

***Another Arrow War et cetera...***  
***A Drama Project for War and Peace (RIBA Work Stages A to C)***

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## **About the Author**

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David divides his time unequally between the countries of Wales, England, Hong Kong, The PRC and Canada.

## ***Another Arrow War etcetera...*** ***A Drama Project for War and Peace (RIBA Work Stages A to C)***

*'There is a Mr Pang, or Penang, or Phang, or Prang, or some such name', it said, 'over at the river settlement. He is asking for medical stuff for minor casualties. Could you go over? You 'ill find him at the school. The corporal will give you the stuff and Anna will take you. Aldridge,' it added 'has been appeased.'*

H.E. Bates. (1905 – 1974)

"The Purple Plain",

First Edition 1948. Penguin Books, London, 1958, Chapter 10. pp. 111

*'Yes, Mr Fresta, sir. I am too from Rangoon. I am student of Far English.'*

*'Advanced English,' Anna said.*

*'Far advanced,' Mr Prang said. 'That's me. You are knowing London, Mr Fresta, sir?'*

*'Yes.'*

*'There is somewhat of a ruin there?'*

*'Yes.'*

*'And death and pestilence?'*

H.E. Bates. (1905 – 1974)

"The Purple Plain",

First Edition 1948. Penguin Books, London, 1958, Chapter 10. pp. 114

*'Hyperbolicsyllabicesquedalymistic.'* (Note 1)

Hayes, Issac and Avertis Isbell.

"Branded",

Virgin Records Limited, Holland, 1995.

*'In times of war, if you are afraid of death, you shouldn't be a member of the Chinese Communist Party'.*

*'In times of peace, if you are afraid of hardship, you shouldn't be a member of the airport team'.*

Observed (apparently) by Foster, Norman (Lord) of Riverside (or Thames-side) Littlefield, David "In the lion's den" in "BD 2008 World Architecture 100", Building Design, London, January 2008.

## **Dedicatory Preface**

To the Hackney Archery Club, London, England. (Generally, Hackney is probably still a cesspit of militant tendency but there are certainly exceptions to the rule. However, I still wouldn't live there for all the tea in China. No offence.) It's a great pity that the practicing conditions of the Hackney Archery Club are so poor that they will probably never get any members into the UK archery team for the 2008 Olympics. Life can be so disappointing on occasion. Hopefully, this project will compensate for it, if it goes ahead, from the nautical point of view, of course. It's all ballistics at the end of the day. I think. (Note 2)

Inigo Jones, Surveyor of The King's Works. (Note 3)

## **Preface**

This project covers an idea for the period of the 8<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2008, in addition to other projects at other times, and at the same time. It's well beyond my abilities to implement on my own. So the project is entirely academic at this point in time.

## **Acknowledgements**

There are none that I know of.

## **Illustrations**

<i>Fig</i>			<i>Page</i>
1	"Macbeth": A costume for Lady Macbeth.	Unknown Source	3
2	"Macbeth": Stage design.	David Jukes-Hughes	4
3	"The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus": The final performance (24 <sup>th</sup> August 2008).	David Jukes-Hughes	7

## **Contents**

	<i>Page</i>
Dedicatory Preface	ii
Preface	iii
Acknowledgements	iii
Illustrations	iv
Introduction	1
1 Appraisal (RIBA Work Stage A)	1
2 Strategic Briefing (RIBA Work Stage B)	1
3 Outline Proposals (RIBA Work Stage C)	2
Conclusion	8
Notes	10
Glossary	v
Bibliography: Books	vi
Papers, Periodicals and Web sites	vii
PNAP, Regulations and Ordinances	vii

## **Introduction**

The aim of the project is to develop a "Shakespeare Festival" at The Tamar Site on Hong Kong Island from the 8<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2008, which could be held annually at the site if proven commercially expedient.

Generally, the purpose of the proposal is to celebrate the great propaganda victory of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in obtaining the privilege of hosting the 29<sup>th</sup> Modern Olympic Games of the XXIX Olympiad.

This amazing feat of political engineering by the CPC will almost certainly ensure an overwhelming success for the party at the next General Election in China P.R. Indeed, it may well keep the party in power for at least another ten years. After which new 'rabbits' will probably need be extracted from the 'CPC top hat' in order to win any further General Elections at 'the ballot box'. I imagine.

