

Elizabeth W. Son

**TRANSPACIFIC ACTS OF MEMORY: THE AFTERLIVES OF
*HANAKO***

In producing Chungmi Kim's eponymous *Hanako* (1999), the first Asian American play on the topic of "comfort women," East West Players (EWP) provided a critical space for addressing this devastating chapter of Asian history and showing its relevance to communities in the United States. It also inadvertently launched the play on a ten-year transpacific journey as *Comfort Women* (2004) in New York and as *Nabi* (2005–9) throughout South Korea and Canada. *Hanako* dramatizes the intergenerational bonds between a Korean American university student, her grandmother, and Korean "comfort women" survivors who travel to New York to give their public testimonies. As the play develops, one learns that the grandmother has been repressing her own memories of enslavement as one of an estimated two hundred thousand young girls and women euphemistically called "comfort women" whom the Japanese Imperial military forced into sexually servicing its troops in the years leading up to and during World War II.¹ Survivors kept their wartime experiences a secret from the public until the early 1990s, when a social movement for redress emerged in Asia. Over the past two and a half decades, activists and artists from around the world have joined survivors in their quest for justice. The recent agreement in 2015 between South Korea and Japan to "resolve" the "comfort women" issue sparked outcry from survivors and their supporters for its insincerity and inadequacy, further galvanizing the movement. *Hanako* and its afterlives as *Comfort Women* and *Nabi* are part of the transpacific

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culture of political activism and artistic expression that contends with the ongoing struggle over the history of “comfort women.”²

The production of *Hanako* was part of an effort in the late 1990s to broaden EWP’s repertory, especially to reach Korean American audiences. “The EWP,” writes Esther Kim Lee, “have had the longest history of producing plays written by Korean or Korean American writers.”³ Although during the early years of its history, EWP produced three plays by cofounder Soon-Tek Oh (in 1967 and 1970), the company did not stage another play by a Korean American playwright until Sung Rno’s *Cleveland Raining* (1995) and Kim’s *Hanako* (1999).⁴ “Korean American plays,” adds Lee, “were rarely produced during the 1970s and 1980s, when plays presented under the category of ‘Asian American theater’ were mostly about the Chinese and Japanese American experiences.”⁵ EWP had a “predominantly Japanese American” subscription base in the 1980s: “It was only in the mid-1990s,” she points out, “that the company explicitly made efforts to include plays about other ethnicities.”⁶ Tim Dang, artistic director of EWP, hoped that *Hanako* would foster dialogue between the Japanese American and Korean American communities.⁷ A play such as *Hanako* could appeal both to first- and second-generation Korean Americans and to Japanese American audiences learning about the history of “comfort women” for the first time. One audience member, Mary Omoto, who saw the EWP production said, “Before I saw the play, I didn’t know something like this had happened. For the Japanese not to offer an apology is appalling.”⁸ Reviewer Sam Chu Lin wrote, “Many in the audience were visibly moved by what they had seen,” adding that “fears that the presentation might split Los Angeles’ Korean and Japanese communities proved unfounded.”⁹

Hanako was part of a season that included productions of Cherylene Lee’s *Carry the Tiger to the Mountain*, about the murder of Vincent Chin, and Tim Dang and Joel Iwataki’s *Beijing Spring: A Musical Odyssey*, about the Tiananmen Square uprising.¹⁰ These productions focused on the mobilization of individuals and local communities against injustice. Alice Tuan wrote that this lineup “seemed to create a season of Theatre of Guilt and kept new audiences from being interested.”¹¹ *Hanako* and its subsequent productions as *Comfort Women* and *Nabi* deal less with narratives of guilt, Japanese culpability, and state politics. Instead, *Hanako* focuses on personal and familial conflicts over memory, and thus it encourages dialogue about a potentially divisive history across ethnic and national boundaries. The play fosters compassion for the survivors while allowing the audience to identify with the granddaughter figure as a witness to the women’s survival and activism. Though the play is sentimental and didactic at times, it stages and offers a redressive critique of dominant narratives surrounding sexual slavery at the hands of the Japanese military: the “comfort women” issue as a strictly Asian concern; a nation-centered history of silencing; and the privileging of redress in the form of an official apology and reparations. *Hanako*, *Comfort Women*, and *Nabi* treat remembrance, witnessing, and community formation as more than simply common themes but as possibilities enacted through productions around the world.

