**Students In Conversation: “Stop Kiss” A Play Presented by The Mt. SAC Theater in Collaboration with The Pride Center Episode 153**

# 00:00:00 **Christine**

# Hate will lose as long as we continue to tell our stories and we continue to share, and we continue to lead by example. Because if we want a world that represents us, we need to fight for it and we need to make it. We need to make this the type of community, global community we want to be a part of.

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# 00:00:20 **Christine**

# And I'm so proud of my students for standing up and saying, "I'm going to be heard" and saying, "This is who I am, and I do not ever need to apologize for it." My students (and I'm sure Tania, you agree) give me so much hope for the future.

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# 00:00:37 **Christina**

# Hi, I'm Christina Barsi.

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# 00:00:39 **Sun**

# And I'm Sun Ezzell, and you're listening to the Magic Mountie Podcast.

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# 00:00:43 **Christina**

# Our mission is to find ways to keep your ear to the ground, so to speak - by bringing to you the activities and events you may not have time to attend, the resources on campus you might want to know more about, the interesting things your colleagues are creating, and the many ways we can continue to better help and guide our students.

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# 00:01:00 **Sun**

# We bring to you the voices of Mt. SAC, from the classroom to completion.

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# 00:01:04 **Speaker 1**

# And I know I'm going to achieve my goals and I know people here are going to help me to do it.

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# 00:01:09 **Speaker 2**

# She is a sociology major and she's transferring to Cal Poly, Pamona! Psychology major, English major ...

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# 00:01:15 **Sun**

# From transforming part-time into full-time-

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# 00:01:17 **Speaker 1**

# I really liked the time that we spent with Julie about how to write a CV and cover letter.

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# 00:01:25 **Christina**

# Or just finding time to soak in the campus.

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# 00:01:27 **Speaker 1**

# To think of the natural environment around us as a library.

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# 00:01:30 **Christina**

# We want to keep you informed and connected to all things Mt. SAC, but most importantly, we want to keep you connected with each other. I'm Christina Barsi, Mt. SAC alumni and producer of this podcast.

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# 00:01:41 **Sun**

# And I'm Sun Ezzell, Learning Assistance Faculty and Professional Learning Academy Coordinator.

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# 00:01:46 **Christina**

# And this is the Magic Mountie Podcast.

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# 00:01:54 **Sun**

# Welcome back to the Magic Mountie Podcast, this is your host, Sun Ezzell. This week, we're excited to bring you a very special episode, featuring Theater Professor, Christine Cummings and Mt. SAC students, Emma Frickert, El Ramirez and Lucie Higuera in conversation about Mt. SAC's production of the play, Stop Kiss.

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# 00:02:10 **Sun**

# Variety calls Stop Kiss, a poignant and funny play about the ways both sudden and slow, that lives can change irrevocably. Thanks for joining us.

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# 00:02:24 **Tania**

# Welcome to the Magic Mountie Podcast. My name is Tania Anders your host for today's episode. Today, we would like to share with you a collaboration between the Mt. SAC Theater Department and our campus's Pride Center. The goal of this collaboration is to create student outreach opportunities with regards to the themes and story of the program's newest play called Stop Kiss by Korean American playwright, Diana Son.

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# 00:02:50 **Tania**

# The play explores LGBTQ themes, including violence and prejudice against this community. What a wonderful way to start off Pride Month activities on our campus. My guests today are Christine Cummings, Professor of Theater; Emma Frickertm and El Ramirez who are playing leads in the play, and Lucy Higuera, the play's dramaturg. Well, thank you for being here, everyone. It's so good to see you and to hear about your project. Hi, there.

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# 00:03:19 **Christine**

# Hello.

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# 00:03:20 **Tania**

# So, first off, I would love for you to please introduce yourself to our listeners, and maybe Christine, you could start us off.

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# 00:03:28 **Christine**

# Sure. I am Christine Cummings. My pronouns are she/her/hers, and I'm a Professor of Theater at Mount San Antonio College, and the director of the play, Stop Kiss.