Generally, the success of the party at the next 'ballot box' could well be of great benefit to the people of the PLA occupied territories of Hong Kong, The New Territories of Imperial China in the Hong Kong Area, and Macao, and of course the people of China P.R. simply for reasons of stability and harmony. No doubt further CPC election success will also be of great benefit to patriotic capitalists in the China area generally, other patriotic parts of the World, including patriotic Commonwealth countries and, of course, the many patriotic democratic countries.

### **1.0 Appraisal (RIBA Work Stage A)**

In recent years, Hong Kong, in spite of its disreputable British colonial roots has suffered a distinct lack of Shakespearian theatrical productions. It would seem that all three of the last Hong Kong Governments have singularly failed, for one reason or another, to support this area of cultural endeavour on any significant scale. This is could be bad for the local economy as well as stability and harmony.

### **2.0 Strategic Briefing (RIBA Work Stage B)**

The solution to the problem outlined in chapter 1, I believe, is to have an annual Shakespearian festival in the Hong Kong Area. The first festival could be held from the 8<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2008 to coincide with the 29<sup>th</sup> Modern Olympic Games of the XXIX Olympiad. However, this date could be changed in the following years. (The possibility of 'Hellespontians' in August generally make this time period a risky proposition from the commercial point of view. However, 'History' could be perhaps served on this one special occasion. I think.)



### **3.0 Outline Proposals (RIBA Work Stage C)**

#### **(i) Introduction**

“The First Hong Kong Shakespearian Festival 2008”, from the 8<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2008, could include the following itinerary:

<b>Table 1: “The First Hong Kong Shakespearian Festival 2008”: Itinerary</b>				
<b>Item</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Play</b>	<b>Languages</b>	<b>Players (?)</b>
1	8 <sup>th</sup> & 9 <sup>th</sup> August	“Macbeth”	PRC Putonghua / Hong Kong Area Imperial Chinese Mandarin	CAD / PLA (Hong Kong) Garrison
2	10 <sup>th</sup> & 11 <sup>th</sup> August	“Henry V”	PRC Putonghua / Hong Kong Area Imperial Chinese Mandarin	CAD / PLA (Hong Kong) Garrison
3	12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup> August	“The Tragedy of Richard III”	PRC Putonghua / Hong Kong Area Imperial Chinese Mandarin	CAD / PLA (Hong Kong) Garrison
4	14 <sup>th</sup> & 15 <sup>th</sup> August	“The Tempest”	PRC Chinese English / Hong Kong Area Chinese English / English	RSC
5	16 <sup>th</sup> & 17 <sup>th</sup> August	“Much Ado About Nothing”	PRC Chinese English / Hong Kong Area Chinese English / English	RSC
6	18 <sup>th</sup> & 19 <sup>th</sup> August	“The Comedy of Errors”	PRC Chinese English / Hong Kong Area Chinese English / English	RSC
7	20 <sup>th</sup> , 21 <sup>st</sup> , 22 <sup>nd</sup> August	“A Midsummer Night’s Dream”	See Note A	Hong Kong Schools / RHKRA
8	23 <sup>rd</sup> & 24 <sup>th</sup> August	“The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus”	PRC Chinese English / Hong Kong Area Chinese English / English	Hong Kong Players / RHKRA

Note A: One performance could be in PRC Putonghua / Hong Kong Area Imperial Chinese Mandarin, one in PRC Chinese English / Hong Kong Area Chinese English / English, and one in PRC Cantonese / Hong Kong Area Cantonese, in strict accordance with the “Three Represents Theory”.

Each play could begin at 8pm. The bar could open at 6pm.

Of course others may take a different view of the proposed itinerary, or even its temporal order. Therefore, I should give at least a brief description of the reasoning behind the choice of plays and their order, along with some of the more salient points of each performance.

(ii) William Shakespeare (1564 – 1616): “The Three Historical Plays”.

Honour is due to the all conquering forces of the PLA (Hong Kong) Garrison. Thus, it would seem appropriate to stage three of Shakespeare’s great historical and military plays at the outset. (See Table 1: Items 1 to 3) I have proposed that these be delivered in PRC Putonghua / Hong Kong Area Imperial Chinese Mandarin, and that the costumes be traditionally Imperial Chinese, being both economically appropriate to the temporal period, and the probable limited financial budget of the theatrical programme. (See Figure 1) (Note 4)



Figure 1: “Macbeth”: A costume for Lady Macbeth. (Unknown source) (Note 5)

I suggest that the overall director / producer of the three historical plays could be Zhang Yimou. However, he may well be busy producing (excellent) propaganda for the Communist Party of China (CPC) at the 29<sup>th</sup> Modern Olympic Games of the XXIX Olympiad in Peking, China P.R. during the proposed festival period, and thus be unavailable for the task. Perhaps another of the “Fifth Generation” film directors could step in, instead. They are all so good at producing this sort of thing. I think.