Kim, a first-generation Korean American poet, playwright, and screenwriter, first wrote *The Comfort Women* (1995), a one-act play inspired by the testimonies of survivors.¹² Reading these testimonial accounts “shocked and enraged” the

playwright, compelling her to examine, as Diane Haithman puts it, the “emotional scars of women who had survived 50 years of shame.”¹³ “I wanted to honor all the ‘comfort women’; those who broke the silence and those who have not,” explained Kim. “And I wanted to give them a voice with dignity in hopes that the world would listen to them and do something to prevent the recurrence of such horrific human-rights violations.”¹⁴ Kim articulates the redressive possibilities of artistic treatments of the history of “comfort women.” She also seeks to expand the often nationally and temporally bounded parameters of the “comfort women” issue beyond merely “condemn[ing] such war crimes by Japan” to include discussions of women’s human rights.¹⁵ Kim considers the history of “comfort women” to be “not just the story of the past” but an example of how a lack of state responsibility for the crimes of military sexual slavery contributes to the contemporary culture of impunity granted to perpetrators of violent crimes against women.¹⁶

After meeting survivors in Korea, she developed the one-act play into a full-length version titled *Hanako*, which premiered in 1999 at EWP’s David Henry Hwang Theater, where it was directed by Tzi Ma.¹⁷ “Instead of recounting the horrors of war,” wrote Haithman, *Hanako* focuses on “a fictional meeting between some aged comfort women and a very traditional Korean grandmother of their generation who meets them when she emigrates to New York.”¹⁸ “The power of Kim’s text,” wrote Julio Martinez of EWP’s production, “compensates for the occasionally uneven, self-conscious performances of the four-person ensemble and director Tzi Ma’s unimaginative, pedestrian staging.”¹⁹ In spite of the fluctuating production values of *Hanako*, EWP staged an important intervention: it gave visibility to the history and cause of “comfort women” survivors. The play’s subsequent production lives as *Comfort Women* and *Nabi* is the focus of the rest of this article.

COMFORT WOMEN (2004)

For the revised production *Comfort Women*, Kim strengthened the relationship between the grandmother and her granddaughter, made the character of the grandmother’s mother more prominent throughout the play, and wrote the final scene to be more hopeful.²⁰ The play, which received mostly positive reviews, was directed by Frances Hill at the Off-Broadway theatre Urban Stages in New York.²¹ Lindsey Wilson described the Urban Stages production as a “play of enormous emotion and prominent social awareness.”²² She continued, “The cruel and inhumane treatment these girls were subjected to is horrific and graphic in its description, but it is a description that needs to be broadcast to the world. *Comfort Women* is here to not only declare ‘this happened,’ but ‘this happened to me.’”²³ She concluded that the play’s personalization of history, allowing audiences to connect with individuals, is a “very powerful way to learn, but it’s also a very emotionally draining method of learning.”²⁴ Some reviewers pointed to the weaknesses of the play. While Jenny Sandman considered the play “overdue and a timely examination of war atrocities,” she wrote that the “compelling story” becomes “a little harried” toward the end: “The yelling, singing and the many brutal stories leave no time for the audience to rest or reflect.”²⁵ “The script

suffers from a tendency toward melodrama and convenient coincidences to move the story forward,” wrote Dan Bacalzo.²⁶

