

EDUCA —TION NOTES

BY AMY LABAN
& CLAIRE CHRISTIAN



LA BOITE
THEATRE
COMPANY

Production Partner
Single Asian Female



PHILIP BACON
GALLERIES

SINGLE
ASIAN
FEMALE

By Michelle Law



V1.0

**YOUR VOICES.
YOUR STORIES.
YOUR THEATRE.**

ABOUT
LA BOITE



La Boite holds a unique place in the hearts and minds of artists and audiences in Queensland. For more than 90 years, La Boite has represented the adventurous and alternative. There has always been a strong focus on the development of new work and artists, and today is no different.

The stories, ideas and voices of our city and country are many and varied and as such La Boite seeks to represent and engage in this beautiful and rich diversity; the diversity of form, ideas, ethnicity, gender – of identity.

Theatre has the capacity to embrace difference in so many ways. La Boite push the boundaries of form by collaborating with some extraordinary partners to stretch theatrical, physical and musical boundaries. La Boite plays with contemporary circus, visual theatre, opera and cabaret, classical text, the theatrical and extraordinary international talents. This varied menu aims to enliven and inspire our existing audiences and draw new audiences to share in the La Boite experience – the experience and magic of live performance in our unique Roundhouse Theatre.

FEATURE TEACHER

Amy Laban from Tagai State College, Thursday Island, Secondary Campus

- Favourite realism play/production...
Mrs Thally F by John Romeril – true crime theatre :) !
- A funny thing that happened in her classroom... *I love playing human objects – it encourages people to work together, listen to what others are doing, see things from a different point-of-view and see even the small details as important. I can't think of only one funny thing. Each class is unique and has such wonderful things about the time we had together. I smile about all of them as I go back through the memories now.*
- Something she wishes teachers remembered... *I wish all teachers remembered that each of their students is worthy of love, respect and gentleness – it's not just a job.*

**"JOYFUL AND
LAUGH-OUT-LOUD FUNNY
FROM START TO END ..."
SUZY WRONG**

**★★★★ THE AUSTRALIAN
★★★★★ THE GUARDIAN**

PLAY
OVER
— VIEW



SYNOPSIS

Michelle Law's (*Homecoming Queens, Bloomers*) incisive and hilarious comedy, tackling race and gender in contemporary Australia, is back.

Single Asian Female follows the story of the Wong family as they deal with some of life's big questions and explore what it means to be an Asian woman in Australia. Step into the after-hours of a suburban Chinese restaurant and meet the whip smart women who are definitely talking about you in their native tongue.

With two sisters at odds with each other and a mother harbouring a secret that threatens to tear her family apart, *Single Asian Female* is Australian domesticity like you've never seen it before.

Catch the Wong family in their return to the La Boite stage, following a sold out 2018 season in Sydney at Belvoir.

CAST AND CREATIVES

DIRECTOR Claire Christian

DESIGN Moe Assaad

LIGHTING DESIGN Keith Clark

SOUND DESIGN Wil Hughes

CAST INCLUDES Emily Burton, Patrick Jhanur, Tatum Mottin, Courtney Stewart and Hsiao-Ling Tang

ESTIMATED RUNNING TIME

2 hours and 20 minutes (with interval)

RECOMENDED FOR

Students in grades 11 and 12

WARNINGS

- Occasional coarse language
- Minor abortion storyline
- Very short, implied, under the doona sex scene. There is no nudity – actors are briefly in their underwear.

If you would like to read the scene, or discuss in more detail please get in touch.

SUBJECT MATTER

Chinese-Australian experience of Australia, Sibling relationships, Migrant experiences, Mother-daughter relationships, Divorce, Family, Growing up, Dating in 2018, Racism, Immigration, Female politics, Adolescent pressure, Bullying, The experiences of women of colour in Australia, Secrets, Friendship, Identity

PURPOSE

To entertain, challenge and empower

CONTEXT

Cultural, Sociological, Political

FORM, STYLE & CURRICULUM LINKS

Comedy, Contemporary Realism, Contemporary Performance, Linear and non-linear theatrical forms, Storytelling, Based in truth, New Australian writing, Contemporary Political Theatre

Q&A WITH WRITER MICHELLE LAW

DRA
—MATIC
MEANING



WHY DID YOU WRITE *SINGLE ASIAN FEMALE*?

