

Access Guide: Mark of a Woman



Picture by Mark Pickthall | Photo of Chisato Minamimura

Image description:

A photo of Chisato performing, there is a projected image in white of various people as silhouettes in the background.

Theatre Passe Muraille's Relaxed Environment

Mark of a Woman will be performed at Theatre Passe Muraille as a Relaxed Environment. A Relaxed Environment is designed to create a more welcoming atmosphere for all audience members, including those who could specifically benefit from a more informal approach, and a 'relaxing' of formal theatre conventions.

A Relaxed Environment includes:

At the theatre:

- A very low-level house light in the audience
- the ability for anyone to come and go from the space, get up and move, as needed
- Ability to leave your phone on silent or vibrate
- A more open approach to audience movement or sound
- May also include a quiet space to sit
- May also include a Peer Support facilitator on select days

This Access Guide, that includes:

- An introduction to the play and some of the key elements
- Specific environmental, content and trigger warnings

Thank you to TPM's Access Sponsor



What's Included in this Access Guide?

This information package aims to help anyone access and understand the play. In particular, the guide may assist those who have different needs for communication including, but not exclusively, Autistic People, those who communicate using multiple languages, as well as others who may be challenged by some theatrical constructs.

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Need More Information?

If you require more information please reach out to Theatre Passe Muraille's General Manager Jenn Sartor at jenns@passemuraille.ca.

How to Experience Mark of a Woman

Mark of a Woman runs May 22 & 23, 2026 and performance dates and times can be found on our [ticketing page](#). The run will be in a Relaxed Environment and will have ASL, Visual vernacular and English voice over. **Mark of a Woman** will be performed in one act and will last 60 minutes. The theatre space will be open to audiences 30 minutes before the set start time and the Front-of-House manager will announce when the theatre is open in the lobby. There will be an ASL Interpreter available for communication in the lobby starting 30 minutes prior to the show start and they will be available after performances for 20 min as well.

Relaxed Space - If you leave the theatre at any time there is a Relaxed Space in the lobby you can visit. Our Relaxed Space is a quiet space equipped with comfortable seating, blankets, and sensory objects for any patrons who need a break from the performance or would like to experience it in a more low-intensity environment. If you ask an usher they will show you to this area.

Performance Advisories & Common Questions

Are there any performance advisories?

Content Warnings: This performance contains reference to colonialism, abduction, sexual assault and mild torture. It also references cancer treatment and mastectomy surgery.

Environmental Warnings: Low lighting throughout. [Woojer Straps](#) vibrate (these are optional to use and there are not enough for the entire audience). The Woojer straps are optional and must be booked in advance (we have a limited amount available).

Age limit suggestion: 14+

What access components are available during the performance run?

Woojer belts: A limited amount of Woojer belts are available for each performance. The belts vibrate in accordance to the sounds of the performance.

ASL translation: The performance will be presented in ASL. An ASL Interpreter will be available for communication in the lobby starting 30 minutes before each performance, they will be available after the performance for a short time as well.

Plot Details

The following section of text contains Plot Details that could be considered spoilers! Please continue to the section titled Set Details if you do not want to know what happens (the end of the plot section is highlighted)!

Words that are underlined can be found in the Background Information section if you would like a definition or would like to learn more.

Chisato enters and introduces herself, noting that she does not have any tattoos. She then asks the audience if anyone has tattoos. She says she is particularly interested in Women's tattoos and their histories and stories.

Chisato explains she went to a museum and 300 pieces of skin with tattoos were owned by the museum, but they could not tell Chisato when she asked which ones were from women.

Chisato talks about the beginning of tattoos in Polynesia, including Aotearoa (New Zealand), Hawaii and Easter Island. The word comes from "to mark" starting 3000 years ago.

Kayan Tribe tattoos- Women were marked at a young age and continue to be marked throughout their lives all over their bodies. Now that tradition is lost.

