

香港劇場年鑑2016

舞蹈・戲曲・戲劇

HONG
KONG
THEATRE
YEARBOOK

2016

Dance

Xiqu

Drama



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「IATC (HK) 劇評人獎」2016頒獎暨討論會 (摘錄)

日期	二〇一七年四月廿四日 (一)
時間	晚上七時三十分至九時三十分
地點	灣仔01空間
講者 (發言序)	張秉權、肥力 (陳偉基)、陳國慧、小西 (鄭威鵬)、佛琳 (丁羽)、盧偉力、陳炳釗、羅冠蘭、梁偉詩、陳瑋鑫、江藍 (朱琮愛)、陳麗珠
記錄整理	洪思行、朱琮愛、陳國慧

張秉權 我們先談兩齣獲提名的作品，由《竹林深處強姦》開始吧。它獲得幾項提名，包括年度演員獎、年度舞台科藝／美術獎等。

肥力 討論時大家對這套戲沒多爭拗，都很感興趣。這作品是很吸引人的，可能很大程度是因為宋本浩的演出令表演充滿很大能量，這種能量在香港是少見的。其他地方可能有很多模擬真人秀，也有電影以模擬綜藝節目為題材，但在香港做到有這種水準的表演比較少，而且它很有趣和「好玩」。

我一直有觀看「藝君子劇團」的演出，其演員都很有力量。我覺得《竹林深處強姦》是在「玩」一些演技，將我們認為是傳統的演技去把玩，把通俗劇放到最大，而當放到最大時，它便會變成一種形式或方法。對我來說，這種形式或方法是很特別。

陳國慧 作品的表演形式很吸引我，以模擬直播電視節目的形式去做舞台作品，形式上對我們來說是新鮮的；對演員來說則是難拿捏的，尤其是宋本浩。除了像肥力所說是「放到好大」外，在大與小的拿捏之間，他還遊走於角色和演員之間，甚至在所謂「幕後」——即使他不是焦點，他的狀態仍然保持著高度的專注。

我看演出時特別留意演員不在自己的角色時，他是在甚麼的狀態。我很欣賞演員對演出所拿捏的精緻度，這是很不容易的，因特別是這作品演員可能要從一個能量很高的狀態，再根據不同場景去調節，整個團隊的配合都很好。我對宋本浩二〇一六年參與

的多套作品都有印象，期待他往後的演出。

張秉權 小西可以談談影話戲《看著你……》？

小西 這套戲是有趣的，獲提名年度舞台科藝／美術獎，我們看的是創作團隊對多媒體運用和「玩」空間的元素。

張秉權 這齣戲在處理多媒體方面是非常好，形式就是內容，令觀眾眼前一亮。

年度劇本／編劇獎：陳炳釗（前進進戲劇工作坊《午睡》）

張秉權 《午睡》在第二十六屆香港舞台劇獎也獲獎，是二〇一六年備受注目和認同的劇本。我想在香港不是有很多劇本能夠把作者的成長日子，跟不同年代的觀察和情感互相交織，然後醞釀若干年後，在今日回看當年。

演出場刊已說得很清楚，作品由一個八十年代的短劇發展出來，當時寫的是那時如何看那年代，而今天再發展時，就是從今天如何「再看」那個年代，這是一種「記憶再記憶」，也是個人成長歷史對照香港大時代歷史。正如劇本所說，那是一個「決定了」的八十年代，決定了很多事，但卻又沒甚麼位置似的。

今天在雨傘運動後，改變了不少人的關係，集體群眾的關係。劇中兩兄弟有不同的心路歷程和態度，弟弟離開了香港又回來，他的個人堅持成為深深的困擾與掙扎，讓參與過與關心運動的觀眾可以有不同的解讀和代入。這實在是個很成功的作品，我們從中能看到個人歷史和八十年代香港的歷史。

「進劇場」喜歡在舞台上「寫詩」，用戲劇跟詩發生關係；「前進進戲劇工作坊」則探討文本如何跟生命扣上關係，不論是借新文本看自己和香港，或是像陳炳釗般回看過去的生命「線索」，並從「線索」發展出新的生命。

《午睡》說要去尋找真實的祖母，究竟尋找到了不？甚麼是午睡？午睡是否個進取的方法？當中有很多空間去解讀，這是個難得的作品，儘管年輕的演員未必能捕捉到八十年代的韻味，但年紀稍大的演員可能又沒有年輕人的青春和演技上躁動的氣質，所以處理的難度很高，就藝術效果而言，是劇本成就高過演出。

佛琳 這個劇本看來特別有感受，除了兩兄弟的角色關係外，我覺得陳炳釗是借了當時電影的黃金盛世，反映今時今日的香港，令我們看到香港當時是「亞洲電影王國」之一，為何整體社會變成了今天的狀況呢？這二十多年間發生甚麼事呢？我們失落了甚麼呢？我覺得劇本讓我看到這些問題。