Figure 2 shows the general stage set up at "The Tamar Site", Hong Kong Island.

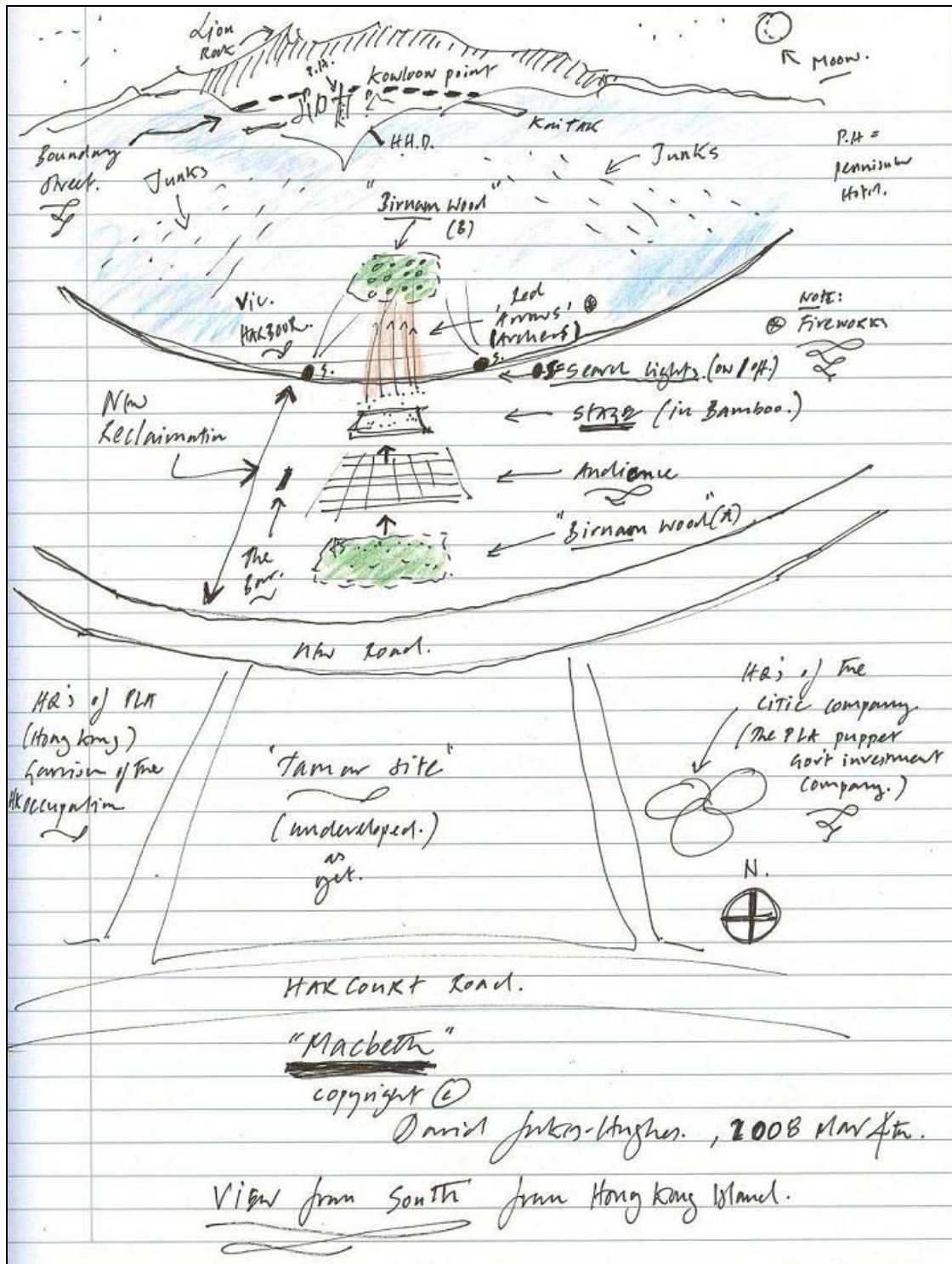


Figure 2: "Macbeth": Stage design.

