UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE DRAMA STUDENTS PRESENT

IN THE HEART OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

BY JOHN SPURLING
THE DRAMA COURSE.

Although often looked at as a recent development, the Drama course at the University of Adelaide actually has a history stretching back to 1968. It was then that the University Council set up a committee to consider the place of theatre in the University. Drama 1 was established in 1975, complementing and extending the range of subjects within the humanities, and offering the potential of extensive correlation with music. In setting up the Drama 1 course the University recognized the interest in the theatre that was continually growing, both on and off campus, and the increasing importance of theatre arts in education. Since 1975 the theatre arts in South Australia (film, television and live theatre) have undergone widespread and vigorous development. Drama has become an accepted and respected academic subject. The University has made a significant move towards the better fulfilment of the aims on which Drama was initially established, by introducing a second year course in 1980, allowing students the opportunity to pursue their interest beyond the first year level. In the Heart of the British Museum features an all student cast of actors and technical crew who are involved in every facet of production from stage management and publicity, to set construction, costume and makeup. The staff and students of the Drama Department wish you an enjoyable and stimulating evening of theatre!
In the Heart of the British Museum by John
Spurling is a play organized as a collage
which examines the conflict between the needs
of the artist and the intellectual on one side
and the demands of society on the other. We
live in a world full of contradictions and
mysteries and this work is an attempt to
bring the sense of myth and history to shed
some light on them. The play thus secures
echoes and ironies across unrelated cultures,
and grafts the manners of one period onto
the events of another.

The play absorbingly explores the question
of whether the artist should work in isolation
from a position of political detachment or
be committed to a definite political and social
viewpoint, subordinating individualism to it.
This theme is explored in three main areas:
a Chinese academic being forcibly re-educated
by Mao's Red Guards; the Roman poet Ovid
incurring the displeasure of the Emperor
Augustus for writing erotic, subversive poetry
and being exiled as a result; and the life
of the Aztec gods Tezcatlipoca and Quetzalcoatl,
who may or may not be responsible for our
destinies depending on the degree of myopic
condemnation we possess for progress and change.

The quality of the play and this production
is enhanced by its totally honest and imaginative
exploration of the tensions existing between the
two points of view and by its refusal to provide
glib answers.

The production incorporates music, song, dance
and mime in its structure, all of which contribute
to underscore issues and events that have pervaded
history and which continue to be addressed in
contemporary circles. This production hopefully
will contribute to the debate.

Max Mastrovassas,
Lecturer in Drama.
Glossary

ARIADNE: Daughter of King Minos of Crete. Ariadne helped Theseus escape from the labyrinth & then escaped with him from Crete. Theseus, however, abandoned her on the island of Naxos, whence she was rescued by the opportune arrival of Bacchus, the god of wine, & his rout.

AUGUSTUS CAESAR: Born 63bc. Adopted son of Julius Caesar. One of his least successful measures was the Lex Julia de adulteris which imposed harsh penalties for adulterers caught in flagrante delicto, including death & exile. His own daughter & grand-daughter were both exiled under this law. He died in 14ad.

CHIANG KAI-SHEK: After a coup in 1926 became leader of the Kuomintang & the most powerful man in China. Defeated by the Communists in 1946-9 civil war.

CORINNA: The supposed subject of Ovid's love-poems. Almost certainly a figment of his imagination.

CULTURAL REVOLUTION, the: Attempt, inaugurated in 1966 by Mao Tse-Tung, to re-activate the Chinese Revolution from within & below. Students & Red Guards set upon & harassed their superiors in the hierarchy so as to destroy the last vestiges of authority possessed by the old & established & underpinned by the teachings of Confucius. It degenerated into vicious & unproductive anarchism & was called off when it began to arouse the determined opposition of the army.

KUOMINTANG, the: Chinese nationalist & anti-imperialist party. In 1925 Chiang Kai-shek became its leader.

LONG MARCH, the: The 6 000 mile trek from Southern Kiangsi to Yanan, between the years 1934 & 1936, which paved the way for eventual victory of the Communists over the Kuomintang.


METAMORPHOSES: the. Ovid's books beginning with the creation and ending with the apotheosis of Julius Caesar. A continuous narrative drawn from mythology, around the theme of transformation.

