



SCHOOL OF ENGLISH
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

CHKU
Guild

HAMLET

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



THE BLACK BOX, LG 54, CENTENNIAL CAMPUS
- THE MAES, MACC, MFA THEATRE PRODUCTION -
3, 4, 5 DECEMBER 2025

DIRECTED BY DR. KRISTEN MURRAY

HAMLET SYNOPSIS

Act 1:

Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark, returns from university in “suits of woe,” grieving for his recently-deceased father. Hamlet is equally unsettled by his mother Gertrude’s “o’erhasty marriage” to Hamlet’s uncle, Claudius, whose coronation ensures that Hamlet does not inherit the throne. Hamlet’s father - Old Hamlet - emerges as a Ghost, revealing that his brother, Claudius, poisoned him to gain the crown. The Ghost demands revenge for this “murder most foul.”

Acts 2 & 3:

Claudius plots to eliminate the threat Hamlet represents. Hamlet’s distressed isolation in “To be or not to be” is exacerbated by the forced fracturing of his relationship with Ophelia. Both Claudius and his trusted advisor, Ophelia’s father Polonius, puppeteer the couple’s encounter. Hamlet feigns madness as a strategic distraction, yet his “noble mind seems here o’erthrown.” Hamlet then manipulates a theatrical event that mirrors his father’s murder and exposes Claudius’ guilt. Hamlet visits his mother Gertrude’s chamber to caution and chastise her: “Let me set you up a glass to see the inmost part of you.” Believing he hears a hidden Claudius, Hamlet stabs Polonius.

Acts 4 & 5:

Claudius composes a secret commission to have Hamlet executed in England. During the subsequent sea journey, Hamlet escapes and returns to Denmark. Laertes, Ophelia’s brother, demands an explanation for his father’s death; Claudius then convinces Laertes to seek violent retribution. Ophelia’s grief overwhelms her mind and she drowns in a “glassy stream.” Since “her death is doubtful,” the graveside service is swift. Hamlet exchanges wit and wisdom with a Gravedigger - “It is my grave, sir, as I lie in it” - then sees Ophelia’s funeral. Claudius plots Hamlet’s demise once more, this time through a dishonest display of skill with Laertes. The duel results in “bloody and unnatural acts” that level the court of Denmark, enabling the ascent of Fortinbras, Prince of Norway.



DIRECTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

The HKU School of English Shakespeare Production Project, now in its third year, involves inventive collaboration across our three taught postgraduate programmes: the MAES, MACC, and MFA. For this production of *Hamlet*, eighty-five students have worked diligently to portray the roles and/or design the costumes, lighting, sound, props, set, and publicity elements. For the vast majority of our actors, this production marks their first experience on stage.

In approaching Shakespeare productions with students, I engage in close readings and discussions of social structures and emotional relationships within the text. I commonly condense the scenes and modernise the setting; this process leads students into deeper, clearer connections to the narrative. Although I actively guide students on stage in rehearsals, I encourage actors to see how movements and expressions emerge naturally through Shakespeare's language.

The main roles in this production are multi-cast - an approach that provides additional learning opportunities and balances our students' time commitments. We have nine Hamlets, each of whom devotes insight and heart to the eloquent Danish Prince. In addition, three or more actors embody the other main roles. The variations between actors highlight the process of literary interpretation: each actor represents a unique, resonant reading of their character.

In this *Hamlet*, Elsinore becomes an urbane royal residence in a hybrid Asian city. The snowy newspaper trees represent Hamlet's focus on 'Words, words, words...' Our actors speak select lines in Putonghua and Cantonese to signify a multilingual environment. As per Shakespeare's text, Hamlet is under surveillance. In our modern context, therefore, his phone serves as a repository for memory, documenting his fragmented relationships. Yet Hamlet's passionate, articulate desire for certainty finally yields to an acceptance of the unknowable: "The readiness is all. Let be."

