



HMONG!

THE CIA'S SECRET ARMY

Based on a screenplay by Lee Vang; adapted for the stage by Jaime Meyer and Lee Vang.

Objective

To present ***Hmong! The CIA's Secret Army***, adapted for the stage by Lee Vang and Jaime Meyer based on a screenplay by Lee Vang, in the fall of 2025 for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Hmong migrations to Minnesota. This play was premiered at History Theatre in the Spring of 1999 with an impactful production that garnered critical and box office success. **History Theatre**, in cooperation with a committee of supporters led by Minnesota State Senator Tou Xiong, is seeking funding opportunities to produce this piece authentically and with the production values it deserves.

About History Theatre

Founded in 1978, History Theatre is an Ivey Award-winning theater located in downtown St. Paul that presents a main stage season of primarily new works. History Theatre's mission is to entertain, educate, and engage audiences by creating, developing, and producing new and existing works that explore Minnesota's past and our diverse American experience. This work is guided

by a core belief that history provides a unique lens through which to see and understand contemporary issues.

History Theatre has commissioned and developed over 130 new plays and musicals; presenting 5-6 mainstage shows each season in its 575-seat theatre in downtown St Paul; a week-long RAW Stages New Work Festival and two weeks Next Stage Play Development Workshops. Its education, engagement and touring programs expand and deepen the theatre's mission.

About 50th Anniversary

Today, Minnesota is home to about 95,000 Hmong. Every Hmong family in Minnesota and across America comes with a war, refugee, and resettlement story. The Year 2025 will mark 50 years of the Hmong migration to the State of Minnesota. The Hmong began arriving in the state after the conclusion of the Secret War in 1975 (or end of the Cold War Era in Southeast Asia).

This 50th Anniversary plays a significant part in Hmong history from Laos to Minnesota. The funding we are asking for is to support this production with the goals to:

- Educate the general public of the Hmong journey of coming to Minnesota
- Bring more constructive dialogues and deeper understanding between generations from this experience
- Connect families and their generational war and refugee experiences to the younger generations
- Bring unity across communities to share their immigrant and refugee stories
- Honor the sacrifices of veterans during the war

About *Hmong! The CIA's Secret Army*

The War in Vietnam, Laos, 1962. A 13-year-old Hmong boy named Meng Thao is recruited by the CIA to fight and was separated from his family and his beloved childhood girlfriend, Pa Vang. Meng is caught in a war he does not understand and wants nothing more than to return to his beloved Pa. It is a story of love, family, war, and ultimately, immigration to Saint Paul.

From Playwright Lee Vang: *Growing up, my parents would tell me war stories that haunted me every night. They'd constantly remind me of how they carried me in their pockets across the big ocean to escape the Communists, to escape death and a war that not only dispersed the Hmong all over the world but wiped out almost half of its population. "You must not forget," they'd say.*

This is a personal story of mine and I tell it so that future generations will know what Hmong is, where they came from, and why they are here. The Hmong, a brave people, have so much to be proud of. We must not forget that.

From Sidewalk TwinCities writer Erin Hart: ***Hmong! The CIA's Secret Army*** has all the vital requirements of outstanding theater: exciting performances; a compelling story told in an interesting, theatrical way; and a chance to learn something new about ourselves and our community.

The script has an epic sweep, successfully weaving personal stories into a complicated political backdrop. Dialogue in English and Hmong seems completely natural and enriches the experience of the play immeasurably, adding humor, gut-level authenticity, and – not least of all – increasing the play's accessibility to a truly diverse audience.

The Need

We are committed to telling this important story authentically and thoughtfully. Depending on the level of secured funding resources, the presentation may range from a selection of meaningful excerpts to a fully staged reading of the play, or a fully staged presentation. We are inviting community partners, donors, and businesses with a vested interest in its success to make meaningful contributions.

**Thank you for your
consideration and for more
information please contact:**

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