I wrote *Single Asian Female* for many reasons—because I wanted to write a play, because I wanted to diversify Australian stages, and because I wanted to see an Asian Australian story and characters that weren't heavily stereotyped. I wanted to make something that presented audiences with complex, three-dimensional people who weren't just the side characters or punch lines for other people's stories.

WHAT DOES *SINGLE ASIAN FEMALE* MEAN TO YOU?

Single Asian Female was my first feature-length work for me as a writer so it will always be an incredibly special project to me. Before it, I'd been working as a freelance writer in print and in short films and TV, but to present a project that was fully mine and a reflection of my own voice was a huge step for me career wise and personally speaking. It gave me more confidence in myself and after it was shared with the world, it took on a new life giving confidence to other Asian Australian people, which has been the most important thing to me.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE AUDIENCES TAKE AWAY WITH THEM?

I hope audiences leave entertained and moved. I hope they start to see people of colour as the centre of their own lives, and I want women to feel connected with each other—their mothers, their sisters, their friends.

WHAT ARE THE PARTS IN THE PERFORMANCE THAT STAND OUT TO YOU THE MOST?

Even though it's the most emotionally exhausting scene, I love watching the fight scene/climax between Pearl, Zoe and Mei because I love watching their secrets finally exposed and all their truths exploding to the surface. The scenes I have a lot of fun watching is the date montage and Zoe and Pearl's date scene. I get a lot of feedback about the dating montage from Asian Australian women who tell me that that is their exact dating experience, and overall, I think people get a kick out of seeing Zoe and Paul having sex. Who doesn't love a good sex scene!

WRITER'S NOTE FROM THE BELVOIR STREET THEATRE PROGRAM

Whenever I see theatre in Australia I like to watch the people in the audience. They sigh, laugh and cry with recognition as the story unfolding on stage touches them, connects them, and validates their existence — something I rarely experience and makes me deeply envious. Who knew that being made to feel unwelcome and invisible in my own country was something that also extended to the art I consumed. I would leave shows feeling very alone.

I want *Single Asian Female* to play a small role in changing that for people like me. People of colour. Women. Migrants. Outliers. The Other. This show is a love letter to them. And I want those in positions of privilege to gain some new insights: namely that we are here, we have been listening, and that now it is our turn to speak. But above all, I want audiences to be entertained. These are difficult issues to dissect, but that doesn't mean we can't have a lot of fun unpacking them along the way.

Single Asian Female is full of the things I love: Doraemon, '90s hits, and social politics. It shines a spotlight on labels; those we assign ourselves and others, and how we struggle against the limitations imposed by those labels in order to lead authentic lives. The Wong family women are real to me because they were inspired by people I know: generous, assertive, resilient women who hold the world on their shoulders. And I have

been blessed to meet more of these incredible women in the process of making this show.

Collaborating with director Claire Christian has been a pure joy. From day one she knew instinctively how to realise the characters and world I'd created with attention and care. Working with Claire to assemble a team of extremely gifted cast and creatives who gel together so beautifully, like a real family, has been a surreal experience that fills me with gratitude. (Also disgust, because everyone who's worked on this production is offensively attractive.)

This play would not have been possible without them, nor would it have been possible without Lotus, the series of workshops led by Contemporary Asian Australian Performance (CAAP) and Playwriting Australia that fosters Asian Australian playwrights and helped me realise I had a story to tell. *Single Asian Female* also wouldn't exist without the encouragement and support of mentors and cheerleaders like Maxine Mellor, Glyn Roberts and my fellow Lotus Brisbane girls.

Thank you for seeing *Single Asian Female*. Whether you're single, Asian or female, or none of those things, you've made a choice to see work from a new and challenging perspective. It's exciting. It's also exciting that you'll be joining us for karaoke during the show. It's too late. The doors are already locked.

