

HARVEY MUDD STUDENT THEATER PROUDLY PRESENTS:

# SILENT SKY

WRITTEN BY  
LAUREN  
GUNDERSON

DIRECTED BY:  
KAANTHI  
PANDHIGUNTA  
'23

"WHAT  
YOU DO  
OUTLASTS  
YOU"

experience wonder under this silent sky

FRIDAY,  
DECEMBER 2,  
2022

SATURDAY,  
DECEMBER 3,  
2022

FUNDED BY  
CLAREMONT  
COLLEGES  
HOLMES FUND  
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PERFORMING  
ARTS



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# DIRECTOR'S NOTE:

Silent Sky is a story about a group of strong women who aspired to make their mark on the world a decade before women even had the right to vote. One in particular, Henrietta Leavitt, overcame all odds to make a contribution to astronomy that changed the field entirely. Thanks to her discovery of the period-luminosity relationship of Cepheid variables, we now know the size of the Milky Way galaxy and that the universe is ever-expanding.

This play is about Henrietta and her discovery, but it is also about love and sacrifice. Love of family and love of truth, but also sacrifice of family and sacrifice of self. How deep would your love for truth have to be to sacrifice your life for it?

This play shines a light on the invisible women upon whose shoulders science stands today. It honors the determination and passion of those who refused to “know their place.” It is brought to life beautifully by a cast and crew of Harvey Mudd student-artists. This play challenges our view of the scientists who came before us and beckons the audience to contend with both history and humanity.

Working on this play has been spectacular in every step of the process. I started this a year ago because I had such an amazing time being in the cast of Isaac's Eye, a Mudd play produced 2019. I too wanted to create opportunities in theater for my peers, and I am so happy that this project has become so much bigger than me. I am blessed to know so many incredibly talented peers who poured their hearts and souls into this with me, and I am so glad that you, dear viewer, get the opportunity to witness their gifts on stage. This play could only have been produced this way at Harvey Mudd.

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**KAANTHI  
PANDHIGUNTA  
, DIRECTOR**



# CAST

HENRIETTA LEAVITT.....Devon Tao  
PETER SHAW.....Jackson Philion  
WILLIAMINA FLEMING.....Wava Chan  
ANNIE CANNON.....Marina Ring  
MARGARET LEAVITT.....Jee-In Kwon



## DANCERS/ STARS

ASHLEY TAN,  
GABRIEL KLINGER,  
HANNAH FRIEDMAN,  
DORA LI,  
KAANTHI PANDHIGUNTA

# DESIGN AND PRODUCTION CREW

**DIRECTOR:** Kaanthi Pandhigunta  
**STAGE MANAGERS:** Emma Zhang, April Zhao  
**SET/PROPS:** Ashley Cheung, Sidney Taylor,  
Michelle Johnson, Valentina Vallalta, Marina  
Ring  
**DRAMATURGY:** Kishore Rajesh, Katheryn  
Wang  
**MUSIC COMPOSERS:** Kevin Wan, Coleman  
Gliddon, Nestor Coria  
**DANCE CHOREOGRAPHERS:** Michelle  
Johnson, Valentina Vallalta, Cindy Wang  
**COSTUME DESIGN:** Cristian Gonzalez, Ruth  
Mekonnen, Sarah An, Amelia Acker  
**LIGHTS/SOUND:** Occam Kelly Graves,  
Katheryn Wang, Simi Vora, Sarah An  
**RUN CREW:** Ashley Cheung, Lea Twicken,  
Kevin Wan, April Zhao, Emma Zhang  
**MARKETING:** Shreya Balaji, Kaitlynn Gray

# CAST & CREW BIOGRAPHIES

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## AMELIA ACKER

[Costumes]

Amelia Acker ('26) is a prospective physics major. She has been involved in theater for six years, both acting and working backstage in shows such as "SHREK: The Musical", "Ranked", and "She Kills Monsters". She wants to thank you for coming!

## WAVA CHAN

[Williamina Fleming]

Wava Chan ('25) is an Engineering major. She is happy to be a part of this production, and is so pleased to be working with such a talented cast and crew. She is excited to debut on Harvey Mudd's "stage" alongside some truly brilliant actors. This experience has been pretty out-of-this-world for her, and she hopes everyone enjoys the play as much as she enjoyed working on it.

