

**La MaMa**

Experimental Theatre Club

Presents

# **NO RESERVATION**

**By The Hess Collective**

**Conception, Playwright, Director:  
Elizabeth Hess**



**The Downstairs  
66 East 4th Street, NYC, 10003  
Feb 6-23, 2025**

# No Reservation

The Hess Collective

Conception, Playwright, Director:  
Elizabeth Hess

Artists (in alphabetical order):

Akiko Aizawa

Ninoshka De Leon Gill

Elizabeth Hess

Maya Mays

## **Creative Team:**

Associate Director: Miriam Grill

Stage Manager: Vivian Farahani

Lighting Designer: Grayson Sepulveda

Sound Designer: Lucas Tahiruzzaman

Set & Costume Consultant: Jane Catherine Shaw

Soundscapes: Jason Snell

## **Director's Artistic Statement:**

*No Reservation* is a co-created performance project with diverse women artists that moves forward from second wave feminist visual and theater artists who took on the patriarchy through works like *The Dinner Party*, by Judy Chicago, *Some Living American Women Artists/Last Supper* by Mary Beth Edelson and the dinner scene in *Top Girls* by Caryl Churchill. This cross-cultural collaboration breaks new ground by embracing diverse voices of the intersectional community of multidisciplinary women artists, including those with different identities pertaining to gender.

The project comes at a time when patriarchy is being threatened, and false gods have resorted to a 'meta' universe to incite violence and suppression in unprecedented ways. *No Reservation* offers the healing perspective of women-identified performers as they address the imbalance of power by resurrecting the lost feminine to give voice to all who have been discarded, silenced, and overlooked, while also restoring their dignity, self-expression, and autonomy. This piece encourages the audience, of all gender identities, to equally question patriarchal norms and embrace their shared humanity through empathy and authentic engagement with otherness.

**Akiko Aizawa** is a New York based theater actor and teacher. As a long-time member of the SITI Company she appeared in shows such as; *The Bacchae* (BAM), *The Trojan Women* (Getty Villa), *Culture of Desire* (NYTW), and *Radio Macbeth* (NYU Skirball Center), all directed by Anne Bogart. As a former member of the Suzuki Company of Toga she appeared in *The Trojan Women*, *Dionysus*, and *Hatekon*, among others. Other credits: *Oedipus* (dir. Ianthe Demos), *Hanjo* (dir. Leon Ingulsrud), *Suicide Forest* (dir. Aya Ogawa), and *Sleep* (dir. Rachel Dickstein). She is currently a member of One Year Lease Theater Company, SITI Emeritus Artists, and American Physical Theatre Company. Originally from Akita, Japan, she brings a rich cultural background to her work in the arts.

**Ninoshka De Leon Gill** is happy to be making her personal debut with The Hess Collective's third co-production with La MaMa! What a gift to work with such an inspiring cast and crew. Selected Credits include: NYC Stage: *SPOILED* (Dixon Place), *Meshahnye* (Polya, Theatre for a New City), *Dracula* (Lucy Westenra, Morris-Jumel Mansion), *Cabaret* (Lulu, The Secret Theatre), *The Wishing Tree* (Ayse, Signature Theatre). Regional: *Dracula and the Theatre of Doom!* (Van Helsing, Tarrytown Music Hall), *Sleepy Hollow Meets the Headless Horseman* (Katrina, Pancake Productions), *The Music Man* (Maud Dunlop, Sharon Playhouse). NYC Labs: *The Wave* (Ars Nova), *Counting Sheep* (3LD Art and Technology Center), *Amelie* (Lyric Theatre). Film/TV: *SPOILED: The Film Project* (La MaMa online platform), *Foreign Nationals* (Cristina, Foreign Entertainment, LLC), *Love My Roomie* (Leslie, Yhá Wright Productions). Voiceover: *Too Hot to Handle Germany* (Laura, Netflix & IDC NY) Ithaca College B.S. Environmental Science, Dance.