WRITER'S NOTE

WRITER, MICHELLE LAW, DESCRIBES THE PLAY

Single Asian Female is a comedy that skewers race and gender issues in ways that will challenge how you think about our country and the people who live in it. It's a play that speaks to the daily realities of my own life and the lives of many Australians who often feel voiceless and targeted.

Inspired by a blog I kept of the same name about my experiences of being single, Asian and a woman living in Australia, the play was born of my desire to tear into labels and the ways in which they can stifle us when we're not given the chance to subvert them.

In *Single Asian Female*, you'll witness three women grappling with specifically female issues, from the pressure of choosing between your fertility and your career, to navigating high school and girl gang politics, to trying to survive and be strong for yourself and others when you're trapped in an abusive relationship. You're going to see women grappling with distinctly female relationships, too: sisters at odds with each other, frenemies undermining each other, and a mother

trying to overcome generational and cultural gaps to connect with her daughters. I also wanted to examine the narratives of women at three key stages of their lives: high school, one's reproductive prime, and menopause.

So what can you expect from *Single Asian Female*?

Expect to see the Sunshine Coast and Australian domesticity like you've never seen it before, from the back rooms of a Chinese restaurant and from the perspective of outsiders, of migrants, who confirm all your fears that you're being spoken about in another language. Expect to see women (and specifically women of colour) ... and to hear their voices, which are at once strong, irreverent, and hilarious. Expect to see a family in turmoil.

Expect to see audiences who don't normally go to the theatre, who don't normally see themselves reflected on stage. Expect to see laughter, tears and kitschy karaoke in equal measure and be prepared to sing along.

WRITER'S NOTE

DIRECTOR'S NOTE BY CLAIRE CHRISTIAN FROM THE BELVOIR STREET THEATRE PROGRAM

When people ask me about my experience on *Single Asian Female*, I describe the project as a 'unicorn.' A very special, and one-off experience; a cast and creative team who fell desperately in love with each other, and the work, and a beautifully positive response to the story, and these characters. It feels like the greatest joy ever to get the team back together, to throw a bit more glitter (and neon) onto our unicorn and ride it into Belvoir.

There is no denying that Michelle Law and this play are special. It feels special because it's real. The Golden Phoenix could very well be any suburban Chinese restaurant and the Wong women could reflect any migrant Australian experience. It feels special because it's important. It's important that we tell stories that privilege the other, that reflect the actual Australian society we live in. It's important that we see people of colour on posters and giant billboards, on our screens and especially on our stages, because sadly this is not the reality of the arts sector that we work in and all enjoy. I get to say this from a point of safety as a privileged white woman who has never felt othered because of the colour of my skin,

my cultural heritage or ancestry. I say it because I can, because I've been afforded opportunities and a platform and if we don't use our voice to talk about the things that are wrong, well, things will never change. And things have to change.

Single Asian Female gives a voice to the voiceless and talks about race and gender in ways that we often don't. In ways that we should; in honest, vulnerable and angry ways that reflect what's really going on. But, most importantly, this play is special because it's about women, it's written by a woman, and it is masterfully performed by women. Funny women. I know right? Who knew that women could be funny.

It has been an absolute JOY to bring this project back to life with this brilliant team. My hope is that you, our audience, have as much fun and feel as many complex feelings as we have these last few weeks. Welcome to the Golden Phoenix... you can sing along if you like. go to the theatre, who don't normally see themselves reflected on stage. Expect to see laughter, tears and kitschy karaoke in equal measure and be prepared to sing along.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

SINGLE ASIAN FEMALE IS A COMEDY— A CONTEMPORARY PIECE OF REALISM THAT WE WANTED TO FEEL A LITTLE LIKE A SIT-COM.

DIRECTORIAL VISION



ACTING

The acting sits very much in realism – we wanted all of these characters to feel very real and three-dimensional.



SETTING

It is set on the Sunshine Coast, in 2018. An old Chinese Restaurant, bought in the eighties, with the Wong family home above. The space is cluttered and full because we wanted it to feel lived in – there is history here.

Mei's room is bigger than Pearl's room very purposely – to symbolise their relationship and the way Pearl feels about her role as a mother.

