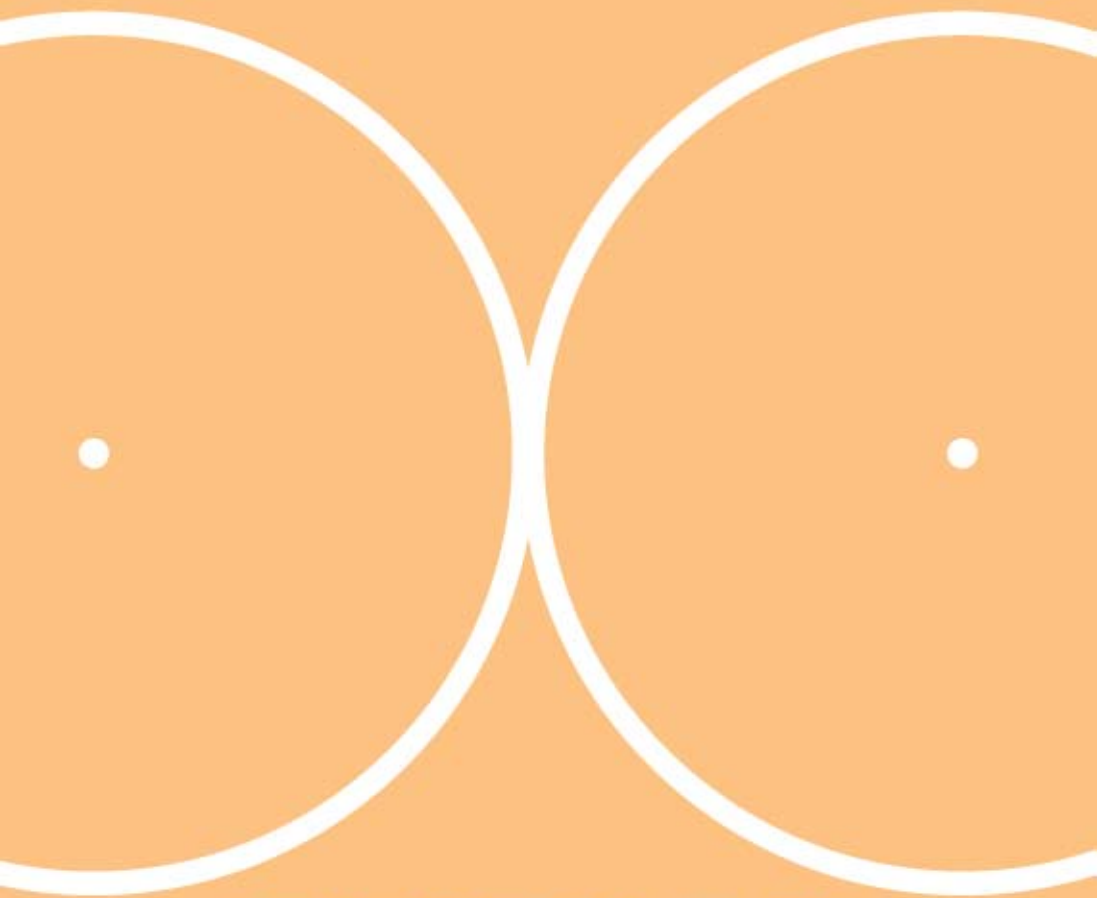


# TAN TARN HOW SIX PLAYS

HOME • THE LADY OF SOUL AND HER ULTIMATE "S" MACHINE  
UNDERCOVER • SIX OF THE BEST  
THE FIRST EMPEROR'S LAST DAYS • MACHINE



INTRODUCTION BY DR. K. K. SEET

TAN TARN HOW, senior research fellow at the Institute of Policy Studies, Singapore, graduated in 1982 from Peterhouse College, University of Cambridge with B. A. Honours in the Natural Sciences Tripos. He also has a Diploma in Education from Singapore's Institute of Education. After teaching, he joined *The Straits Times* and from 1987-1996 was a political reporter, op-ed writer, arts deputy editor, and foreign correspondent in Hong Kong and Beijing. He left to be head scriptwriter for television drama and comedy at MediaCorp for about two years before returning to the newspaper in 1999 to be its science and technology editor, political correspondent and deputy news editor until 2005. He has also been the associate artistic director of the drama company TheatreWorks, leading workshops for budding playwrights. Besides the six full-length plays in this volume, Tan has also written a short play, *In Praise of the Dentist*.

DR. K. K. SEET established the Theatre Studies Programme at the National University of Singapore in 1992. He has authored 13 books, published numerous academic papers and adjudicated on many arts-related competitions, including *The Straits Times* Life! Theatre Awards, where he is the longest standing judge, and the Singapore Literature Prize, for which he served as Chief Judge for many years. For his contributions to arts and culture, Dr. Seet was conferred the Special Recognition Award by the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts in 2005. Dr. Seet now divides his time among his homes in Singapore, Thailand and the United Kingdom.

# TAN TARN HOW

## SIX PLAYS

FORTHCOMING VOLUMES IN THIS OMNIBUS SERIES

*Ovidia Yu: Six Plays*

*Chong Tze Chien: Four Plays*

Introduction by Dr. K. K. Seet

FROM STAGE TO PRINT SERIES BY EPIGRAM BOOKS

*Boom* by Jean Tay

*Everything But the Brain* by Jean Tay

*Those Who Can't, Teach* by Haresh Sharma



EPIGRAM BOOKS / SINGAPORE

For MJ, LC and J  
and  
in memory of MW.

First Edition  
Copyright © 2011 by Tan Tarn How

Introduction copyright © 2011 by K. K. Seet

Published by  
Epigram Books  
1008 Toa Payoh North #03-08 Singapore 318996  
Tel: (65) 6292 4456 Fax: (65) 6292 4414  
enquiry@epigram.com.sg  
www.epigram.com.sg

Cover design by Stefany  
Playwright photograph by Tan Mingjuan

With the support of



National Library Board Singapore  
Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Tan, Tarn How.  
Six plays / Tan Tarn How.  
– Singapore : Epigram, 2011.  
p. cm.  
ISBN : 978-981-08-7977-8 (pbk.)

I. Title.

PR9570.S53  
S822 -- dc22 OCN701693966

Printed in Singapore

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the written permission of the publisher.

