

KRISTINA WONG FOR PUBLIC OFFICE: LIVE FROM HER HOME!

A Visions and Voices Signature Event

Written and performed by **KRISTINA WONG**
Directed and dramaturgy by **DIANA WYENN**
Devised by **KRISTINA WONG** and **DIANA WYENN**
Sound by **MARK McCLAIN WILSON**
Scenic, Costumes, and Props by **KRISTINA WONG**

Friday, October 23, 2020, at 5:30 p.m. PT
Live via Zoom
University of Southern California

WHAT TO KNOW

- Kristina Wong is a performance artist, comedian, and writer.
- Her projects include the web series *How Not to Pick Up Asian Chicks* and the theatre shows *The Wong Street Journal* and *Wong Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.
- She is also an elected official representing her fellow Koreatown residents on the Wilshire Center Koreatown Neighborhood Council.

“I believe that as an artist, my job is not to ‘fix’ the wrongs of the world with easy answers, but instead, to further complicate the question by making the invisible—visible, and hopefully, creating some space for public discourse.”—Kristina Wong

ABOUT KRISTINA WONG

Kristina Wong is a performance artist, comedian, writer, and neighborhood elected official who has been presented internationally across North America, the UK, Hong Kong, and Africa. She was featured in the *New York Times*’ “Off Color Comedy” video series, which highlights “artists of color who use humor to make smart social statements about the sometimes subtle, sometimes obvious ways that race plays out in America today.” Wong has been a late-night-show guest on Comedy Central and FX, and an actor in film and television. Center Theatre Group honored her as the 2019 Sherwood Award recipient for her exceptional contribution to the Los Angeles theatre landscape and her work as an innovative and adventurous artist.

LOS ANGELES NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS

Neighborhood councils are L.A.’s most local form of government, or “the closest form of government to the people,” as the City of Los Angeles puts it. They are a formal part of the L.A. city government. Neighborhood-council board members are elected by their communities, and serve as city officials on a volunteer basis. The neighborhood-council system was established in 1999. There are currently 99 neighborhood councils across L.A.



CULTURE JAMMING

“I’m interested in guerilla performance as culture jamming—creating performances that subvert the use of space not intended for ‘performance.’ I experiment with interactive, improvisational performance that blurs the roles of ‘artist’ and ‘audience’—recasting unsuspecting bystanders as costars to my performance personas—unearthing the masks, disguises, and performances hidden in the most mundane of daily life.”—Kristina Wong

Culture jamming is a form of protest that disrupts or subverts mainstream media and culture, especially corporate advertising and other forms of mass communication. Culture jamming became a popular form of anti-consumerist protest in the 1990s, with creative and critical reconfigurations of corporate logos, advertisements, and more. Today, culture jamming often takes the form of memes on social media.

Some notable exemplars of culture jamming: The Yes Men, the Billboard Liberation Front, *Adbusters* magazine, the Guerrilla Girls, Crimethinc, and Jorge Rodriguez-Gerada, among others.

SOME OTHER PROJECTS BY KRISTINA WONG

The Auntie Sewing Squad

Launched by Kristina Wong in her apartment in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Auntie Sewing Squad has grown into a national network of volunteers sewing masks for vulnerable communities. They have donated more than 80,000 masks since March.

Radical Cram School

A digital series in which Asian American kids explore issues of identity, revolution, and social justice through puppets, community storytelling, and comedy. (Find it on YouTube.)

The Wong Street Journal

A solo theatre work about global poverty, privilege, and economics.

Going Green the Wong Way

A theatre piece about the environment and Wong’s efforts at a carbon-free life.

Wong Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest

A performance about Asian American women and mental health.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- Did this show expand your notion of what an elected official is or could be?
- Did you learn anything new about the political/electoral process from this performance?
- What is the role of humor in *Kristina Wong for Public Office*?
- How did Kristina Wong employ storytelling to prompt her neighborhood council to take action?
- Wong asks, “How is it that artists and politicians have switched jobs?” How would you answer this question?

- What is the role of performance in politics and government? Think about press conferences, elected officials on social media, and any other public appearance of a member of government.
- What do you think of the idea that “culture is power”?

IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT:

- Kristina Wong online | kristinawong.com
- Find Your Neighborhood Council | empowerla.org/councils
- The Auntie Sewing Squad | auntiesewingsquad.com
- 11/6 & 11/7 at Visions and Voices:
[Live Artists Live III: Despair/Repair](#)

STORYTELLING AND SOCIAL CHANGE

“[I]n order to make any change, people must join together. They must talk with one another to figure out what change they want to make and build relationships to do it. And those relationships are conducted in no small part through stories.”—from the guidebook “Storytelling and Social Change” by Paul VanDeCarr and Working Narratives

“Current realities are often rooted in oppressive narratives. Our role as change agents is to undermine these narratives and replace them with new stories that help build a fairer, freer world.”—Patrick Reinsborough and Doyle Canning of the Center for Story-Based Strategy



DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

CHRISTINA SNIDER of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about this evening's event. Those with a call number (e.g., books) are physical items which you can find in our campus libraries. Those without a call number (e.g. e-books, journals, and databases) are electronic resources, which are accessible through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at libraries.usc.edu but may require the user to log in using their USC credentials.

BOOKS

- ◉ Angelo N. Ancheta, *Race, Rights, and the Asian American Experience* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press, 2006).
- ◉ Cindy I-Fen Cheng, *The Routledge Handbook of Asian American Studies* (Boston: Credo Reference, 2017).
- ◉ Pei-te Lien, M. Margaret Conway, and Janelle Wong, *The Politics of Asian Americans: Diversity and Community* (New York: Routledge, 2004).
- ◉ Nita Tewari and Alvin Alvarez, *Asian American Psychology: Current Perspectives* (New York: Psychology Press, 2009).
- ◉ Jennifer Lee and Min Zhou, *Asian American Youth: Culture, Identity, and Ethnicity* (New York: Routledge, 2004).
- ◉ Roberta Uno, ed. *Contemporary Plays by Women of Color: An Anthology* (London: Routledge, 2017).
- ◉ Vicki Nam, ed., *Yell-oh Girls! Emerging Voices Explore Culture, Identity, and Growing Up Asian American* (New York: Quill, 2001).
DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY: E184.O6 Y45 2001
- ◉ Melody Berger, ed., *We Don't Need Another Wave: Dispatches from the Next Generation of Feminists* (Emeryville: Seal Press, 2006).
DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY: HQ1111.W4 2006
- ◉ Rory Dicker and Alison Piepmeier, eds., *Catching a Wave: Reclaiming Feminism for the 21st Century* (Boston: Northeastern Univ. Press, 2003).
DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY: HQ1426 .C284 2003

DATABASES

- ◉ [Asian American Drama](#)
- ◉ [Performing Arts Periodicals Database](#)
- ◉ [ProQuest Music and Performing Arts Collection](#)
- ◉ [Theatre in Performance](#)

JOURNALS

- ◉ [Journal of Asian American Studies](#)
- ◉ [American Politics Research](#)
- ◉ [Comedy Studies](#)

FILMS

- ◉ [Wong Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest](#) (Cinema Libre Studio, 2013)