The realist drama of *Comfort Women* takes place in the living quarters of an elderly Korean woman who lives with her family in Queens, New York, and has dreams and flashbacks of her life before, during, and after World War II. Her twenty-one-year-old granddaughter Jina interrupts her private reveries by inviting home two survivors. Jina’s grandmother is reserved and dismissive of these survivors and their activist work, prompting one of the survivors to passionately defend their cause and share her wartime experience. Frustrated with her grandmother’s rudeness, Jina storms out of the room and is not present when the tension between the grandmother and the survivors reaches a climactic moment. One of the visiting survivors confirms her suspicion that the grandmother is a former “comfort woman” when she catches a glimpse of the name “Hanako” in Japanese tattooed on her back. While the survivor recalls her memories of Jina’s grandmother as a young woman, the grandmother becomes visibly upset and adamantly denies that she was Hanako, the name a Japanese officer gave to her when she was a “comfort woman.” After Jina takes the two survivors to a rally to protest a speech by the Japanese emperor at the United Nations, a series of reenactments of the past that the script refers to as “memory scenes” takes place on an upstage platform behind a scrim. After remembering painful scenes from her time in the “comfort stations” and from her postwar life, the grandmother tells the ghost of her mother that she was Hanako and that she and her mother need to accept her past. Jina, who hears about her grandmother’s secret past from the other two survivors, returns to comfort her grandmother and to assure her that she loves her grandmother and that the two of them will share her story with others.

The playwright’s decision to locate the story of the encounter between the grandmother and the other two survivors in the United States demonstrates the supranational contours of the social movement for redress and frames it as a transnational Asian American narrative. Don Shirley postulates that “perhaps [Kim] was trying to demonstrate just how far the bitterness engendered by the Japanese actions can travel.”²⁷ However, he finds the setting “arbitrarily distant” from the location where the violence first took place.²⁸ Unlike the critic, I view the setting of the narrative in the United States as strategic: locating it across the Pacific from the origins of the wartime experience was necessary for the larger cultural work the play performs. The grandmother’s immigration to the United States has made it possible for her to “forget” her past. Repressing her memories of having served as a military sex slave, Jina’s grandmother instead channels her memories of the past into a personal memorializing of her brother. Her brother, who was conscripted into the Japanese Imperial Army, was badly wounded during the Hiroshima bombing when he was stationed there and passed away from his injuries after he returned to Korea.²⁹ The action of the play unfolds on the day the grandmother is preparing for her brother’s *jesa*, a Korean memorial ritual, held in the home on the anniversary of a loved one’s death, in which food, drinks, and prayers are offered to the spirit of the deceased. Jina brings home the survivors because she thinks they will help her grandmother seek reparations on behalf of her brother.

In bringing these two histories into conversation—the conscription of Korean colonial subjects into the Japanese Imperial Army and the American bombings of Japan during World War II—Kim gestures toward the complicated transpacific politics of remembering World War II-era atrocities. One of the visiting survivors encourages Jina’s grandmother to report her brother’s death to a Japanese organization that is collecting data in preparation for pressing Japan to make reparations to its former World War II colonial conscripts. The possibility of pursuing reparative measures from the United States with regard to the Hiroshima bombing is not even mentioned. In fact, the play enacts a forgetting of US culpability in privileging the brother’s victimization as a Japanese colonial subject. While national politics of memory are not the focal point of *Comfort Women*, the play does raise an important question regarding who is responsible for remembering and atoning for these wartime atrocities.

