ARTISTIC STAFF
Directed by Stacy Ray
Assistant Director: Katherine Altman
Dramaturgy: Katherine Altman, Keita Beni & Annastasia Fiala-Watkins
Choreography: Amy Schiffner
Scenic Design: Rachel Filbeck*
Costume Design: Marc Marcos*
Lighting Design: Joseph Governale
Sound Design: Brian Shevelenko
Projection Design: Joseph Governale
Properties: Rachel Filbeck

CAST
(NIN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)
Nora Helmer  Christine Lamborn
Torvald Helmer  Tyler Haugen
Christine Linde  Emily Steward
Nils Krogstad  Donovan Oakleaf
Dr. Rank  Malia Wessel

This show will be performed without an intermission.

DIRECTOR’S NOTE
The epiphany of change, life in the 21st century, exciting but filled with uncertainty. The play is titled, Nora, but it’s about our lives NOW. We’re asked to do the same things these characters are asked to do: to evaluate, to allow ourselves to feel, to make choices, and ultimately, to change.

We no longer have to wait for the span of a generation to see or feel change - it’s in our daily lives. It’s volatile, jarring, and seemingly unpredictable but never random. The elements of change simmer for a long time waiting only for a catalyst and when that catalyst appears - there’s no avoiding the reaction; an epiphany must occur.

In less than 2 years, we have passed through our own societal epiphanies of change: An election that brought uncomfortable male/female dynamics to the forefront, the exposure of unapologetic prejudice and division, a greater expanse in the financial divide, and the rise of the #MeToo Movement taking feminism and human rights to a new level for both men and women. All of this in the midst of a hyper-sexualized society.

As visionaries of life, Henrik Ibsen and Ingmar Bergman couldn’t have asked for better material. With these few thoughts in mind, we dove into Nora and discovered the timeless brilliance of Ibsen through the laser-sharp perspective of Ingmar Bergman.

Thank you for coming to see the show. The students, faculty, and staff of the Department of Theatre and Dance appreciate the gift of your commitment to supporting the Arts at UH Mānoa.

- Stacy Ray

*N in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Fine Arts degree

FROM THE DRAMATURGY TEAM
The Nora you are going to see today explores social issues shaped and reshaped by different lenses of the contexts in which it was created. Nora is a Swedish filmmaker Ingmar Bergman’s 1981 stage adaptation of Henrik Ibsen’s classic A Doll House from 1879, and it is presented with our own 2018 interpretation of Bergman’s work.

Ibsen is perhaps the most produced playwright in the world after Shakespeare. His perfection of the use of natural prose dialogue, his predictions of the future for drama, and his depiction of middle class domestic life were revolutionary for the evolution of realist drama. Born in 1828 in the small Norwegian town of Skien, Ibsen’s worldview was influenced in part by his family’s public plummet from middle class living to bankruptcy, and the poverty and humiliation that accompanied it. Interested in poetry and in painting, his gift for symbolism and meaning in both language and visual images informed his playwriting. Ibsen was as irreverent and controversial as he was insightful and poetic, interested in exploring universal questions of what it is to be human.

Bergman, born in Sweden in 1918, drew heavily on his personal life to create powerful, questioning films. These stark explorations of the human condition and human relationships were characterized by intimate two-person scenes, evocative visual imagery, and often deeply internalized, subjective character narration and dream sequences. Even though he is best known for his work in film, his first love was theatrical directing, which he also pursued throughout his life. Incredibly prolific, Bergman wrote or directed more than 60 films and 170 theatrical productions. Much of his theatre career was with the Royal Dramatic Theatre of Stockholm, where he premiered in 1951, served as managing director from 1963-1966, and continued to direct two productions on average per year through his final production in 2002.

Bergman staged Nora in 1981 as part of the Bergman Project, which also included Julie, his adaptation of August Strindberg’s Miss Julie, and a stage version of his television mini-series film, Scenes from a Marriage. Together, these three productions examined the complexities of communication and partnership between the two sexes. Bergman pared the A Doll House script down by a third, condensing the story into 90 minutes and cutting the characters of Nora and Torvald’s maids and their children, with most scenes then featuring only two characters. He removed the convention of realistic exits and entrances, having the cast remain on stage during the entire production, serving, along with the audience, as the observing judge and jury to the other characters, and allowing characters to simply appear in space, driven by the internal action of the story.

Our production of Nora explores the ideas of both Ibsen and Bergman through a contemporary lens, updating the setting and the characters. For example, Dr. Rank’s casting as a female character reframes her relationship with Nora and Torvald, and therefore Nora and Torvald’s relationship with one another. This production aims to raise questions about gender communication, the ways in which human beings collectively and individually shape identity, the ways in which societal pressures and ingrained assumptions shape all humans in ways both seen and unseen, and about ways we can all inch toward that looming goal we call “progress” together.