She uses visual vernacular to express a practice from the 18th century, and then about some practices in Europe.

Noting that Europeans traveled to many other lands, and how they've changed lives and cultures through colonialism. Chisato notes that a similar thing was happening in Okinawa, where the women had a long-standing tradition of marking their hands. Hand marking was banned in 1899 by the Japanese Meiji government.

Tattoos had started to spread to the upper continents, with women in higher classes having small tattoos. An example given is Winston Churchill's mother, Lady Randolph, who had a small snake tattoo on her wrist. In contrast, women who were in lower classes had tattoos as a means of survival.

Next, looking at America, the first documented woman in modern America to become a professional tattoo artist was Maud Stevens Wagner. She was a circus performer in 1904, Chisato tells a story about Maud and her journey to be a tattoo artist.

Shuko Fujita is a Japanese woman with hajichi tattoos, she lives in London. Chisato talks to her using an interpreter, Shuko describes her tattoos.

The next story is for Sonia, who got tattoos on her chest , after 10 months of breast cancer treatment and a double mastectomy, after the cancer came back.

Chisato ends the show expressing the mark of a woman.

END OF PLAY

Background Information

The following words are listed in the Plot Details section with an underline. The following list provides definitions and links if you want to learn more.

Kayan tribe tattoos- particularly among the Kayan women of Borneo (Sarawak), are intricate hand-tapped designs symbolizing identity, beauty, social status, and spiritual protection. Traditionally, these tattoos covered arms, legs, and hands, often featuring dark, detailed motifs applied by female artists, marking a woman's passage into adulthood.

Maud Stevens Wagner- was an American circus performer who became the first known female professional tattoo artist in the United States. She learned the craft from her husband, Gus Wagner, after reportedly trading a date with him for tattoo lessons in 1904. Together, they traveled the country as "tattooed attractions," helping to bring artistic tattooing to mainstream American culture.

Hajichi (ハジチ) refers to the traditional tattoos worn on the hands and fingers of Ryukyuan (mainly Okinawan) women.

Double mastectomy- A double mastectomy is surgery to remove both breasts.

It is usually done to treat cancer or to prevent cancer for those who are at high risk (like people who carry the BRCA gene).

Set Details

The Main Floor of the Mainspace theatre:

- There is a black box in the centre as the main playing space.
- There is a perspex box down stage left corner of the performance space, which contains what appears to be tattooed skin samples.

For details on lighting & sound levels for **Mark of A Woman** read the Performance Advisories & Common Questions.



Image description: A photo of Chisato performing on stage, in the background are drawings of hands with various tattoo designs on them.

Seating Conditions

Mark of A Woman will be performed with traditional theatre seating with the audience seated together on one side of the playing space. Physically accessible and size inclusive seating is available.

If you have specific seating requests not outlined in this document (and would like this arranged in advance) we invite you to communicate this to our Front House Staff using info@passemuraille.on.ca or by calling 416-504-7529.

Characters

Chisato is playing herself.



CHISATO MINAMIMURA Chisato Minamimura is a Deaf performance artist, choreographer and BSL art guide born in Japan and now based in London. Chisato trained at Trinity Laban in London and holds a BA in Japanese Painting and MA from Yokohama National University. Chisato has created, performed and taught internationally and is currently a Work Place artist at The Place. Chisato has been involved in aerial performances with Graeae Theatre Company, London's Paralympic Opening Ceremony and Rio's 2016 Paralympic Cultural Olympiad. Chisato approaches choreography and performance making from her unique perspective as a Deaf artist, experimenting with and exploring the visualisation of sound and music. By using dance and digital technology, Chisato aims to share her experiences of sensory perception and human encounters.

The End of the Performance

At the end of the performance, you are welcome to come and go from the space while you are at the theatre if you would like to visit the lobby, washroom, or Relaxed Space.

Venue Guide

Click [HERE](#) for more details, including maps, parking information, FAQs, and the Theatre Passe Muraille Visual story!