Mei's room is an ode to the typical Australian adolescent bedroom, fit with pieces from Kmart. We wanted teenagers in the audience to love her bedroom and be able to say, 'that's in my room!' It sits in direct contrast with Pearl's room and her connection to culture.

Through lighting and placement in the space we have been able to indicate the different places in the story; the Orchestra waiting room, the bar where Zoe and Paul go on their first date, the airport.



INTERTEXTUAL REFERENCES

DIRECTORIAL VISION



There are a lot of intertextual references that specifically speak to culture and time.

TERESA TENG is a Taiwanese singer, one of the most famous and successful singers to originate from the Mandarin-speaking world. She is Pearl's favourite singer and her two of her tracks play in the show. Writer, Michelle Law, remembers growing up listening to Teresa Teng play at home.

DORAEMON is a Japanese manga series written and illustrated by Fujiko F. Fujio. The series has also been adapted into a successful anime series and media franchise.

RILAKKUMA is a fictional character produced by the Japanese company San-X, created by former employee Aki Kondo. Rilakkuma appears on items such as stationery, dishware, backpacks, and stuffed animals

Katie's formal costume is from the anime **K PROJECT** and is the character Anna Kushina. She is a powerful young woman with amazing powers who is the only woman in a group of male leaders. A nice piece of intertextuality for how Katie probably sees herself in the world, especially at school.



Katie's formal costume

Katie and Mei connect over their love of **ANIME**, **MANGA** and **ASIAN CULTURE** – they're the things that Mei purges from her room in the first scene of the play, some were even presents from Katie.

I WILL SURVIVE BY GLORIA GAYNOR is the song that Pearl sings at the top of the show, an introduction to her love of karaoke, but also indicative of this specific moment in her life.

JANE EYRE is Mei's favourite book that she is studying in English but it's also closely linked to her own life. It's also Michelle Law's favourite book.

Mei A lot happens, but it's about this girl who grows up basically alone and she feels totally isolated ... but then she rises above it all and finds love and family after never wavering from her principles. People always say it's a romance novel but it's really about her evolution as a person.

CHAINS BY TINA ARENA is the final Karaoke song that the Wong women all sing together. Pearl asks to sing a song by Teresa Teng but the girls remind her that they can't sing in Cantonese, this is the choice she makes instead. A quintessential Australian ballad reflective of who they are, and what they've been through, the Wong women are definitely no longer in chains anymore.



'Chains' by Tina Arena

COSTUME

DIRECTORIAL VISION



PEARL is a dag, note her clashing patterns, sockettes and sandals, her large sun visor.

MEI is a dag until she starts hanging out with Lana and her style gets a bit of an update – but it's still always a little off.

LANA is the epitome of on-trend.



Pearl

YURI!!! ON ICE (WIKIPEDIA)

A Japanese sports anime television series about figure skating.

Yuri on Ice has raised discussion concerning its depiction of a same-sex relationship between its protagonists, with some critics praising it for covering homosexuality in a way that differs from most anime and manga such as the yaoi genre, and for dealing with homosexuality in a country and sport that has present-day issues with homophobia. Others criticised its depiction for being unrealistic, and of visual censorship that arguably makes it ambiguous to some viewers.

The series has also been praised for its depiction of anxiety, and also raised a brief controversy concerning a similar figure skating-based title to be released in the United States in 2017.

ZOE is smart, and a little proper. She wears a lot of black and white, because Zoe tends to be black and white about things in her life. In the very first scene she is wearing her date dress and Paul's shirt in their date.

PAUL wears earthy tones – he's calm and down-to-earth. He's smart casual. The underwear is a brand though, he works hard and likes nice things.

KATIE is a nerd. She wears what she loves and is deeply influenced by the anime, comic books and Asian culture she adores. The t-shirt she wears to dinner is from an anime called **YURI!!! ON ICE**

The girls all wearing **CHEONGSAMS** at Pearl's welcome home party is symbolic of how they've all changed. Mei is wearing her Mums. Zoe in her own. And Pearl in a brand new gold one.



Zoe and Paul

SYMBOLS, MOTIFS AND THINGS OF NOTE

DIREC- TORIAL VISION



While *Single Asian Female* is a piece of realism, there are moments of heightened theatricality that we use to support the comedy of the piece (moments such as “Pearl boarding”).