Though immigration to the United States allows for a forgetting of certain traumatic memories from the homeland for the grandmother, the United States also becomes a site for remembering for second-generation Asian Americans who have a different relationship to the history of “comfort women.” Laura Hyun Yi Kang writes about Korean American cultural productions that address “comfort women” history “as enunciating not only a diasporic Korean identification with the ‘comfort women’ but also the producers’ cultural and national location in the United States, a place that allows and enables its variously ethnicized subjects into such rememberings and representations.”³⁰ Situating *Comfort Women* in the United States allows the playwright to explore the participation of Asian Americans, particularly those of Korean descent, in the transnational social movement. Jina sees her support of survivors as an extension of how her grandmother taught her to “value [her] Korean heritage and do something worthwhile.”³¹ Through the character of Jina, the play dramatizes how many second-generation Korean Americans have been drawn to the cause of the survivors through a combination of a desire for close ties to one’s cultural heritage and an espousal of human rights and social justice.³² Jina, who is characterized as idealistic, passionate, and caring, is politically involved in the cause of “comfort women”: she studies their history, attends rallies that raise awareness, and gathers signatures for a petition to the Japanese government in support of survivors’ demands for redress.

Comfort Women also imagines how different survivors might have continued their lives, from a grandmother who has kept her past a secret from her family to survivor-activists who travel the world to tell their stories. The grandmother represents the countless women who chose not to come forward. In Korea, two hundred and thirty-eight former sex slaves officially registered with the South Korean government in order to receive government support for housing, living, and medical expenses,³³ as of December 2015, only forty-six of these women were still alive.³⁴ These numbers do not include the thousands of women who did not come forward to the government and most likely kept their past a secret from their families and communities. Because of the Confucian roots of a patriarchal society such as that of Korea, which valorized a woman’s chastity, survivors faced immense social stigma and ostracism from their own families and communities. The play opens up the space for the audience to consider communal and

familial responsibility for silencing this history and intensifying the suffering of survivors. In the case of Jina's grandmother, her mother forced a sense of shame upon her daughter and insisted that she forget her past so she would be able to reintegrate into society. The grandmother adopted this attitude of shame and attempts to pass it on to her granddaughter: "Those women—are not the kind of people Koreans are proud of," she explains. "They are shaming our country."³⁵ This sense of ignominy stems not only from past victimization at the hands of Japanese colonial powers but also from current exhumation of the past by survivors.

The play challenges this discourse of shame and presents survivors as dignified and as people who are integral to the social movement. *Comfort Women* shows that many Americans have learned about this history through the international travels of survivors who have participated in court hearings, protests, and testimonial events organized and sponsored by student groups on university campuses, civic and social organizations, and human rights organizations in the United States. In the play, the two survivors are in New York to participate in the rally to protest the Japanese emperor's speech. Kim juxtaposes the public space of the UN protest with the private space of the home to illustrate the possibilities of reparative action beyond officially sanctioned parameters. The private space of the grandmother's living quarters becomes an alternative redressive space, decentering the Japanese state as the sole provider of justice. Restitution goes beyond apologies and reparations from the state; it also includes the personal sharing of memory. Private exchanges of memory enable survivors to depart from scripted public testimonies and thus assert ownership over their own narratives.³⁶ In *Comfort Women*, the two visiting survivors make their case for remembering and redressing the injustices committed against former "comfort women," particularly to the grandmother who embodies the reluctance of many Koreans to join their cause and to Jina. The survivors view members of Jina's generation as agents of reparative action. "We were political hostages—sacrificed out of human greed and injustice. Yet, in our homeland, we were the outcasts hidden away. The faceless faces, the voiceless voices for over fifty years. . . . Who can give us back our youth?" asks one of the survivors as she turns to Jina.³⁷ "Your generation is our hope," the other survivor tells Jina.³⁸ The elderly women articulate a multigenerational horizon for justice and consider Jina and her generation to be the torchbearers of the struggle.