In the past three months, I have seen our students shine through impressive performances and production concepts. I offer my sincere gratitude to the School of English, and the Faculty of Arts overall, for supporting our creative endeavours, including the Shakespeare Production Project, the Local/Focal Short Film Festival and the Dragonfly Spoken Word Festival. I look forward to leading future imaginative learning engagements through the HKU Guild. Finally, I hope our production of *Hamlet* is affecting, thought-provoking, and affirming of our collective commitment to English Studies and the Humanities.

- DR. KRISTEN MURRAY -



⁴ HAMLET - CHARACTERS - IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

MARCELLUS, GUARD
BERNARDO, GUARD
HORATIO, FRIEND TO HAMLET
GHOST/OLD HAMLET
HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK
CLAUDIUS, KING OF DENMARK
GERTRUDE, QUEEN OF DENMARK

POLONIUS, DANISH ADVISOR
LAERTES, SON OF POLONIUS
OPHELIA, DAUGHTER OF POLONIUS
VOLTEMAND, EMISSARY
FIRST PLAYER
PLAYER KING & QUEEN
PLAYER LUCIANUS

GUARDS
FORTINBRAS, PRINCE OF NORWAY
NORWEGIAN CAPTAIN
SAILOR
MESSENGERS
OSRIC, LANDOWNER

- CAST - IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER



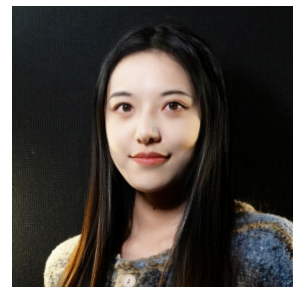
ALURI MEDHA



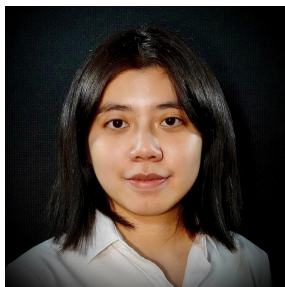
CHEN JIANING, JANINE



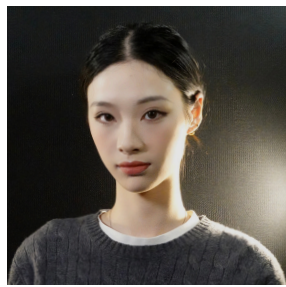
CHEN RUIHAN, RAY



DING NING, CRYSTAL