盧偉力 陳炳釗這個劇本參加過當時劇本創作獎，當時我覺得這個劇本是很好的，但其他評審不太喜歡，所以後來《午睡》得不到三甲位置。在我心目中，我覺得當時的版本是比較好。當時的那種灰色的味道，陰沉中揮發不出來的感覺，令我想起哈洛·品特的《回歸》。當年有些角色的設定是一個象徵，現在沒有了，所以讓我覺得當年的力量是大過現在這版本。

至於今次的演出，我贊同剛才張秉權所說，陳炳釗是在劇本中想做一種像契訶夫的書寫方式，所以劇情是很瑣碎，瑣碎情節中帶有人與人之間的關係，這種對白在年青一代的劇作者中是少見的，因為年青一代的劇作者的對白通常是追求「有東西」，但缺乏真正的「心」。而陳炳釗在劇本中是「有很多東西」，舉重若輕地化作日常生活。所以我覺得劇本的前半部寫得相當不錯，但排得不夠味道，後半部卻要弄些東西出來，從劇本的狀態來說就像沉不住氣。

陳炳釗 盧偉力其實一直看著我從進入劇場寫劇本，這個劇本內的世界他是了解的。很感謝他剛才所說的話。

年度演員獎：羅冠蘭（同流《心靈病房》）

張秉權 羅冠蘭同樣在第二十六屆香港舞台劇獎獲得最佳女主角。很多人覺得不論在電影還是舞



《心靈病房》（2016）

攝影：Fungwaisun

台劇，演不正常的角色如老人痴呆、弱智、患重病和絕症等會容易獲獎，這種看法可能是對的，但也要看有沒有能力去演，令觀眾看得動容。羅冠蘭在《心靈病房》中的演出確實令人感到揪心。這套戲不是純粹單線發展，演員要不停跳出跳入，當中的拿捏毫不容易。

羅冠蘭作為一位資深演員，也是教授戲劇的導師，能駕馭的角色寬度當然大，她在《心靈病房》中演的是教授角色，正符合她老師的身分，她也能順暢地在演出中轉換情態，這一場是講授詩歌的教師，轉眼就變回一位重病病人，剎那間的轉變做得很好。而且要面對不同的對手，包括不同身份的年輕人。透過她仔細的演繹，令角色的肌理豐富起來。

不過我們在討論時也談到有些場面或許可以有改善，譬如化妝：光頭的處理就可做得好些；嘔吐一場，嘔吐後平復的時間能否再多點，時間長些可能會令過渡更細緻動人。

這是個很出色的劇本，不乏自嘲和幽默，導演處理亦很準確。戲的難度很高，而最重要的元素當然是主角羅冠蘭的處理。

羅冠蘭 演員要演好一個角色，原來有時需要有很大的付出。我做了幾十年的戲，這是第一次因演戲以致情緒崩潰。就在入台前一天的早上，大約十時左右，忽然不停的大哭，像打開水喉般停不了，直至下午才斷斷續續的稍為止住，但在晚上排戲時又控制不了的大哭，嚇怕了其他演員。

為何情緒會崩潰呢？我覺得是因為這套戲探討的生死議題，以及引伸出來的其他有關生命及生活上的議題其實都很沉重，甚至在排練時別人如何看這套戲，或是如何演繹這個劇本等等客觀因素，都有很大影響。

此外，排練時，戲中一些場次蘊含很沉重很內在的感受但卻很抑壓，令內心很鬱結卻又不能哭——哭其實是好的，可以讓演員把在戲中累積的負面情緒抒發出來，但角色在這些場次的戲並不宜哭，對演員來說是很辛苦的。我曾試過整個早上都在排

同一場戲，每排完一次便多「一堆情緒」壓在心頭，根本無辦法將那堆鬱結抒發出來。在排練初期，排練完後回家梳洗，之後會突然哭，哭完會覺得舒服，但後來累積越多了，連間中抒發的空間都失去，於是連自己也不察覺到已累積了這麼多，到最後便崩潰了。

再加上這套戲探討的問題，還有別人普遍對這角色的看法令人心痛！我覺得大家對這個角色有誤解，把她視作討人厭且有點冷血的角色，不近人情。我覺得不應該從這角度看。例如，不能以她在病中「沒有一個人來探病」便證明她有多討人厭。試想她在學術界的地位，連牛津出版社都邀請她寫書；還有，不是所有學生都不喜歡她。其實，在劇本中看到，「沒有人探病」根本是她的意願。此外，還有一些問題，加重了我對劇本及人物的困擾，有些是不能夠靠一個人解決得了的，所以那些複雜情緒的累積連我都估計不到，就在那一整天爆發出來了。所以說，有時演員在消化劇本，演繹角色時，當中的付出是非常大。

這是一個有很多層次的劇本，很能啟發思考。我希望每個人都可以閱讀這個文本。翻譯這劇本的難度很大，因為那些用字、意思、語帶雙關等，例如詩，原本是英語，表達較傳神。

張秉權 劇本的原名《Wit》很難翻譯，《心靈病房》作為中譯劇名較易於吸引觀眾。

羅冠蘭 我覺得《心靈病房》本身已經可以探討應否這樣翻譯（聽說劇名是跟台灣的譯名），劇本是否真的在說「心靈病房」呢？我覺得我們這劇本大部分的翻譯都已經很好，能盡量帶出當中的趣味幽默，但有些地方真的很難譯，要原汁原味的領略和感受，最好是讀英文原文了。