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# 00:03:38 **Lucie**

# Hi, I'm Lucy Higuera. My pronouns are they/them/theirs. And I'm the dramaturg for the play.

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# 00:03:45 **Emma**

# Hello, I'm Emma Frickert. My pronouns are she/her/hers and I play Callie in the play.

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# 00:03:53 **El**

# Hi, my name's El Ramirez. I use they/them pronouns and I am Sara in the play.

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# 00:03:58 **Tania**

# Wonderful. Thank you so much for introducing yourselves. And I'm really excited to hear more about the play. So, Christine, maybe you could be so kind and set the stage for us. Could you please tell us a little bit about the play?

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# 00:04:12 **Christine**

# Sure, I would love to. Stop Kiss is a play by Korean American playwright, Diana Son. It takes place in 1998, New York City. So, the soundtrack is just killer and awesome. All of this nineties music that I love.

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# 00:04:24 **Christine**

# The story follows Callie and Sara who meet and unexpectedly fall in love. Their first kiss provokes a violent gay-bashing attack on one of them, which obviously, irrevocably transforms their lives. The play, however, is not only about homophobia and prejudice and how intolerance inevitably turns to violence because it does.

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# 00:04:48 **Christine**

# But at its heart, the play is about identity, it's about love. It's about commitment and trust and finding meaning and direction in one's life. It is a beautiful thing that Stop Kiss is able to transcend gender preference and just be a love story because love is love. It is funny and heartbreaking. It's a gorgeous piece of writing, and I just think our audiences will really have a wonderful time in this play.

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# 00:05:12 **Tania**

# Thank you so much for introducing it to us. Now, I'm curious to hear from Emma and El, you're the leads in the play. Can you share with our listeners why this play is important to you and why you think it's important to produce plays such as Stop Kiss on our campus?

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# 00:05:28 **Emma**

# Yeah, so this play is really amazing, I think, for a lot of reasons. The number one reason though I would say, is that it is about two women. And so much of media that does center around gay relationships is about men and is usually two men who identify as gay. And that is kind of like the majority of what we see either in movies or in TV shows.

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# 00:05:51 **Emma**

# And so, to have this be about two gay women is something that is like, especially when it was written in the nineties, like unheard of at the time, I would say, in terms of being a play. And I mean, like when I think about the actors who were involved with the original production who are Sandra O and Jessica Hutch who went on to be obviously like very famous actors.

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# 00:06:11 **Emma**

# It's kind of amazing to think about like this play has been around for so long and was involved with such like amazing people at its beginning, but I'd never heard of it until this semester when the auditions were happening. And so, I think if we can like do this play and people will come and see it and they will take something away from it, that is the really amazing part to me.

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# 00:06:32 **Emma**

# And like, I wish that this play was taught in classes. Like I wish that it got more publicity I guess, than it did. But I think it's a really incredibly written play. I think it's going to be a really great performance.

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# 00:06:46 **Tania**

# Thank you so much for sharing out, Emma. El?

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# 00:06:49 **El**

# I love this play. I'm just going to say that because, oh my goodness, even like the first time I heard about it, that this was even going to happen - I was so absolutely excited about it because like Emma said, it was so unheard of to hear of two women falling in love, having feelings for each other, romantic feelings of that. Because history would just be like, oh, they were just friends, they were just good pals.

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# 00:07:17 **El**

# But I'm so in love with the way that like this isn't just like sugar-coated, it's more realistic. And I love that because that's really how it was like back in the like nineties, it was so unheard of. It was like a bad word like the F word or something that you just like whispered about. And it just makes me so happy that I can actually do something for other people like me that I wish I had when I was my age.

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# 00:07:46 **El**

# Of course, I was born in the 2000s and there was so much more representation than there was back then, but I want to make it so much more normalized. I want to let other people know that this is fine, that this is normal, that it's okay to love a person of the same gender, it's okay.

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# 00:08:03 **El**

# And exactly like how Christine said, love is love, and gender shouldn't be something that steers that. It should just be the soul of the person. And it's so important because we need more stories that aren't just sugar-coated, that aren't just like happy endings because not all of them are. And it makes me just so happy that I can actually represent myself and also other people.