NABI (2005–9)

In contrast to the US productions, the Korean productions of *Nabi*, which received positive reviews, become an explicit form of arts-based activism.³⁹ Eunmi Bang wanted to direct a play in 2005 in connection with the sixtieth anniversary of Korea's liberation from Japanese colonial rule. "As a woman," she told me in an interview, "I also wanted to tell a story about women."⁴⁰ Bang understood that liberation from Japanese colonial rule was not a widespread joyful event because of the devastation to communities, particularly the women who had been forced into military sexual servitude. Survivors faced an uncertain future

of social ostracism and psychological and health issues. Bang read a Korean newspaper article about the New York production of *Comfort Women* and decided to contact the playwright. She felt compelled to share Kim's play about "comfort women" whose wartime and postwar experiences complicate a celebratory remembering of Korea's liberation. The two women engaged in e-mail correspondence over several months about translations and about restructuring the play. In addition, Kim attended rehearsals before the premiere in Korea to offer her feedback.⁴¹ Translated into Korean with minimal revisions, *Nabi* premiered in May 2005 at the Seoul Theater Festival and toured throughout South Korea in 2006.⁴² Bang, the founder of the Nabi Theatre Company, continued to direct and produce the play in theatres, schools, churches, prisons, and on the streets for the next three years, even taking *Nabi* to Toronto and Vancouver in 2008.⁴³

Though she is slim and petite, Bang has a loud, almost shrill voice that I could not help but hear during 2007 protests in Seoul known as the Wednesday Demonstrations, during which we all stood across from the Japanese Embassy and called out for an official apology and legal reparations. After the protests, I noticed the director energetically greeting the survivors. When Bang agreed to an interview the following summer, she asked that I meet her at a protest not too far from the Japanese Embassy, this time for a completely different cause. In the summer of 2008, protesters in groups as small as a handful and as large as several thousand demonstrated daily in front of government buildings, along the streets, and in open plazas against the importation of American beef in particular and against the conservative Lee Myung-bak presidency in general. On the designated afternoon of our interview, I found my way to a small clearing by a street near the city center where Bang had gathered with her fellow Catholic parishioners. A group of riot police stood next to the small group of protesters. Bang and I sat on a stone platform between the police and the protesters. After the group dispersed, Bang asked that we find a quiet place to talk. We began our interview in a hole-in-the-wall restaurant specializing in beef soup and *soju*, a rice-based alcoholic drink. Then we wandered through the streets of central Seoul, eventually ending up in front of a bookstore. What I found interesting about our walking interview was Bang's need to be on the move and close to passersby. She did not want to be sequestered, instead choosing to be immersed in the everyday landscape of the city's residents. This desire for connection with local communities is evident in Bang's work in *Nabi* and her touring of the production to nontraditional performance spaces to enact social change.

The changes to the script were geared toward making the play more palatable to a Korean audience and less emotionally draining. *Comfort Women*, according to Bang, was clearly written for an American audience and consequently came across as didactic, with its barrage of testimonial accounts of wartime experience. Because the history of sexual slavery at the hands of the Japanese military is more widely known in Korea, Bang explained that the play "should not be for educational purposes only, but also develop an impression and move toward catharsis."⁴⁴ Bang felt that Kim approached the subject matter as a human rights issue, whereas she viewed her artistic process in very personal terms. "For me, the grandmothers

are like my mother,” she told me.⁴⁵ Her focus was on restoring their dignity and showing them as women who are not consumed by their past.

Through the play, Bang wanted Korean audiences to have a glimpse into how the grandmothers are living today, not just a series of recollections of the past. “The grandmothers,” Bang said to me, “do not continue to live depressed lives and always say, ‘I was a “comfort woman,” I am unhappy.’”⁴⁶ She added more singing, such as the Korean folk song “Arirang,” to illustrate that survivors enjoy everyday life and are not solely defined by their past. Another major change in the script was the omission of one survivor’s account that Japanese soldiers placed women at the entrance of a cave as human shields. Though the playwright wanted to retain this moment, believing it to be one of the saddest accounts retold, Bang thought it necessary to alternate the narrative flow of the play with “both tension and relaxation,” so that there was not a constant bombardment of testimonial accounts.⁴⁷