年度演出獎和年度演員獎：

前進進戲劇工作坊《金龍》（重演）、溫玉茹（前進進戲劇工作坊《金龍》（重演））

張秉權 《金龍》這次重演是在前作基礎上修改，有些演員亦曾參與首演。每位演員的「質地」

都不一樣，所做出來的效果也會有差異。《金龍》能夠獲獎的一個重要原因是我們覺得幾條敘事線清晰，感情的處理更見分寸，這是個「距離」的問題。作為當代翻譯劇，「距離」拿捏適當是很要緊的。

至於溫玉茹能夠獲獎是因為她把角色演繹得仔細、自然而又十分動人。這個亞洲黑工牙痛而要剝牙，卻因為身分問題不敢看醫生，只好自行剝牙卻因失血而死。這個剝牙事件的風格處理很好。喜與悲之間的調子，拿捏得準確。其實這個角色是很淒涼的，她的死亡彷彿毫不重要，生命就是如此凝固了，也如一隻爛牙般被棄掉了。溫玉茹的處理，加上導演的安排，令觀眾看到演員在角色扮演和敘事之間的兩重關係，我們會同情這個角色，同時也會批判黑工這回事，或者視角色為黑工的共同遭遇。溫玉茹處理台詞是很「漂亮」的，尤其是黑工怎樣回到家鄉那一段。

總之，我們既看到一個卑微生命就此失去，也藉此看到現在大量難民逃到歐洲的痛苦境況。

盧偉力 我想補充關於溫玉茹的氣質，她的氣質的其中一個特點是她完全將自己「拿掉」來處理角色，所以能夠看到她飾演的角色身上的污糟邋遢等面貌，這些對一位女演員是有難度的。她所演繹的很多個角色，其實是要抓破一些東西，包括身體。所以說那不只是技巧上的角色拿捏，而是態度，我覺得這種態度是非常的珍貴，尤其是在表演狀態中更見珍貴。

小西 與首演比較，重演好像多了德文元素。我想在場有很多人看過首演和重演，我覺得不是要跟首演比較，今年是第一年屆劇評人獎，我們的其中一個原則，就是看今年的演出，不計較是否首演。話雖如此，在腦中總會跟前作比較。我覺得重演比首演更為完整。遊戲性越強、德文越加強，越能彰顯悲涼，更能令人看得心寒和感動，所以說是整體出色。

今次德文處理比上次好得多。其實在廣東話中穿插德文是很怪的，他們的做法是用廣東話的語調去講德文，所以是很奇怪的，因為德文其實是很「flat」（語調平淡）



《金龍》（重演）（2016）

攝影：張志偉

的，但我覺得陳炳釗很有趣的地方就是他用了不同的技法去製造一種「疏離」，讓德文部分帶有喜劇式的效果。不單是這部分，譬如間場，我記得第一個版本是用廣東話去讀「停頓」，第二個版本則有些是用廣東話讀「停頓」，有些是用德文讀「pause」，這次陳炳釗是用了很多技巧去配合。

梁偉詩 關於笑的問題，我覺得陳炳釗是香港劇界很少能把喜/鬧劇處理得很有質感的，而且喜鬧中有淚，是令我們很有感知的一位劇場導演。我覺得陳炳釗可以再「癲多些」，他在這方面有很大的創造空間。

陳炳釗 首先很多謝溫玉茹的另一半每晚幫她練習德文台詞。另外要多謝《金龍》的翻譯陳伶均，她也是首演的劇場構作。其實由二〇一三年開始首演《金龍》，到二〇一六年重演讓我學到很多，如資料搜集的過程。陳伶均仔細地連德國的人口結構、女性問題、種族問題等資料都會不停地電郵過來。對於如何掌握德國背景和探索他們的世界，讓我學習到不少新事物，因為有充裕的時間，我很享受這過程。我覺得處理歐洲新文本的時候，好像跟本土社會有些距離，但它始終在述說當代世界，當我們深入走進去，還是可以學到很多東西。

年度導演獎、年度舞台科藝／美術獎、年度演員獎、年度演出獎：

進劇場《莎拉·肯恩在4.48上書寫》

張秉權 進劇場的《莎拉·肯恩在4.48上書寫》是一個很有挑戰性和重要的作品，進劇場的表演帶給我們一種很有趣和開眼界的方法去處理文本。這個作品今次獲得年度多個獎項，我們覺得這是一個重要的演出。

梁偉詩 我是在香港文化中心看這作品的首演，然後因為劇評人獎和教學的關係，再看中英文版本的錄像演出。首先我想很多朋友看這個演出時會留意到陳麗珠不是在演某一特定角色，而是一種精神狀態。第二是如果大家有看過「風車草X進劇場」合作的《CRAVE狂情》，便會發現那時候已經有這種傾向，讓四名演員同時演一個人的四種精神狀態，但進劇場要到二〇一六年這部作品，才將那種演繹方法推向極致。

