

POTENTIALITIES

2016
singapore
international
festival of
arts



SANDAIME RICHARD

CREATION

8, 9, 10 SEPTEMBER
8PM

2H20, INTERMISSION INCLUDED
VICTORIA THEATRE

*Performed in Japanese, English, Balinese and
Bahasa Indonesia, with English surtitles*

WRITTEN BY
HIDEKI NODA

DIRECTED BY
ONG KENG SEN

DREAMING AN INDIVIDUAL ADVENTURE

By Ong Keng Sen

In 1997, I directed "Lear", a Japan Foundation Asia Center production. Its directorial concept developed into my signature style of juxtaposing Asian traditional performance forms together with a linguistic diversity spoken onstage. At that time, I pioneered the concept of New Asia onstage - it was to become very trendy over the next years. I was not interested in trend but I was searching for a performance language that would express some kind of relationship with who I was, living where I was. An individual who was both disconnected from and yet emotionally connected to the histories that coursed through my consciousness, sub-consciousness and unconsciousness. From young, I spoke multiple languages in Singapore and had to manoeuvre both traditions and globalisation growing up. I was a child of a country which articulated the term 'Asian democracy'. I disbelieved that democracies could be fundamentally different in Africa, Arab world, Asia but yet could not deny that I was somewhat different from an American or a European. So I made a symbolic piece of a child killing her father in "Lear", written by Rio Kishida.

Fast forward 20 years and now it's still Shakespeare that I am engaging with in *Sandrae Richard*. But this time I put him on trial, 400 years after his death, with the help of Hideki Noda's illuminating script written in the early 1990s. It is a game of Chinese boxes, where I travel from one world to another. Inside or outside of Shakespeare's world is Noda's world from which my world emerges. Am I born from Noda who has been born from Shakespeare or am I framing Noda who is framing Shakespeare? This time it is not a tragedy but a comedy (of sorts) that I am working with. In place of Noda's puns and rapid-fire conversation, I have proposed a rapid-fire repartee of cultural-bytes, a juxtaposition of samples of different artforms, linguistic languages, globalisation, traditions, all wonderfully performed by my collaborators. The audience encounters a world of disorientation as is usual in my stage-world, a sea of 'nonsense' which ultimately settles into a beautiful dream.

On this journey, I am still concerned about multiplicities but now, I am interested in the multiplicities in one country, Japan. For it is here that I encountered the complexity of the contemporary with its insistence on the formal aspects of traditions to neon-coloured fantasies animated and throbbing with the intensities of electronics. It is here in fashionista land that I can still be enchanted by the onnagata embodied by Kazutaro Nakamura, meet someone like Doji Shigeyama who is internationally schooled in Japan but belonging to an illustrious kyogen family, and indulge in the all-female Takarazuka modern musical revue which Seika Kuze emerged from. I can say that in *Sandrae Richard* I am juxtaposing Japanese traditional performance forms (for even the Takarazuka is now a century old) together with English and multiple Indonesian languages. Of course, I cannot leave behind the global contemporary world which I come from and along the way, I get some help from mystical Bali and my innovative designers. Finally, as a contemporary artist working today, I want to complicate gender playfully as a way of interrogating the dominant power structures today - a male writer is besieged by his 'female' characters.

I have sometimes described this new work as an extravaganza of comic turns. In an unusual turn, I have cast an onnagata as 'Richard III'. I am inspired by Noda's comic turns but I am also impressed by the role of an artist, or the role of a writer more precisely, in *Sandrae Richard*. How should I reflect history as an artist? Should I seek 'revenge', should I exploit the sensation in history to become rich and famous, or should I just be human and continue dreaming an individual adventure which can inspire generations to come?

BIOGRAPHIES

In 1955, **HIDEKI NODA** was born in Nagasaki, Japan. He is a playwright, director and actor. He launched his first theatre company, Yume no Yumisha, and created many works to much acclaim. After disbanding the company in 1992, he went to study in London. In 1993, he established a theatre production company called NODA MAP. Since then, he has presented a succession of major hits, including "Kill", "Pandora No Kane" ("Pandora's Bell"), "Oll", "Akaoni" ("Red Demon"), "The Bee", "The Diver", "The Character" and "South". He has collaborated with the Kabuki actor Nakamura Kanzaburo XVIII, and he has adapted Kabuki plays and directed productions such as "Tragedy Of Togitatsu" and "Nezumikozo", his original versions of the classical Kabuki at Kabuki Theatre. Noda is also actively involved in international productions, working with Thai and British actors. He became the artistic director of Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre in July 2009. He has won most of the major drama awards in Japan and was awarded the 2009 Asahi Prize. He was appointed an Honorary Officer of the British Empire (OBE) in October 2009 and the Medal with Purple Ribbon (for contributions to education and culture) in June 2011.

ONG KENG SEN is the Festival Director of the all-new Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA). The first Singapore artist to have received both the National Arts Council Young Artist Award (1992) and the Cultural Medallion (2003), Ong is a Fulbright Scholar and was awarded the prestigious Fukuoka Asian Arts and Culture Prize in 2010 for his work in Asian contemporary performance. His works have been presented to much acclaim all over the world including Lincoln Center in New York City, Théâtre de la Ville in Paris, Cocoon Theater in Tokyo, Idans Festival in Istanbul, Panorama Festival in Rio de Janeiro and Adelaide Festival in Australia. He holds a Masters in Performance Studies (Intercultural Performance) from Tisch School of the Arts, New York University and was also an Adjunct Professor with the National University of Singapore, where he started the theatre studies programme in 1992. Ong will direct four editions of SIFA from 2014 to 2017.