The company that performed *Nabi* in Korea viewed their work as a form of activism, one that was part of the advocacy for state redress for survivors while also using theatre to teach younger generations. In 2007, *Nabi* was produced in ten middle schools and high schools in Seoul as part of an education initiative sponsored by the Seoul Department of Education.⁴⁸ “The Department of Education,” Bang explained, “understood that I was teaching history through performance.”⁴⁹ Since it is difficult in Korea to delve into the complexities of the “comfort women” issue in history textbooks, Bang said, the “Seoul Department of Education selected my performance work for live historical education.”⁵⁰ During a postperformance talk at Sookmyung Girls’ High School in Seoul in 2007, I was struck by how the director framed her troupe’s productions of *Nabi* as a reparative gesture.⁵¹ The company sought not only to teach history but also, in the process, to raise a protest consciousness. *Nabi*, which has been seen in countless productions in Korea, is an important cultural means through which Koreans of all ages have learned about the story of “comfort women” survivors and their quest for justice.

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Chungmi Kim’s *Hanako* and its afterlives as *Comfort Women* and *Nabi* perform an important task of representing and documenting a transpacific politics of memory, the global reach of the social movement for redress, and the postwar lives of survivors—both those who have chosen a quiet life and those who have taken an active role in the social movement. But these productions do more than portray the experiences and histories of survivors; they have also brought together larger communities invested in memorializing the history of “comfort women” in the face of state obfuscations and in offering a critique of the burdens women have borne in colonial and nationalistic projects. This redressive theatre, which began on the stages of East West Players and has traveled both east and west, creates a space of reengagement where artists and audiences can remember and bear witness to the history and legacies of these brave women.

ENDNOTES

1. Estimates of the number of “comfort women” range from several thousand to two hundred thousand. See Yoshiaki Yoshimi, *Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery in the Japanese Military during World War II*, trans. Suzanne O’Brien (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000 [*Jugun ianfu*, 1995]), 43, 91–4.

2. *Hanako*, *Comfort Women*, and *Nabi* join a flourishing body of theatrical work on the history of “comfort women.” Select theatrical representations include Doo-rae Han, *A Silent Dirge* (Korea, 1993); Gil-cha Hur, *Coming and Going at Sundown* (Korea, 1996); Miyagi Satoshi, *Medea* (Japan, 1999); Chen Shi-Zheng, *Forgiveness* (United States, 2000); Jeany Park, *Falling Flowers* (United States, 2003); Eve Ensler, “Say It, for the ‘Comfort Women,’” in *The Vagina Monologues* as part of the V-Day Global Campaign for “Comfort Women” (United States, 2006); Aida Karic, *The Trojan Women: An Asian Story* (Austria, United States, and Korea, 2007); Haerry Kim, *Face* (United States and Korea 2009); Hae-sung Lee, *Red Poem* (Korea, 2013); and Jeong-mo Yoon, *Bongseonhwa* (Korea and United States, 2013, 2014). These stage productions join an extant body of aesthetic productions representing the history of “comfort women,” including literature, visual art, music, dance, and documentary film.

3. Esther Kim Lee, “Introduction,” in *Seven Contemporary Plays from the Korean Diaspora in the Americas*, ed. Esther Kim Lee (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), xvi.

4. East West Players, “Production History & Archive,” accessed 12 June 2015, www.eastwestplayers.org/about/production-history-archive/.

5. Lee makes note of a few exceptions. See Esther Kim Lee, “Introduction,” xvii.

6. *Ibid.*

7. In her *Los Angeles Times* article on Chungmi Kim and the story behind *Hanako*, Diane Haithman writes, “East West Players artistic director Tim Dang says he already was interested in the story of comfort women when Kim sent her script to the theater for consideration. And the play fit, too, because the theater had been looking for ways to reach out to Los Angeles’ fast-growing Korean community.” See Diane Haithman, “Baring the Scars of Shame,” *Los Angeles Times*, 4 April 1999, accessed 23 April 2015, <http://articles.latimes.com/1999/apr/04/entertainment/ca-23914>. EWP has recently reported that Dang will be stepping down in June 2016 after a tenure of almost twenty-three years: East West Players, “Tim Dang to Step Down, Making Way for New Leadership; East West Players to Engage in Year of Transition,” news release, 30 June 2015, accessed 9 February 2016, www.eastwestplayers.org/news/tim-dang-to-step-down-making-way-for-new-leadership/.