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# 00:08:26 **Tania**

# Thank you, El and Emma, both, for sharing. I'm really excited about this play too. I completely agree, we need more opportunities like this. And when I first heard about the production of Stop Kiss, what really intrigued me as well, is that you reached out to start a collaboration with our campus's Pride Center. And I think that is such a wonderful thing to make connections across the different areas of our very large campus.

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# 00:08:59 **Tania**

# And of course, in this case, the Pride Center is the perfect partner for a collaboration. So, Lucy, I was wondering if first of all, maybe you can share a little bit about what a play's dramaturg does in general, and then how that led you to also reaching out to the Pride Center for collaboration.

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# 00:09:19 **Lucie**

# Yes, basically, dramaturgy is research on the play basically, like closely dissecting and looking at the script and what references to the time period the playwright makes. It's kind of like a way of assisting the director in creating validity for the show.

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# 00:09:35 **Lucie**

# I really love dramaturgy because it makes the show so much more believable. And I really love that Christine included this role in the play because this play really calls for dramaturgy because it's very important to make the play valid in the messages it's getting across. The actors being educated on what was going on during this time so that they can be even more believable to the audience.

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# 00:09:57 **Lucie**

# And then I also help with outreach. It was Christine's idea to collaborate with the Pride Center. I'm just basically assisting her in that and sending emails to people and stuff. But that's been really fun because I've never done anything quite like that, and I like being her little assistant.

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# 00:10:10 **Lucie**

# But yeah, so I also had some points I wanted to talk about, about our experience with collaborating with the Pride Center. So, our main form of outreach and publicity that we've been doing with them is we are building a pathway from the Pride Center to the theater where students can walk along the pathway and sort of see the posters that we're putting up.

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# 00:10:31 **Lucie**

# So, it's basically to encourage a discussion and awareness of the important topics explored in the play as well as experiences of many of our students, staff, and faculty members. And so, the posters that we made for this pathway, we partnered with Studio13 to make these, and basically what's on these posters - this is some of the research I also did: on one of the posters, there's statistics of violence towards the LGBTQ+ community.

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# 00:10:56 **Lucie**

# I included statistics within campus life, with university students, as well as just statistics within America in general, because it takes place in America. So, I feel like that would be the most relevant as well as you know, the students here live in America. So, I feel like that would make sense.

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# 00:11:12 **Lucie**

# And then our second poster is basically a spotlight of prominent LGBTQ+ figures. I mean, art, entertainment, science, politics, and sports. It's basically just a poster that's inspiring that some of these figures are in our community because they're so successful and people to look up to. And I feel like it's really important to highlight those people and talk about how successful people in the LGBTQ community are.

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# 00:11:38 **Lucie**

# And then our third poster is quotes from LGBTQ+ students, including myself. So, basically, we took quotes from some of the students from the Pride Center and asked them just to say something about their experience in the community or just something they have to say about it. So, we put some of those quotes on a poster.

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# 00:11:54 **Lucie**

# And then we also have a photo op, which will be outside the quad near the library. And yeah, so basically, we want to promote people taking pictures and posting it. There'll be a rainbow and the LGBTQ+ flag. So, yeah, and then we also wanted to promote posting pictures with that photo op with the hashtag Stop Kiss Mt. SAC.

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# 00:12:15 **Lucie**

# And then also, another thing we're doing within the collaboration with the Pride Center, is we're having a talk back Saturday. So, basically, June 4th, which is the Saturday show of Stop Kiss, we are going to have a panel of Pride Center students doing an audience talk back after the performance. So, basically, the audience will ask them questions about their experience, about the show, and they'll have a chance to kind of talk about that and have their voices heard.

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# 00:12:40 **Lucie**

# And then I just wanted to share the mission statement of the Pride Center since this is not just for the Theater Department, this is also us wanting to get a bigger voice for the Pride Center because I feel like a lot of people don't really know about the Pride Center. I didn't really think about it that much before working with this show. So, I just wanted to share their mission statement with everyone.