## PERFORMING RIGHTS

Copyright of all the works published here belongs to the playwright. Professionals and amateur groups wishing to stage these plays or perform a public reading of them must get written permission from the playwright's representatives, Orangedot Talents, 24 Hooper Road Singapore 229201 ([www.odp.com.sg](http://www.odp.com.sg))

---

---

## CONTENTS

Introduction by Dr. K. K. Seet	xi
Home	1
The Lady of Soul and Her Ultimate "S" Machine	55
Undercover	105
Six of the Best	173
The First Emperor's Last Days	209
Machine	281

---

---

**TAN TARN HOW: THE PLAYWRIGHT AS SOCIAL COMMENTATOR EXTRAORDINAIRE**

Introduction by Dr. K. K. Seet

Tan Tarn How can be succinctly described as a playwright of the public life and a raconteur of social history in the way he captures the zeitgeist with the exactitude and incisiveness of a political analyst. This can be attributed to a spillover from his full-time occupation, initially as a journalist with the political desk of *The Straits Times* and eventually as a senior research fellow at the Institute of Policy Studies where the ambit of his duties encompasses studies of policy issues on the social rubric. His days in political journalism and active involvement in the media (he also had a short spell as a scriptwriter in MediaCorp television) make him particularly well informed about the subjects he deals with and his subsequent research on policy matters provides both an insider's look as well as a larger perspective.

The bulk of Tan's plays are thus ostensibly inspired by historical events. If Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* may be said to herald a new literary genre called "the nonfiction novel" where the objective criteria of journalistic reportage is yoked to literary devices like narrative tone, rhetorical style, dramatic structure and the development of psychologically vivid characters, Tan's plays similarly occupy the terrain of "fictive realism or docudrama", like *Crimewatch* on television, but infinitely refined by the sophistication of philosophical reflection and satirical treatment.

*The Lady of Soul and Her Ultimate "S" Machine* was written shortly after the inception of the National Arts Council to spearhead the promotion of the arts in Singapore, following many appeals by both public and parliament to inject culture into a parvenu society. *Undercover* gives a metadramatic spin to the Marxist conspiracy of 1987 when founding members of the local theatre company The Third Stage were arrested for allegedly subversive activity. *The First Emperor's Last Days* emerged at a point when many a biography of Singapore leaders were being researched and chronicled by journalists, some of whom Tan would have known personally during his days at the political desk

---

of *The Straits Times*. *Six of the Best* draws its originating impulse from the indictment of American teenager Michael Fay for vandalism, an event that sparked much discussion and brouhaha in the international press. Even *Home* can be said to have been seeded in the context of an aging society with scant provisions for the elderly, while *Machine*, as privately divulged by the playwright himself, was spawned of a midlife crisis he personally underwent, when issues of fidelity and the dynamic between the sexes rose to the fore as a result of flagging endorphins, marital stagnancy and the andropause. With the exception of the last play, therefore, the rest are premised on momentous occasions that have generated much controversy. These plays therefore serve to encourage further constructive debate in retrospect, where time confers the necessary detachment to prevent visceral involvement that clouds the rational and impartial.

If renowned historian E. H. Carr defines history as "a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialectic between the present and the past", then Tan engages in a parallel dialogue with historical events as a revisionist who sites his plays within a notion of history less as trajectory than as a concatenation of forces against which their thematic matrix may be counterpointed for deconstructive intent. By setting the dramatic present within the context of a historical event, however covert the references, Tan attempts to understand the present from the past with the hindsight of critical distance. He also extends the dialogue to include his audience which is provoked to undertake a similar exchange. Through identification with characters envisaged as the products of particular historical forces, the audience is inspired to re-think the situations being dramatised as invested, informed onlookers.

Yet Tan does not trade in the real in the Aristotelian sense of strong empathetic reaction leading to catharsis, but instead conjures up a kind of heightened realism in his spatially ambivalent *mise-en-scène*, deliberate anachronisms and conflagration of historical minutiae. Hence, Tan uses familiar structures as a bridge into the dramatic experience of the conventional audience, then disorients this same audience by subverting forms and overturning expectations.

Unlike Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt*, Tan does not strive to distance his audience through defamiliarisation but rather involves them in a basic familiarity before provoking them into analysing the differences in the surprising nature of his tropes and images.

The prologue of *The Lady of Soul and her Ultimate "S" Machine*, set in a Nations Boutique uses the econ-speak of the retail trade, and framed within the shopaholicism, corporatisation and materialistic ethos of the average Singaporean, strikes an all too familiar chord. Except in this instance, the capital gains, the trade-in value, the appreciation and amortisation apply not to your usual consumer merchandise but to nations and their human rights track records. The burlesque sequences that punctuate the solemn, sober proceedings of bureaucracy in which Chris and Les resort to rap and vaudeville, put a parodic twist on corporate presentations and pitches at board meetings. The committees and subcommittees that ceaselessly self-propagate to oversee the most banal and hairsplitting of semantic equivocations in a policy paper are merely the hyperbolic equivalents of what actually occurs at a more mundane level, but are no less mind-boggling and symptomatic of a pervasive culture of relinquishing responsibility by pushing the buck.

*The First Emperor's Last Days* intensifies this schism between the familiar and the disturbing with its homage to a kind of Pinteresque landscape, a basement in an unknown building where a seemingly random group of archivists is assembled to write the biography of the First Emperor in his purportedly final days. The set reconciles the iconic with the symbolic. Despite its everyday configuration of work-desks and computers, the room seems to "grow smaller as the play progresses", so the stage directions inform us. The ceiling soars to an unseen height and takes on ominous undertones that signify the existence of some obscure, oppressive authority presiding over the characters, the unseen Big Brother monitoring and controlling their every move with an eagle eye. This is further made manifest by the fact that all correspondence as well as all daily needs, from meals, and laundry to requests for medicine, are conveyed and delivered by means of a dumb waiter that assumes centre stage as in that eponymous Pinter play. Where and to whom this dumb waiter reaches is never made explicit, in the same way



that both the nature of and approach to the task which these denizens of the basement are consigned are not clarified. This fosters a scenario that is fecund for mutual policing and surveillance, like Foucault's panopticon. The characters believe, from hearsay and conjectures, handed down by predecessors (and often vicariously) that they are the biographers of the First Emperor though they have no inkling as to the template and scope of the memoirs required.

Shrouded in mystery, this cloak-and-dagger business they are implicated in causes them to second guess the boundaries and mutually suspect each other to be a snitch or stooge in the worse internecine manner. First, Tang the newcomer is the latest suspect since no one is sure why his predecessor was replaced. This enigma was given a facetious mock-heroic interpretation, that being that stylistic differences were unacceptable to the "Period Police and Comma Commissars", as if punctuation constituted a pivotal issue. That objects like a suitcase arrive before its owner (himself doubled-over in the dumb waiter to reinforce the claustrophobia, spatial and discursive) enables the earlier denizens to wager over the gender of their latest colleague among other things, as well as exacerbating the atmosphere of silent paranoia. Even the longest resident See Yew, mild mannered and seemingly innocuous, is under suspicion for the disparity between his skills and his alleged role. For as Gordon propounds, does it not beg the question why a man who is not technologically-savvy, who thinks the boot is the storage compartment of a car and the monitor a species of lizard, has been entrusted with the CD-ROM version of the biography?