其實是我在年度舞台科藝／美術獎中提名這作品的，那時候的感覺是它的舞台設計、音樂、使用咪高峰、地板和牆壁的方法，都有助表達戲的情感和精神狀態，包括鄭文榮所設計的服裝。陳麗珠使用的白色長裙，表示了如像病人、又像睡袍、又像居家的狀態。我覺得整體的美術，包括在不鏽鋼地板上寫字、白色瓷磚牆上寫數學程式、到後來的滲血、濺血和拋杯等，將沉溺的精神狀態帶來強烈變化。如果純粹去演抑鬱症或精神崩潰的狀態，我們作為旁觀者可能只會想像有些人會力竭聲嘶、或是失控、或是大叫等。然而，在舞台科藝上，或是服裝上，或是形體上如何令這件事可以有種表演性？客觀的物質條件支撐了整件事。

我特別提及陳麗珠爬上不鏽鋼梯上使用咪高峰，以及在場中佈置的咪高峰，這些處理帶出間離效果。因她一開始在觀眾入場時便彈琴，其實不斷地告訴觀眾她正準備演出這場戲，她要去演那個文本。對於「出入」這個文本，我相信陳麗珠由二〇一五年「讀劇馬拉松」，到二〇一六年的《莎拉·肯恩在4.48上書寫》，再到二〇一七年上半年才演完的《伊底帕斯》，都有那種「出入」的實驗。我覺得這種實驗若從物質條件來說，在舞台上呈現出來的狀態是非常獨特的。

陳瑋鑫 陳麗珠這個作品有趣的地方是，她不是要演某個角色而是整個狀態所呈現的詩意。很多時大家會覺得原劇是死之前的胡思亂想或是碎語，她將這些變得很美麗，而不是一種「被迫去死」的狀態。陳麗珠並不是用很悲痛的感覺去讀文本；加上音樂，整件事的確令我覺得我終於聽得懂原本莎拉·肯恩的《4.48精神崩潰》的文字，或是她想表達的東西，而不會跌進不同版本的詮釋：這段是她和朋友的對話、那段是她跟醫生的對話。相反，《莎拉·肯恩在4.48上書寫》是開放角色，因為只是女演員在讀文字，然後配上音樂。我覺得整件事是很有機的。我看過讀劇版本的錄像，但這個版本令我覺得是一個進化版，整件事拉寬了。

江藍 整個演出的處理都很乾淨，由佈景到場面的處理，都看到陳麗珠怎看莎拉·肯恩，由此而為我們提供了一個很不同的角度去看這個文本。

小西 我想了很久為何它叫作《莎拉·肯恩在4.48上書寫》，我從這個名字開始思考這套劇。

其實很多人說《4.48精神崩潰》是莎拉·肯恩最清醒的時候去寫自己最清醒的狀態。所以《莎拉·肯恩在4.48上書寫》有三個層次：一、《4.48精神崩潰》所描述的莎拉·肯恩自己最清醒的狀態；二、莎拉·肯恩在最清醒的時候書寫《4.48精神崩潰》；而第三個層次就是陳麗珠如何進入這兩個層面，當然不只三個層次。

我看完《莎拉·肯恩在4.48上書寫》後也思考了很久它在表達甚麼，當我翻閱劇本與相關文本覺得這套戲是很複雜，有很多層次，當中很多細節都要思考為何要這樣處理：為何部分是英文——如果你看過劇本，你會發現重點不在文字本身的意思（語意），而是（由文字）達成近乎詩的節奏；這次表演這方面有很獨特的處理。

梁偉詩 我有一點補充，當時陳麗珠有要求現場觀眾讀一段文本。一開始我是不喜歡的，我覺得破壞了整體表演氣氛。後來我想了很久為何要有那部分，看過錄像後，才慢慢地明白到這個決定其實是跟觀眾作為觀者，與現場和陳麗珠和文本之間的互動關係，不是單純演員演戲的問題，能有更多維度的出入。

陳麗珠 其中一個啟發我排演《莎拉·肯恩在4.48上書寫》的，是莎拉·肯恩的最後一個訪問，她應一位朋友大學老師的邀請，跟他一班學生傾談。她很有魅力地交談，而不久之後便自殺了。在訪談中完全想像不到她會自殺，而是一位非常風趣、思考銳利的人。她在《4.48精神崩潰》中不是說自殺，而是生存，她從不同的角度讓人思考為何要生存，她從跟自己的關係、跟愛人的關係、跟年老的自己的關係、跟所有人將來的關係中，都找不到留下的理由。對我來說理解她所書寫的是一次極好的課堂。

張秉權 多謝你的分享。這是我們第一次辦這個獎，我們會繼續辦下去。希望今次不足的地方，能在下次改進，也歡迎各位督促和給予建議，多謝大家。



《莎拉·肯恩在4.48上書寫》（2016）

攝影：張志偉

Drama

IATC (HK) Critics Awards 2016 Awards Ceremony and Discussion (Excerpts)

Date	24 April 2017 (Mon)
Time	7:30-9:30pm
Location	Wan Chai 01SPACE
Speakers (in order of speaking)	Cheung Ping-kuen, Felix Chan, Bernice Chan, Damian Cheng, Ting Yu, Lo Wai-luk, Chan Ping-chiu, Lo Koon-lan, Jass Leung, William Chan, Daisy Chu, Bonni Chan
Transcript editors	Edison Hung, Daisy Chu, Bernice Chan

Cheung Ping-kuen Let's start with two plays that were nominated. We will start with *The Truth from Liar*. It was nominated for a few categories including Performer of the Year and Scenography of the Year.