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# 00:12:58 **Lucie**

# Which is that the Mt. SAC Pride Center is a resource center and lounge space serving the LGBTQ+ community of Mount San Antonio College. Our mission is to provide an inclusive and safe space for members of the LGBTQ+ community through our resources such as academic help, group therapy, identity, discussion groups, and an onsite therapist. The Pride Center operates Monday through Thursday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM in building 26A, room 1640.

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# 00:13:24 **Lucie**

# And yeah, it's just a really great center for the LGBTQ+ community at Mt. SAC to feel like they have a safe space. The first time I went there, I was like I want to be here every single day. Like everyone here seems so nice. And the fact that there's an onsite therapist just makes me feel really safe personally. And I feel like more people should know about it. So, yeah, that's all I have to say about that.

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# 00:13:45 **Tania**

# Thank you so much, Lucy. Absolutely, it's a fantastic space and you're right, people should all know about it. I think that I thought they have very good visibility already. So, it's really good to hear because we have so many students that come to us for just a few classes each academic year or they're part-time, they work a lot. So, they may not have the opportunity to walk all over our campus.

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# 00:14:08 **Tania**

# So, as faculty, we do certainly try to share with our students as much as we can of all the resources that our campus offers. And I think the majority of faculty really emphasize this, but it's good to hear that we need to do as much as we possibly can and just keep sending out that message. It really sounds like you did a lot of work to help with promoting the event, what you put together with the posters - I know Studio13, they're so amazing at putting together wonderful-looking flyers, posters, whatever it may be.

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# 00:14:41 **Tania**

# So, I encourage you to send those out to the campus community also, because I think they will even make a great resource after the play ends. We can share with our students. So, I would love for you to share that with faculty and other groups on campus, that would be really fantastic.

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# 00:14:56 **Tania**

# So, Christine, maybe I have another question for you. What does your collaboration look like at this time and how might it evolve into even more in the future? Because it seems like you have something really great going on and I don't know if you've collaborated in the past or if you're seeing new opportunities now. So, maybe you can share a little bit.

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# 00:15:16 **Christine**

# Thank you for the question. We actually, in the Theater Department, have made it our mission when we are choosing our five-show seasons to make sure there is diversity in the play offerings. So, now, that we are making sure that we do that, I plan to continue these collaborations cross-campus with places like the Pride Center, the Equity Center.

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# 00:15:37 **Christine**

# We have a REACH program, we have instructors who teach courses on cultural diversity and equity and things like that. So, I absolutely plan to continue doing this because theater has a particular ability to get us talking, to get us thinking, to get us feeling. And we are planning to choose plays that will speak to our student demographic.

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# 00:15:58 **Christine**

# I don't know that we had been as good about that in the past. And so, that's what we decided. We're like we're going to do plays that represent all of us and represent characters and themes and stories that our students in particular can connect to. So, I absolutely plan to continue collaborations. I agree with you, Tania - it is hugely important. We are a gigantic campus.

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# 00:16:16 **Christine**

# The theater's like hidden over on the side of campus, a lot of people don't even know where we are. So, I really like the idea of reaching out and making these larger conversations. It's important. Theater has a lot of really important things to say.

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# 00:16:30 **Tania**

# So, I'm wondering from the students that are here because one of our challenges is often that students come through Mt. SAC and spend two years, maybe three, maybe four, maybe five years with us. I get excited in some ways also because it offers more opportunities to build a longer-lasting community.

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# 00:16:48 **Tania**

# And so, I'm wondering if you guys have thought about what you can do to continue building this collaboration with the Pride Center, like maybe even creating a smaller group that says, hey, let's just regularly put on small plays or maybe thinking about what are other plays we might suggest to Christine and her team. I'm just curious, have you guys given that some thought, how you could carry the torch forward beyond the play?

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# 00:17:18 **Christine**

# I will go ahead and offer that we did have a group of students who decided to do a play reading series, where they had a group. It was kind of like a book club, and they were reading diverse plays. They were reading playwrights that aren't as produced as often. So, that's one thing.