The use of projections to assist the audience with the non-linear time line, and to act like a Karaoke screen at the end.

Katie's karaoke version of Shoop at the end is to act as a transition that takes us 18 months into the future.

The repetition of the beginning and final images with Pearl on the table in her old cheongsam compared to the three girls standing reunited at the end in their traditional dress. Including Pearl in a brand new gold cheongsam.

The appearance of a disco ball in the restaurant is deeply symbolic of the journey of the Wong women and the potential of their joyous futures.

At all points throughout the show, the script (the use of Cantonese), the music (use of traditional tracks and Chinese performers), the lighting (the Chinese lamps, the shrine in Pearl's room), the set (colours, wallpaper, props – the ordering of the photos on the wall going from oldest to youngest) and the direction of these elements there is a fusion of Chinese culture meeting the Australian setting and experience.

MORE INSIGHTS

Q&A with the director of *Single Asian Female*, Claire Christian in Hot Chicks with Big Brains, written by Anna Apuli, February 28 2017.

hotchickswithbigbrains.com/qa-the-director-of-single-asian-female-claire-christian



Pearl boarding

KEY RESEARCH POINTS

THINGS TO PONDER



WE SHOULD ASK OURSELVES

- What is the difference between appreciating culture and appropriating culture?
- How do you know when a friend becomes a frenemy?
- Do parents really have a favourite child?
- Is there such a thing as reverse racism, or is it also, simply, racism?
- What defines a 'real' woman? What does she do?
- Do you have any siblings? How does your relationship with them impact how you feel about yourself?
- Do secrets always get found out?
- Compare/contrast the importance in a relationship: security or emotions?
- When does one generation 'retire' and the next generation take over?
- Is there such a thing as a 'sisterhood' among women? How would you define it?
- What is the process for immigration into Australia? How long does it take? (Google time!)
- Adults often withhold information from young people to protect them. Do you think this is fair? Explain.

CULTURE

The term 'culture' has multiple meanings depending on the context in which it is used. In this topic, it is not the growing of fuzzy little things in petri dishes.

The definition for this purpose is: the ideas, customs and behaviours of particular group in society. Consider what groups may be defined as 'cultures'. Culture is often defined in terms of race, or ethnicity. We can group on a macro level such as 'Asian', 'African' or 'European'. Or, we may look further into society and label 'African-American', 'Torres Strait Islander' or 'Swiss'.

Culture can also relate to smaller groups within society. The ways of participating in them and the languages used within them are usually very specific. For example, sports people would say "training" where theatre people may say "rehearsal". On a more micro-scale, you also have a family culture. How your family acts in certain situations, such as at Christmas, may be different to others within your own ethnicity.

So when we label people in groups, it is important to recognise that there is not one way of being, but many expressions of that 'culture'.

What does it mean to be Australian, a migrant, first or second generation, a refugee, an Asian Australian, a daughter, a sister, a friend? What is your cultural identity? What is Australia's cultural identity?

IDENTITY

All of the plays characters are trying to navigate their personal identity. Who they are and what they stand for. For the three central characters part of this is navigating their cultural identity too. What are the things that make us who we are? Beliefs, experiences, morals, likes, dislikes, politics etc.

FAMILY

Single Asian Female explore issues of divorce, the unique role you play in your family unit, growing up, parents and siblings, sister relationships.

BELONGING

What does it mean to belong? The play looks at the theme of belonging in a family, at school, in society and in Australia.

GENDER

The three central characters are strong women, it explores contemporary Australian women, stereotypes and feminism.

KEY RESEARCH POINTS

THINGS TO PONDER



CHARACTERS

PEARL (50s) A Chinese migrant who moved from Hong Kong to Australia 30 years ago. She's an overprotective and proudly traditional Chinese mother, however she's quite progressive in other ways — she's a feminist, foul-mouthed and runs her own business. She recently divorced her abusive husband, a decision that drove a wedge between her and her daughters. Pearl is desperate to preserve her relationships with her westernised children; when it comes to them she's grappling with generational as well as cultural barriers.