The stage would be 15 metres by 15 metres and 1.5 metres high. It would be constructed in bamboo. The floor would be of timber planking. The base would be covered in bamboo blinds. It would be located 20 metres from the harbour shore on the new land reclamation just north of "The Tamar Site" on Hong Kong Island. Seating for the audience would be placed in rows to the south of the stage. 2 metre wide walkways would divide the audience in two or three places, and on either side of the audience area.

The stage would have steps on either side of it as well as the back. These would be 2 metres wide. Screens of strips of white cloth would hide the back stage area on either side of the stage. These would be 1.8 metres high and 10 metres long. However, there would be no screen at the back of the stage. A balustrade in bamboo 1.5 metres high would surround the stage on the west, north and east sides to protect actors from falling off. The audience area would be surrounded by a 2 metre high noise barrier in sheet metal.

The historical or military plays would have battle scenes, and to some extent the stage arrangements reflect this point. In history the battles took place during the day time. However, in this case the battle scenes will take place at night. Fireworks will be substituted for arrows and archers. The fireworks will shoot off into the harbour as if they were arrows. The effect should be magnificent, very colourful and very noisy. I would think.

Harbour shipping will have to be controlled during performances by the HK Marine Police. Parties on Junks could line up on either side of 'the backstage' harbour area to watch the 'battle' scenes. RTHK, ATV and TVB could broadcast the performances live, so that Junk parties can follow the state of play on shore.

Stage lighting and sound equipment would be required.

In "Macbeth" there would be two "Birnam woods". (See Figure 2) Birnam wood (A) would be on shore and would move through the audience to the shore. Birnam wood (B) would be off-shore on two or three barges.

In "Henry V" the woods would be on barges on either side of 'the backstage' harbour area to represent the field of Agincourt. (White horses would represent French cavalry in strict accordance with 'King Cnut Thought'.) Fireworks would shoot off from the shore as in "Macbeth", but also from the barges.

In "The Tragedy of Richard III" the fireworks would follow those for "Macbeth".

The PLA (Hong Kong) Garrison of the Hong Kong Occupation Task Force could provide the hundreds of soldiers and other 'rude mechanicals' needed for the battle scenes. (This is an area of control that Zhang Yimou excels at. I believe.)

(iii) William Shakespeare (1564 – 1616): “The Three Comedies”.

“The Three Comedies” could be performed by “*The Lord Admirall’s Men*”. If they are not available then The Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) could do it. (See Table 1: Items 4 to 6.)

The stage set-up would be less elaborate for “The Three Comedies”. A simple bamboo curtain could surround the stage. It would be 2 metres high. The costumes in all three plays would be those of Ancient Greece. (This is a somewhat liberal interpretation, perhaps.)

Some sailing ships could decorate the stage at the shore-line. All three plays are set in coastal locations, or coastal towns. Lighting can be used to highlight the ships at the appropriate scene.

The play could be performed in PRC Chinese English / Hong Kong Area Chinese English / English. Unfortunately, the humour is complex and unusual, and does not lend itself to any easy translation.

(iv) William Shakespeare (1564 – 1616): “The School Play”.

The seventh play could be performed by the best drama students of the schools of Hong Kong. “A Midsummer Night’s Dream is, I believe, a very popular play in the Hong Kong schools. I once saw it after the start of ‘the exercise in sovereignty’. Unfortunately, I had a business meeting to attend to, so I missed the second half of the performance. However, the experience has given me the idea that the play could and perhaps should be performed in all three common languages of the Hong Kong Area. (Whether this will lead to an improvement in the performances or not, I could not possibly comment. However, I am sure the parents at least will support their children nevertheless.)

The languages of the Hong Kong Area are currently, PRC Putonghua / Hong Kong Area Imperial Chinese Mandarin, PRC Chinese English / Hong Kong Area Chinese English / English, and PRC Cantonese / Hong Kong Area Cantonese. Thus, there could be three performances, each in a different language or dialect of China.

The stage arrangements would follow those for “The Three Comedies”. The costumes would be those of Ancient Greece.

The RHKRA could assist in this production.

(v) Christopher Marlowe (1564 – 1593): “The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus”.

The eighth and final play I have proposed is “The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus” by Christopher Marlowe. Although this play is not “Shakespearian” as such, Marlowe was Shakespeare’s contemporary, and perhaps his greatest rival. Marlowe died at an early age in an affray, apparently over a billing problem. (Note 6)

The play could be performed by “The Hong Kong Players” in PRC Chinese English / Hong Kong Area Chinese English / English.