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# 00:17:32 **Christine**

# Do you students have any other ideas about how we can continue this outreach, about anything that you would personally like to see happen? Not just within the theater department, but maybe the campus at large?

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# 00:17:43 **Emma**

# I know that it's kind of difficult sometimes for students who aren't involved either in theater or like through others to know about the plays that are going on and really like get the dates and what times and when, and getting that outreach. So, one of the things I know ... my mom is a professor of history here and she's actually offering extra credit in her classes to go see the play, which is really cool because honestly, like this play is for students.

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# 00:18:09 **Emma**

# Like of course, we want our family and our parents and everyone to come see it, but we really, really want students to come see this too. Especially students who may feel represented. But if they don't know about it, then they aren't going to be able to experience it.

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# 00:18:22 **Emma**

# So, I think professors like in their classes, advertising it, talking about it, even offering extra credit for future plays too, would be really, really cool because then that gets into those students who otherwise, may not care, may not know about it, but could really benefit going and seeing a show

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# 00:18:37 **Lucie**

# Just to add to that, I feel like parents could also have just a really like impactful way of getting outreach for our plays, especially now that we're doing plays that like identify more with students and more diverse students. My dad, for example, is not even associated with Mt. SAC and he's also offering extra credit to his students to come see it, which he does for all the plays that I've been in as well.

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# 00:19:00 **Lucie**

# But I just feel like if parents have a way of doing that, whether they're a teacher or not, like just talking to people about it, even if they're not associated with the Theater Department, it could go a really long way just to show support for students of whatever community our message is getting across to.

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# 00:19:16 **Tania**

# Yeah, that's why I was so interested also in your posters because I know a great way to foster equity and diversity in our classes - like I'm in the sciences and we do these scientist spotlights, which helps to show students there's somebody out there that is a top scientist that looks like you, that is like you. And so, you basically are creating resources when you say with your posters that you're showing from the community of experts in various fields.

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# 00:19:45 **Tania**

# And so, it could really help to encourage faculty, look up this person that was on that poster. And maybe you can infuse that into your classes. We're all always super busy, so it's wonderful if someone has done the research, it would be a great resource for you to share with the campus community.

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# 00:20:01 **Tania**

# So, once the play ends, will there be any follow-up events since we're in Pride Month right now? And we kind of touched on this already, collaboration projects, maybe with the Pride Center or other groups on campus. I'd be curious to see, like you guys already mentioned that not all students have the time necessarily to come see the play, and then it's so unfortunate, it runs over for a couple of days only. And maybe it would be great to just have events in the Pride Center following this. I'm just curious if you have anything planned.

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# 00:20:32 **Christine**

# I do know that Lavender Graduation is actually today. We're recording today. That, they are doing at four o'clock in Founders Hall. And I also spoke with them and Anne Walker organized a trip to Pride by the beach on June 11th for Pride Center students as well.

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# 00:20:48 **Christine**

# The tricky thing is that pride month starts right at the end of our semester. So, the play closes the day before finals start, which is why we really wanted to make sure that the week before finals, we start the Pride Month celebrations a little early, because we're all about graduations on the 10th and we're about to go off.

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# 00:21:07 **Christine**

# But you know, as I've been talking to Cara Tan, who's just wonderful at the Pride Center, I think that now that we've started this conversation and once we see the reaction, the campus-wide reaction to what we're doing, and this pathway we're creating, I think that we will come up with some other really fun things that we can continue to do.

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# 00:21:25 **Christine**

# I'm a part of the community, I am LGBTQ+ as well. And so, the Pride Center is very near and dear to me. So, I am certain now, especially since the students are pretty jazzed about all of this, I'm betting we could probably keep this going.

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# 00:21:37 **Tania**

# So, the three students that are our guests today, are any of you graduating or will you still be with us for next year so we can continue this path?

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# 00:21:45 **El**

# I know that I'm a freshman, so I'm definitely not graduating yet. But I am honestly so excited to continue doing this. I really do want to make it a thing where we continue to have even more representations in more plays and even more stories. And even if I'm not acting in it, I want to participate in whatever I can, because I know these stories can mean so much to people.