**Elizabeth Hess** is a performer, playwright, director, Arts educator, and Artistic Director of The Hess Collective - produced at La MaMa, Dixon Place, TheaterLab. She has developed multidisciplinary projects with The O'Neill Theater Center, NYU, The New Group and The Lark. Her book, *Acting & Being: Explorations in Embodied Performance* (Macmillan) is based on her approach to global performance practices honed over 20 years of teaching primarily at NYU and international workshops. Ms. Hess' acclaimed solo work has been performed around the globe, in New York, Off-Broadway and at the UN Conference on Gender Violence. Other acting credits include work with The New Group, Women's Project, Irish Rep, MTC and NYTW in New York, as well as extensive regional theaters. TV credits: *Clarissa Explains It All*; *Law & Order*; *All My Children* and *Another World*. Film credits: *Handsome Harry*; *Italian Lessons*; *Buddy & Grace* and *Soldier's Heart*. [www.elizabethhess.net](http://www.elizabethhess.net)

**Maya Mays** is an actor and producing artist based in New York. She is proud to be making her Off Broadway debut with The Hess Collective in co-collaboration with La MaMa ETC! She is so grateful to be immersed in this project and get the chance to work alongside such incredible artists. A recent graduate of University of North Carolina School of the Arts (2024), Maya challenges herself to engage in and create stories that spark hope, mirror society, and fosters connectivity on and off stage. Selected credits include- *Into The Woods* (Sierra Repertory Theater), *If Pretty Hurts...* (UNCSA), *The Tempest* (Santa Cruz Shakespeare), and you can watch her in *Purlie* (American Group Theatre) this March! She'd like to dedicate this performance to all of the strong woman in her life. Follow her journey @mayadmays

## **The Hess Collective:**

[www.thehesscollective.com](http://www.thehesscollective.com)

**Elizabeth Hess: Artistic Director:** Founded in 2016, The Hess Collective generates original work that addresses issues of social and global urgency through heightened realism, cross-cultural collaboration, and multidisciplinary creation. Through embodied exploration, diverse artists uncover inner landscapes that transcend external barriers and release psychic contents through the immediacy of a shared transformative experience. (See Artist Bios.)

**Miriam Grill: Managing / Associate Director** is a Brooklyn-based theatre maker with many hats. She is currently the Community and Educational Coordinator at La MaMa and the Operations Manager for Dances for a Variable Population (a multi-generational NYC dance company). She has a commercial background assisting on Broadway (*Motown*, *Annie*, *Bring It On*, etc.) and worked as a movement consultant for Cirque du Soleil in Macau (*House of Dancing Waters*). She was the founder and director of a university theatre department in Guangzhou China specializing in educating the next generation of female directors, produced and directed a bilingual female theatre company in Taiwan, and led youth and arts therapy programs in refugee camps on the Myanmar border. As a producer, she works on emerging technology that promote social access and equity, such as Sundance's first AI piece, *Frankenstein AI* and *iForest* at World Economic Forum in Davos 2026. She holds an MFA in Theatre Directing from Columbia University.

**Vivian Farahani: Stage Manager / Assistant Director** is a theatre-maker and director based in New York. A family story characterized by migration leads her to ask questions concerning the relationship between culture and behavior, examining how our history and belief systems impact our perspectives. In 2023, Vivian was the Directing Intern on Simon McBurney's *Wozzeck* at the 2023 Festival D'Aix-en-Provence. Other recent projects include Lucy Prebble's *Enron* on the UNCSA Mainstage, productions of Lucy Prebble's *The Effect* and Mike Bartlett's *An Intervention* in the UNCSA Keys Season, and Anne Carson's translation of Sophocles' *Antigone*. She holds a B.F.A in Directing from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts.

**Maya Mays (she/her): Production Intern** is an actor and producer based in New York City. Originally hailing from Florida, she began her theater journey on regional stages before earning her BFA in Drama from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts in 2024. Beyond acting, Maya is passionate about storytelling as a producer. She is dedicated to championing narratives that amplify underrepresented voices and celebrate diverse perspectives, fostering meaningful conversations both on and off the stage. Follow her journey @mayadmays!