Spatial and temporal displacements lurk beneath the banal surface of daily interactions and humdrum operations. Contemporary appliances like shredding machines and computers are extant in a period of history when books were being burnt, intellectuals buried alive, and the value of the Great Wall in obstructing the northern barbarians is being questioned. References to Summer Palace, the Book of Songs, the August Records of the Kings of the Shang dynasty and the imperial exams of yore point unequivocally to a period in ancient China. Yet the privileging of white horses provide the indices of contemporary Singapore with its hint of the alleged nepotism accorded the children

of VIPs. The punitive measures doled out to dissidents—quarantining by horses, disembowelling and boiling in hot oil—are straight out of a feudal regime too, yet there is a hint of a modern democracy in the civil service practices mentioned, with Aileen as the corporate highflyer drafting white papers and Gordon with his track record of contentious political commentaries.

If the spatial dislocation is glaring, the temporal markers are even more cryptic and destabilising. From the beginning, it is already intimated that the characters have no sense of time: they know the time but are not sure if it's the same time outside. Hence, they devise their own sense of time by dividing it into the rigid binary of work and sleep. They have a telephone but it is not connected except when a call is received.

As "the drama" unfolds, the repository of history throws up all manner of data that increasingly collide and conflict. One is told that the bubonic plague has gripped Europe, that Buddha has just gained enlightenment, that Columbus has reached America. Simultaneously, one is also regaled with information about astronauts reaching the moon. The telephone and the word processor have been invented but the television is still awaiting its breakthrough. Meanwhile, Brazil has won the World Cup. This juxtaposition of antithetical realities which seem to coexist seamlessly is emblematic of a kind of metadramatic artificiality whose transcendence of spatial and temporal specifics universalises the themes therein while deflecting political immediacy and pointedness.

Conspicuous is a lack of transparency from above, combined with a brutal, ruthless exercise of power by an Emperor who behaves more like an oligarch and who thinks nothing of doing away with anybody who offends him, even his own flesh and blood. The lack of guidelines or precedents keeps the four biographers on tenterhooks, vacillating between a tone of craven flattery (which as Gordon shrewdly points out, is the fastest and surest way of lowering the value of a biography by turning the subject into a two dimensional caricature) or a more balanced and comprehensive editorial portrait which risks incurring the wrath of the Emperor. By means of this tension and anxiety, Tan conveys a climate of fear and paranoia and links this to Singapore without specifically naming the country. The paradoxes thus offer interstices

through which the incisive satirical probes could be smuggled and these include the lack of transparency and the absence of out-of-bounds (OB) markers in Singapore society.

The protagonists of *Machine* also appear to inhabit a kind of liminal space between the present and the future, in which the precise determinants of gender politics cannot be located and yet the struggle for ascension between the sexes strikes the reader as both regressive in their mutually dependent mind-games and curiously postmodern in its nonchalance, cavalier nature and unexpectedly sadomasochistic counterturns. Aptly, Tan spells out neither locale nor time period, and the only historical marker being that the play takes place after Teresa Teng's untimely demise. The two men show up at the door of Kim and Lina mysteriously. As Lina later points out, Rex and Heng appear like obsolete species in a culture of use-and-throw. They are like the wayfarers or journeymen of old, in that they "go around fixing things and then move on". Yet they are also very much postmodern sojourners in an age of transience and ephemeral desires, characterised by quasi-anonymous encounters where quick fire transactions supplant traditional values of commitment.

While rich in domestic details, the drama also injects a dose of the hyperreal, where the conversations are chock-full of quibbles and ellipsis, where the silences, the pregnant pauses and the unspoken are often louder and more honest than the words bandied about. Often projecting a philosophical sense of phenomenism, the action intimates that what is read is the dramatic present, and every other account has little validity. Hence, one hears about the tryst involving the rich man's betrothed daughter in another town but one has no idea who was the guilty Lothario in that instance, as Rex's and Heng's versions cancel each other out. In fact, the cult of the phenomenal extends to the very lines of dialogue, which often suggest the solipsism of singular, isolated perception, such that needful questions are broached but never satisfactorily answered about the nature of the liaisons among the characters: is it flirtation in the hope of something long-lasting or is it merely a game? Are Lina and Rex attracted to each other in the penultimate scene or do they merely want to effect "the

last permutation" of that rectangle? The intrinsic dissonance and lack of certainty in the circumstances are echoed by Tan's observations of his dramatis personae in his playwright's notes: Rex "may or may not be a thief"; "Kim's life is as much in her imagination as her real life"; Heng's world is confined to "what he sees with his eyes"; Lina, in the final analysis, proves not only to be "quicksilver" and volatile, but brittle and insecure, the blatant advocate of the fast fix and subscriber to the assets of "short shelf life" but who is actually desperate for something long term and enduring.

Often, this radical disjunction between the idiom and the subject amounts to a kind of shock, what Edward Bond has described in David Hare's political plays as "aggro-effects", or disturbance through empathy and emotional involvement, an element equally attributable to Tan's plays. By challenging the audience's aesthetic expectations, the dramatic action ends up querying the political premises and assumptions upon which it is predicated. *Machine* starts out as a quirky romance but ends up as an allegory about the mechanical, robotic nature of contemporary relationships between men and women. The imagery and tropes therein become multi-pronged in their allusion. When Rex and Heng seemingly ambulate in their peregrinations from town to town, are they in fact repairing machines or tampering with the dysfunctional lives of lonely, single women? When Lina divulges that Kim is broken, she says it like she is referring to the washing machine that Heng is disassembling, a trope made even more obvious when she tells Kim that Heng "took it apart for her", a phrase that points not only to the machine that he has disembowelled but also to her vulnerability that he has just exposed. Likewise, Heng is good with his hands—not only in terms of machine repair but also in giving pleasure to masochistic females through exacting pain. Rex, conversely, is glib in tongue but all words and no action. The personalities of the four characters undergo a volte-face as their true natures are revealed at the end. Lina who initially seems to look after Kim by calling her a fragile flower is unwillingly bruised in hoping to exchange pain for commitment. Kim, on the other hand, forfeits a longstanding relationship through her deviant addiction to pain, but emerges as the cynical party who ultimately recognises that

what propels her may not be love or even need for Heng but the demon "need" itself.

