

info@jctcenter.org

For Immediate Release

‘SELL ME: I Am From North Korea’ Portrays Struggles of Refugees & Defectors

Jersey City Theater Center (JCTC) sheds light on the life and times of refugees and defectors from North Korea – considered a closed-society ruled by a totalitarian government –with its presentation of *SELL ME: I Am From North Korea*.

JCTC presents *SELL ME: I Am From North Korea* on Feb. 1 at 3:00pm and at 7:30pm and Feb. 2 at 2:00pm at Merseles Studios, 339 Newark Ave., Jersey City, NJ 07302.

A one-woman show inspired by the true stories of North Korean defectors, *SELL ME: I Am From North Korea* premiered at the 2019 International Human Rights Art Festival in New York. A profound portrait of people who risked everything to escape one of the world’s most repressive regimes, *SELL ME: I Am From North Korea* was written by and stars Korean-born playwright and performer Sora Baek, a Tenafly resident.

Baek based the play on her own research of her Northern neighbors who’ve resisted the North Korean government and the continuing obstacles, stigmas, and prejudices defectors face as undocumented refugees. She shows the very real, very human costs this brutal regime inflicts on individuals through the story of Jisun Park, a 15-year-old girl who risks her life for the chance to give her family hope and freedom. Following its premiere, Baek and her team expanded the play and the Jersey City show will be the first performance of the full production.

“Jersey City is a diverse community and JCTC through our programming makes that diversity visible,” said Olga Levina, Artistic Director, JCTC. “Theater breaks down walls that separate us by giving a voice to the voiceless. North Korea is often in the news but rarely do we hear about its people. *SELL ME* is an important new work about the fight against injustice by a refugee community whose stories of struggle and trauma have rarely been told before.”

SELL ME explores the complicated struggles of North Koreans, whose stories deserve a wider audience as the global community grapples with the humanitarian crises of refugees and dictatorial regimes. Baek began work on the play shortly after the birth of her second son and considers *SELL ME* her contribution to bringing about change in both Koreas, America, and the broader world.

“It is my wish that all our children grow up in a world that is more welcoming, free, and just than the one we have now,” said Baek. “I am beyond thrilled to perform *SELL ME* at JCTC’s black

box theater. To bring this meaningful and relevant story to the state I live in and to have the support of such a great beacon in the Jersey City community is truly special."

SELL ME: I Am From North Korea

**Saturday/February 1
Doors: 2:30/ Show: 3:00
Saturday/February 1
Doors: 7:00/ Show: 7:30
Sunday/February 2 *
Doors: 1:30/ Show: 2:00**

Tickets: \$30 General Admission/ \$20 Students & Senior Citizens – Must Show Valid ID)

To purchase tickets, visit www.JCTCenter.org

***A Talk Back with Sora Baek follows the Sunday/February 2 performance.**

**Jersey City Theater Center
Merseles Studios
339 Newark Avenue
Jersey City, NJ 07302
(201) 795-5386**

Cast & Crew

Jisun Park: Sora Baek

Playwright: Sora Baek

Director: Amanda Kate Joshi

Lighting Designer: Mikaela Baird

Projection Designer: Clay Anderson

Sound Designer/Stage Manager: Jaimie Van Dyke

Producers: Jaimie Van Dyke and Sora Baek

Sora Baek (playwright/actor) – has an MFA in acting from Academy of Art University in San Francisco. An actress with *Only Make Believe*, a NYC-based interactive children’s theatre company, Baek has also appeared in *The Storm*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *Sworn Virgin* (New York and International Tour) all with Blessed Unrest. *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* (Calaveras Repertory Theatre), *The Odd Couple* (Machoola Productions), and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Curious Frog). She has worked with Emmy Award-winning directors Joseph Sargent and Robert Butler. She received a Best Actress Award at the Epidemic Film Festival in San Francisco, CA and also at the National College Theater Festival in Korea. www.sorabaek.com

Amanda Kate Josh (director) – a NYC-based director & producer, Josh has spent the last 15 years working on new and developing plays and musicals. Directing selections include: *Inch by Inch* by Rachel Graf Evans (Theatre for a New City at Producers' Club); Craig McNulty’s *Welcome Home Steve* (Players Club); *Wilde’s Importance of Being Earnest* (14th Street Y); Michelle Markowitz’s *Hookups & Hang-ups* (Abingdon Theatre); Jay Hanagan’s *Softly Sara Falls* (Lookinglass Theatre). She has worked with theatre companies including Goodspeed Musicals, the Maltz Jupiter Theatre, Abingdon Theatre Company, New Dramatists, and New Georges (whose production of *A Beautiful Day in November...Great Lakes* won an OBIE in 2015). She has been an associate director many times for both Tony Walton and Don Stephenson. Additionally, she has been a reader for the Lark’s Literary Wing, the Princess Grace Award in Playwriting and has been an SDC Observership Evaluator. www.amandakatejoshi.net

Funding for *SELL ME: I Am From North Korea* was made possible by generous support from the Hudson County Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs/Tourism Development, Thomas A. DeGise, Hudson County Executive and the Hudson County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

SELL ME: I Am From North Korea was also made possible through the generosity of Ben LoPiccolo Development Group, JCTC’s Board of Directors, private donors and local Jersey City businesses.

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Jersey City Theater Center, Inc. (JCTC) is a nonprofit, 501c3 arts organization committed to inspiring conversations about important issues of our times through the arts.