DING RUYI, ALYSSA



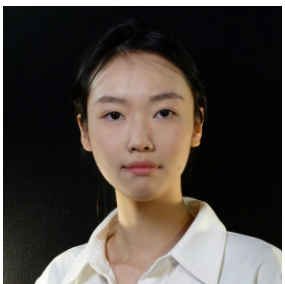
FENG ANQI, FELICIA



FENG XIANGYANG, FRANKIE



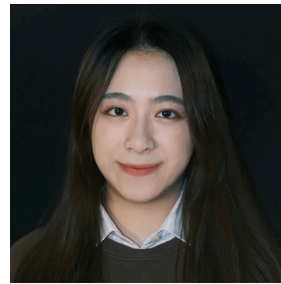
GAO YUANYUAN, AVENIR



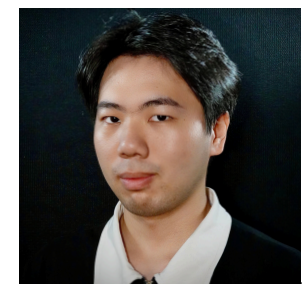
GAO YANG, SUNNY



GONG LINYU, SYLVIA



GU JAIYI, CRYSTAL



GU LINGJIE, JOHNNY

⁵
HAMLET
- CAST -



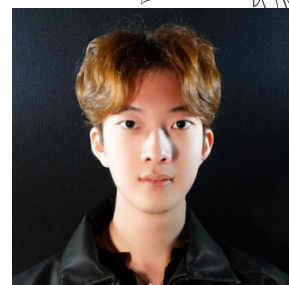
HE YUQI, CECILIA



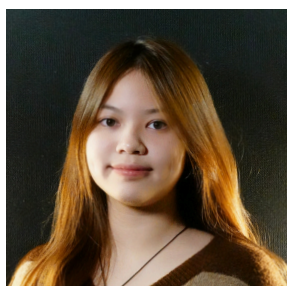
HUA BICEN, CHELSEY



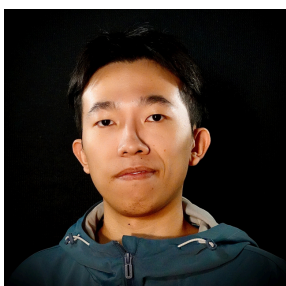
JI WENTING, WENDY



JING ZIKANG, HECTOR



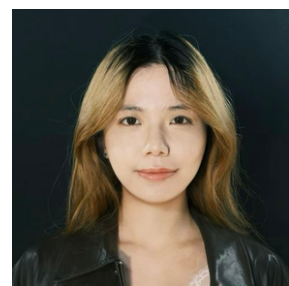
LAO YUHUI, LARISSA



LI JAINRONG, ROY



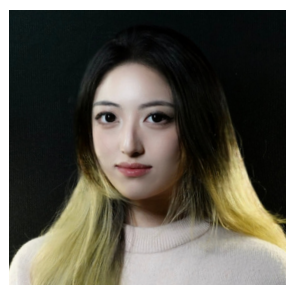
LIANG TINGQIAN, ADRIANNA



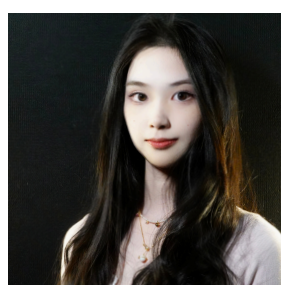
LIU YI XIN, LEONIE



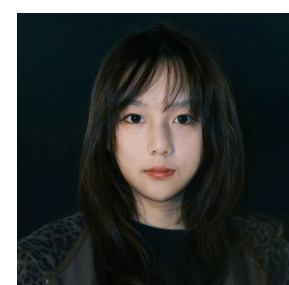
LIU YIYAO, YOLANDA



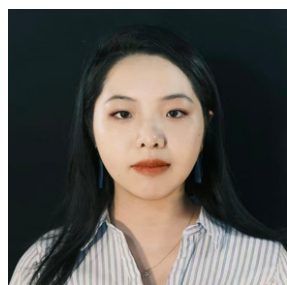
PENG TIANYI, ELENA



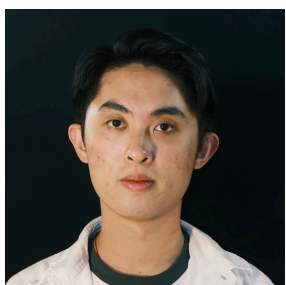
QIAN YITING, FONI



RAO HUANYU, ROWAN



SHAO KAIYAN



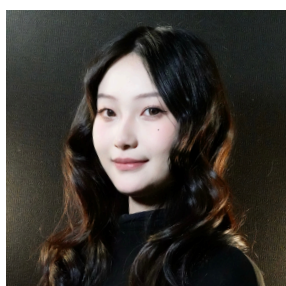
WANG QIHAO, EVAN



WANG QINGYAN, SYLVIA



WANG XINYI, GRACE



WANG YONGJIA, ALISTAR

6

HAMLET

- SCENES & CAST -

"PEACE, BREAK THEE OFF! LOOK WHERE IT COMES AGAIN."

1:1 - OUTSIDE THE ROYAL RESIDENCE

MARCELLUS - YE XINGYI, ALEX
BARNARDO - LI JIANRONG, ROY
HORATIO - YUEN TSZ PING, CINDY
GHOST - WEI LU QING, VICKY



"BUT I HAVE THAT WITHIN WHICH PASSES SHOW,
THESE BUT THE TRAPPINGS AND THE SUITS OF WOE."

