**A Midsummer Night’s**

**DREAMING**

**Under the Southern Bough**

**仲夏夜梦南柯**

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**About our Shakespeare-Tang Xianzu project**

The poet’s eye, in fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;  
And as imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet’s pen  
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name.

- Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* 5:1

The vitality of writing in the world relies on extraordinary talented people. A talented person with extraordinary skills will have an open mind, which can fly up to the sky, down to the earth, back to the past or forward to the future. It can be free beyond life or death. Freedom is omnipotent.

*-* Tang Xianzu, *Preface to Works by Qiu Zhaolin*

In August 2014, inspired by Shakespeare’s “poet’s eye” that glances “from heaven to earth …” and Tang Xianzu’s “open mind” that “can fly up to the sky, down to the earth …”, the Universities of Leeds in the UK and International Business and Economics (UIBE) in China launched the project “William Shakespeare and Tang Xianzu: celebrating a 400 year legacy” to mark the 2016 400th anniversary of the deaths of two legendary playwrights. At the centre of the project, surrounded by series of seminars and workshops, is the stage production *A Midsummer Night’s DREAMING Under the Southern Bough*. With the two texts and the overarching theme of “dreaming”, students and staff from two universities have created a new work. The creative team at the UIBE presents a piece inspired by the young lovers and fairies in Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer* while Leeds offers a contemporary response to Tang Xianzu’s *Nanke Ji*.

Starting from an “airy nothing”, we present a magical experience that is “back to the past” and “forward to the future”. We thank those who have given so much to ensure the realisation of this project. A million thanks!

**Li Ruru**

**Curator and Producer**

**关于“莎士比亚和汤显祖”项目**

诗人的眼睛，充满着狂热，一下子

从天上看到地下，从地下直望到天上；

在他的“想象”中孕育了形形色色

无可名状的东西，诗人的笔头一转，

他们便成了形，“虚无缥缈”便有了

落脚的场所，还捞到一个名称。

- 莎士比亚,《仲夏夜之梦》第五幕，第一场

天下文章所以有生气者，全在奇士。士奇则心灵，心灵则能飞动，能飞动则下上天地，来去古今，可以屈伸长短生灭如意，如意则可以无所不如。

- 汤显祖，《序丘毛伯稿》

是莎士比亚那可以从天上看到地下的“诗人的眼”与汤显祖那能飞动下上天地，来去古今的“奇士之心”，指引英国利兹大学和中国对外经贸大学于2014年8月启动了“威廉·莎士比亚和汤显祖：欢庆四百年文化遗产”这一国际项目，以纪念两位戏剧大家2016年逝世400周年。

在项目安排的系列讲座和工作坊的中心是舞台演出《仲夏夜梦南柯》。以共同的主题“梦”为连接，两地师生重新诠释原作并呈现崭新的舞台作品。对外经贸大学的创作团队以莎士比亚经典《仲夏夜之梦》中的年轻恋人和仙子为启发进行创作，英国利兹大学的师生则以当代艺术形式重新演绎汤显祖的《南柯记》。

起始于“无可名状”，今天在舞台上“来去古今”。我们感谢所有为这个项目作贡献的人，在此奉献上无穷尽的、深深的谢意！

**李如茹**

**策划与制作**

导演语 **Director’s words:**

李军博士毕业于香港中文大学，现在对外经济贸易大学英语学院任教

LI Jun teaches English drama at University of International Business and Economics in Beijing

槐，木中之鬼，中国古代不乏将其与魅幻奇梦相联的传说，其中最为流传的是源自唐朝的“南柯一梦”，后来汤显祖正是据此写下《南柯记》。此树亦给我们带来创作灵感——这部改编于《仲夏夜之梦》的作品将莎剧中的雅典附近的森林挪到了一家有中国特色的“槐树爱巢”旅馆，由此展开一个与原剧迥然不同的新梦，向观众展示当代中国年轻人在追求爱情与发现自我过程中的选择、困惑和希望。

Sophora, wood ghost, is a tree often associated with fantastic apparitions and dreams in ancient Chinese legends and tales. The most popular, *Nanke Dream*, dates back to the Tang Dynasty, and is the source of *A Dream Under the Southern Bough*, written by Tang Xianzu. For our adaptation, this tree also gave us the inspiration to change the location of the wood near Athens in Shakespeare’s comedy to a Chinese milieu, Sophora Nest Hotel. We have rendered a new dream and exhibit to the audience the choices, confusions and hopes of contemporary youth in their pursuit of true love and self-identity.

**Director’s words** 导演语:

Steve Ansell is the Artistic Director of stage@leeds and the stage@leedscompany, University of Leeds

斯蒂夫·安塞尔，利兹大学利兹舞台、利兹舞台演出团艺术总监

The journey of *A Midsummer Night’s DREAMING Under the Southern Bough* started in Shanghai in 2012 when I first visited China. Working with *The Sun is Not for Us*, a new play commemorating Chinese playwright Cao Yu’s centenary, it became apparent that there was a wealth of wonderful stories and classical Chinese plays that were unknown in the West and often overlooked by audiences in China. The 400th Anniversary of the deaths of William Shakespeare and Tang Xianzu presents the perfect opportunity to revisit, re-imagine and reposition Tang for a contemporary audience both in China and the UK as a contemporary of Shakespeare and as a master storyteller in his own right.