ZOE (29) An A-type musician experiencing a quarter-life crisis. Zoe is desperate to secure a job in an orchestra so that she can gain independence from her smothering mother (Pearl) who is pressuring her to settle down and be a good role model for her younger sister (Mei). She has chronic anxiety and is prone to panic attacks. Zoe is the golden child who extinguishes fires within the family and has always been Pearl's right hand woman. She has an awkward relationship with Mei and struggles to connect with her.

MEI (17) A self-hating Asian who's desperate to fit in with her Anglo peers. She's embarrassed by her Chinese family, especially her mother Pearl. Mei lashes out to conceal her vulnerability; deep down, she is more like the dutiful and loving Asian daughter stereotype that she's trying so hard to reject. Reading is her passion and she uses it as a way to escape drama at home. She resents Zoe and Pearl's closeness and misses her father. Mei feels like she doesn't quite belong anywhere, both at home and at school.

PAUL (30s) Zoe's love interest and Pearl's lawyer. Paul was a refugee; he and his family sought asylum in Australia when he was a child. He works immigration cases at Legal Aid, fighting for those people he recognised needed help when he was growing up. He's self-deprecating and awkward in a very charming way. And he's caring enough to handle Zoe's anxiety.

KATIE (17) Mei's best friend. Katie is a bit of a social outcast, but she doesn't let it get to her; she's proud of who she is and her nerdy love of cosplay and manga. Katie loves Asian culture and Mei's family, and is earnest in a way that makes her unintentionally funny. She recognises that Mei is going through an identity crisis but doesn't want to interfere.

LANA (17) Mei's frenemy. Lana bullies Mei and Katie in both overt and underhanded ways to distract herself from her fractured home life; she wants to regain some semblance of control. Lana takes joy in belittling Mei because her own father is engaged to a young Asian woman of whom Lana is jealous.

KEY RESEARCH POINTS

THINGS TO PONDER



ELEMENTS OF DRAMA DISCUSSION POINTS

ELEMENT Role

DISCUSSION Pearl Wong, Zoe Wong, Mei Wong, Katie, Paul, Lana, and some characters played by the same actor (MAN 1 & 3 are played by the same actor; MAN 2 & 4 are played by the same actor).

ELEMENT Tension of relationships

DISCUSSION This show focuses on the relationships between three generations of women. Think about the different relationships in the show:

- Pearl and Mei,
- Pearl and Zoe
- Pearl, Mei and Zoe
- Zoe and Paul
- Mei and Katie
- Mei and Lana
- Katie and Lana
- Also, think about the relationship that is spoken about but not seen between Pearl, Zoe and Mei and their father.

ELEMENT Space

DISCUSSION Imagine you had to put your whole house on stage as a set (it's a very large stage!). How would you do it? Where would you place the rooms? What kinds of materials would you use? How could you make the audience feel as though they were walking into your house?

ELEMENT Theme

DISCUSSION This show addresses the way issues are woven into our lives in complex layers.

RESPONDING

This quote by Michelle about the play could also be used as a great Responding Task quote to discuss contemporary political theatre, or the role of theatre in contemporary Australia.

"Theatre reflects us, it reflects our society, and the kinds of worlds, stories and faces that have dominated Australian stages for so long are ones that aren't familiar and often exclusionary to othered Australians, including myself."
– Michelle Law.

Other options for responding tasks could be:

- Looking at form and style and discussing contemporary realism
- Diversity on stage
- Female writers/characters

PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITIES



BRAINSTORM

Separate the class into three groups and have them fill in a table on butcher's paper. Each group gets a different word from the show's title to write about: 1. Single 2. Asian 3. Female. Then write as much as they can under three sub-headings: a. The Stereotype b. The Reality and c. Questions/The Unknown. After they have had time to really discuss in detail, each group report back to the class what they discussed. Put the posters on the wall (warts and all!) to come back to after the show. Example: Asian

The Stereotype	The Reality	The Unknown
Smart	A continent and islands where	How many languages are there across Asia?
Tiger mums	There are lots of different countries	

COME TO ME / GO AWAY

This game plays on the tension of relationships. With the class sitting in a large circle (to form a boundary), choose two people to play come to me/go away. Choose which person is going to play the role of "come to me" and who is to be "go away". At the teacher's instruction (this game needs to be closely monitored) the game begins. The two people are only allowed to say the title of their role.