Felix Chan In our discussions, there were not many disagreements over this play. It interested all of us. This piece is very attractive, probably due in large part to Sung Boon-ho's performance which suffused the show with energy, a kind of energy rarely seen in Hong Kong. Simulated reality shows may be common elsewhere, and there are movies which simulate variety shows as their theme, but in Hong Kong there are relatively few performances which attain this level. Moreover, it was very interesting and fun.

I have been following the productions of Artocrite Theater. All their actors are full of energy. I feel that *The Truth from Liar* is playing with a few dramatic techniques; it is playing with what we consider traditional dramatic techniques, expanding melodrama to the largest extent possible, and in doing so, transforming it into a kind of form or method. To me, this kind of form or method is very special.

Bernice Chan Simulating a live broadcast TV programme in a theatrical work — this mode of performance is really attractive to me. In terms of form, this is new and fresh; to the actors it is challenging, especially for Sung Boon-ho. Apart from what Felix said about "expanding", between what

is big and what is small, he shifts between the character and the actor. Even when he is supposedly “behind the scenes” — when he is not the focus, he still maintains a state of high concentration.

When I watch theatre productions, I pay particular attention to the state an actor is in when they are not in character. I very much admire actors who perform with precision. This is not easy, especially in this piece when they might have to go from a high energy state, and then adjust that energy accordingly in different scenes. The co-ordination among the entire ensemble was very good. All the many performances of Sung Boon-ho in 2016 made an impression on me, and I look forward to his future work.

Cheung Ping-kuen Maybe Damian could talk about Cinematic Theatre’s *Watching U...*?


Damian Cheng This piece is very interesting. It was nominated for Scenography of the Year. What we see is the use of multimedia by the creative team and their “playing” with the elements of space.

Cheung Ping-kuen This play is excellent in its use of multimedia. The form is the content. It is fresh and surprising.

Script/Playwright of the Year: Chan Ping-chiu (On & On Theatre Workshop’s *Waking Dreams in 1984*)

Cheung Ping-kuen *Waking Dreams in 1984* also won awards in the 26th Hong Kong Drama Awards. It is a script which received much attention and appreciation in 2016. I believe there are not many scripts in Hong Kong that can take a writer’s formative years, interweave them with impressions and feelings from different eras, and then, after being set aside to ferment for several years, look back on that era from the present perspective.

As clearly stated in the programme, this piece was developed out of a short play written in the 1980s. At that time, the work was about how people perceived their own era. When the work is further developed in the present day, it becomes a “re-membering” of that era



from the present perspective. This is a kind of “memory and re-membering”, and it is also a coming of age story which reflects the larger history of Hong Kong. As the script suggests, the 1980s were “predetermined”. Many things were determined then, without seeming to have much fixity.

Now, in the aftermath of the Umbrella Movement, many things have changed in interpersonal relationships and community relationships. In the play the two brothers have different emotional journeys and attitudes. The younger brother leaves Hong Kong and then returns. His personal determination becomes something deeply troubled and conflict ridden. This allows audience members who have participated in and who care about the movement to have different interpretations and projections. This is an extremely accomplished work, in which we can see a personal history and the history of Hong Kong in the 1980s.

Theatre du Pif likes to “compose poetry” on stage, generating a relationship between the play and poetry. On & On Theatre Workshop explores the relation between text and life, whether it is by using a new text to look at oneself and Hong Kong, or, as Chan Ping-chiu does, to look at the “clues” in one’s life and generate new life from these “clues”.

Waking Dreams in 1984 speaks of the search for the real grandmother — is she found? What does it mean to nap? Is it a proactive approach? There is a lot of room here for interpretation. This is a difficult piece. Although younger actors may not be able to capture the charm of the 1980s, older actors may lack their youthfulness and the sense of forward momentum in the quality of the acting. Realising all this is very difficult, and in terms of artistic effect, the script is of higher quality than the production.

Ting Yu

This script inspires many feelings. Apart from the relationship between the two brothers, I feel that Chan Ping-chiu has borrowed from that golden era of films to reflect contemporary Hong Kong. We see that Hong Kong at the time was one of Asia’s movie kingdoms. Why has our society changed to such an extent? What happened in the intervening 20 years? What

have we lost? I feel this play brings my attention to these questions.

