *Dreamless Sleep* (Arts Theatre and The Bunker) and *Next of Kin* (Bristol Old Vic Studio). She is also a playwright and has had her writing produced at Theatre503, The Bunker, Arcola Theatre, Arts Theatre and Bristol Old Vic. Writing includes the adaptation and world premiere of Deborah Levy's *Billy and Girl* (Karamel Theatre), *Let There Be Light* (reading at Chichester Festival Theatre) and *Dreamless Sleep* (The Bunker). Assistant Direction includes *Our Town* (Watermill Theatre, Newbury) and *Legally Blonde: The Musical* (Bernie Grant Arts Centre). Georgie trained at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts, and is Joint Artistic Director at Flux Theatre.

The cast is:

## **Elizabeth Chan** | Iris Chang

Theatre includes *B!rth* (Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester), *The Sugar-Coated Bullets of Bourgeoisie* (HighTide Festival), *The Odyssey* (Almeida Theatre), *Caught*, *Hamlet is Dead* (Arcola Theatre), *Light Shinning in Buckinghamshire* (National Theatre), *Henry IV* (Donmar Warehouse), *Chimerica* (Almeida Theatre, Headlong Theatre and West End), *The Wheel* (National Theatre of Scotland), *Greenland* (National Theatre), *Don't Shoot the Clowns* (Fuel Theatre), *An Argument About Sex* (Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh) and *Cinderella* (Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith). Television includes *Coronation Street*, *Motherland*, *Carters Get Rich*, *The Last Dragonslayer*, *Last Tango in Halifax*, *Cucumber*, *Holby City*, *Black Mirror – The Entire History of You*, *Spirit Warriors* and *Silent Witness*.

## **Timothy Knightly** | Brett Douglas / Interviewer / Doctor

Productions at the Finborough Theatre include *The Heaven*.

Trained at Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts.

Theatre includes *The Distance* (Sheffield Theatres and Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond), *Romeo and Juliet* (The Tobacco Factory, Bristol and Tour), *The Distance* (Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond), *Natural Affection* (Jermyn Street Theatre), *The Ashes* (Nottingham Playhouse), *Lady Windemere's Fan* (Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester), *Ruben Guthrie* (Wimbledon Studio Theatre), *The Amazing Vacetti Sisters* (Tristan Bates Theatre), *The Water Engine* (Old Vic Tunnels), *Leon and the Place Between* (Unicorn Theatre) and *Absolution* (Theatre503).

Film includes *The Inbetweeners*, *The Birthday*, *The World Turns* and *Lucky*.

Television includes *The Evermoor Chronicles*, *Not Going Out* and *All Saints*.

## **Jennifer Lim** | Nanking Relative / Victim / Ensemble

Productions at the Finborough Theatre include *Acceptance* as part of *Vibrant 2015 – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights*.

Theatre includes *The Good Woman of Setzuan* (National Theatre), *A Colder Water Than Here* (Vault Festival), *World Factory Tour* (Metis Arts), *The Fu Manchu Complex* (Ovalhouse), *Wild Swans* (The Young Vic), *Speaking to Him* (Birmingham Rep), *Cleaning Up* (Theatre Venture), *Hecuba* (Foursight Theatre), *Daughter of the River* (Mu-Lan Theatre Company) and *Pork Bellies* (Theatre Centre). Rehearsed Readings include *The Kumamoto Care Home Murder* (Theatre Royal Stratford East) and *You Need Some of This* (Theatre503).

Film includes *A Monster Calls*, *Far Away*, *Piercing Brightness*, *Ten Thousand Waves*, *Womb*, *Still*, *Act of Grace*, *Hostel*, *Code 46* and *Rogue Trader*.

Television includes *Spirit Warriors*, *Holby City* and *The League of Gentlemen*.

Radio includes *And the Rain My Drink* and *The Story of the Stone*.

## **Amy Molloy** | Minnie Vautrin / Ensemble

Productions at the Finborough Theatre include *Over the Bridge*.

Trained at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts.

Theatre includes *Disco Pigs* (National Tour and Irish Tour), *Cyprus Avenue* (National Theatre of Ireland - Abbey Theatre, and Royal Court Theatre), *Playhouse Creatures* (Bruiser Theatre, Belfast), *Teaset* (Pleasance Courtyard, Baron's Court Theatre and White Bear Theatre), *Little Boxes* (Theatre503), *Rock Paper Scissors* (Brockley Jack Studio Theatre), *Let Me Count the Ways* (Rich Mix London), *Tejas Verdes - Chilean Trilogy* and *Villa - Chilean Trilogy* (The Mac, Belfast), *The*

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Parachutist (Cockpit Theatre), My Cousin Rachel (Gate Theatre, Dublin), Big Maggie (Druid Theatre, Galway), Belfast Girls (King's Head Theatre), October, and Building Site (Arcola Theatre), John Gabriel Borkman (BAM Harvey Theater, New York City, and National Theatre of Ireland - Abbey Theatre), The Lieutenant of Inishmore (The Curve, Leicester), Black Milk (Brian Friel Theatre, Belfast), Kitty and Damnation (Lion and Unicorn Theatre), The Surveyor (New End Theatre, Hampstead), Once a Catholic (Upstairs at the Gatehouse), The Seagull (Chelsea Theatre), A Laughing Matter (Pleasance London) and Come on Over (Tristan Bates Theatre).