## ASHLEY CHEUNG

[Set/Props/Lighting]

Ashley Cheung ('23) is happy to lead the technical direction of her first HMC theatre production! She has participated in almost all possible positions in tech crew and backstage for many shows since high school and most recently worked at Pomona's scene shop for House of Desires. She has loved using her engineering background to design and build the set and had enjoyed leading the props team to get everything ready for the show!

## NESTOR CORIA

[Music Composer]

Nestor Coria ('23) is a joint computer science and mathematics major with a concentration in music. He has helped compose music for other student projects before, and was happy to be given the opportunity to write a piece for Silent Sky. Outside of his role in Silent Sky, Nestor plays the piano and works diligently towards his degree. Please enjoy the show!

## HANNAH FRIEDMAN

[Dancer]

Hannah Friedman ('23) started dancing in middle school and is always looking for new opportunities to dance. Her background is mostly in modern dance, with some ballet, jazz, and ballroom sprinkled in, so dancing in a play has been a new and delightful experience for her. When not dancing, she enjoys working on math problems, knitting, reading, and swimming. Dancing with her fellow stars has been a highlight of the semester and she hopes you enjoy the show!

## COLEMAN GLIDDON

[Music Composer]

Coleman Gliddon ('23) has previously composed and arranged music for such renowned ensembles as the Gliddon-Nocita Family Christmas Party Players and the Harvey Mudd Jazz n-tet, and is excited to be writing music for the stage for the first time for Silent Sky! He expresses his gratitude toward the dancers and choreographers of the production for being willing to tolerate and work with his "creative ideas." When not making music with the Pomona Jazz Ensemble, Coleman can be found completing physics problem sets in secluded corners of ac end.

## CRISTIAN GONZALEZ

[Costume Design / Construction]

Cristian Gonzalez ('23) is an engineering major, and is one of the co-founders of Harvey Mudd College's Sewing & Fashion Design Club, a club dedicated to introducing students to the many avenues of fiber arts (sewing, knitting, crocheting, weaving, and more!). He also loves working on making personal outfits, and is excited for their first experience creating costumes for a full theatre production.

## OCCAM KELLY GRAVES

[Lighting/Sound]

Occam Kelly Graves ('23) has played cello and composed music since fourth grade and has worked as a stage manager in a production of Once Upon a Mattress in high school, working closely with lighting and sound techs. But since being at Mudd, he has had few opportunities to pursue theater and the arts...until now. He has loved working with the wonderful cast, crew, stage managers, composers, and, of course, director Kaanthi! He has enjoyed using absolutely none of his knowledge in mathematical and computational biology for the lighting and sound design of this production and hopes you love the show as much as he does.

## MICHELLE JOHNSON

[Choreographer/Dancer]

Michelle Johnson ('23) has been dancing since he could walk, and has been choreographing since mid-September. Putting his dance concentration to good use, he has absolutely loved jumping, twirling, and dancing with his fellow choreographers and dancers. As challenging as the work has been, his wish (upon a star) is that the dancers and audience members enjoy the show as much as he has. In the future, Michelle also hopes to put his mathematical and computational biology major to good use, eventually returning to academia and giving students the same learning opportunities he's received - be it in biology or theater!

## GABRIEL KLINGER

[Dancer]

Gabriel Klinger ('25) is an engineering major who enjoys playing guitar, listening to Phantom of the Opera, and dancing in his free time (in fact, you might see him showcasing his Michael Jackson dance moves at parties around campus)... He has had a blast working with other dancers on this play and hopes you enjoy the show!

## JEE-IN KWON

[Margaret Leavitt]

Jee-In Kwon ('25) is excited to- spoiler alert- get married, be pregnant, play the piano and sing in the Silent Sky. None of which I expected at the time of the audition, such dynamic experiences of becoming a character are exactly what makes theater so attractive. I'm definitely in for a ride with all of Margaret's talents that I must display on stage, and I'm very glad you're here for the ride with me. Above all, I hope you enjoy the Silent Sky!

## KAANTHI PANDHIGUNTA

[Director/Dancer]

Kaanthi Pandhigunta ('23) made her acting debut at the critically acclaimed smash hit, Cinderella, at Fremont Children's Theater. After floating in and out of the limelight for several years, she made her glorious return to the stage at Harvey Mudd's Isaac's Eye in 2019. She decided to change it up this year and take up a directorial role in this incredible production (and a dancing role... surprise!). Outside of theater, Kaanthi is an engineering major who enjoys cats, cooking, and playing sports badly. She has had so much fun working with the entire Silent Sky team and is so excited to see you all at the show!