Tan dissects postmodern relationships with the precision and indifference of the surgical scalpel: if Donna Harroway's cyborgs have some semblance of humanity, Tan's protagonists are no better than machines in the sense that they find "one life" only "partially fulfilling" and continually hanker after new experiences and "other things to do", and in a perverse way they sabotage their chances by resisting what might actually work out. As Rex intones at the finale: like the others, he is trapped by a game he is reluctant to play, but keeps doing it until "love is no longer part of the equation". In other words, the characters seem to decipher the emotional damage involved but cannot help themselves. It is as if Tan is echoing Leo Bursani that "monogamy is cognitively inconceivable". Tan's play then dramatises the treatise advanced by Bursani, which expounds that if psychoanalysis "has itself described for us the original inconceivability of a monogamous fixity of desire and therefore of a stable sexual identity, monogamy nonetheless is the relational figure most congenial to what we might call the psychoanalytic fidelity of self to the self, its indifference to signs of self that are not signs of interpretation, and finally, its profoundly immoral rejection of our promiscuous humanity".

Hence, Tan's methodology is less a shift from realism to self-reflexivity than a deliberately self-referential kind of realism. This mode of heightened realism enables him to incorporate implicit commentary into a familiar form in which conventions of realism which reflect the political status quo are questioned and subtly destabilised. The real world that seems to encroach on the drama is in a sense problematised and institutions are construed as inherently flawed through an emphasis on ritual or performativity over concrete action in the shape of political change. While satire remains a potent weapon in Tan's armoury, it never purports to bring about social change but rather raises consciousness of its possibility as an article of faith. In other words, satire often functions to challenge its own efficacy as a device, on the assumption that the exposure of social injustice or political foibles carries with it no guarantee of remedy or redemption.

In *The First Emperor's Last Days*, no resolution to the extant dilemma of the four characters is offered. Throughout the drama, the singular preoccupation of these characters is to leave the site of their vocational incarceration by finishing the biography as quickly as possible with least damage to themselves or detriment to their families. Tan marshals together four characters of different aspirations and age groups to resist giving centrality to any one character type. Hence, there is Aileen who is youngest but echoes the dominant discourse by concurring with the "necessity" of the Emperor's draconian creed in sacrificing the few for the good of the majority. She shows such fervent belief in the system that she is able to collaborate with a man whose father she blacklisted and sent to the gallows. Gordon, conversely, is the renegade academic who has been rehabilitated and co-opted in line with his instinct for self-preservation. The newcomer Tang on the other hand epitomises the voice of conscience but he too has been coerced and cowed by the system. Only See Yew remains enigmatic, seemingly resigned to his fate and yet undertakes little measures to help the others in upholding the truth. The denouement of the play promises no salvation in that both Gordon and Tang elect suicide as their release from the impasse since all biographers will be silenced anyway. This represents a way, via negativa, of wrenching a modicum of self-determination from an impossible quandary. Tang may have sewn the authentic version of the manuscript into his jacket lining, in the hope that his son might recover it someday and redeem his name, but the aura of surveillance throughout the play forecloses any likelihood of truth being restored. In the final scene, Aileen hesitates to take that fatal jump and together with See Yew, who chooses to stay in his prison of a basement, this articulates that there is no easy way out even after the Emperor's demise.

In *Six of the Best*, diverse perspectives on the Michael Fay incident (albeit that the American vandal in Singapore in 1994 is not explicitly named) generate many questions about the dialectics between culture and conduct but again yield no satisfactory answers. In this short but punchy drama that transpires in the course of one brief day in an advertising firm comprising an ethnically motley team of workers, Tan frames the escalating racial tensions by means of a flogger character who

discourses, in quasi-Brechtian direct presentation, about the technique, effect and philosophy of that punitive measure. His ruminations on his unusual vocation punctuate the proceedings, juxtaposing clear-headed logic with the mounting racial stereotyping within that office setting.

To prevent audience identification with any one perspective or mindset, Tan assembles an eclectic group: an American who may or may not be guilty of neo-imperialism (Jim), a tight-lipped non-committal Brit whose reticence may be the result of cultural reserve as much as an unvoiced disdain for the fumbling ex-colonised (Neville), an "accommodating" Singapore girl who doesn't speak Hokkien and may be culturally atrophied or at least has her own romantic motives (Sharon), another Singapore girl who may or may not have a Pinkerton complex (Cherie), and finally, two hot-blooded Singapore males eager to prove their mettle in a workplace dominated by white men, and consequently harbouring much racial resentment, except that it remains unstated in one case (Peter) and brimming under the surface in the other (Huat).

Taking into account the glut of agendas and subterfuges hiding beneath the veneer of collegiality, the audience can never ascertain if the racism that comes to a head at the play's climax is profound or the unfortunate outcome of the personal made political. Is Huat truly astute or merely resentful when he thinks the vandal is lucky to be American, an observation doubly relevant when he later wonders if their firm would have clinched the BMW contract had it been named "Tan, Lim and Mohamed" instead of "Beckman, Horton and Jones"? Is Jim being the ugly white boss by hitting on the girlfriend of the subordinate he wishes to groom as his heir or does he just believe, in the best American convention, may the best man win? Has Cherie in fact rejected Peter because of his personality rather than his skin colour? Tan compounds these issues by incorporating heartlander gossip and speculation of the corner coffee shop ilk in his random references, such as when Huat and Peter suggest that racism already rears its head in the purportedly harmonious multiculturalism of Singapore: the SAF conveniently overlooks the Malays; the MFA thinks its Indian representation is too strong and is hesitant to recruit more.

Amid mutual accusations of "othering" by the characters, the feminisation of the East is underlined in a postcolonial context by Huat who attempts to re-assert his masculinity by telling Peter, who has lost his girlfriend to a white Westerner, that he has performed cunnilingus on a Caucasian woman, an anecdote aptly couched in the Hokkien dialect to exclude the foreigner in a concomitant re-appropriation of language. That Fay is subtly equated with Cherie in this play (she as the booty fought over by the two men; he as the object of political and judicial tussle between two countries) further serves to emasculate him as the victim of disparate jingoisms who has to capitulate to the ministrations of the phallic "rotan".

Hence, the viewpoint on both racism and punishment is constantly shifting and the reader/spectator finds himself often agreeing with whatever was last spoken. With the audience consciously pulled in different directions, the volatile space between the various discourses and positions undermines the audience's own confidence. In fact, the sophisticated debate among the well informed characters can be reduced to nothing more than the territorial struggles of two male pack animals, in this case, Jim and Peter, over a female, Cherie, and ends up exposing the pathos of the alpha male. Likewise, the audience finds themselves curiously concurring with the stance of the flogger, who gains in humanity with each of his speeches, in contrast to the other characters who increasingly lose their grasp on reason and decorum.

The cyclical connotations of the drama in *Machine*, where everything seems to have happened before in another place and time and involved different personae of the four protagonists (the two men moving on to other "repair jobs" while the two women find other things broken in their lives that require fixing) foreshadow their repetition and recurrence. In all instances, it is as if Tan is reiterating the late poet-philosopher, George Santayana, who said, "He who does not heed the lessons of history is condemned to repeat them." Despite their bruises, betrayals and broken hearts, the characters in *Machine* will replay those gender games over and again, with no closer communication between the sexes, even though Tan has given us much fodder for thought in the process.