Film include Raided House, The Sea and Black Ice.

Television includes Virtues, The Fall, Call the Midwife and 50 Ways to Kill Your Lover.

## **Mark Ota** | Deputy Japanese Ambassador / Soldier / Ensemble

Theatre includes Poker Face, I Went To a Fabulous Party (Kings Head Theatre), How to Hold Your Breath (Royal Court Theatre), My Mind is Free (Edinburgh Festival), (Up)Rooted (SLAM), Theatre Madness Festival (Stratford Circus), Home is Where (Rich Mix), The Hotel, Romeo and Juliet (Jackinabox Productions), Speaking to Him (Birmingham Rep), Cleaning Up (Theatre Venture), Hecuba (Foursight Theatre), A Midsummer Night's Dream (Moving Stories), The Tempest, As You Like It, The Memory of Water and Constellations (Arts Educational Schools London). Rehearsed Readings include The Sun (Yellow Earth) and Bird Bones (London Playwrights Lab).

Film includes The Watchers, Silentville, Walking With the Ferryman, Mountain, Woman Forever Woman, Moumoku Samurai, Memory Lane and Lullaby.

## **The American press on playwright Christopher Chen**

"Witty and suspenseful." San Francisco Examiner on You Mean To Do Me Harm

"Masterful... depth of anger and insecurity and dishonesty that comes up in both of the play's relationships is astonishing, the level to which Chen is able to take us in such a short time is remarkable." Theater Dogs on You Mean To Do Me Harm

"Lean, mean, and meticulously crafted drama... Chen has always had a strong skill for crafting dialogue, but in this play he seems to have broken through to a new level." Huffington Post on You Mean To Do Me Harm

"Cunningly clever... The feeling is akin to waking up from a dream, only to find oneself in another dream." TheaterMania on Caught

"Christopher Chen's enjoyably manipulative new play keeps finding ingenious ways to pull the rug out from under the audience's feet" The New Yorker on Caught

"As smart as it is funny and as challenging as it is intriguing." Theater Dogs on The Late Wedding

"Chen never seems to work on only one level. He twists us into knots all the way down to how we talk about talking about race... a major – and highly entertaining – accomplishment." San Francisco Chronicle on Mutt

## **The Press on director Georgie Staight's production of Dubailand at the Finborough Theatre**

"This is proper political theatre: astute, informative and grown-up." Matt Trueman, WhatsOnStage

"A play that confronts our complacency and complicity.... Recommended." ★★★★★ Dominic Cavendish, The Telegraph

"Extremely engaging." ★★★★★ David Hughes, The Spy in the Stalls

"Georgie Staight directs with brisk economy." Michael Billington, The Guardian

"Georgie Staight's production glides slickly through its scenes from parallel lives." Sam Marlowe, The Times

"Georgie Staight's simple but intense production." Carolin Kopplin, UKTheatre

"Compelling and urgent." Holly O'Mahony, Exeunt Magazine

**PRESS NIGHTS: THURSDAY, 4 JANUARY 2018 AT 7.30PM and FRIDAY, 5 JANUARY 2018 AT 7.30PM**

**PHOTOCALL: WEDNESDAY, 3 JANUARY 2018 AT 1.00PM-1.30PM**

Finborough Theatre, 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED

Box Office 0844 847 1652 Book online at [www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk](http://www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk)

**Tuesday, 2 – Saturday, 27 January 2018**

Tuesday to Saturday evenings at 7.30pm. Sunday matinees at 3.00pm. Saturday matinees at 3.00pm (from 13 January)

**Prices until 14 January 2018** – Tickets £16, £14 concessions, except Tuesday evenings £14 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £16 all seats. Previews (2 and 3 January) £12 all seats.

£10 tickets for Under 30's for performances from Tuesday to Sunday of the first week when booked online only.

£12 tickets for residents of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea on Saturday, 6 January 2018 when booked online only.

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**Prices from 16 January 2018** – Tickets £18, £16 concessions, except Tuesday evenings £16 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £18 all seats.

Performance Length: Approximately two hours with one interval of fifteen minutes.

For more information, interviews and images, please contact

**Antonella Petrancosta** on e-mail [admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk](mailto:admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk) or **07512 609614**

Download press releases and images at <http://www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk/press-resources.php>

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