8. As quoted in Sam Chu Lin, “A Tragedy Retold,” *Asiaweek*, 7 May 1999, accessed 23 April 2015, www.cnn.com/ASIANOW/asiaweek/99/0507/feat2.html.

9. *Ibid.*

10. The season also included Philip Kan Gotanda’s *Yohen*. For more on the season, see East West Players, “Production History & Archive,” accessed 12 June 2015, www.eastwestplayers.org/about/production-history-archive/.

11. Alice Tuan, “The Crisis of Label,” in *Theatre in Crisis?: Performance Manifestos for a New Century*, edited by Maria M. Delgado and Caridad Svich (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 112–20, at 116.

12. *The Comfort Women* won the Grand Prize at the University of Southern California (USC) One-Act Play Festival in 1995. It was completed with the Jerome Lawrence Playwright Award from the USC Professional Writing Program and was also a finalist of the O’Neill Playwrights Conference. It was published in D. L. Lepidus, ed., *New Playwrights: The Best Plays of 2005* (Hanover: Smith & Kraus, 2006), 51–100, where see Lepidus, “Playwright’s Biography,” 52; and C. Kim, “From the Playwright,” 54.

13. C. Kim, “From the Playwright,” 54; and Haithman.

14. C. Kim, “From the Playwright,” 54.

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Hanako* premiered at East West Players on 7 April 1999 as part of the thirty-third season. See also C. Kim, "From the Playwright," 54.
18. Haithman.
19. Julio Martinez, "Review: *Hanako*," *Variety*, 14 April 1999, accessed 23 April 2015, <http://variety.com/1999/film/reviews/hanako-1200457299/>.
20. Chungmi Kim, phone conversation with author, 27 May 2015.
21. Urban Stages, founded by Frances Hill, aims to showcase new playwrights. Hill is also interested in plays that "[bring] out the cross-cultures in New York, where we live," so Urban Stages develops and produces plays by "multiethnic playwrights that speak to the whole of society." *Comfort Women* is an example of such a play. See Adrienne Onofri, "Women Who Run the Show: Frances Hill of Urban Stages," *Broadway World*, 26 March 2009, accessed 20 October 2010, http://offbroadway.broadwayworld.com/article/Women_Who_Run_the_Show_Frances_Hill_of_Urban_Stages_20090326.
22. Lindsey Wilson, "Comfort Women," *Talkin' Broadway*, 28 October 2004, accessed 20 October 2010, www.talkinbroadway.com/ob/10_28_04.html.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Jenny Sandman, "Comfort Women," *CurtainUp*, n.d., accessed 12 August 2015, www.curtainup.com/comfortwomen.html.
26. Dan Bacalzo, "Comfort Women," *TheaterMania*, 2 November 2004, accessed 13 August 2015, www.theatermania.com/new-york-city-theater/reviews/11-2004/comfort-women_5286.html.
27. Don Shirley, "A Grim Past Lives with Them Still: *Hanako* Struggles to Capture the Soul-Searing Experiences of WWII 'Comfort Women,'" *Los Angeles Times*, 9 April 1999, accessed 19 October 2010, <http://articles.latimes.com/1999/apr/09/entertainment/ca-25560>.
28. Ibid.
29. The grandmother was not completely forthright with her granddaughter, who thinks her uncle was "drafted into the Japanese Army and got killed during World War II." The grandmother opens up to the other survivors and tells only them the truth about her brother. See C. Kim, *Comfort Women*, 61, 69.
30. Laura Hyun Yi Kang, "Conjuring 'Comfort Women': Mediated Affiliations and Disciplined Subjects in Korean/American Transnationality," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 6.1 (2003): 25–55, at 33.
31. C. Kim, *Comfort Women*, 64.
32. Since the 1990s, Asian American students and organizations have organized fund-raisers and supported visits by survivors to testify at universities.
33. The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan advocated for the South Korean government to provide support for survivors. In 1993, the 일제하 일본군 '위안부' 피해자 생활안정지원법 (Iljeha Ilbongun Wianbu Pihaeja Saenghwaranjeongjiwonbeop; Daily Life Stability Support Act for Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan) was passed. The Korean government provides survivors with "housing, living expenses, and free medical services." See 한국정신대문제대책협의회 (Hanguk Jeongsindae Munje Daechaek Yeobuihoe; The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan), *지울 수 없는 역사, 일본군 '위안부' (Jiul Su Eomneun Yeoksa, Ilbongun Wianbul; History That Can't Be Erased: Japanese Military "Comfort Women")* (Seoul: The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan and the Ministry of Gender Equality & Family, 2005), 40.
34. Sang-hun Choe, "Japan and South Korea Settle Dispute Over Wartime 'Comfort Women,'" *New York Times*, 29 December 2015, A1.
35. C. Kim, *Comfort Women*, 64.
36. A typical script for testimonies includes information about where the woman was born, the circumstances in which she entered sexual slavery, her experience during captivity, her return home, and her involvement in the social movement for redress.
37. C. Kim, *Comfort Women*, 91.

