

***Mountain Language* Talkback: Notes taken by co-dramaturg Mary Rose Valentine**

Friday, April 1, 2022 — After 7:00pm performance of *Mountain Language*

Panelists:

- Mason (Lighting Design)
- Kevin (Musician from Open Music)
- Sky (Costume Design)
- Dee (Musician from Open Music)
- Ritul (Cast member – Officer)
- Morkata (Cast member – Prisoner)

Arushi's question: Play set at an unspecified time: Did you have a specific place/time in mind?

MASON: When first starting, pick deeper things. Pictured it cold, big strict prison, old architecture, darker lighting and cool template, colder time, colder parts of world

SKY: When reading, talk about unspecific time, not specific location. Playing with texture and color tells a story. Create a timeless, cold, indescribable environment with a strong community, especially among women. Different stories, different people coming together

KEVIN: Idea of the band came from the prologue concept. Band as part of people waiting, who brought their instruments. Not necessarily referential, but heavily influenced by instruments available. Folk music from the future, from many geographical locations

Morkata: Camp-style prison

RITUL: Pinter tries to make you uncomfortable. What kind of war are we waging? Guerilla warfare, invasion? Create something you haven't quite seen before. Vague and weird

ARUSHI: Atmosphere over understanding

Audience question: How did the travel into the space set you up as the performer?

RITUL: I was hoping nobody would walk in past me because they weren't supposed to! Trying to stay in character and contribute to the idea that something is happening but you don't know what yet

KEVIN: Make the wait part of the show! As a performer it was easy to be in there already. Last night, at the start, it was quiet immediately. Tonight, the chatter continued for a while.

JEANMARIE: Asking women if there was a difference in audience between yesterday and today?

MIRIAM: I liked the way that it was more organic. It was a more natural shift because it was gradual.

Audience question: Loved the lighting design! Favorite part was in the theatre when the women walked through a light that shone on their faces. Liked different experiences with universal throughline in costume design

Lighting the lobby?

MASON: Working around weird lights and art already in the lobby. Working with shadows of different sizes and depths, and it was just two fixtures

Audience question: Significance of pine cones and rocks? Annoying background noise.

KEVIN: Partially to give a physical sensation to waiting. The ensemble of women is a musical ensemble too. Keep the hallway in mind while watching a scene in the room. Raise tension and keep the sense of waiting presence. Annoying as part of the world and situation.