

CHINS UP! SHOULDERS BACK!

by **Ainur Karim**

Translated by **Ellen Vayner and Slava Faybysh**

In 2019, three middle-aged women grant an interview to a doctoral student studying chelnoki – educated women who worked for the state before the collapse of the USSR and turned to “marketeting” in the aftermath of the fall – and in doing so, allow us a glimpse into the personal and political realities of workers in an illicit economy. *Chins Up! Shoulders Back!* offers audiences slices of women’s lives at a moment of seismic change, in which their communities’ evolution, growth, and survival is tied to their own.

Director.....Tioni Collins

Neonatologist.....Carol Osborne

Teacher.....Maria Caprile

Librarian.....Kat McIntosh

Man.....Tony Caprile

Woman.....Erin Amsler

Stage Manager..... Amanda Gray

A Co-Production between



This season we are excited to present to our audiences the winner of our third annual plays-in-translation contest hosted in collaboration with the **American Literary Translators Association (ALTA)**. This year's competition winner, *Chins Up! Shoulders Back!*, has been selected from a diverse field of plays translated into English that speak to the theme "from spark to light": emphasizing growth and change, in styles ranging from whimsical to dark, from inspiring to threatening.

The Kazakh play *Chins Up! Shoulders Back!* features a cross-generational Kazakh history that is largely unknown in the West. Based on real-life events, the play features three educated women who were forced to give up their previous careers in order to adapt to a collapsing society. Along with approximately one million other Kazakhs (80% of whom were women), they turn to ferrying goods over the border to keep their families and the country afloat.

We are happy to welcome you to the Scoundrel & Scamp Theatre!