

Reclaiming Vietnam

PRESS RELEASE August 2015

**Edinburgh Fringe 2015 – August 17-22, 24-29, Forest Theatre, Greenside @ Infirmary Street, 2015
12:35pm**

Reclaiming Vietnam – a one-woman search for identity and healing premieres in Europe at EdFringe

“A knock out artistic achievement. The explosions of truth, pain, and redemption in Kim Chinh’s autobiographical Reclaiming Vietnam are gracefully revealed with personal joy and ultimate empowerment. I was surprised each step of the way. After my outrage, tears, and laughter, I emerged, heart heavy and full of love and hope.” – Alice Cox (NYC filmmaker and director)

It has taken several years and fathomless courage for US actor and playwright for stage and film, Kim Chinh, to write about her confrontation with her childhood abusers and then bring that story to the stage. She has bravely re-created her story in *Reclaiming Vietnam*. Her one-woman show explores the challenges she’s faced as an American with roots in Vietnam and her journey to face her past and heal her wounds. *Reclaiming Vietnam* opens at EdFringe on August 17th – its European premiere after a knock-out season in New York city.

The play opens with Kim arriving in Vietnam. The time has come to discover this country, the homeland of her father, and the part of her identity that she has rejected most of her life. A spontaneous moonlight ride on a motorbike ends in a crash and old memories start to surface. The play fluctuates between her present-day search for who she is and flashbacks to long-buried secrets. The audience is witness as she gathers the courage to speak the truth and begins to heal her wounds.

Reclaiming Vietnam is an autobiographical work which explores identity, human fragility and human error. Kim has struggled to recognise her Vietnamese heritage as she was molested by cousins who were refugees after the Vietnam War. She decides to return to her hometown to talk with each of them. Every conversation played out in her performance is a jaw-dropping scene.

But *Reclaiming Vietnam* also celebrates the strength to be found in facing the truth and with it, forgiveness, peace and joy. Weaved in are issues that affect society on a global scale. Her experience, simply and powerfully conveyed, is poignant. At the same time, the story is told with refreshing humour and honesty.

Says Kim; ‘*Reclaiming Vietnam* follows my personal journey, but it mirrors that of so many others. I didn’t want this story to be about right and wrong, but more about how although exploring the past might bring with it pain, it can also infuse us with a sense of empowerment.

She continues; I used what came naturally to me to tell my story and to help others see they are not alone. The best thing I can do is encourage dialogue around this difficult topic so that it’s not such a taboo or a secret. I am delighted and honoured to be bringing my work to EdFringe – my first visit, and definitely not my last!’

Kim plays herself in this one-woman show, telling her complex story and portraying the sights, sounds, colour and experiences of Vietnam through storytelling, word-painting and just 3 props – a stool, chair and bench. She believes it is this simplicity and the play’s searing truth that has made *Reclaiming Vietnam* so successful in New York.

Reclaiming Vietnam will be performed at the Forest Theatre, Greenside @ Infirmary Street, at 12.35pm between **17-22 and 24-29 August**. For further information visit <https://tickets.edfringe.com>
Ends

Press contacts: Rachel Shimell, 02380 732981, rachel.shimell@gmail.com or Kim Chinh, kimbchinh@gmail.com. To book review tickets for this show please contact Rachel or Kim

Note to Editors

Credits:

Kim Chinh (US) – Writer/ Performer
Elizabeth Browning (US) - Director

Biographies:

Kim began her acting career at the Alley Theatre in Houston, Texas. She has appeared in several short films including *The Face* written and directed by Elizabeth Browning, *L to Canarsie*, and *See Something Say Something* both written and directed by Alice Cox. She also starred in *Elizabeth Rose*, for which she received a nomination for Best Actress in the Annual 72 Hour Film Shootout sponsored by Asian Cinevision and MTV. On stage, she played the part of Maggie in *The Chinese Restaurant Syndrome* directed by April Feld Sandor at the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia as well the part of Lia in *Big Flower Eater*, working with Direct Arts founder and playwright Victoria Linchong. Cesi Davidson, playwright, has featured Kim in several of her story-telling series and staged readings. Kim participated in New York's Summerstages as a cast member of *SPEAK* featuring the music and spoken word of Marla Mase and the Tomas Doncker band. Kim's one-woman show, *Reclaiming Vietnam*, has been performed around NYC over the last 2 years. This show was accepted into Emerging Artists Theatre's New Work Series in Fall of 2014, as well as the New York Fringe Festival in 2015.

Elizabeth Browning has worked in the entertainment industry for more than 26 years as Artistic Director of the Elizabeth Browning Studio in NYC and President of Joy Light Productions. Featured in *The Actor's Guide To Qualified Acting Coaches: New York*, Ms. Browning coaches professional actors on Broadway, in film, and television and has been key in the development of a number of ground breaking new theater and film projects. Directing credits include *Unrehearsed Truths*; *Our Lives Since 9/11* (Public Theater), *Quarter to Three* (Laurie Beechman Theater), *Suddenly Cop Wife* (45th Street Theater & PGT), *Lipstick and Camouflage* (National Tour), *I Need A Guy Who Blinks* (Double Helix Theater Festival, Paradise Theater and Stampede Theater Festival), *Because We Want To* (TBG Mainstage Theater), and *Moonprints* (Laurie Beechman Theater). Ms. Browning was also delighted to collaborate in the development of the Innovative New York Theater Award Winner *Size Ate* and *A Brief Night Out* by Marla Mase. Ms. Browning's short film, *The Face*, has been touring film festivals this year from Los Angeles to the Big Apple Film Festival, and was awarded Best Picture Family Short.

Festival listings information:

Reclaiming Vietnam takes place at Edinburgh Fringe 2015, August 17 – 29, Forest Theatre, Greenside @ Infirmary

Street, 2015 12:35pm

Ticket Price: £ 6 - £ 8

<https://tickets.edfringe.com/whats-on/reclaiming-vietnam>

www.reclaimingvietnam.com

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A young woman arrives in the homeland of her father. Vietnam represents a part of her identity she has rejected for most of her life, wishing to be seen as an American (like her Caucasian mother) and not "the other" (like her Vietnamese father). A spontaneous moonlight ride on a motorbike ends in a crash and old memories surface. The play alternates between her present-day search for identity in Vietnam and flashbacks to her attempts to confront her personal history. Each experience strengthens her resolve to speak the truth and in the process, reclaim what was lost.