Lo Wai-luk

Chan Ping-chiu's play was entered into the playwriting award in the 1980s. At the time I thought the script was very good, but the other jurors did not really like it, which is why *Waking Dreams* did not make the top three. Subjectively, I feel that version was better: The grey flavour of the time, the feeling of light trapped in darkness, made me think of Pinter's *The Homecoming*. Back then certain characters were designated symbols, which we have now lost in this version. That is why I think the previous version had more weight.

As for this performance, I agree with what Cheung Ping-kuen just said. In this play Chan Ping-chiu wants to achieve an effect like Chekhov's, which is why the plot is fragmented, with each fragment containing interpersonal relationships. This kind of dialogue is rarely seen in the works of young playwrights, because dialogue written by young playwrights is often in search of "something" but lacks "heart". Chan Ping-chiu's play contains a lot of things which, though weighty, are alchemised into daily life. I think the first half of this script is very good, though the performance lacks flavour. The second half, however, endeavours to convey certain things, and the script becomes jittery from there.

Chan Ping-chiu

Lo Wai-luk has witnessed my journey as a playwright. He understands the world of this script. I am grateful for his comments.

Performer of the Year: Lo Koon-lan (*We Drame's Wit*)

Cheung Ping-kuen

Lo Koon-lan also won Best Actress in the 26th Hong Kong Drama Awards. Many people believe that the way to win both stage and film awards lies through portraying an unusual character like a demented, mentally retarded, seriously ill or terminally ill person. There may be an element of truth here, provided one has the ability to perform such roles in a way which moves the audience. Lo Koon-lan's performance in *Wit* was certainly moving. This play does not develop in a linear manner: The actors have to jump in and out of the action, which makes it very challenging.

As an experienced actor and an acting teacher, Lo Koon-lan can act in an extensive range of roles. In *Wit* she plays the role of a professor, which chimes well with her own identity as a teacher. Within the performance, she can transition seamlessly between the professor of poetry and a seriously ill patient. These rapid transitions are executed very well indeed. Moreover, she goes through a series of encounters with various people, including young people whose identities change over the course of the play. Through her attention to detail, she provides a lot of texture to this role.

This is also the place, however, to flag up areas for improvements, such as make up. A bald head can be represented better. The recovery time after vomiting can be longer, which would make the transition more delicate and moving.

This is an outstanding script. It does not lack self-deprecation and humour. The direction too is very precise. This is a difficult play, and of course the main element is Lo's treatment of the main role.


Lo Koon-lan

Sometimes it is costly for an actor to do justice to a role. I have been acting for a few decades now, but this is the first time that I have had an acting induced emotional collapse. The day before the get in, at approximately 10am, I suddenly started crying hard. It was as if a tap had been turned on. I could not stop. By the afternoon I had calmed down somewhat, in fits and starts, but at night when we were rehearsing the uncontrollable crying started all over again, frightening the other actors.

Why did I have such an emotional collapse? I think it is because this play deals with life and death, as well as associated themes which are all heavy. Even during rehearsals, objective elements such as how other people viewed this play, or their views on how one should perform this play, also had a great influence.



Wit (2016)
Photo: Fungwaisun



Moreover, during rehearsals, a few of the scenes contained very heavy and internalised feelings which had to be suppressed. It means that the heart is oppressed without being able to cry. Crying is actually good, since it allows the actor to wash away the accumulated negative feelings in the play. Yet for this character it is not appropriate to cry during these scenes, which is very difficult for the actor. I had the experience of rehearsing the same scene for an entire morning, with every repetition leading to another accumulation of emotions in the heart, without any emotional outlet. Early on in the rehearsal process, I could go home at the end of the day, wash up, and suddenly burst into tears, after which I felt much better. Later, however, as the emotions accumulated, there were no opportunities to let them out. Even I myself did not realise how much had been accumulated, which led to an emotional collapse.

Moreover, the issues explored in the play, and the general opinion of other people towards the character can be really wounding! I feel that most people misunderstand this character, viewing her as an unlikeable, cold-blooded person without human emotions. I do not think this is the right angle. For example, we should not deduce that she is unlikeable from the fact that no one visits her during her illness. Think about her status in the academic world, where even Oxford University Press commissions her to write a book. Moreover, not all her students dislike her. In fact, you can see from the play that the lack of visitors arises from her own choice. There were also other issues which exacerbated the difficulties I had with the script and characters, some of which I could not resolve on my own, which led to this accumulation of complicated emotions. It was more intense than what I had anticipated and it exploded on that day. Therefore, sometimes actors must pay a great price when digesting a play and acting a part. This is a script with many layers, which can inspire many thoughts. I hope everyone can read this script. The script is very difficult to translate. The words, the meanings, the double entendres, like the poetry, are all in English, and they are more vivid in the original language.

Cheung Ping-kuen The original title *Wit* is hard to translate. The Chinese title, which literally means, “The Mind Ward”, is more attractive to audiences.