1:2 - THE ROYAL RESIDENCE RECEPTION ROOM



CLAUDIUS - GU LINGJIE, JOHNNY
GERTRUDE - HE YUQI, CECILIA.
POLONIUS - SHAO KAIYAN, KAIYAN
OPHELIA - ZHAO XINYU, XENA
LAERTES - LAO YUHUI, LARISSA

HAMLET - JING ZIKANG, HECTOR
HORATIO - YUAN TSZ PING, CINDY
MARCELLUS - YE XINGYI, ALEX
BARNARDO - LI JIANRONG, ROY

"TO THINE OWN SELF BE TRUE..."

1:3 - OUTSIDE THE ROYAL RESIDENCE

LAERTES - LAO YUHUI, LARISSA
OPHELIA - ZHAO XINYU, XENA
POLONIUS - SHAO KAIYAN, KAIYAN



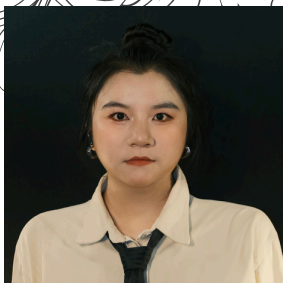
"SOMETHING IS ROTTEN IN THE STATE OF DENMARK."

1:4 & 1:5 - OUTSIDE THE ROYAL RESIDENCE & THE WOODS

HAMLET - RENG TIANYI, ELENA
HORATIO - YUAN TSZ PING, CINDY
MARCELLUS - YE XINGYI, ALEX
BARNARDO - LI JIANRONG, ROY
GHOST - WEI LU QING, VICKY



