CHINA CONTRASTS

Two plays by Adelaide University Drama students,

THE INJUSTICE DONE TO TOU NGO

DRAGON BEARD DITCH

8pm LITTLE THEATRE, enter from VICTORIA DRIVE
JUNE 13–16, 20–23.

BOOKINGS: DRAMA OFFICE, 2234 333
($3.00 adults, $1.00 students, unemployed, pensioners)
Drama students have produced two plays which show an interpretation of the contrasting traditional and contemporary social - political - cultural life in China. The theme of repression runs through each play. In the Yuan Dynasty play, The Injustice Done To You Ngor, the rigid social code of ethics restricts the individual; whereas, in the contemporary play, Dragon Beard Ditch, it is the poverty and misery of the environment which suppresses the individual.

Drama is essentially a practical art and productions of this nature give students an introduction to that art as part of their formal coursework. Four weeks of intensive preparation during the University holidays have gone into rehearsing, building sets, making costumes and props, composing and arranging an original percussion score, setting lights, preparing sound tapes and organizing publicity - overall, giving students of Drama a chance to discover the essence of theatre in an act of theatre.

THE INJUSTICE DONE TO YOU NGO

Yuan dramas, written under the Yuan Dynasty (1280 - 1368), represent the earliest form of Chinese play. This play was written by Kuan Han-ch'ing who is often regarded as the "Father of Chinese Drama". The play focuses on one of the central themes of Yuan drama, justice versus corruption. It explores this theme with a mixture of comedy, seriousness and superstition that reflects the original popular origins of Yuan drama - growing, as it did, out of adaptations of well-known stories and legends.

While this production doesn't attempt to reconstruct a traditional staging of the play (in fact, very little is known about how Yuan dramas were presented) it does attempt to take into account certain traditional features of Chinese drama and the Yuan style - a disregard for realism, a flexible setting encompassing the full range of distance and time, live musical accompaniment, straightforward exposition of characters and events, a presentational style allowing for direct address to the audience and so on. But, whatever the style, the play's theme of social injustice survives the test of time and remains as valid today as when it was written - for both East and West.

CAST
Mother Ts'ai
You T'ien-Chang
Dr. Lu
Donkey Chang
Old Chang
You Ngor
Prefect Evilbrute
Prison Governor
Executioner
Chang Ch'ien
Magistrate

Stage Manager - Colim Mann
Asst. Stage Manager - Lucy Marchant

PUBLICITY
Amanda Heitmann
Julie Littheim
Margie Madsen
Claire Pallant
Cherie DeMalln- Co-ord.
Jenny Sim
Jenny Saml
Kate Wilson
Josie Bettis

PROPS
Julie Gardner
Lucy Marchant Co-ord.
Richard Barrett
Helen Abbott

Lighting Supervisor: Jon Cameron-Hill
Set Design Supervisor: Jim Cowley.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:
Lisa Colley, Bonnie Swain, Theatre Guild, Reg Bennett, John Blain, Sylvia Chan, Peter Brideoak

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DRAGON BEARD DITCH

The collective responsible for the performance of this play, at first, found great difficulty in relating to the poverty and degradation of the inhabitants of Dragon Beard Ditch, the most vile slum in pre-liberation China. A vividly graphic description of the Ditch at the beginning of the play gave us, however, our major crutch to understanding the realities of life in the Ditch - realities which are so alien to us in the modern bourgeois Australian state.

In their various struggles to escape the reality of their condition in the first part of the play; and their later involvement in the remaking of the Ditch after the liberation, the characters depict for us the eternal struggle of the human spirit against the erosion of dignity.

CAST
Sze-Sao
Little Niu
Mad Chong
Niang-Tse
Mother Wang
Erh Chun
Old Chao
Police Sergeant Liu
Ting Sze
Ka-Tse
Dog Feng

Stage Manager - Greg Anderson
Asst. Stage Manager - Julie Gardiner

PUBLICITY
Amanda Heitmann
Julie Littheim
Margie Madsen
Claire Pallant
Cherie DeMalln- Co-ord.
Jenny Sim
Jenny Saml
Kate Wilson
Josie Bettis

PROPS
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