Lo Koon-lan I feel that the title “The Mind Ward” (I heard we followed the Taiwanese precedent here) can start off a discussion about appropriate translation. Is the script really about a “mind ward”? I feel that the translation is mostly very good, bringing out to the greatest extent possible the interest and humour of the script, but some parts are really very difficult to translate. To experience the original nuances and flavours and feelings, you have to read the English original.

Performance of the Year and Performer of the Year: On & On Theatre Workshop’s *The Golden Dragon* (Rerun), Wan Yuk-yu (On & On Theatre Workshop’s *The Golden Dragon* (Rerun))

Cheung Ping-kuen This restaging of *The Golden Dragon* builds and improves on the foundation of the previous staging. Some of the actors were also in the original cast. The “texture” of each actor is not the same, so the resulting performance is also different. One of the reasons *The Golden Dragon* won this award is because we feel that the different narrative strands are clear, and the treatment of emotions proportionate — this is a question of “distance”. For contemporary translated drama, the proper mastery of “distance” is very important.

Wan Yuk-yu won the award because she delivered a finely nuanced performance of this character that was natural and moving. The protagonist is an illegal Asian worker, who has a toothache and needs a tooth extraction. She does not dare see the dentist because of her illegal status and extracts the tooth herself, ultimately dying because of the loss of blood. The style in which the tooth extraction is performed is done very well. This new production of *The Golden Dragon* achieves the balance between comedy and tragedy with great sureness. In fact, this character is to be greatly pitied. Her death seems unimportant, like a life frozen, then thrown away like a rotten tooth.

Wan Yuk-yu's treatment, and the director's arrangements, allow the audience to see how the actors navigate the two layers of acting a role and narrating the story. We sympathise with this character, and simultaneously condemn the very existence of illegal workers, or perhaps we perceive the character's fate as the common tragedy of the illegal worker. Wan Yuk-yu delivers her lines beautifully, especially the part when she talks about how illegal workers return home.

To sum up, we witness the loss of a lowly life, and from that understand the tragedy of the large numbers of refugees fleeing to Europe.

Lo Wai-luk

I want to add something to the discussion of Wan Yuk-yu's quality. One distinctive component of this quality is her ability to "remove" herself from the role, which is why we see her character's dirtiness and slovenliness. This is a challenge for actresses. Her many roles involve breaking something, including her body. Which is why we say this is not just a question of mastery over technique, but a question of attitude. I think this kind of attitude is very precious; it is especially precious when seen in performance.

Damian Cheng

Compared to the first version, this restaging seems to include more German elements. I am sure that many people have seen both versions. I do not feel this is about comparing the two versions. This is the first year we have had the Critics Awards. We agreed to disregard whether the productions this year are premieres or reruns. However, it is inevitable that one makes a mental comparison with the former work. I think this restaging is more complete than the original version. The element of play is stronger, the German has increased, the sadness is more expressive. One feels a chill in the heart, but is also moved, which is why we say it is outstanding overall.

The way German was dealt with has improved this time around. In fact, mixing German with Cantonese is very strange. Their way of dealing with this was to use Cantonese tones to speak German, which is very strange, because German is actually a very "flat" language.



The Golden Dragon (Rerun) (2016)
Photo: Cheung Chi-wai

Where Chan Ping-chiu gets interesting is in his use of many different techniques to create a kind of “alienation”, allowing the German part to appear like comedy. This is not the only example. Take the demarcation of scenes. In the first version, I remember the use of the word “pause”, read out in Cantonese. In this version, sometimes “pause” in Cantonese was used, sometimes “pause” was read out in German. This time Chan Ping-chiu has used many techniques to match the play.

Jass Leung

With regard to laughter, I feel Chan Ping-chiu is one of the very few in Hong Kong's theatre to be able to bring much nuance to comedy/farce. Moreover, there are tears within the farce. He is truly a director who sharpens our perspective. I think he can be even “madder” — he has a lot of creative space in this regard.

Chan Ping-chiu

First I would like to thank Wan Yuk-yu's partner for helping her with the German lines. I would also like to thank the translator of *The Golden Dragon*, Chen Yijun, who also translated the first version. In fact, between 2013 when we first staged *The Golden Dragon*, and 2016 when we restaged it, I learnt a lot, for instance, about the research process. Chen went into extraordinary detail, even sending over information about German demographics, gender and race problem in a steady stream of emails. This is equivalent to a background course in German society and an exploration of their world, which enabled me to learn many new things. Since we had adequate time, I really enjoyed this process. I feel that when dealing with new work from Europe, there is a gap between them and our society, but at the end of the day they are telling contemporary world stories. When we go deeper into the work, we can still learn many things.

Director of the Year, Scenography of the Year, Performer of the Year, Performance of the Year:

Theatre du Pif's 4.48 Psychosis by Sarah Kane

Cheung Ping-kuen

Theatre du Pif's 4.48 Psychosis by Sarah Kane is a very challenging and important work. Theatre du Pif's performance is a very interesting and eye-opening way of dealing with text.

Jass Leung

This work received many awards this year, because we think this is an important performance.