⁷ HAMLET - CAST -



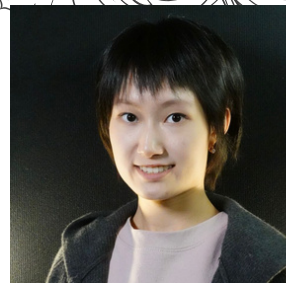
WEI LU QING, VICKY



WEI XIN, BRITTANY



WU JAIYI, ISABELLE



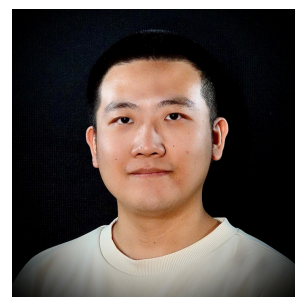
XU WANXIN, CINDY



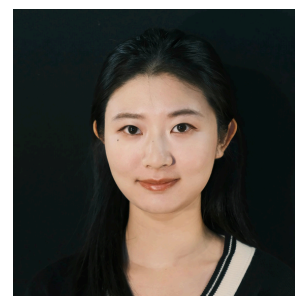
YANG WINTAO, WINTER



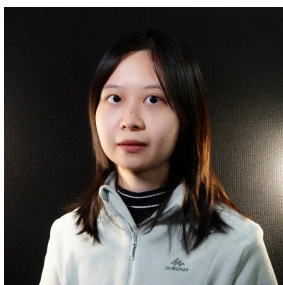
YE LEI, LILY



YE XINGYI, ALEX



YI XINYANG, YILIA



YUAN CHI, CASEY



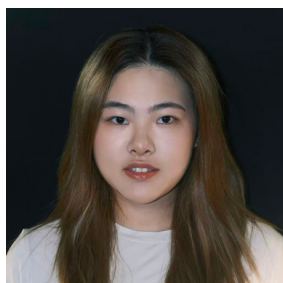
YUEN TSZ PING, CINDY



ZHANG JIAXIN, CINDY



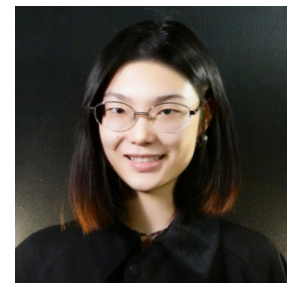
ZHANG JING, JENNY



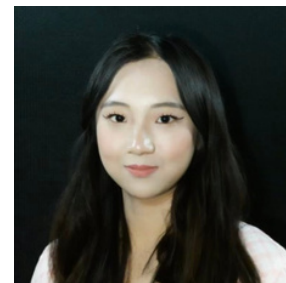
ZHANG KERUI, EMMA



ZHAO XINYU, XENA



ZHOU SHUHAN, JUDITH



ZUO WENXIN



HAMLET

- SCENES & CAST -

"THE PLAY'S THE THING WHEREIN I'LL CATCH THE CONSCIENCE OF THE KING."



2:1 - THE ROYAL RESIDENCE RECEPTION ROOM

CLAUDIUS - DING NING, CRYSTAL

GERTRUDE - ZHANG JING, JENNY

POLONIUS - DING RUYU, ALYSSA

VOLTEMAND OF NORWAY - YE LEI, LILY

HAMLET - HUA BICEN, CHELSEY

FIRST PLAYER - GAO YANG, SUNNY

PLAYERS - WU JIAYI, ISABELLE; GU JIAYI, CRYSTAL; ZHANG KERUI, EMMA

"MADNESS IN GREAT ONES MUST NOT UNWATCHED GO."

3:1 - THE ROYAL RESIDENCE OFFICE

CLAUDIUS - CHEN RUIHAN, RAY

GERTRUDE - YI XINYANG, YILIA

POLONIUS - DING RUYU, ALYSSA

HAMLET - RAO HUANYU, ROWAN

OPHELIA - WANG YONGJIA, ALISTAR



"THE LADY DOTTH PROTEST TOO MUCH, METHINKS."

3:2 - THE ROYAL RESIDENCE MEDIA ROOM

CLAUDIUS - CHEN RUIHAN, RAY

GERTRUDE - YI XINYANG, YILIA

POLONIUS - DING RUYU, ALYSSA

HAMLET - JI WENTING, WENDY

OPHELIA - WANG YONGJIA, ALISTAR

HORATIO - YUAN CHI, CASEY

PLAYER KING - ZHANG KERUI, EMMA

PLAYER QUEEN - WU JIAYI, ISABELLE

PLAYER LUCIANUS - GU JIAYI, CRYSTAL

FIRST PLAYER - GAO YANG, SUNNY



HAMLET

- SCENES & CAST -

"OH, MY OFFENCE IS RANK. IT SMELLS TO HEAVEN."

3:3 - THE ROYAL RESIDENCE CHAPEL

CLAUDIUS - LIU YIYAO, YOLANDA

POLONIUS - GONG LINYU, SYLVIA

HAMLET - JI WENTING, WENDY



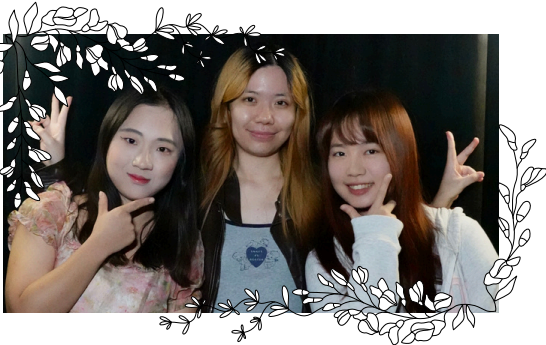
"I MUST BE CRUEL ONLY TO BE KIND."

3:4 - GERTRUDE'S CHAMBER

GERTRUDE - ZUO WENXIN, WENXIN

POLONIUS - GONG LINYU, SYLVIA

HAMLET - LIU YI XIN, LEONIE



"MY SOUL IS FULL OF DISCORD AND DISMAY."