## **Script Excerpt Translations:**

Creole: Numa Claude Pelissier

German: Vivian Farahani

Japanese: Akiko Aizawa

K'iche' (Mayan language family): Priscila Beatríz Hernández Yax

## **Special Thanks:**

Developmental Workshop:

Artists:

Marina Celander

Sophia Gutchinov

Schuyler Johns

Onni Johnson

Dramaturg: Begum Inal

Script Consultant: Gina Stevensen

Photographer: Steven Pisano

Videographer: Ryan Thompson

Consultants: Mary Bitel, Kathy Wentrack

La MaMa: Mia Yoo, David Diamond, Beverly Petty, Sarah Rae Murphy, Denise Greber, Kiku Sakai, Erick Alonso, Theo Cote, Braulio Basilio, Mateo Rodrigues-Hurtado

Funders: The Hess Collective is grateful for all the generosity and support that allows us to continue to make art that matters!

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Donors: Anonymous, Mark Alrich, Tina Ball, Paul Bedard, Cheryl Dolinger Brown, Richard Charney, Josette Cornelius, Nina Eckardt, Marlin Gingerich, Birgit Hagele, Mary Lou Hess, Lewis Holman, Alix Keast, Niclas Nagler, Katie Palmer, Susan Rogers, Bernice Rohret, Rebecca Sheahan

**A full program with information on this  
production can be found on the  
*No Reservation*  
page of the La MaMa website.**

**In addition you can scan the  
QR code Poster located in the theatre  
lobby for access to the digital program.**



# LA MAMA



## RESTORE A BUILDING REMAKE A WORLD



*Rendering: 74 East 4th St.*

La MaMa's historic, landmark building at 74 East 4th Street underwent an urgently needed complete renovation and restoration to preserve the historic façade, create building-wide ADA accessibility, and provide much needed performance, exhibition and community space for decades to come.

La MaMa, founded by Ellen Stewart in 1961, has been on east 4th Street since 1967. La MaMa embraces every person in its community and is legendary as the place where new artists of all nations, cultures, races, and identities are given opportunities. It is the place where art begins.

To learn more about the renovation, or to make a donation please visit [www.lamama.org/remakeworld](http://www.lamama.org/remakeworld)



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We thank our supporters who are indispensable to La MaMa as we continue to expand and strengthen our artistic community. You help make space for artists to create and share new stories, present diverse perspectives, and keep us all connected in our 63rd Season!

## 63rd Season General Operating Support:

Doris Duke Foundation, Howard Gilman Foundation, Mellon Foundation, Radio Drama Network, and The Shubert Foundation



## Public support provided by:

National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Governor, and the New York State Legislature, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the City Council.



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**No Resevation**  
Feb 6-23, 2025  
The Downstairs

**Had Enuf of the Blues:  
Cabaret on the Verge**  
Feb 6-9, 2025  
The Club

**In Through The Doorway Out**  
Feb 7-9, 2025  
Community Arts Space

**The Barbarians**  
Feb 14- March 2, 2025  
Ellen Stewart Theatre

**La MaMa Kids:  
The Dragon's Laugh & Other Tales**  
Feb 15, 2025  
Community Arts Space

**Unsuccessful (La Consagración de Nadie)**  
Feb 27-March 2, 2025  
The Downstairs

### COMING SOON

**The Magic Light**  
March 7-16, 2025  
The Downstairs

**Metamorphoses**  
March 7-23, 2025  
Ellen Stewart Theatre

**Above Ground**  
- not exactly a comedy  
March 13-23, 2025  
The Club

**Infinity**  
March 20-23, 2025  
The Downstairs

**Swallows**  
March 28-April 6, 2025  
The Downstairs

**Angel in the Ashes**  
-a melodrama with kazoos  
March 27-April 13, 2025  
The Club