1. "Come to me" person says "come to me" and attempts to hold the hands of the other person.
2. "Go away" person says "go away" and attempts to avoid having their hands touched.

Encourage the students to stay in Realism – focus on their role. Then, when they have been playing for some time (or if the tension is not building) the teacher indicates a swap or roles (using a clap, or saying swap or another loud sound). The two actors then swap to the other role. This can happen a few times, as long as the teacher can see the tension. Then swap to two other students and let them try. After it has happened a few times (you'll sense when it's enough), lead the group in a discussion about the building tension. *When was it strongest? When did it shift? How did the actors feel? How did the audience feel?*

RESEARCH TASK

There are a number of references to Chinese (and other Asian countries) culture and language in the play. How many of the following do you know about?

- Chinese New Year
- Mah Jong
- Cheung Fun
- Cheongsam
- Cantonese
- Jook/Congee
- Doraemon
- Ancestral Shrines
- K Project
- Miyazaki
- Chinese Tea Ceremony
- Rilakkuma

IDEAS FORUM

Separate the class into small groups. Give them each a social issue from the play (see 'things to ponder'). Guide them in appropriate group discussion techniques – we may have differing ideas and opinions, but we can do so respectfully.

RITUAL TABLEAUS

In groups of 3-5 tell the story of how your family celebrate weddings. For some, it may mean no celebration at all. Others may have large family gatherings with far too much food. Each person has 30 seconds to share their stories in the small groups. Then, as a group, decide on one story that was told to represent as a series of 3 tableaus/freeze frames. For example:

- Tableau 1 – the proposal
- Tableau 2 – bridal shower
- Tableau 3 – reception with a feast

The teacher then facilitates presentation of the tableaus in front of the class, who watch each tableau, then deconstruct meaning from each image set.

POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITIES



BRAINSTORM REVISIT

Revisit the Brainstorm activity from before you saw the show. Were any of your questions addressed in the show? Were you surprised with the way any of the three (Single, Asian, Female) were addressed? What did you learn that you didn't know before about each of them?

SET DESIGN

Draw the set in as much detail as you can remember. Share your ideas about what was in the set – down to the small detail. As a class, produce a set design: either on paper or as a 3D model.



WHO AM I?

Choose three words to define who you are. Create a short scene where all three words are used in among other sentences, then see whether the audience can guess what your three words are.

CHARACTERS

The six characters in the play are all very different, they are all very much in direct contrast to each other. Discuss how this impacted the moments of conflict in the play. For example, Pearl keeping her secret from the girls, the way that Zoe and Mei feel about each other and their Mum, the way that Mei feels about Lana compared to Katie, how Paul reacts when he finds out Zoe's secret. It may also be interesting to discuss the way that gender is explored in the play. What kind of man is Paul? What is important to him? What are his politics? Is he a feminist? Why do you think Michelle Law would write the only male character in the play like this? The women in the play are all navigating very different parts of their lives, high school and adolescence, middle age and making choices about motherhood and career, and being later in life with grow-up children. What do these five women represent about women in contemporary society?

ADULTS

In dealing with Pearl's situation the girls must reflect on what their Mum means to them. You could have students reflect on an adult in their life that they feel grateful for and why. These reflections could then be turned into monologues and shared with the group and then possibly turned into a whole class scene, taking sentences from each student's monologue and creating a performance of adult appreciation.