4:1 - THE ROYAL RESIDENCE OFFICE

GERTRUDE - WEI XIN, BRITTANY

CLAUDIUS - GAO YUANYUAN, AVENIR

GUARDS - FENG XIANGYANG, FRANKIE



"IF YOUR MESSENGER FIND HIM NOT IN HEAVEN,
SEEK HIM IN THE OTHER PLACE YOURSELF."

4:3 - THE ROYAL RESIDENCE OFFICE

GERTRUDE - WEI XIN, BRITTANY

CLAUDIUS - GAO YUANYUAN, AVENIR

HAMLET - XU WANXIN, CINDY

GUARDS - FENG XIANGYANG, FRANKIE;

GU JIAYI, CRYSTAL



HAMLET

- SCENES & CAST -

"TWO THOUSAND SOULS TO DEBATE THIS STRAW."

4:4 - THE WOODS, AWAY FROM THE ROYAL RESIDENCE

NORWEGIAN CAPTAIN - WU JIAYI, ISABELLE

FORTINBRAS - YANG WENTAO, WINTER

HAMLET - XU WANXIN, CINDY

GUARD - FENG XIANGYANG, FRANKIE



"IS IT POSSIBLE A YOUNG MAID'S WITS
SHOULD BE AS MORTAL AS AN OLD MAN'S LIFE?"

4:5 - THE ROYAL RESIDENCE OFFICE

CLAUDIUS - GAO YUANYUAN, AVENIR

GERTRUDE - WEI XIN, BRITTANY

LAERTES - WANG XINGYI, GRACE

OPHELIA - QIAN YITING, FONI

GUARD - GU JIAYI, CRYSTAL



"I DO NOT KNOW FROM WHAT PART OF THE WORLD
I SHOULD BE GREETED BY LORD HAMLET."

4:6 - OUTSIDE THE ROYAL RESIDENCE

HORATIO - YUAN CHI, CASEY

SAILOR - YE LEI, LILY



II HAMLET - SCENES & CAST -

"THERE IS A WILLOW GROWS ASKANT THE BROOK"

4:7 - THE ROYAL RESIDENCE OFFICE



CLAUDIUS - GAO YUANYUAN, AVENIR

GERTRUDE - WEI XIN, BRITTANY

LAERTES - WANG XINGYI, GRACE

MESSENGER - GAO YANG, SUNNY

"A FELLOW OF INFINITE JEST..."

5:1 - THE GRAVEYARD OF THE ROYAL RESIDENCE

GRAVEDIGGER - WANG QIHAO, EVAN

GRAVEDIGGER'S ASSISTANT - ZHANG KERUI, EMMA

HAMLET - LIANG TINGQIAN, ADRIANNA

HORATIO - YUAN CHI, CASEY

CLAUDIUS - ZHANG JIAXIN, CINDY

GERTRUDE - WANG QINGYAN, SYLVIA

LAERTES - CHEN JIANING, JANINE

PRIEST - GAO YANG, SUNNY

OSRIC - ZHOU SHUHAN, JUDITH



"FLIGHTS OF ANGELS SING THEE TO THY REST."