In what might be termed satirical anatomies or gestures of revolt, in which our habitual perceptions are refreshed with images that are not official or approved in order to break what George Orwell called “the Geneva conventions of the mind”, Tan explores the dialectic between the individual and the institutional, often made manifest in his characters as a tussle between the private individual and the public persona. Many characters in his plays are tainted by institutionalised modes of communication such that the corruption of the individual becomes a figurative expression of the general decay of society.

*Undercover* reveals the various layers of subterfuge and duplicity within an agency (implicitly identified as the Internal Security Department) tasked with ferreting out political subversives in society through infiltrating blacklisted organisations by means of undercover agents. Even while Jane, the new recruit, has been assigned to ingratiate herself into that earmarked drama group by seducing Qiang, she is simultaneously involved in a clandestine cat and mouse game in which she is double crossing her own Deputy Director, who is in turn attempting to sabotage his chief by ratting on him. The external espionage undertaken by that organisation is therefore mirrored by the treacherous double-dealing within it such that the reader is left to wonder if there is indeed anyone trustworthy. At the mercy of a pervasive misogyny within the ISD, Jane cannot help but be co-opted into acts of betrayal to secure her foothold. Likewise, the Deputy can be seen as safeguarding his own ascent up a hierarchy that privileges educational elitism, where his own humble background leaves him disadvantaged. At the other end of the political spectrum, notwithstanding the supposedly laudable objectives of Qiang’s underground outfit in addressing social oppression and inequality, its internal operations are also fractured by female subordinates with a romantic interest in the leader himself, such that even the rehearsals for a community drama targeting greater social awareness cannot proceed without hiccups. In this instance, Flo and Linda can be construed as emulating the example of Qiang himself, who often uses ideological theory as a tool for seduction.

Tan highlights the lacuna between ideology and its facile application by the characters, who reveal reconstructions of their private

past: this autobiographical element then functions as a touchstone for each of their discourses. Hence, while the individual may be corrupted by the institutional ethos, the efficacy of ideology may also be compromised by personal agendas. In *Undercover*, Head’s eagerness to do away with his Deputy may stem from the lack of reciprocation to his latent homosexual attraction. In the same vein, Qiang confesses that his cause was impelled by a need to exorcise personal demons. He tells Jane about how he was consumed with fear when meeting the patriarch of the nation and all his subsequent heroic daring-do is rooted in the confrontation of his own anxiety, in order to reaffirm his manhood.

In *The Lady of Soul and Her Ultimate “S” Machine*, one recognises similarly tainted missions. Derek, as another closet homosexual in a secret arrangement with his erstwhile college buddy and now colleague Paul, exemplifies an ineffectual liberalism where private nostalgia eclipses the public protest, resulting in a fissure between rhetoric (oral signification) and broader action (visual signification). The treatise of liberalism is consequently articulated within contextual frames which contradict its intent. By the same token, Qiang’s grandiloquent spiel in *Undercover* is grounded in irony—his efforts at raising consciousness among battered wives are undercut by scenarios of seduction and elitist associations with Oxford University and gourmet cuisine. Derek is equally satirised when he fantasises, in a dream sequence, about the monetary benefits in mass manufacturing and exporting the “S” machine. The boldness of his act in sending an unexpurgated version of his report to the press perhaps belies his real mercenary instinct. At least one other reader sees the character of Derek as essentially problematic, as embodying the regressive, antirevolutionary habits of the armchair critic. Matilda Gabriel, in her doctoral dissertation, surmises that the impact of having a culturally hybrid, postcolonial protagonist like Derek is diluted by making him a homosexual. Rather than being torn between conflicting demands of Eastern tradition (how he has been raised) and Western liberalism (the school of his training), or between individualism and the Confucian norm of society before self, Derek circumvents that contradiction in postcolonial male identity by being rendered the epitome of Western liberal male culture as against the Western conservative puritanical

norms of masculinity encapsulated in the prudish figure of the Minister (all quivering knees aboard the roller-coaster), who belongs to the same old school-tie network. Derek's liberalism becomes associated with his homosexuality instead of being aligned to larger concerns of the social fabric. But this is surely Tan acting ambivalent about the certainty of any closure again. This is in line with his calculatedly unfathomable portrayal of Madame Soh whose excessive antics might initially beggar belief. Even as she ostensibly serves to equate culture with unbridled female licentiousness in the most unapologetically sexist manner, her advocacy of "arts with tarts" and "whores for a cause" also punctures the complacent, self-righteous smugness of the typical bureaucrat and exposes a society repressed in more than the sexual way.

Of the six plays in the collection, the unremittingly naturalistic *Home* clearly represents the juvenilia, where Tan honed his craft before exploring the larger, more textured canvas of his later plays. This is not to say *Home* is insufficiently layered, as its title already carries a twin significance: as hospice or home for the elderly as well as home in the sense of "home and hearth" and by extension, what constitutes a family unit in an alternative context.

While it may have preceded the Maintenance of Parents Act, this play can be seen as anticipating the passing of that bill by its very prescience. Here, two sexagenarians end up in a similar facility for the aged by different routes and with different mindsets. Both have lost their wives and suffered different degrees of neglect by their children. The recalcitrant Tang is packed off with a colour television as the token of a guilty conscience by his sole surviving elder son who reads his mother's premature death as a form of betrayal by his father. Tang, with deteriorating eyesight that further seals him in insularity, becomes the prickly, crotchety roommate whose unreasonable behaviour and house rules the other denizens and workers of that home find difficult to stomach. Alex is, in contrast, the perky newcomer who has no doubt that his children would have provided for him abundantly, except that they are overseas, where the widening cultural and generational gap results in his accumulating sense of marginalisation and irrelevance. As he puts it, he fears he is becoming invisible to them. But ultimately, what

galvanised him to return from Canada and the US where his son and daughter respectively reside, sell his own house in order to check into the hospice, is his short lease of life as diagnosed by his physician. With six months at most to live, Alex frees himself from being a burden to others.