OVID (PUBLIUS OVIDIUS NASO). Born 43 B.C. in Sulmo. His books of verse include The Loves, The Art of Love, The Fasti, The Heroides, The Metamorphoses and The Tristia. In 8 A.D. Augustus banished him to Tomis for his connection with the scandal involving Augustus' grand-daughter Julia. The exact nature of his 'crime' is unknown. He died in exile in 18 A.D. He was one of the greatest and most popular poets of his day and has exercised an enormous influence ever since, on painting and sculpture as much as on literature.

QUETZALCOATL: Aztec god of the wind, also the morning star, he taught a philosophy of gentleness and asceticism, encouraged agriculture and the arts. After falling to the temptations of Xochiquetzal, he left Mexico.

TEOTIHUACAN: The place where the Aztec gods held a sacrifice to make a new sun at the beginning of the present creation. The new sun required human hearts to appease his thirst, otherwise he would stop moving across the sky & burn the earth to ashes.

TEZCATLIPOCA: He & Quetzalcoatl were the Aztec creator gods, to whom the supreme being had entrusted the creation of the lesser gods & men. The god of government, power, war, 'the enemy on both sides'. One of his attributes was the obsidian mirror in which he could see all things 'like the darkness, like the mind'.

XOCHEQUETZAL: The Aztec goddess of sensual delight, temptress of Quetzalcoatl.
CAST

Jarvis.................. Anthony Schultz
Hemingway.............. Vladimir Thune
Mrs Jarvis.............. Penny Attwood
Tezcatlipoca............ Daniel Persse
Xochiquetzal............ Anna Longmire
Quetzalcoatl........... Chas Hill-Smith

Lao Sheng............... Craig Weatherill
Red Guard Leader........ Fran Tonkiss
Red Guard................ George Karzis
Basil Schild............ Karen Nibbs
Julie Letch.............. John Foley
Mary Geyer.............. Mary Geyer
Jane Sansom .......... Avril Fennell
Sarah Knaggs....... Phillip Parslow
Avril Fennell........ Ovid
Mary Lewis............. Corinna
Eugene Minge........... Husband
Mary Geyer............. Ovid's Wife
Ben Rogers............. Acolytes, Guests
Craig Weatherill...... 8 Friends
Helen James............ Gina
Alison Roberts........... Tina
Gail Green............. Michelle Malone
Carmel Noonan........... Cleo
Carmel Noonan........ Donna Steven
Mary-Anne Haddad..... Augustus Caesar
Nina Campbell........... Basil Schild
Anne-Marie Peard...... (supporting cast)
Lucille Girardi......... Eugene Minge
Graham Lugsden........ Caesar's Acolyte

Sun..................... Donna Steven
Vulcan................ Eugene Minge
Venus.................. Anna Longmire
Mars................... Chas Hill-Smith
Philomen............... Julie D'Lima
Bacchus................. Megan Verity
Gods.................... Sophie Meagher
Goose.................. Susan Burford
Helen James ............. Helen James
Ariadne................. Carolyn Ferrie
Bacchus................. Chas Hill-Smith
Bacchic Rout........... Julie D'Lima

Goths.................. Donna Steven
Mary-Anne Haddad...... Mary-Anne Haddad
Carmel Noonan......... Carmel Noonan
Nina Campbell.......... Nina Campbell
Anne-Marie Peard...... Anne-Marie Peard
Lillian Girardi........ Philippa Milroy
Philippa Milroy........ John Foley
Ben Rogers.............. Basil Schild
Eugene Minge........... Ben Rogers
Chas Hill-Smith........ Eugene Minge
Vladimir Thune......... Chas Hill-Smith
MUSICAL DIRECTORS............Jo Carter
                        Tricia Spence
                        Meredith Gunthorpe

"Red Guard" music composed & arranged by Meredith Gunthorpe. All other live music (including some lyrics) composed by Jo Carter and arranged by Tricia Spence.

ORCHESTRA:

    Flutes............Bianca Willems
                        Julie d'Lima
                        Catriona Martin
                        Meredith Gunthorpe
                        (Alternate nights)

    Clarinet............Danielle Lawrence
                        Sophie Meagher

    Bass............Danny Persse
                        Tricia Spence
                        (Alternate nights)

    Drums............Scott Rice
                        Craig Weatherill
                        (Alternate nights)

Conductor............Jo Carter

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