## JACKSON PHILION

[Peter Shaw]

Jackson Philion ('25) took an elective theatre class in 6th grade and has been gracing stages coast to coast ever since! A passion begun by his role in Legally Blonde carried this burgeoning young actor through two different high schools and 8 mainstage shows, where he fell in love with the craft. After deciding to pursue his competing love for engineering at Harvey Mudd, he hung up his acting pants with the hope that the past two and a half years have aged them like fine wine. He is thrilled to make his grand re-debut to the stage alongside such an incredible cast and crew for HMC's production of Silent Sky!

## KISHORE RAJESH

[Dramaturg]

Kishore Rajesh ('25) is a Math-Computer Science major who loved the opportunity to be part of a stage production for the first time. He had so much fun working in dramaturgy and hopes to do more in the future!

## ASHLEY TAN

[Dancer]

Ashley Tan ('25) is a joint chemistry and biology major who has been dancing since middle school. Her experience has been centered around musical theater and choreography, with a focus on modern dance and jazz. Outside of dance, she enjoys reading, gaming with her friends, and playing the drums for Shogo Taiko. She has had so much fun dancing with the other stars and hopes that you enjoy the show!

## DEVON TAO

[Henrietta Leavitt]

Devon Tao ('25) has been in the theater world since they were 8, taking on multiple production roles as an actor, technician, stage manager, music director, or director. Last summer, Devon music directed a production of Peter and the Starcatcher for middle and high school students. Devon made their first appearance in 5C Theater in the Pomona Mainstage House of Desires as the Cloaked Man/Singer. They are super excited for the opportunity to participate in a play at Mudd. Special thanks to Kaanthi.

## SIDNEY TAYLOR

[Set/Props]

Sidney Taylor ('23), a machine shop proctor and a frequent user of the Harvey Mudd makerspace, has thoroughly enjoyed putting her design, maker, and creative skills to the test with the set and prop teams. To accompany the sets and props that she helped design and build in house, she has also scoured Facebook Marketplace and Craigslist for some of the finest pieces that you see on stage today. Sidney is a senior engineering major who hopes you too take advantage of all that the machine shop and makerspace have to offer. Enjoy the show!

## VALENTINA VALLALTA

[Choreographer/Dancer]

Valentina Vallalta ('23) is a CS-Math major who loves trying new things. With absolutely no qualifications, she is very happy that Michelle has dragged her along to choreograph for this play. We put so much love into these dances and tried our best to make them fun. Dancing with the stars has been such a blast. I hope you all enjoy the show!

## KEVIN WAN

[Music Composer]

Kevin Wan ('24) has an unhealthy obsession with video game soundtracks, particularly those from Ori and the Will of Wisps and Genshin Impact. These two albums ultimately persuaded him to serious study music composition (privately). Kevin is very thankful to the dancers and directors for their patience when he spends too much time composing music instead of delivering the pieces on time.

## CINDY WANG

[Choreographer]

Cindy Wang ('23) is an engineering and dance major. Inspired by the theories of architectural design and Laban movement analysis, which helped her in beginning to understand many quintessential choreographies of modern dance and ballet, guided by exercises in her composition I class, Cindy learned to start exploring the varying qualities of abstract geometrical forms and the layering of movement patterns in choreography. For her, dance is also a medium for sharing and passing on all the help she has received.



## KATHERYN WANG

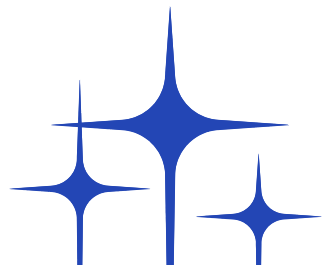
[Dramaturg/Lights]

Katheryn Wang ('23) is an engineering and history major and really loved the opportunity to combine both her scientific and historical interests by being a dramaturg for the first time. She also loves working as lights and first started in 2017 for her high school's arts nights.

## EMMA ZHANG

[Stage Manager]

Emma Zhang ('24) is a Math-Physics major who absolutely loves theater! After watching more than 50 plays in the past two years, she has developed an undying love for experimental theater. Having done much learning from her theater concentration, this is her first venture into theater production in college. She has learned so much in her role as a stage manager for Silent Sky and can't wait for you to see it come to life on stage! Special thanks to family, friends, Alison & the stage management class, and viewers like you. Thank you.



# SPECIAL THANKS

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AND FOR VIEWERS LIKE  
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