The juxtaposition of the perspectives between the two men forms the crux of this drama, which derives its satirical humour from the scenes in which Alex turns the tables on Tang with regard to the house rules that the latter has stipulated. Their uniform regard for the cleaner, Mrs. Goh, who has herself risen above her own premature widowhood and elected financial independence from the four daughters she single-handedly raised, also provides the moments of levity in the play as does a dance which the two men spontaneously enact when Tang is wearing the pink framed spectacles of Alex's late wife. Tan's message here seems to be about the *raison d'être* of our twilight years. Instead of fretting over the sequence of events that brought us to this stage, or being mired in remorse over opportunities lost, Tan emphasises Alex's jovial acceptance of his ill health as well as the less than intimate relationship with his children. Accordingly, Alex treasures as his heirlooms those items associated with epiphanic moments when he must have felt the deepest connection, such as when his wife bought him his first vase, or when his son dropped an irretrievable ping pong ball into it. In high relief to Alex's cheerful resignation (even though he admits to fearing his impending death on bad days) is Tang's irate and defensive temperament. His side of the room is sterile and devoid of ornamentation to reflect his unhappy state, although ironically he has outlived all three previous roommates in his stagnancy. He cherishes the radio given to him by his younger son less as remembrance than as vindictive outrage against his elder son whose gift of the television he promptly sold. Alex's positive outlook does rub off on Tang eventually, helped along in its momentum by the equally optimistic Goh. Although neither party is sure of the time each has left, the drama concludes on the reassuring note that how we conduct the remainder of our lives is a question of attitude and perception, this last effectively captured by the symbol of the spectacles. As catalyst, Alex helps Tang appreciate his quality of life and enables Tang to see clearly for the first time near the end.

Noting the topicality of these plays, therefore, one cannot help but detect a similar impetus between Tan and Naomi Klein's stance towards tumultuous moments in history, even though their respective fields of application and *modus operandi* are widely divergent, and the parallel ends here. Klein's bestselling book on how the "free market" came to dominate the world places a similar onus on the aftermath of a controversial event. Her definition of "the shock doctrine" is the cunning exploitation of public disorientation following massive collective shocks—wars, terrorist attacks, or natural calamities—to achieve control by imposing economic shock therapy, and when the first two shocks don't succeed in eradicating resistance, a third shock is administered: the electrode in the prison cell or the Taser gun on the streets. Tan's quasi-historicist treatment of real life events in his drama similarly focuses on the public disorientation after a news-making incident, when too much rumour-mongering, confabulations and forum discussions can end up veiling its true significance, and one might mistake the smokescreen for the truth. Whether or not the dubious practice of censorship in Singapore functions as the "third shock" where Tan is concerned, his plays do serve as the social barometer of our times by their no-holds-barred political satire, putting events in their proper contexts and putting history into perspective for the elucidation of all and sundry.

Dr. K. K. Seet, 2011

---

HOME



---

## PRODUCTION NOTES

*Home* was first produced in Singapore by TheatreWorks in April 1992. The production was directed by Lee Yew Moon. The cast was as follows:

---

TANG Benjamin Ng  
ALEX Charlie Giang  
GOH Wong Siew Lyn

---

## CHARACTERS

---

TANG A 67-year-old inmate in the old folks' home.  
ALEX A 63-year-old new inmate in the old folks' home.  
GOH A 50-year-old cleaner and tea lady at the old folks' home.

---

*A room in an old folks' home. There is not a trace of decoration. There are two beds, one on each side. The one on stage left is for Tang and the other one is for Alex. Upstage, at the head of each bed, is a wardrobe. Between the wardrobes is a study table, facing a window, with one chair. On the table, placed nearer to Tang's side of the room, is an old-fashioned radio from 15 years ago, a tall glass with a set of fork and spoon, a bottle of Sloans and Chinese medicated oil, and two Tupperware boxes of half-finished biscuits. At stage left, near to the foot of Alex's bed, is a door leading to the corridor. Another door, at stage right, leads to the toilet.*

## ACT 1

SCENE 1 *When the curtains rise, Tang is packing his previous roommate's things from the wardrobe into a cardboard box placed on the bed. He picks up various things, and those that he decides to throw away, he puts inside the box. He takes out the following:*  
*A book: flips through to see if there's anything in between the pages, finds nothing; throws. A single sock: searches for matching side, finds nothing; throws. A wire clothes hanger: he bends it back into shape, goes to his own wardrobe and hangs it up. A man's brief: he tests the waistband but the elasticity is gone; throws. A very old box of tea bags: looks for expiry date and finds none; throws. A belt: either too long or too short, depending on Tang's size; throws. Another book: throws without looking. A battery: tries it on his own radio—battery still works; puts on his desk. And, lastly, lining paper for wardrobe shelf: takes it out and looks at reverse side which is a calendar picture of a young movie star; tries to see if it looks nice pasted on the inside door of his own wardrobe; decides no; throws. Near the end of this, Goh enters with broom, dustpan, mop and bucket, but keeps quiet as she observes Tang.*

GOH Lin Tai<sup>1</sup>.  
*Tang turns around, surprised. Goh comes in and starts to sweep.*

GOH Hong Kong screen goddess, 1960s. "Love Without End", "Eternally Yours", "How Can I Forget You?" and her best film "Roses are Red, Violets are Blue".

TANG Lin Tai.

GOH I was a teenager then. I watched every one of her movies three times and my mother thought I was mad. I dreamed of growing up like her. Just like thousands of other girls. When she killed herself, I cried for a week. And I stopped going to the movies for a year. *(thinks)* To be young again. To fall in love again. *(looks at Tang, but he shows no response)* 1960s. Remember rock and roll? That's what I call nice music—with melodies—and real dancing—with steps. Not what the kids do nowadays, no tune, no steps, just any old how. How much we danced! I bet you I can still do a triple turn. *(does a turn with broom as partner)* If I have the right partner, that is. *(she waits for response from him, but he says nothing)* I won a medal at a competition in Dukes Hotel with my boyfriend of that time you know. He cut a good figure, that man, he did. And guess what happened? I married him. Those were the days, eh, Tang?  
*Tang looks out of the window. Goh looks at Tang intently. She sweeps round his legs.*  
 I suppose they were for some of us. *(rhetorically)* Got up on the wrong side of bed again, old man? Move.  
*Tang steps aside absent-mindedly for the broom. Goh finishes sweeping, gathers dust into the dustpan, and goes into the toilet to flush the dirt down. She comes in again.*

TANG Did you go to his funeral?

GOH Course I did.

TANG How many people?

GOH Seven. And that includes matron, Mr. Loh and me. His four sons went, but not the son's wives or their children. It

1 a famous Chinese film actress in the 1950s and 1960s

was a sorry affair as funerals go, and I have been to lots of funerals after working here for so long. Before you really get to know them, pop they go. You know something strange about funerals, Tang? The sadder everyone is, the less sad the funeral is. Only if everyone is gloomy will it be considered a success. (*notices box and peers inside*) What's this? I thought they came and took away everything?

TANG Almost.

*Goh shakes box.*

GOH Can't say they left much for you to keep, did they? Not that you would want to. People say it's bad luck to keep the things of the dead. You know what? They say the person who keeps a dead man's things will be the next to go.

*Tang looks at his wardrobe, thinking about the clothes hanger.*

But I don't believe any of that superstitious rubbish.