I saw this work when it premiered at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. I watched the recording of the Chinese-English version because of the Theatre Critics Awards and for my teaching. I feel that initially, many who watch this performance will notice that Bonni Chan does not confine herself to one specific role, but represents a kind of mental attitude. Secondly, if you have seen *Crave* co-produced by Windmill Grass Theatre and Theatre du Pif, you would have noticed this tendency already, since the four actors simultaneously represented the four different mental conditions of one individual in that play. However, it took until 2016 for Theatre du Pif to push this method of performance to its extreme in this work.

Actually I was the one who nominated this work for the category of Scenography. At the time I felt that its stage design, music, use of microphone, the floor boards and the walls, and the costumes designed by Cheng Man-wing all contribute to the expression of emotional and mental conditions. Bonni's long white dress represents a patient's gown, or pyjamas, or the state of being at home. I felt that the entire aesthetics, from the writing on the stainless steel floorboards, the mathematical equations on the white tiled walls, to the subsequent bleeding, the splashing of blood, the throwing of cups, effects strong changes to the state of obsession. If an actor sets out to perform depression or emotional collapse, as observers we might imagine people utterly drained, or losing control, or screaming. But how, through scenography, costume or form, do we make such states theatrical? In this case, objective material conditions supported the entire project.

I want to draw attention to Bonni climbing a stainless steel ladder to use the microphone, as well as the microphones in the set, as these arrangements contribute to the alienation effect. Right at the beginning, as the audience is still filing into the theatre, she plays the piano, which is in fact a way of signalling the audience that she is preparing for her show, that she will perform this text. As for "entering and exiting" this text, I believe that Bonni, through *Play Reading Marathon* in 2015, *4.48 Psychosis* by Sarah Kane in 2016, and *Oedipus* which she

has performed in the first half of 2017, has experienced this “entering and exiting”. I feel that if this kind of experiment emerges from material factors, the states that appear on stage will be very unique.

William Chan

Bonni’s performance is interesting in that she is not representing a single character but the poetics of an entire mental attitude. Although many think of the original drama as consisting of random thoughts or fragments before death, she transforms these into beauty, rather than a state of being “hounded to death”. Bonni does not read the text in a particularly pained way. With the addition of music, the entire event made me feel that I finally understood the original text of Sarah Kane’s *4.48 Psychosis*, or what she was trying to express, without falling into different interpretations — if she is speaking with her friends, if she is speaking with the doctor. By contrast, *4.48 Psychosis by Sarah Kane* liberates the role, because only one actress is reading the text, to a musical accompaniment. I think the whole thing is very organic. I have seen the recording of the reading, but this version made me feel like it was an evolutionary work, which expanded the entire event.

Daisy Chu

This whole performance, from the set to the setting, is very clean. You can see how Bonni sees Sarah Kane. From this we have a very different angle from which to regard the text.

Damian Cheng

I have reflected long and hard about why this play is called *4.48 Psychosis by Sarah Kane*. From the title I started thinking about the play. In fact many people say that *4.48 Psychosis* is Sarah Kane at her most lucid, writing about her most lucid periods. Therefore *4.48 Psychosis by Sarah Kane* works on three levels — 1) *4.48 Psychosis* describes Sarah Kane at her most lucid; 2) Sarah Kane wrote *4.48 Psychosis* while she was at her most lucid; 3) how Bonni navigates these two levels. Of course there are more than three levels.

After I watched *4.48 Psychosis by Sarah Kane*, I reflected for a long time about what it was actually expressing. Once I had read the script and related literature I could appreciate the complexity of this play, the multiple layers, and ponder the reasons behind the myriad details,



4.48 *Psychosis by Sarah Kane* (2016)
Photo: Cheung Chi-wai

for instance, why certain parts are in English. If you have seen the script, you will discover that the emphasis is not on the meaning of the text itself, but (from the text) on the almost poetic rhythm. In this performance this is handled in a very unique way.

Jass Leung

I have something to add. At the time, Bonni requested that audience members read certain texts. At first I did not like this at all, I thought it spoiled the entire atmosphere of the performance. Later, after much reflection as to why this may have been necessary, and after watching the recording, I slowly came to understand that her decision had to do with the audience as observer mutually interacting with the set and Bonni and the text, so that this became not merely a question of actors performing a play, but a work with many dimensions of access.

Bonni Chan

One of the inspirations for *4.48 Psychosis* by Sarah Kane was Kane's last interview, when she was invited by an academic friend to speak to his students. She was so vivacious while speaking, but then committed suicide not long afterwards. You would never have been able to tell from the interview that she would commit suicide, she was so humorous, so switched on. What she set out to talk about in *4.48 Psychosis* is not suicide but life. She allowed us to consider life from many different angles — in relation to herself, with lovers, with her own future aged self, and in all these future relationships she failed to find a reason to stay. To me, this is a very good lesson in understanding her work.

Cheung Ping-kuen

Thank you very much for sharing. This is the first time we are giving out these awards, and we will continue to do so. We hope that any inadequacies this time round will be corrected next time, and we also welcome everyone here to advise us and suggest improvements. Thank you.

(Translated by Amy Ng)