38. Ibid.

39. *Nabi* means butterfly in Korean. Activists use butterflies as a mascot for the survivors, symbolizing their coming out with their past and their liberation as survivors. Eunmi Bang, the play's director, adds that the character of Jina's grandmother is like a butterfly; when she repressed her past, she was trapped in the "caterpillar stage," and when she accepted her past, she emerged as a butterfly. Bang also adds that she hopes that the story of survivors as told through her productions will "spread far with the butterfly effect." Finally, the audience transitions from a "caterpillar" state of ignorance about the past to "butterflies" who know the "truth and follow through with action." See Eunmi Bang, interview with the author, Seoul, 2 August 2008.

40. Bang interview.

41. Bang told me that a dear friend of hers translated the script, but she would not offer the friend's name. She shared the translations with the playwright, who also offered suggestions.

42. Yoon-young Lee, "연출가와 관객 올린 연극 '나비'" (Yeunchulgawa Gwangaek Oohlleen Yeunguk "Nabi"; Tears of the Producers and Audience for *Nabi*), *Yonhap News*, 6 May 2005, accessed 9 March 2011, <http://news.naver.com/main/read.nhn?mode=LSD&mid=sec&sid1=104&oid=001&aid=0000995377>.

43. Bang's Arirang Theatre Company first produced the play. They later changed their name to the Nabi Theatre Company. For a review of the production in Vancouver that was presented at the Evergreen Cultural Centre, see Yeonyong An, "위안부 할머니 실화 연극 '나비'" (Wianbu Halmeoni Silhwa Yeonguk Nabi; The True Story of "Comfort Women" Grandmothers in the Drama *Nabi*), 19 November 2008, accessed 23 April 2015, www.koreatimes.com/article/487414.

44. Bang interview.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid.

48. For more on other productions of *Nabi* in Seoul schools, see Sangdon Pak, "연극 '나비' 서울 6 개 학교서 공연" (Yeonguk "Nabi" Seoul 6 Gae Hakgyoseo Gongyeon; Performances of the Play "Nabi" at 6 Schools in Seoul), *Yonhap News*, 8 May 2007, accessed 12 August 2015, <http://news.naver.com/main/read.nhn?mode=LSD&mid=sec&sid1=103&oid=001&aid=0001629972>.

49. Bang interview.

50. Ibid.

51. Postperformance discussion of *Nabi*, Sookmyung Girls' High School, 20 July 2007.