*Tang looks relieved for a while. Goes to bed, lies down,*

*looking forlorn. Goh goes into toilet with a pail for water, and starts to mop the floor.*

*In the following, Goh tries to elicit some response from him.*

GOH Heh, cheer up! Don't tell me you miss him?

TANG Him!?

GOH Of course not. Would surprise me if you do. You two never got on, did you? Of course, he is a grumpy old man. Like you, only he was about ten times grumpier. Not a tiny bit of niceness in him. Seven people at his funeral. Can't say he was Mr. Popular, eh? Seven miserable people. Old man, how about putting on the radio?

*Tang switches on radio. Waltz music.*

GOH They are playing the waltz! Heh, want to dance?

TANG No thanks.

GOH Don't worry, matron is out so she won't catch us. Come on.

TANG I can't dance.

*He lies down and closes his eyes.*

GOH Can't dance! Pity. Some day I will have to teach you. (*holds up mop*) Never mind, I've got my regular partner.

*Goh waltzes round the room with mop. As she gets into the rhythm she starts to close her eyes.*

GOH Your new roommate is coming in, isn't he?

*Alex appears at the door. Neither Goh nor Tang notices him.*

TANG Yes.

*Tang turns to face the wall.*

GOH I hope he is not another old grouch. One a room is enough, as far as I'm concerned. This is fun! Know anything about him?

TANG No.

GOH I heard from Mr. Loh that this one's actually quite rich.

Maybe he can dance. Well, anything beats a mop, for sure, though I think you might come close, by the looks of you.

What I would give for a good shake of this body! (*dances*)

You know why he wants to come here instead of live in his own house?

TANG No.

GOH If he's rich he should have his own house, shouldn't he?

This place is for poor old buggers like you, no place to go and wanted by no one.

*Tang snorts—it's an old routine between the two and he doesn't even have to reply.*

GOH Probably chucked out by his children. Probably the same old story. Poor, old rich fart.

ALEX (*knocks softly*) Er, excuse me.

*Goh stops in her tracks. Tang sits up.*

GOH Whoooo! You shocked me.

ALEX Sorry.

GOH Who are you?

ALEX I'm new here.

GOH I can see that. You looking for something?

ALEX This is my first day here. Mr. Loh was too busy to show me the way. He told me the last room, and this looked like the last one. But I think I must have got it wrong. There are already two of you here...

GOH I don't live here!

ALEX You don't? Sorry.  
 GOH I work here.  
 ALEX Oh. I've come to the right room then?  
 GOH Must be, since this room has the only empty bed in the whole nursing home.  
 TANG *(slightly hostile)* Very recently vacated.  
*He switches off the radio. Goh glares at Tang.*  
 GOH Yes, left rather suddenly. *(trying to change subject)* Where are your things?  
 ALEX Outside. *(to Tang)* Left suddenly? His family got him out? You must wish you were the one who went, don't you?  
 TANG Not to where he went.  
 GOH Right, he's much happier here. *(still trying to change subject)* Want me to help bring them in, your things?  
 ALEX No thanks, it's all right. I'll do it myself. *(to Tang, jovially)* I thought once you are in here you stay here forever.  
 GOH Most people do. *(still trying to change subject)* Why don't you bring your things in now?  
 ALEX All right. I'll go and fetch them. *(he makes to go out, turns back and addresses Tang)* Or until they die.  
 TANG That's what happened to him actually.  
*Alex stops short.*  
 GOH Look what you have done, you old grouch. He's new here, for heaven's sake.  
 ALEX It's all right. Don't get angry on my account.  
 TANG Yes, might as well face facts.  
 GOH Oh, shut up!  
 ALEX It's all right, really.  
 GOH Ignore him, he's like that all the time.  
 ALEX Yes, I mean, no, I mean, never mind... *(quietly)* I must admit, when you come down to it, that's what I came here for.  
 TANG *(flatly)* That's the spirit.  
 GOH *(tries to ameliorate: indicates Tang and the empty bed)* He's badly shaken by the death of his friend.  
 TANG He was no friend.

GOH You see, he's so devastated that he has forgotten everything now.  
 TANG We didn't care for one another one little bit. No love lost between us.  
 GOH *(resignedly)* Damn you old man. The least I had expected of you was to be nice to your new roommate.  
 ALEX Er, I suppose I better get my things.  
 GOH Need a hand?  
 ALEX No worries, I don't have much.  
*Goh takes up her mopping from where she has left off. Alex brings one suitcase in, then another, then a third.*  
 GOH Looks like you brought your whole house.  
 ALEX Not really, I only saved what I couldn't bear to throw away. Had to give away all my books though, a pity that.  
*Awkward silence.*  
 GOH Well, we'd better introduce ourselves. I'm Mrs. Goh, I help clean the place, as you can see by my dancing partner, but I also bring in the tea in the morning and afternoon.  
 ALEX I'm Alex. Nice to meet you.  
*Alex shakes hands with Goh, who is surprised. He goes to Tang to shake his hands, but Tang remains unmoving.*  
 TANG Tang.  
*Alex stops short of Tang's bed.*  
 ALEX Nice to meet you.  
*Tang grunts. He lies flat on the bed and looks at the ceiling.*  
 GOH You settle in. I better go and do the toilet now. *(indicates Tang)* Don't expect to be entertained by him though.  
 ALEX All right. *(surveys room)* Nice, nice. Kind of spare though. I think a little decoration would cheer up the place eh? You are the way you live, I always say. *(goes to open wardrobe, inspects it and hums a tune)* Not much space in this, is there?  
*Tang acts like he hasn't heard. Alex looks at him, continues humming, and bends down to look under the bed.*  
 Well, at least two of the suitcases can go under here.  
*Alex looks at Tang and shrugs. Alex gets ready to sit down.*

TANG *(without turning his head)* He died on that very same bed.  
*Alex nearly falls onto the bed but manages to pull himself up.*

ALEX He did?

TANG Last week.

ALEX What of?

TANG Cancer.

ALEX It's all right then. Cancer's not contagious.  
*Alex almost sits down again.*

TANG But he also had some skin disease.  
*Alex just manages to stop his bum from touching the bed.*

ALEX Skin disease?

TANG He was scratching all the time, day in day out, until  
 I got thoroughly sick of it. *(pause)* The last two months  
 were terrible.

ALEX Must have been trying for you too.

TANG I meant the last two months were terrible for me. I thought I  
 might get it, even though I made sure I avoided him.  
*Alex is astounded.*

ALEX Yes. Er, did they fumigate it?

TANG No.

ALEX No?