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# 00:22:12 **El**

# Because I know that these are stories that I wished I saw so much more of when I was younger, that could have helped me. And I also, love how my parents, my mom, she tries her best and I absolutely love her for that. And she really is so excited. Like the first day I told her, like when I got the announcements of like the casting, she was like, "Oh my God, my Mija, she got in a play."

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# 00:22:38 **El**

# And she was just so absolutely happy and giddy about it. And it made my heart melt and it was such a bonding moment because it was just like a proud moment. But also, like, "I love you for who you are" kind of moment. And it just meant the absolute world to me.

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# 00:22:53 **El**

# And I'm making my grandfather go. He might not know English, but he's going. He's so supportive as well. And I just can't wait to continue doing more things like this and supporting more people in the Pride Center and the community. Yeah, I just can't wait. I love doing this. I love it.

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# 00:23:12 **Tania**

# Oh, thank you so much for sharing. That's so beautiful. What about Lucy and Emma?

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# 00:23:17 **Lucie**

# Yeah. So, I'm also a freshman and after like doing this role with Stop Kiss, I would love to continue. Like I mean, I don't know what roles would necessarily be available for me, but I would just love to continue researching and doing more things with equity within the campus I didn't know I was super interested in.

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# 00:23:34 **Lucie**

# I've always kind of been interested in like activism and things like that, but more on the research aspect of it. I would love to continue doing that in my time at Mt. SAC while I do have time, because it just has taught me so much. And if I can use my voice to get students to also educate themselves on certain topics, not even just having to do with the LGBTQ+ community, like just other communities in general - that would just mean a lot to me.

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# 00:24:01 **Lucie**

# Because just the posters we made, like hearing Tania, your reaction to them and knowing that they do have an impact, even though they're just little posters on the sidewalk that we're putting out, that just means a lot. And I would love to continue doing things like that.

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# 00:24:15 **Tania**

# What about you, Emma?

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# 00:24:17 **Emma**

# Yeah, so I am actually graduating this year. I am transferring to the University of Santa Barbara next fall. So, this is kind of bittersweet for me because this will be my last play here and my only play in person at Mt. SAC, unfortunately. Ugh, very sad.

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# 00:24:36 **Tania**

# Well, congratulations though.

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# 00:24:37 **Emma**

# Thank you.

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# 00:24:37 **Tania**

# That's a wonderful accomplishment.

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# 00:24:42 **Emma**

# I'm very excited. I'm also, like I said, it's bittersweet, it's kind of hard because I graduated from high school, class of 2020. So, my first year of college was completely online. And then like we were able to do a play and it was really amazing, but it was entirely over Zoom, and that was like a really incredible experience. But also, we didn't really get to meet the cast at all. There wasn't really an audience just in terms of like being in the space.

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# 00:25:07 **Emma**

# So, this has been the only play that I've been able to do in person, but I think it's a really amazing one to go out with. And I'm actually, I'm not majoring in theater and I probably won't be continuing with theater at UCSB, which is very sad. I want to keep it forever like as a hobby, but I'm not really pursuing any sort of a career. And so, this will probably be my last play for like the near future, which is also very sad. But this is a really, really good show to be the last one. I'm really, really excited.

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# 00:25:37 **Tania**

# I'm really happy for you that you got to experience Mt. SAC also in person, not online. My son was in the same boat as you. He graduated in 2020, and he was also a Mt. SAC student. And before he transferred to UC Irvine and yeah, just to have all classes online was hard for him because like you're saying, the connections you make in person, it makes a difference. And it's nice to hear that you'll treasure the moments you had with your theater colleagues forever in your heart, even if you will pursue other things. It's about making friends.

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# 00:26:11 **Tania**

# And I think Christine, you're very lucky because you have two freshmen, so you will get to have them around.

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# 00:26:16 **Christine**

# Oh, I'm thrilled. I'm thrilled about that

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# 00:26:18 **Tania**

# I bet you are. So, it's time to wrap up our conversation here, but is there anything else that any of you would still like to share with our listeners that we haven't touched on? I'm happy to have you give some closing remarks. Yeah, Lucy.

