

RICE
PRESENTED BY
ACTORS TOURING COMPANY IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH ORANGE TREE THEATRE



9 October – 13 November

By Michele Lee

Directed by Matthew Xia

Press night: 13 October at 7pm

- A wickedly humorous observation on globalisation, politics and family.
- By award-winning East Asian/Australian writer Michele Lee, winner of the Australian Writers' Guild Award for Best Original Stage Play.
- Directed by Matthew Xia (*Amsterdam, Blood Knot*), Artistic Director of [Actors Touring Company](#), who produce international contemporary theatre – making the global, local and the local, global.
- Livestreamed 4 & 5 November on OT on Screen
- UK premiere, 9 October – 13 November at Orange Tree Theatre

ACTORS TOURING COMPANY presents the UK première of **Michele Lee's *Rice***, a co-production with **Orange Tree Theatre**. Artistic Director of Actors Touring Company, **Matthew Xia**, directs **Zainab Hasan** (Nisha) and **Sarah Lam** (Yvette). The production opens on 13 October, with previews from 9 October, and runs until 13 November at Orange Tree Theatre, with livestreamed performances via OT on screen on 4 and 5 November. *Rice* continues with socially distanced seating and safety measures, which remain in place until January 2022.

Nisha is a young hotshot executive working for Golden Fields, Australia's largest producer of rice. Ambitious and headstrong, she's determined to become the first female Indian CEO in Australia. She's close to sealing a contract with the Indian government, which would see her company take over India's national rice distribution system.

A secret deal worth billions.

Working late nights in the office she encounters Yvette, an older Chinese migrant, who cleans up her mess. Yvette has her own entrepreneurial ambitions, but her daughter faces court after participating in a protest against the unethical practices of a national supermarket chain.

The two form a powerful – if unlikely – bond as they navigate the complexities of their lives and the world at large.

Completing the creative team is **Hyemi Shin** (Designer), **Bethany Gupwell** (Lighting Designer) and **Lex Kosanke** (Sound Designer), **Asha Jennings-Grant** (Movement Director) and **Sophie Parrott** (Casting Consultant CDG).

Michele Lee is an East Asian-Australian writer working across television, film, stage, books, audio and live art. She has won numerous awards for *Rice*, including the Australian Writer's Guild Award for Best Original Stage Play. Her other theatre credits include *Security* (finalist for 2021 Patrick White Award), *Single Ladies*, *Going Down* (shortlisted for the Victorian Premier's Literary Award, the Nick Enright Prize, an Australian Writer's Guild Award and five Green Room Awards), *An Assistant's Notes for a Pandemic*, *The Naked Self*, and *Off Centre*. For television, her credits include *Hungry Ghosts*, and *Secret Threads*.

Zainab Hasan plays Nisha. Her theatre credits include *The Motherhood Project* (Battersea Arts Centre), *Living Newspaper* (Royal Court Theatre), *The Welkin* (National Theatre), *The Shakespeare Trilogy* and *Henry IV* (Donmar Warehouse), *The Tempest*, *Henry IV* (St Ann's Warehouse, NY), *Tamburlaine*, *Tartuffe* and *Timon of Athens* (RSC), *My White Best Friend* (Bunker Theatre), *Hijabi Monologues* (Bush Theatre) and *Boy* (Almeida Theatre).

Sarah Lam returns to the Orange Tree Theatre to play Yvette, having previously appeared in *Factors Unforeseen*. Other theatre credits include *Paradise*, *World of Extreme Happiness*, *Magic Olympical Games* and *Lost Worlds* (National Theatre), *Snow in Midsummer* and *Poppy* (RSC), *La Cage aux Folles* (Park Theatre), *Richard II* (Shakespeare's Globe), *The Country Wife* (Southwark Playhouse), *The Golden Hours*, *Top Girls*, *Sergeant Ola and his Followers* and *Cries from the Mammal House* (Royal Court Theatre), *Chimerica* (Almeida Theatre) and *Penny Whistle* (Hampstead Theatre).

Artistic Director of Actors Touring Company **Matthew Xia** returns to the Orange Tree Theatre to direct *Rice* – he previously directed *Amsterdam* (ATC co-production) and *Blood Knot* at the OT. Other directing credits include *Eden* (Hampstead Theatre), *One Night in Miami* (Nottingham Playhouse, HOME, Bristol Old Vic), *Into the Woods*, *Frankenstein*, *Wish List* (Royal Exchange as Associate Artistic Director), *Shebeen* (Nottingham Playhouse, Stratford East), and *Blue/Orange*, *The Sound of the Yellow*, *Sizwe Banzi is Dead* – for which he won the 2013 Genesis Future Director Award (Young Vic). Xia is an Associate Artist at the Nottingham Playhouse.

Rice will be touring across the UK from Feb - April 2022, produced by ATC and the Orange Tree Theatre in association with Theatre Royal Plymouth.

Listings

RICE

Orange Tree Theatre

9 October – 13 November

OT On Screen: 4 - 5 November, 7.30pm

Audio Described: 13 November 2.30pm

Captioned: 9 November 7.30pm

Tickets: From £15

Under 30s: £15

Orange Tree Theatre, 1 Clarence Street, Richmond, TW9 2SA

Box Office: 020 8940 3633

orangetreetheatre.co.uk

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Notes to Editors

ABOUT ACTORS TOURING COMPANY

ATC creates dialogue between Britain and the rest of the world – and between the intersecting cultures within our country. It is a leading producer of plays that come from beyond our shores. We are passionate about giving voice to the ‘outsider within’ – the cross-cultural nations within our own nation. We tour our plays right across Britain: creating, developing and sustaining a dialogue between those deemed ‘the other’ and UK audiences. In the last few years, we have produced first English language productions of plays from Iran, Norway, the US, Germany, Austria, Russia - bringing international voices to school and village halls, studio theatres and main houses: from Barcelona to Glasgow, from Hong Kong to Scarborough. We regularly produce with partners such as Orange Tree Theatre, Young Vic, Theatre Royal Plymouth and Northern Stage. Signature productions include: *The Brothers Size*, *The Events*, *Amsterdam* (also with Orange Tree Theatre), the ATC debut of Artistic Director Matthew Xia, *Dear Tomorrow* – letters of hope commissioned from writers around the globe and *Family Tree* (with Young Vic as part of Greenwich and Docklands International Festival 2021).

ABOUT THE ORANGE TREE THEATRE

The Orange Tree (OT) is an award-winning, independent theatre. Recognised as a powerhouse that creates high-quality productions of new and rediscovered plays, it entertains 70,000 people across the UK every year. In May 2021 the OT reopened with its Recovery Season. As an independent theatre and registered charity that relies on ticket income, the Covid-19 pandemic continues to pose significant risk to the OT. To support the theatre’s return to a producing powerhouse at this time, it is raising funds through its Recovery Fund.

The OT’s home in Richmond, South West London, is an intimate theatre with the audience seated all around the stage: watching a performance here is truly a unique experience. We believe in the power of dramatic stories to entertain, thrill and challenge us; plays that enrich our lives by enhancing our understanding of ourselves and each other.

As a registered charity (266128) sitting at the heart of its community, we work with 10,000 people in Richmond and beyond through participatory theatre projects for people of all ages and abilities. The Orange Tree Theatre’s mission is to enable audiences to experience the next generation of theatre talent, experiment with ground-breaking new drama and explore the plays from the past that inspire the theatre-makers of the present. Artistic Director Paul Miller. Executive Director Hanna Streeter

Website orangetreetheatre.co.uk | Email box.office@orangetreetheatre.co.uk