FURTHER READING

CHECK
IT OUT



BELVOIR STREET THEATRE RESOURCES: INTERVIEWS AND A PODCAST ABOUT THE SHOW

- <https://belvoir.com.au/productions/single-asian-female/#performance-times>
- <https://belvoir.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Single-Asian-Female-Learning-Resources-Belvoir.pdf>

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO SEE ASIAN-AUSTRALIANS ON SCREEN IN THIS RACIST COUNTRY BY MICHELLE LAW (20 AUGUST 2018)

- <http://junkee.com/asian-representation-australia/171514>

CRAZY RICH ASIANS MADE ME LAUGH AND CRY, BUT IT ALSO GAVE ME HOPE BY MICHELLE LAW (25 AUGUST 2018)

- <https://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/movies/crazy-rich-asians-20180822-h14bds.html>

HOME COMING QUEENS SBS WEB SERIES WRITTEN BY MICHELLE LAW AND CHLOË REESON

- Two best friends reinvent themselves after chronic illness changes their friendship, their futures and... their pubic hair. Season 1 contains 7 episodes.
<https://www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/program/homecoming-queens>

HOW YOU SEE ME - ASIAN

- "People always ask me: 'where are you from?'... and I want to say, Minnesota, but I know that's not what they mean" #HowYouSeeMe
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTLtgUGgN8>

HAS YOUR JUDGEMENT EVER BEEN WRONG? TELL MY STORY BY SOUL PANCAKE

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QeU8R2Qj83w>

FACE TO FACE: PARENTS, CHILDREN SHARE FOUR MINUTES OF EMOTIONAL SILENCE

- http://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/face-face-parents-children-share-four-minutesemotional-silence-n693196?cid=sm_fb

6 THINGS ALL IMMIGRANT KIDS EXPERIENCE

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZq6GW5pkc0>

CHILDREN OF ASIAN IMMIGRANTS REVEAL SACRIFICES THEIR PARENTS MADE

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k1lDX0lzh4>

ASIAN MOMS AND THEIR KIDS IMITATE EACH OTHER

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_2464476137&feature=iv&src_vid=k1lDX0lzh4&v=D1PL1ZMdu0g

ASIAN IMMIGRATION IN AUSTRALIA

- <http://mobile.abc.net.au/news/2016-09-14/pauline-hanson-maiden-speech-asianimmigration/7645578>

'CULTURAL ENCLAVES' ACADEMIC STUDY / REPORT

- <http://priceschool.usc.edu/students/reviewjournal/2011-2012/ethnic-enclaves-sanctuaryor-impediment/>

FURTHER READING

CHECK
IT OUT



PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN THE MEDIA

- www.startupsmart.com.au/advice/growth/innovation/if-she-can-see-it-she-can-be-it-doeshollywood-hold-the-answer-to-more-women-instem/

REPRESENTING WOMEN

- www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bumlt2pIRuw&sns=em

THE VALUE OF SHARING WOMEN'S STORIES

- www.m.huffpost.com/uk/entry/8279930

REVIEWS & ARTICLES ABOUT SINGLE ASIAN FEMALE (2018 SYDNEY)

- Sydney Morning Herald
www.smh.com.au/entertainment/theatre/single-asian-female-review-sweet-and-sour-comedydrama-is-a-little-revolution-20180218-h0w99d.html
- Limelight Magazine
www.limelightmagazine.com.au/reviews/single-asian-female-belvoir/
- Theatre People
www.theatrepeople.com.au/single-asian-female/
- Stage Whispers
www.stagewhispers.com.au/reviews/single-asian-female-0
- Time Out Sydney
www.timeout.com/sydney/theatre/single-asian-female
- Broadway World
www.broadwayworld.com/sydney/article/BWW-REVIEW-Family-Fitting-In-and-Fighting-Against-A-Society-That-Sees-Married-White-Men-As-The-Pinnacle-Is-Examined-In-SINGLE-ASIAN-FEMALE-20180219

REVIEWS & ARTICLES ABOUT SINGLE ASIAN FEMALE (2017 BRISBANE)

- The Guardian
www.theguardian.com/stage/2017/feb/10/single-asian-female-shakes-up-monocultural-australian-theatre
- The Guardian
www.theguardian.com/stage/2017/feb/16/single-asian-female-review-no-topic-is-taboo-in-michelle-laws-impressive-debut
- Arts Hub
www.performing.artshub.com.au/news-article/reviews/performing-arts/devon-cartwright/single-asian-female-253174
- Stage Whispers
www.stagewhispers.com.au/reviews/single-asian-female



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