5:2 - THE ROYAL RESIDENCE RECEPTION ROOM

HAMLET - FENG ANQI, FELICIA

HORATIO - ALURI MEDHA

CLAUDIUS - ZHANG JIAXIN, CINDY

GERTRUDE - WANG QINGYAN, SYLVIA

LAERTES - CHEN JIANING, JANINE

OSRIC - ZHOU SHUHAN, JUDITH

FORTINBRAS - YANG WENTAO, WINTER

GUARD - GU LINGJIE, JOHNNY



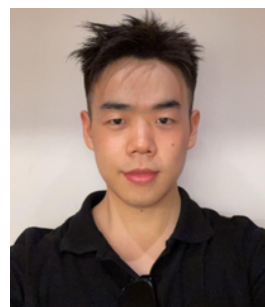
- CREW -



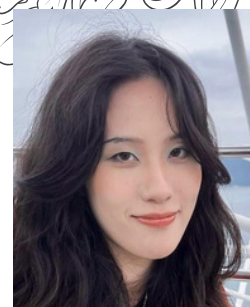
TEACHING ASSISTANT
NG YUEK YU, GWEN



STAGE MANAGER
WU LINDAN, LINDA



ACTING/EDITING RA
LIU CHANGMAO, PATRICK



COSTUME RA
WANG SHENQI, CLAIR

TECHNICAL TEAM FOR THE BLACK BOX - MICKY CHENG : CHI HUNG

LIGHTING DESIGN

ZHANG SHITONG
LI YIWEN
ZHOU TONG
MA YUQING
YE XINGYI
FENG XIANGYANG



SOUND DESIGN

WANG XINYUE
KWOK KELLY
DENG HAOYANG



- CREW -

FILM & PHOTOGRAPHY

XIANG QIAN, ANNETTE
WANG QINGYAN, SYLVIA
CAO SHIHAN, HANNAH
ZHOU ZIYANG, STEVEN
LI KEER, RINA



COSTUME, MAKE-UP & HAIR DESIGN

WANG QILE CHEN YIYU
MA YUXUAN YOU JIAYI
LIU YI XIN ZHOU SHUHAN
TANG YINGMAN



SET & PROP DESIGN

WU ZIXUAN GAO YANG
GAO RUOQI WEN YUAN
HE ZIQING LIN XINYU
LIU LIUHONG DUAN LIANGJING
CHEN TIANYANG



- CREW -



STAGE MANAGEMENT

CHEN DONGLIN, ZOE
HONG JU, ANGIE
HSU LINDA
LIANG XINZHI, STACEY
WANG JIAYUE, CAROL

MARKETING (PROGRAMME)

WU MIAOSHUAI
WANG PENG

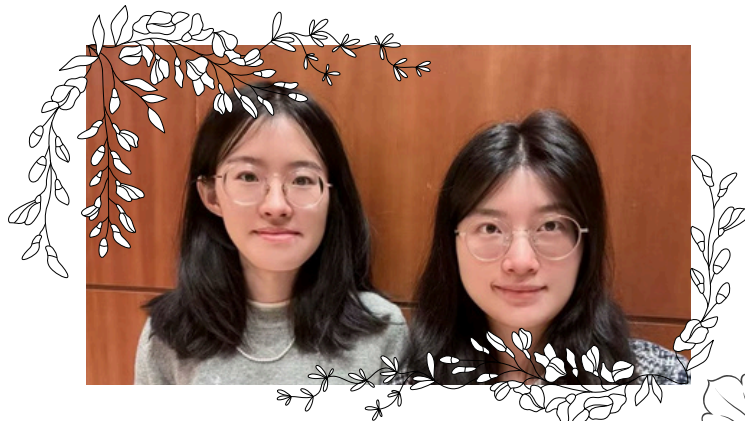


MARKETING (SOCIAL MEDIA)

JIANG SHOUXU
ZHENG SHUZHAN

MARKETING (POSTER)

WU KE
CHEN YUCHENG



15
- REHEARSALS -





- SINCERE THANKS -

DEAN, FACULTY OF ARTS:

PROF. DAVID POMFRET

HEAD, SCHOOL OF ENGLISH:

PROF. TONG KING LEE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TPG STUDIES:

DR. BRANDON CHUA

DIRECTOR, MAES PROGRAMME (LINGUISTICS):

DR. AGNES KANG

DIRECTOR, MAES PROGRAMME (LITERATURE):

DR. ELIZABETH HO

DIRECTOR, MFA PROGRAMME:

DR. ANTONY HUEN

COORDINATOR, MACC INTERNSHIPS:

MR. LONG CHIU

SCHOOL OF ENGLISH ADMINISTRATION:

MS. APPLE KWOK, MR. ISAAC LEE, MS. MANDY LEUNG,
MS. SHAN LOR, MS. HAYLEY WONG, MR. DICK YIP

