

# SHANGHAI YUEJU THEATRE 上海越剧院

Yue Opera or *yueju* (premiered 2005)  
越剧 (2005年首演)



程婴把婴儿装在药箱里，希望偷偷跑出王宫，不料被守卫韩厥拦住。

Cheng Ying attempts to smuggle out the baby concealed inside his medicine chest, but he is stopped by the guard at the palace gate.

*Yueju*, also known as *shaoxingxi*, is a popular regional song-dance theatre originated from tea-picking ballads in the lower reaches of the Yangzi River. Absorbing stage conventions from other older genres, it developed quickly in Shanghai in the 1930s and it is now welcomed in many areas in China.

In *The Orphan of Zhao*, Cheng Ying is the leading character, but he has never considered himself as a hero. He is depicted as a folk doctor, a 'normal man' who chose to rescue the orphan out of kindness and the sense of justice and sympathy in his nature.

He was not a man abandoning life, nor was he reckless in desperation. Having witnessed the guard Han Jue's suicide after releasing the orphan, and Gongsun's valour in saving the orphan, he finally decided to swap the infants (his own son with the orphan of Zhao) regardless of his wife's objection. Being the eyewitness to the brutal death of both old Gongsun and his own child, Cheng bravely chose a long-suffering path of raising the orphan for sixteen years, despite being cursed and reviled by people who were unaware of the truth.

When the darkest time passed, Cheng Ying again faced the loss of a child whom he had treated as his own for sixteen years. He had to return the orphan to his natural mother, the Princess. Bidding farewell to the orphan of Zhao became even more painful than when he had lost his own son.

In the rustling autumn wind, the weather-worn couple leave the orphan behind with his natural mother in the palace. Their figures, as they walk away supporting each other, indicate the essence of one simple word: human.

-- Yu Qingfeng (Playwright)

我笔下的程婴，自始至终都没觉得自己是英雄。我写了一个草泽医生，一个在救孤与否的抉择中出于善良本性、正义感和同情心而行动的“正常人”。

他并非不顾及身家性命，不顾一切“铤而走险”。他是在目睹了韩厥将军为了放孤而刎颈自杀，又感受到公孙老人为了救孤而敢于担当，终于不顾妻子阻拦，做出了献出儿子“换孤”的抉择。他不但亲眼目睹公孙老人的惨死，更目睹了亲生儿子被活活摔死……所有一切，壮实了程婴的一颗坚忍之心，在不明真相的世人唾骂中，十六年忍辱负重，把孤儿抚养成人。

漫天阴霾散尽，程婴却面临着第二次失去儿子，要把视如己出的赵氏孤儿归还给他的生母庄姬公主。这第二次比第一次还要艰难！

历经沧桑的程婴夫妇，在瑟瑟秋风中离去，他们的背影逐渐在我眼中高大起来，变成了一个完整的“人”字，一撇一捺相互支撑着。

——余青峰（编剧）



屠岸贾命令程婴棒打年迈的公孙杵臼。

Cheng Ying is forced to beat the old Gongsun Chujiu.



孤儿明白了自己的身世，不希望程婴夫妇离他而走。

Having learnt his life story, the orphan of Zhao does not wish the Cheng couple to leave him.



照片由上海越剧院提供  
Courtesy of Shanghai Yueju Theatre