

Japanese director Shuji Terayama's "Nuhikun" to be staged in December

"Nuhikun", a theatre work featuring subversion and absurdity by iconoclastic Japanese director Shuji Terayama, will be staged in December. This is a revival version by director J A Seazer with A Laboratory of Theatre Play BAN'YU-INRYOKU.

Shuji Terayama based "Nuhikun" on Jonathan Swift's satirical essay "Directions to Servants". The play is set in a mansion filled with deviant servants without the presence of a master. When the servants become the master of the house, the ending is unexpected. "Nuhikun" exposes the audience to a sadomasochistic universe combining elements of surrealism and dream work, folk culture, machines and Brecht-like theatrics of defamiliarisation. Accompanied by fantastic machines, rock music and operatic echoes, this production has amazed audiences with the avant-garde director's world of wonder with eye-popping visual bravura.

Shuji Terayama was an avant-garde poet, dramatist, writer, film director and photographer. Terayama was one of the leading artists of the new avant-garde Japanese theatre movement in the 1970s, and his most significant theatrical activity began with the establishment of the experimental theatre troupe Tenjo Sajiki. The productions of Tenjo Sajiki including "Jashumon", "Blindman's Letter", "Knock" and "Shintokumara" won critical acclaim and were invited to tour internationally. On the cinematic front, Terayama was a revolutionary pioneer. He frequently placed autobiographical influences within his surreal and fragmented films while his films and dramas were often interconnected, forming an eerie and imaginary world filled with dreams of erotic fantasy and escape. Terayama passed away in May 1983 and is today among the gone-but-never-forgotten cultural icons.

Since its premiere in Tokyo in 1978 by Tenjo Sajiki, "Nuhikun" has been performed over 100 times and toured more than 30 cities in the world. The revival version by J A Seazer with A Laboratory of Theatre Play BAN'YU-INRYOKU perfectly demonstrates Terayama's unique staging of experimental theatre and astonishing directing in the use of layered language and visual imagery.

"Nuhikun", to be performed in Japanese with Chinese and English surtitles, will be presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. The play will be staged at 8.15pm on December 13 and 14 (Friday and Saturday) at the Grand Theatre of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. The work contains nudity scenes, adult content and loud noise. Tickets priced at \$180, \$280, \$380 and \$480 are now available at URBTIX (www.urbtix.hk). For telephone credit card bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2268 7325 or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/theatre/programs_861.html.

Fringe activities will be held, with details as follows:

Kaleidoscope on the Screen (for people aged 18 and above only)

November 23 (Saturday): 2pm, 4.45pm and 8.30pm

November 24 (Sunday): 7.30pm

Theatre, Hong Kong City Hall

Price: \$60 per session

(Post-screening talk on November 24.)

Pre-performance Talk: A Kaleidoscopic World of Shuji Terayama

(conducted in Cantonese)

November 28 (Thursday): 7.30pm

AC2, 4/F, Administration Building, Hong Kong Cultural Centre

Admission is free. Limited seats will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Poster Exhibition of Works by Shuji Terayama X Tenjo Sajiki

December 13 and 14 (Friday and Saturday)

Level 2, Foyer of Grand Theatre, Hong Kong Cultural Centre

(Admission is free for ticket holders of "Nuhikun" 30 minutes before the performance.)

Post-performance Talk

December 13 (Friday)

Patrons are welcome to attend the talk.