

Letter of Support
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It is difficult to properly express my gratitude and appreciate to Clubbed Thumb. CT has fully produced New York production, a goal I have been pursuing for over ten years of living in New York. Although my writing has been supported by other organizations such as the Public Theatre, SoHo Rep, and The Lark, Clubbed Thumb is the first theatre to make a significant commitment to my work on stage.

I met Maria Striar when she attended my thesis production at the Yale School of Drama in 2010. During that time, we discussed my work and goals as a writer. Most of the invited guests who came to our thesis productions barely responded to my follow up emails, but Maria actively stayed in touch and seemed to be genuinely interested in my work and upcoming events. Over the next few years, we kept in contact. When she was not able to attend a reading of my play, *Takarazuka!!!*, she wrote to me and asked for a copy. As a playwright, I send out my work without any response whatsoever. I was shocked when she asked if I would like to develop my play as part of a weeklong workshop with Clubbed Thumb at Playwrights Horizons. Clubbed Thumb paired me with one of my dream directors, Chay Yew. The workshop was very productive. I was thrilled to learn Clubbed Thumb wanted to produce my play in June.

The process from page to stage was straightforward and surprisingly fast-moving. Chay Yew was not available, and so I worked with Lear deBessonet, a wonderful new play director who had an innate understanding of the play. In addition to the Playwrights Horizons workshop, CT set up several informal readings, to allow me to hear the play outloud before rehearsals and make necessary changes to the script.

A challenge Clubbed Thumb met was casting. My play is set in Japan, and all of the actors must be Asian or mixed race. Many of the characters have to perform in Japanese. Despite some of the casting difficulties, Clubbed Thumb has been vigilantly searching for appropriate actors, attending Asian American plays and events, consulting with other theater companies to help me find the perfect cast. Even though as an Asian American playwright, I am pretty familiar with the talent pool, Maria did her research and brought several wonderful actors to my attention that I had never seen before. I also wrote the lead character with a particular actor in mind. I believe Clubbed Thumb's reputation for excellence helped convince this actor to sign onto *Takarazuka!!!*.

In addition, Maria has been an invaluable dramaturg. She has a strong sense of structure and can point out moments in plays that do not feel earned or emotionally true. I think my play has become stronger since I began developing it with Clubbed Thumb. She has been an advocate not only of the play, but of me, and wrote to agents on my behalf. I believe Maria and Clubbed Thumb are interested in

me as a playwright not only for this immediate production but for the future as well. All together, the production of *Takarazuka!!!* was thoughtfully done, beautifully designed, well directed, well acted, and as crazy and disturbing as I hoped it would be.

What I love most about Clubbed Thumb is their fearless support of truly imaginative plays, often from emerging playwrights. When thinking about theaters in New York where I most wanted a production, Clubbed Thumb has always been at the top of my list. All of my favorite writers, writers who write provocative, extraordinary plays have been produced here, and I could not be prouder to join them. Beyond an admiration for Clubbed Thumb's artistic choices, they've supported me more than almost any New York theater in the past, even from institutions that I've worked at. I also appreciate that they are organized, honest, straightforward, and always respond quickly to my questions and concerns. I would not be so excited to be living, watching, making theater in New York without places like Clubbed Thumb.