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UVA DRAMA TO PRESENT QUI NGUYEN'S *SHE KILLS MONSTERS*

Opening November 14 in the Ruth Caplin Theatre

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA – DATE, 2019 –The UVA Department of Drama will continue its 2019-2020 season with Qui Nguyen's *She Kills Monsters*, opening November 14 in the Ruth Caplin Theatre, and directed by UVA Drama Artistic Director Marianne Kubik.

She Kills Monsters is a deep and fascinating dive into the world of fantasy role-playing games. It tells the story of Agnes Evans as she copes with the accidental death of her teenage sister, Tilly. When Agnes finds Tilly's Dungeons & Dragons design module, she stumbles into an action-packed adventure inside Tilly's imaginary refuge from her adolescent experience, finding herself on an unexpected hero's quest. The play, from acclaimed young playwright Qui Nguyen, is a high-octane adventure that serves as an homage to the geek and warrior within us all, and a surprisingly sweet tale of friendship, loss, and acceptance.

"The Drama Department has considered this intricate script for a number of years," Kubik said, "and now is a perfect time to explore its complexities and production challenges. As its director, I'm excited to collaborate with our extensive acting, design, and technology team on sharing an essentially simple story about the value behind role-play in finding our ideal selves, and how we might safely share that self in ways we may not be comfortable with in the real world.

The production comes at a time when Dungeons and Dragons, and other fantasy-based games, are enjoying a resurgence, Kubik said. "I was amazed to discover how many of our students regularly play the game, and it proved a strong selling point for encouraging students to participate. As someone who hasn't previously been connected to D&D culture but is taking the lead in this storytelling project, I'm learning a lot from my students' experience and am thankful for the kind of collaborative exchange our Drama productions offer among students and faculty."

The show has offered Kubik opportunity to expand the UVA Drama student experience with the integration of puppetry to portray the "monsters" that jump from the game board to the stage. "We don't often feature puppetry in our productions," she said, "and our student designers and actors have really embraced this opportunity to learn the skills for one of the oldest storytelling forms. Design, fabrication and operation of these puppets has been an intricate adventure, and I'm excited to see the results of our experiment."

The show will also expand the artistic landscape for UVA Drama by diving into the digital realm through a collaboration with UVA Digital Media Professor Mona Kasra. "Mona has been in close collaboration

with Chicago-based scenic design team Jeff Kmiec and Milo Bue and M.F.A. lighting design candidate Lauren Duffie to bring the visual world of D&D to life. This will help move us from fantasy to reality as seamlessly onstage as we would in our minds, by using state-of-the-art digital technology instead of traditional set changes.”

Tickets for *She Kills Monsters* are sold through the UVA Arts Box Office and are available online at www.artsboxoffice.virginia.edu, by phone at 434-924-3376, or in person at the UVA Arts Box office located in the lobby of the Drama Building. Hours of operation are noon to 5PM, Monday through Friday. Parking for UVA Drama performances is available at the Culbreth Road Parking Garage, conveniently located alongside the theaters.

To access photos of *She Kills Monsters*, visit <https://virginia.box.com/s/ugumo58hrtuxftaxwcrjoek2u9i7uk7>

For more information on the 2019-2020 UVA Drama season, visit <http://drama.virginia.edu/current-season>.