CREDITS

Written by: Hideki Noda
Inspired by Yachi Oshio's translation of William Shakespeare's "Richard III"

Directed by: Ong Keng Sen

Cast (in order of appearance)

Richard III/
Richard the Cripple,
Shakespeare's Brother/
Sandaleo Richard: Kazutaro Nakamura
Maachan, Defence Lawyer of Richard/
Shylock: Janice Koh
Chiropractor, Assistant of Maachan: Junko Enoto
Presiding Judge/
Pop, Shakespeare's Father/
Iemoto, Head of the White Flower
School of Ikebana, Oldest Brother
of Sandaleo Richard/
Keepsake, Son of Iemoto: Seika Kuze
William Shakespeare/
Ikenobo George, Older Brother
of Sandaleo Richard: Doji Shigeyama
Shrew, Shakespeare's Wife/
Anne: Riki Takii
Rose, Shakespeare's Mother/
Iemoto Fujin, Wife of Iemoto: Jajang C. Noer
The Puppeteer/
Edward, King of the White Roses,
Elders Brother of Richard III/
Chobosu, Handmaiden of Iemoto Fujin/
Assassin: I Kadek Budi Setiawan

Set Design: Chika Kato
Lighting Design: Scott Ziellinski
Costume Design: Mitsushi Yamahara
Video Design: Keisuke Takahashi
Music Composition/Sound Design: Toru Yamanaka
Hair and Make-up Design: Tomoya Nakamura

Associate Director: Lisa Porter
Production Manager: Kumi Odaira
Dramaturg: Michiyo Sueda
Stage Manager: Zach Kennedy

Puppet Design and Production: I Kadek Budi Setiawan
English Script Translated by: Michiyo Sueda, Robert Tierney
Indonesian Script Translated by: Kyoko Anzai

Co-Produced With: Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre:
Hiroshi Takahagi, Keiko Miyamura,
Akihisa Abe, Naoki Yoshida

JAPANESE PRODUCTION TEAM

Assistant Lighting Designer: Keisuke Niijima
Interpreter: Riwa Konden
Subtitle Operator: Tutomu Saito
Assistant Stage Managers: Daijiro Kawakami, Toshizumi Sakai
Wardrobe Supervisor: Shumi Abe
Music Support: Tomohisa Ishikawa
Fellow Spot Operators: Haruka Shibata, Shota Ogiso

SINGAPORE PRODUCTION TEAM

Sound Engineer: Shah Tahir
Video System Engineer: Low Wee Cheng (Ctrl Fredk)
Assistant Sound Engineer: Sandra Tay Kiat Chin
Interpreter: Toshi Suzuki
Assistant Stage Manager (Intern): Jessie Medofer

PRODUCED BY THE SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL OF ARTS (SIFA).

CO-PRODUCED BY TOKYO METROPOLITAN THEATRE /
SPAC-SHIZUOKA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL OF ARTS (SIFA) / TOKYO METROPOLITAN THEATRE
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Supported by NODA MAP & Shochiku. Special thanks to
Bali Purnati Art Center, Shikoku Gakuin University, SJ50.

FESTIVAL PARTNER

PROGRAMME PARTNERS

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MESSAGE FROM THE FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

The potentialities of tradition (*Paradise Interrupted*), modern archives (*In The Mood For Frankie*) and contemporary technology (*Ron Arad's 720**, *Tropical Traumas: A Series Of Cinematographic Choreographies*) are part of the continuum that we present this year. Strong this season are artists who have inspired the potential of others, from Bill T. Jones (*Making And Doing*) to Wu Man (*Borderlands*), crowned by *The Sardano Retrospective* - our tribute to this extraordinary life in art.

Potentiality is the possessing of latent power or capacity, capable of coming into being or action. It is an optimism that looks to the future rather than at the griness of the present. With this as an organising theme, Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA) looks around the globe at world issues through a different lens. The Greek crisis is overturned as we experience the power of humanity to continue in spite of setbacks (*Still Life*). The ominous unknown is accepted or embraced rather than rejected by fear and cynicism. In our hard times when world security is threatened by radical elements, we re-examine revolution with a play about post-Arab Spring Cairo (*The Last Supper*). What happens when you reset the clock and return to a new time as Argentine artist Fernando Rubio suggests (*Time Between Us*)? What happens when you return to the most intimate moment between two strangers, two individuals (*Everything By My Side*)?

The emerging artist (*I Am LGB*), the mature individual who is stereotyped as 'past his prime' (*The Last Bull: A Life In Flamenco*), the child (*Five Easy Pieces*)... these are all potentialities embodied in individuals. The eternal is not forgotten as we return to the potentiality in William Shakespeare with Robert Lepage and Evgeny Mironov, where technology meets the individual (*Haeler / Collage*). Shakespeare's 400th death anniversary is ironically celebrated by putting him on trial to reveal what an individual writer should remain true to (*Sandraee Richard*). How should one express history? Can one continue to strive for and value personal freedom despite the ambitions of political power and economic prowess?

Thank you all who have contributed to this edition of SIFA.

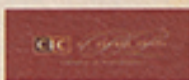
Ong Keng Sen
Singapore International Festival of Arts

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