# 

# 00:26:32 **Lucie**

# Sorry, I'll keep it quick. But I just wanted to talk about my personal connection with the play. It's like very similar to how I kind of discovered my sexuality and discover like who I am, which I think like just to add on to how important theater is to like the LGBTQ+ community and other communities, just knowing that there is a playout there that kind of captures a moment in my life that was very impactful, is just so like important to me.

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# 00:27:00 **Lucie**

# And like I auditioned for the play. I just wanted to be a part of it in any way I could. Like if I didn't get in, I was like, okay, I'm going to be on the crew. Okay, I'm going to do this. Okay, I'm going to do that. So, I'm just like so happy I can be a part of it because I read it and I was just so like, wow, this is such a raw thing that happened to me. And the fact that someone captured it in a relatable way is so like ... it makes me feel heard and seen. And I hope that it does the same for other people. But yeah, that's all I had to say with my connection on it.

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# 00:27:26 **Tania**

# Thank you, Lucy. That's really powerful.

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# 00:27:29 **El**

# Oh, is it okay if I also say something as well?

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# 00:27:32 **Tania**

# Of course.

# 

# 00:27:33 **El**

# Awesome. I also wanted to touch on like real quick, just how it also connected with me as well, because like Lucy, it's also sort of a similar way as to how I figured it out because I didn't grow up knowing about stuff like this. Like not even in middle school did I know it was a thing that girls can be together and love one another. I didn't know that was even an option. I just thought the default was straight.

# 

# 00:28:00 **El**

# So, for so long, I kind of like pushed down those feelings, similar to how Callie is like pushing them down sort of, and just kind of like pretending sometimes that it's not even there and it really, like it does hurt in the end because it's like I shouldn't feel like I have to be hidden or kept a secret or I should have to even be ashamed for who I am because it's who I am. And that should not be anything to be disgusted about.

# 

# 00:28:28 **El**

# It's so relieving to me and so special to me knowing that I can actually help someone, that I can actually be like a leeway. Like it can cause a question of like, am I straight? Or like, do I like them? Or like, how do I feel, let me reflect on my feelings. And that just means the absolute world to me.

# 

# 00:28:49 **El**

# I want to continue doing such things like this, like just representing for people and representing for myself. I have so many friends in the Pride Center and I love those people to death, they're so amazing. And just so just heartbreaking of how wonderful they are. And I just can't wait to do more things like this, and this play is just so special. This play's like the first one I felt so passionate about. It's such an honor to actually have a part in this.

# 

# 00:29:17 **Tania**

# I really love hearing you guys' stories because to me, of course, ultimately, that's what college is all about. Yes, you have to learn the content of classes and so forth, but it's about finding yourself growing and figuring out life. It's really, really wonderful to hear your stories. Christine, do you have any last remarks before we close?

# 

# 00:29:38 **Christine**

# Sure. I just want to say that hate will lose as long as we continue to tell our stories and we continue to share, and we continue to lead by example. Because if we want a world that represents us, we need to fight for it and we need to make it.

# 

# 00:29:55 **Christine**

# We need to make this the type of community, global community we want to be a part of. And I am so proud of my students for standing up and saying, "I'm going to be heard" and saying, "This is who I am and I do not ever need to apologize for it." My students (and I'm sure Tania, you agree) give me so much hope for the future.

# 

# 00:30:14 **Tania**

# Absolutely, so much. So, I want to thank you. We're out of time. I cannot wait to see the play. I know not everybody will have the opportunity, so it'll be great to have follow-up conversations. Of course, we encourage our listeners to look up the play, Stop Kiss, engage with it. And thank you again, so-so much for your time. It was really wonderful to hear from you.

# 

# 00:30:37 **Christine**

# Thank you, Tania, for having us.

# 

# 00:30:42 **Christina**

# Thank you for listening to the Magic Mountie Podcast, and don't forget to share your favorite episodes.

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