

## Brief

### **This meet the press event is host by**

Point View Art Association,

Macau Experimental Theatre and Music Picnic (Canada).

### **Participants include:**

Johnny Tam (Theatre Director, artistic director of Macao Experimental Theatre)

NJO Kong Kie (Music Director, chairman of Point View Art Association and Music Picnic)

Jordan Cheng (Full time actor)

Erik Kuong (Producer, managing director of Creative Links)

This event is going to introduce these two Macao original works “Mr. Shi and His Lover” and “Picnic in the Cemetery” are going to be in the official theatre seasons of the theatres in Canada. “Mr. Shi and His Lover” will present by Tarragon Theatre in Toronto for six weeks run from this November to December and follow by another two weeks run in National Arts Centre, Ottawa.

Macao composer NJO Kong Kie will be the artist in resident of Canada Stage for the next two season. NJO will staging “Picnic in the Cemetery” in April 2018 and a new creation work in 2019.

### **Mr. Shi and His Lover**

“Mr. Shi and His Lover” originally produced by Macao Experimental Theatre. In 2013, Johnny Tam invites Macao composer NJO Kong Kie and script writer Wong Teng Chi to co-create a new work base on the true story from boardway theatre “M. Butterfly”. The first work in progress was presented in a small black box theatre in later 2013. It was names “Butterfly Lovers” at that stage. Then the work was keep developing in 2014-2015 and actors were also taking mandarin and Peking Opera training. In 2016, joint produced with Point View Art Association and Music Picnic in Canada, the work was premier in SummerWorks Performance Festival in Toronto. It was a very successful run and receive a very good feedback from audience and arts critic. This work received four titles from Now Magazine: “Outstanding Direction”, “Outstanding New Plays”, “Outstanding Productions” and “Outstanding Ensembles”. Then received several invitation from festivals and theatres in Canada. The confirmed 8 weeks run in Toronto and Ottawa will be on 2017/18 season and second run in East Coast region on 2018/19 season.

## **Picnic in the Cemetery**

The concert-theatre “Picnic in the Cemetery” is the second touring work that produced by Point View Art Association after the Water-Ink Theatre “Playing Landscape”. “Picnic in the Cemetery” juxtaposes the macabre with the light-hearted – acknowledging on the one hand the eventual destination for all of us, asking on the other hand whimsical questions about choices we make in life. It invites the audience to muse about dying, but more importantly to reflect on living.

At the core of this work is the performance of original chamber music set for violin, cello and piano, and can be enjoyed as such. But the production is in fact a concert, a spatial installation, a theatrical performance and a filmic experience rolled into one - Concert as Theatre.

“Picnic in the Cemetery” was premier in Macao Arts Festival 2013. In 2014, it was presented in Edinburgh Festival Fringe and received the critic ranking of 84 out of 4000s productions. “It is must see. Or, rather, must experience.” reviewed by British Theatre Guide. Then it was touring in China, Taiwan and Portugal. In 2016, it returned to the stage on Macao Cultural Centre with a theatre version. Then also presented in TPAM Tokyo Performing Art Meeting together with “Mr. Shi and His Lover” in this February. The latest presentation was in Ansan Street Arts Festival in Korea with an outdoor version last May. This work has been developed three versions: alternation space version, theatre version and outdoor version. Since 2013, it has toured in 14 cities and total of 71 performances.

## **Important of R&D process**

These two works have spent quite long time of development through different stages of work in progress. Providing enough time for the work to growth is very important. It is very tough to work in this way in Macau due to the product oriented funding system. It is difficult to have support in R&D stage. Most of us need to create different activities in order to get support for the development. It will take a longer process and unstable funding support. That why we take around 3-4 years to create the work.

In general, the existing funding system is only allow us to have less than 8 months for production. For creating a new work is very limited. It causes the “fast food” production practice. We also need to create new work one after the other in order to maintain the support. It won't allow time for the work to growth.

## **Extended discussion**

What kind of creative conditions does Macau need?

How to put our work on the international stage?

Why is the development of international network important?

How to create a cultural industry ecology?