我的《仲夏夜梦南柯》之旅始于2012年上海。那是我第一次去中国。通过参与一出纪念中国剧作大师曹禺百年诞辰的戏剧——《太阳不是我们的》，我发现很多伟大的中国经典戏剧和故事并不为西方所知，甚至也被很多中国观众所忽略。纪念莎士比亚和汤显祖逝世四百周年为中英两地当代观众提供了一个重新了解、想象及定位汤显祖的机会，让他们了解汤显祖作为莎士比亚的同代人，自身也是一位伟大的说故事的人。

**邂逅莎士比亚 （ST@UIBE的话）**

**Encountering Shakespeare**

《仲夏夜之梦》让我们接受了一次宝贵的爱的教育。“真爱之路无坦途”，这给追求真爱路上的人们带来慰藉、耐心与力量。现代社会中，人们在爱情及各方面对“颜值”都颇为看中，“爱不在眼”恰是一剂对症的解药。这些台词深入我们内心并带给我们启迪。

From *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, we received a precious education on love. “The course of true love never did run smooth” gives comfort, patience, and strength in pursuing true love. “Love looks not with the eyes” serves as an antidote to the common modern preoccupation with appearance in almost everything, including love. Such lines entered our minds and enlightened us.

**Meeting Tang Xianzu (Words from stage@leedscompany)**

遇见汤显祖

Tang Xianzu was a contemporary of William Shakespeare although each worked on different sides of the world and they never met. Both playwrights wrote about the complexities and contradictions of the human condition and both died in 1616. It was this unlikely coincidence that has tied these two great writers together for eternity. Shakespeare is known throughout the world whereas Tang Xianzu has remained an undiscovered treasure for most of the world until now. Like Shakespeare in his late plays, Tang’s “dream” plays, written in the later part of his life, explore the values we might choose to live by and question the busy materialist life that does not allow time for self-searching and spirituality. Self-centred Chunyu is forced into an enlightening journey of love and political responsibility. Eventually, he finds an answer to a question he didn’t know he needed to ask. Perhaps, like the Chunyu of our adaptation, when we finally lose the sense of our own importance, we begin to see what’s important around us.

汤显祖与威廉·莎士比亚是同一时代的人。他们生活在地球的两端，从未见过彼此。两位剧作家都以人类社会的矛盾及错综复杂为创作主题，并都于1616年逝世。正是这一巧合让他们俩永远联系在一起了。与莎士比亚享誉全球的际遇不同，汤显祖仍是一块等待被发现的瑰宝。和莎士比亚的晚期戏剧一样，汤显祖在他生命晚期写就的以“梦”为主题的戏剧中探索了我们所选择的生命价值，并审视了这个让我们没有时间探索自我及灵性的忙碌的“物质主义”生活。以自我为中心的淳于棼被迫踏上了一段充满爱和政治责任的发人深省的旅途。曾经他以为并不存在的问题，最终他却找到了答案。或许，就像我们改编作品中的淳于一样，唯有当我们不再仅仅关注自身重要性时，我们才能了解他人的需求。

**Reflections & Reviews**

感想和评论

Through the creation and receipt of drama, we can explore another world and gain greater insight into our own.

通过创作与接受戏剧，我们不仅探索他人的世界，也更深地理解了我们自己。

Susan Daniels

Project Advisor 项目顾问

“A unique global collaboration” 难得的国际合作

- *Yorkshire Post* 约克郡邮报

“A blend of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, the Bard’s comedy of magic and mismatched love, and Tang’s *A Dream Under the Southern Bough*, an opera about a soldier’s fantastical journey through a kingdom of ants.”

这是一部融汇了莎士比亚与汤显祖的新作品： 充满神奇与错位的爱情喜剧《仲夏夜之梦》；军士在蝼蚁国奇妙之旅的传奇剧本《南柯记》。

- *The Telegraph* 每日电讯报

“昆曲中的生旦净末丑摇身一变成为了英国当代退伍军人和想象中蝼蚁国的王室贵族，戏曲的浓妆艳抹转化成为无装饰的西方面孔，为这出剧目增添不少看点。”

Chinese role types are now British retired soldiers and nobles in the imagined ants’ kingdom; strong makeup in the traditional Chinese theatre has transformed into natural Western faces. They are the highlights of the production.

*-* 欧洲时报 *Nouvelles d’Europe*

**剧团与剧情简介**

ST@UIBE上演《仲夏夜梦》

来自北京的获奖剧团ST@UIBE （中国对外经贸大学（北京）学生剧团，）重新演绎莎翁关于爱和误解的经典作品。以神秘的“槐树爱巢”旅馆为背景，ST@UIBE将中国戏曲技法、幽默与当代舞台糅合，探索爱、性别政治及当代中国社会中女性角色的改变。

ST@UIBE present: *A Midsummer Night’s Dreaming*

The award-winning ST@UIBE company from China presents Shakespeare’s classic tale of love and misunderstanding in a refreshing new light. Set in the mystical Sophora Nest Hotel and mixing traditional Chinese theatre techniques, humour, music and contemporary staging, ST@UIBE examines love, gender politics and the changing role of women in contemporary Chinese society.

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stage@leedscompany present: *DREAMING Under the Southern Bough* 《梦南柯》

“You can run from everything but yourself …” stage@leedscompany (University of Leeds student company) present the first theatrical adaptation of Tang Xianzu’s seminal *Nanke Ji* (*The Story of Nanke*, or *The Dream under the Southern Bough*) Charles ‘Chunny’ Fenn is an ex-soldier, unsure about his future and haunted by the memories of his past. On an isolated island, with his two closest friends, he embarks on a surreal journey that will literally change his life.

“人可以逃离一切，却无法逃离自己 。”stage@leedscompany（英国利兹大学学生剧团）首次改编汤显祖极富想象力的剧作《南柯记》。改编版本赋予这一在蝼蚁王国寻找启示的个人旅程充满活力又极具当代性的曲折。退伍军人查尔斯·棼对未来充满不安又无法摆脱过去的桎梏。在一个远离人世的小岛上，他和两位挚友一起踏上了一段将完全改变他人生的超现实旅途。