TANG But they turned the mattress over.  
*Alex sits down slowly.*

ALEX I suppose they know what they had to do. *(cheerfully)*  
 Besides which, as I said earlier, I came here to die. So it's  
 my funeral, isn't it? *(laughs, but stops when Tang does not  
 respond)* That's a joke. *(pause)* I think.  
*Alex decides to do his own things. He opens the first  
 suitcase. Starts to unpack. He hums. He takes out several  
 dozen books, a vase, and some framed paintings which he  
 stacks on the table. Goh emerges from the toilet.*

GOH *(to Tang)* I'm done. You can do your biggie now.  
*Tang enters the toilet.*

GOH Every morning, he waits until I clean it before he goes in.  
 He stays there for I don't know how long. Constipation.

*She cleans the place up. They are still a little shy with  
 one another —*

You should try not to mind him.  
*Alex starts to take out the things from his other suitcases,  
 which he lays on the floor — occupying part of Tang's half  
 of the floor — the bed and the study table. There are clothes,  
 pictures, more books, and all sorts of things. Goh makes  
 Tang's bed. She tidies Tang's wardrobe.*

ALEX He's, er, very...

GOH Difficult?

ALEX Yes, difficult.

GOH Had a difficult life, that's why. I don't know the details  
 though and he's never wanted to tell me although I kept  
 asking him at first.

ALEX You seem to get along with him.

GOH Yes. *(pause)* In a strange way, I rather like him and I don't  
 know exactly why. Maybe, it's a feeling I always had for  
 the underdog, and is he some underdog! I think I'm the  
 only friend of his left in the world. In this whole place, I'm  
 the only person he talks to. *(referring to her tidying up of  
 Tang's wardrobe)* He probably thinks it's my job to pack  
 everyone's clothes too.

ALEX He looks very settled in.

GOH He is. Was here before I came to work here, and that was  
 two years ago.

ALEX But he looks like he can still last for a long time.

GOH Yes. He's actually too fit for it. He's outlasted most of the  
 people here. *(indicates Alex's bed)* That guy must be his  
 number three roommate. He's seen them die before his eyes.  
 I keep telling matron to put him up with someone healthier.  
 But she says every one of the inmates here are already  
 comfortable where they are. So the only people she can put  
 with him are the newcomers.  
*Pause. She continues tidying the wardrobe.*  
 Is it true that you are...?

ALEX Rich? I have had a very comfortable life, yes, if that's what you mean.

GOH (*indicating room*) Not much of an ending, is it?

ALEX I suppose not. This isn't so bad, actually.

GOH You're alone?

ALEX Yes. I mean no. I still have my children. But they are not here. They are in Canada and the States.

GOH So why are you here?

ALEX I went to live with my son, in Toronto, and my daughter in the U.S. But I felt as if I didn't belong, to the country I mean. They couldn't have tried harder to make me feel at home. So I came back. You know the Chinese have this silly idea that a man should be buried where he's born. At my age, it does not seem so silly.

GOH I suppose this country is not a bad place to die in.

ALEX Yes. So when I came back here there was only the house and myself, which is too big for me. I sold the house. It gets lonely living on your own.

GOH That's probably true. But you won't find him much company.

ALEX Well, at least there's someone around, and I can be quite good at making friends.

GOH It won't be easy to open up this one. It took me a couple of years, and he's now worse than he was before.

ALEX Well, I like challenges.

GOH All I can say is good luck to you. (*she examines some of the things*) You sure brought a lot of stuff here. Lots of books.

ALEX I was an academic.  
*Goh picks up a Chinese vase that belongs to Alex.*

GOH Really? (*holds up vase*) Nice, although I can't tell one from the other.

ALEX It's not worth anything. Won't be able to get more than a couple of dollars for it, that is presuming someone wants it. I was a collector, but I sold them all. Just kept this one.  
*Goh shakes it, and there is a sound.*

GOH Heh, there's something inside.

*Peers into it.*

ALEX (*laughs*) Oh that!

GOH What is it!?

ALEX A ping pong ball. When my son was three, he popped it inside. I was mad at him. I tried and tried but could not get it out. The ball was slightly bigger than the hole. I tried chopsticks, the vacuum cleaner, barbecue skewer, everything, but I just couldn't get the darn thing out. Finally I said, heh, why don't I pour some hot water inside. I thought it would make the ball shrink. But you know what happened—instead of shrinking it expanded!

GOH Yes, that's how we made a dented ball round again, didn't we?

ALEX Yes, but I forgot about that. So instead of shrinking, it grew! Then I thought, heck, it's just a ball, and if you leave the vase standing there, no one would know there's anything inside. That's more than 20 years ago. Strange how some things stay with you for the rest of your life.  
*Pause. Goh gives Alex the vase.*

GOH It will look nice with some flowers.

ALEX Yes. But I haven't put flowers in it for a long, long time. For three years to be exact. (*pause*) It was the first birthday present my wife gave to me. I didn't keep more than a couple of things of hers.  
*Pause. He puts down vase on table.*

GOH Well, back to the present. I ought to get the things sorted out quick.

GOH And I ought to be going. Kitchen is probably waiting for me to bring the tea round. See you later.

ALEX See you.

GOH I'll come back and check on how you two are getting on later.  
*Goh exits. Alex continues to sort out his things, which are now scattered over a large area of the entire floor and almost the whole desk. The whole place looks a mess now. He moves some of Tang's things—radio, boxes of biscuits, etc.—away from their original positions in Tang's half of the table*

On *The Lady of Soul and Her Ultimate "S" Machine*

"... the most important thing about Tan Tarn How's play is its marking of a watershed in Singapore theatre: it is arguably the first English play to present the country critically and artistically, without hiding behind coy allegory."

– Hannah Pandian, *The Straits Times*

---

On *Undercover*

Joint winner of the 1996 National Book Development Council Drama Award

"The play, a farce about the goings-on in an internal security department, takes Singapore theatre into uncharted territory."

– Koh Buck Song, *The Straits Times*

---

On *Six of the Best*

"*Six of the Best*, in dealing with such an explosive topic, will hopefully get under the skin to the heart of racism in Singapore."

– Phua Mei Pin, *The Straits Times*

---

On *The First Emperor's Last Days*

Winner of Hong Kong's 1999 Best Top 10 Productions of the Year Award

"With *The First Emperor's Last Days*, playwright Tan Tarn How continues to stake out a unique place for himself in Singapore theatre, as a creator of topical, political plays."

– Cherian George, *The Straits Times*

---

On *Machine*

Winner of Best Script, 2003 Life! Theatre Awards

"Tan's sensitivity and genius is obvious throughout: the dialogue is light but loaded. In the exchanges, there are just the right doses of surprise to compliment, of feigned ignorance to encourage and of coyness to intrigue, as both the man and woman manoeuvre expertly towards their ultimate goal—the bed, after which the relationship ceases to be."

– Suhaila Sulaiman, *The Straits Times*

---

ISBN 978-981-08-7977-8



9 789810 879778