

ABOUT US

Liquid on Stage is a collective of Chinese-Canadian artists dedicated to using theatre as a vehicle to explore urgent social issues from diverse perspectives in a global context. We challenge conventional modes of storytelling by embracing intercultural and interlingual stage representation and incorporating experimental elements. Our name, Liquid on Stage, represents our fearless spirit of innovation and our willingness to take creative risks. Our name is a reference to the risks that liquids can pose in theatre production, but it also symbolizes our commitment to pushing boundaries and defying convention. By confronting the impossible and challenging mediocrity, we seek to inspire others to think critically and creatively about the world around them.

Liquid on Stage由一群华语艺术家创办，以戏剧的力量与不同的创作视角为牙，刺破社会的缺口，直面社会问题，传递思想与声音。通过尝试实验性的创作风格与接纳不同的文化表达，为主流阐述带来不同的观点和思潮，给大家呈现属于我们文化视角的哲学、经历与想象力。我们的名字Liquid on Stage来源于创始人大学时期剧场管理中一条重要的规定：不可以将液体带上舞台，因为会给表演中的演员和正在运行的设备带来难以预料的安全风险。我们想要为剧场带来的，不是技术和安全上的危险，而是跳出思维舒适圈、勇敢表达自我的「危险」。我们想打破其他人没有触碰过的界限，为问题提出与众不同的解法，辛辣而直白地将「危险」带给你面前。

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A surrealist dream piece

CALGARY
FRINGE

LIQUID ON
STAGE

THEY MUST HAVE SMOKED

TA必吸煙

中文演出 - 英文字幕

Performed in Mandarin
Subtitled in English

Aug 5-11
Alexandra Dance Hall
936 9 Ave SE



tickets.calgaryfringe.ca



A New Play by Billy Kairan Guo
Directed by Nick Fangzheng Wang

ABOUT THE PLAY

In search of a lost visa and a heart left behind in a hospital, two misfits decide to secretly sneak into the hospital on the eve of its demolition. Relying on their memories of the smells and cigarettes hidden under the beds, they attempt to locate the once-quarantined room. However, tonight's hospital is far from ordinary, as each ward is intertwined with moments from history or the future. They have been lost in countless hospitals throughout human history. After numerous attempts at time travel, escapes, corrections, and missed chances, they seem unable to find what they have lost.

为了找寻曾经在医院丢失的签证和心脏，两位社会边缘青年决定在拆除工程前夜秘密潜入医院，尝试靠着对于气味的记忆找到曾经隔离过的房间。可今晚的医院却不是想象中那么安静，每间房间都与历史或未来的某个时刻交错糅合：他们迷失在了人类历史的无数个医院之中。在无数次穿梭、逃离、修正、错过之后，他们似乎再也找不到遗失的东西了。

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VUED

PRODUCTION & STAGE MANAGER

Jessica Lou

Jessica has a B.A. in English Literature and History from Queen's University. She lived in Beijing and worked in Chinese Theatre for two years. She mainly focuses on marketing and production management, aims to become a supportive member in the team, aiming to create a friendly working environment, so that every idea and expression across culture could be seen.



Anne is thrilled to be a part of Liquid on Stage! She has a passion for project management and event planning, and loves bringing people together for social and fun-filled occasions. She was captivated by the world of acting and dubbing when she participated in the Thunderstorms script reading. It ignited a deep love for the creative process and the joy of storytelling. In her professional life, Anne works as an engineer at the City of Calgary to make Calgary a better place. Outside of work, she finds solace in the great outdoors. Hiking is one of her favourite activities, as well as exploring different cuisines and flavours.

Anne Yang

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER



DRAMATURG, SURTITLE OPERATOR

Hwaan Han

Hwaan recently graduated with a B.A. in English Drama and Theatre from McGill University, where she was actively involved in the theatre scene as a director, actor, costume designer, and publicity director. In May, Hwaan took on dramaturgy and publicity roles for an independent theatre project initiated by Huirui Zhang, which introduced the Chinese cult hit play, Rhinoceros in Love, to Montreal in a multilingual production. Hwaan is also passionate about academia and is currently working as a research assistant on Dr. Erin Hurley's project about the history of English-language Quebec theatre. Her favorite hobby is taking long naps in the many grassy parks of Montreal, where she resides. She is extremely grateful and excited to be part of the Calgary Fringe Festival this year!



COSTUME & MAKEUP DESIGNER

Stephanie Qi

Professional in makeup design, facial painting, sound design, costume design, working with multiple elements to present various characters on stage. She is a stage makeup designer who specializes in Asian makeup design, a podcast storyteller, and a mother.



MEET THE DIRECTOR



Nick Fangzheng Wang

Independent Chinese theatre director working across languages and cultures. With an MFA degree in theatre directing from the University of Calgary, his work centers around new plays, contemporary emerging forms, and the representation of contemporary Chinese content within the Western context.

A 2021-22 CanadianStage Emerging Artists Resident. 2022-23 Season Lunchbox Theatre Associate Director.

HUIRUI ZHANG

As Doctor, Panda, Soldier, AI

Huirui Zhang is a Chinese-born interdisciplinary theatre director, performer, curator, and creative producer who spends most of her time creating work in Tiohtià:ke/Montréal. She is passionate about exploring issues arising from (im)migration and telling stories of love, identity, and belonging through writing, physical theatre and dance in a collaborative setting. Huirui holds a B.A. in English: Drama and Theatre and Art History from McGill University. In the past four years, she has worked as an actor, director, stage manager and designer for Moyses Hall Theatre, Theatre Sainte-Catherine, Tuesday Night Café Theatre, Segal Centre of Performing Arts, Imago Theatre and Mainline Theatre. She recently made her producing debut, a multilingual edition of the contemporary Chinese cult-hit play, *Rhinoceros In Love*. She is honoured to be invited by Nick to experience Calgary Fringe this summer.



DENIECE J

As Zhen-jun



Deniece is a researcher in the fields of psychology and theatre performance, with extensive practical experience in character design. Her unique interdisciplinary background grants her a genuine and profound understanding of character psychology and performance intricacies.

BILLY KAIRAN GUO

As A-Jun



Billy Kairan Guo is a cross-cultural theatre practitioner dedicated to exploring themes that transcend culture and politics and elevating the aesthetic of traditional Chinese arts in a global context.



Director's Notes

很高兴能有机会参与这部作品。感谢这个小小的团队里永远跳动的能量。

参加Calgary Fringe对这部剧来说是一部新的尝试：120分钟的剧本我们只能看到其中的60分钟，所以有很多元素和话题我们这次只能一笔带过。但我很满足。至少这个夏天，我们围绕疫情、遗憾、想象、绝望和灾难进行了无数次的讨论和实验。这次经历是从未有过的。在此我要感谢编剧，Billy Guo为我们构建的超现实世界。

还要感谢从魁北克来的跨语言戏剧艺术家Hwaan和Huirui。你们让这个团队充满了不一样的律动。感谢来自卡尔加里当地的妆造艺术家Steph和戏剧实践者Anne。还要感谢来自Queen's University大一的阳光般的Deniece和专程从北京赶来的职业舞台监督Jessica Lou。没有你们就没有这个制作。

人的遗憾、社会的遗憾、历史的遗憾、他人的遗憾，还未发生的遗憾……其实人们不太能接受遗憾。大多数对于遗憾的应对不过是忘掉当下情绪的困囿。太多改变过去、转生重生、逆天改命的故事充斥你我眼耳，不过饮鸩止渴。没有通往过去的道路。过去也不会欢迎高傲的我们。“要是能改变过去就好了。”可这真的是我们能拥有的吗？编剧说：

“幻想与当前选择对立的可能性，本质上还是对自我的否认和逃避。”遗憾是珍贵的。每条待选择的路给你遗憾的机会。我们最好还是庆幸我们还能选择。

人类在遗憾中煎熬前进，历史在遗憾中困知勉行。遗憾不会只存在于过去，还驻守在未来。学会与遗憾共存，是这个剧本给我们的启迪。

I'm glad to have the opportunity to participate in this work. Thanks to the ever-present energy in this small team. Participating in Calgary Fringe is a new attempt for this play: with a 120-minute script, we can only show 60 minutes of it, so many elements and topics have to be briefly mentioned.

Nevertheless, I am satisfied. At least this summer, we have had countless discussions and experiments revolving around the pandemic, regrets, imagination, despair, and disasters. This experience has been unprecedented. I want to thank the playwright, Billy Guo, for creating this surreal world for us.

I also want to express gratitude to the multilingual theatre artists, Hwaan and Huirui, who came from Quebec. You both have brought a different kind of rhythm to this team. Thanks to the local makeup artist, Steph, and theatre practitioner, Anne, from Calgary. Additionally, thanks to the sunshine-like Deniece from Queen's University and the professional stage manager, Jessica Lou, who came all the way from Beijing. Without all of you you, this production wouldn't have been possible.

Regrets of individuals, regrets of society, regrets of history, regrets of others, and regrets that have not yet occurred... In reality, people find it challenging to accept regrets. For most, the response to regrets is merely trying to forget the emotional entanglement of the present moment. There are too many stories of changing the past, reincarnation, and defying fate, but they are only temporary solutions to numb our pain. There is no path leading to the past. The past won't welcome our arrogance. "If only we could change the past." But is that something we can truly possess? The playwright says, "Fantacizing in opposition to the present reality is fundamentally a denial of oneself and an escape." Regrets are precious. Every path of choice gives you the chance to experience regrets. We'd better be grateful that we still have choices.

Humanity moves forward in agony with regrets, and history is guided by regrets in its path. Regrets will not only exist in the past but also reside in the future. Learning to coexist with regrets is the enlightenment this script offers us.