Again the stage arrangements could follow those for “The Three Comedies”. The costumes would be those of Ancient Greece. This is a liberal interpretation of Renaissance Germany. However, keeping the wardrobe the same for the last five plays will hopefully keep the production costs down to a reasonable level.

In strict accordance with ‘Deng Xiao - Ping Thought’, each of the two performances could have a different ending, perhaps with an additional ‘player’ in the last performance on the 24<sup>th</sup> August 2008. (See Figure 3)

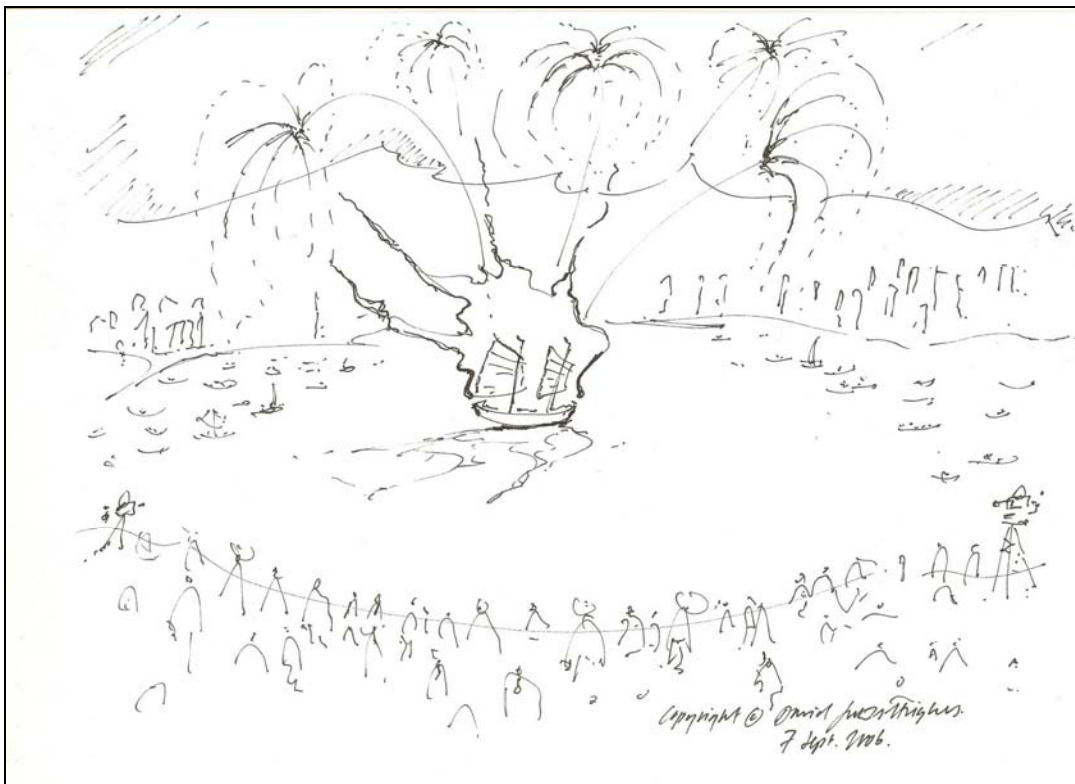


Figure 3: “The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus”: The final performance (24<sup>th</sup> August 2008).

The RHKRA could assist in this production.

## **Conclusion**

In this paper I have proposed an annual Shakespeare Festival in the Hong Kong Area.

In addition I have described a complete Festival for the year 2008. The festival is designed to coincide with the 29<sup>th</sup> Modern Olympic Games of the modern XXIX Olympiad to celebrate that occasion. It also celebrates the total military victory by PLA (Hong Kong) Garrison over British colonial forces at the start of “the exercise in sovereignty” which began on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 1997 in strict accordance with ‘Deng Xiao – Ping Thought’.

It now remains to describe the work to be done if the festival is to proceed. Two tasks need to be carried out at the outset. These are the formation of willing participants in a Joint Venture (JV) theatrical holding company, and the translation of some of the works into the required Chinese dialects.

The JV theatrical holding company could consist of the following four participants: The Central Academy of Drama (Peking, China P.R.) / CPGPRC, *The Lord Admirall’s Men* or Royal Shakespeare Company / HMG (UK), The Hong Kong Government (representing Hong Kong Schools) / HKSARG, and “The Hong Kong Players”. The name of the JV theatrical holding company could be called “The Hong Kong Shakespeare Festival Holding Company”.

The patrons of the company could be the Chairman of the SCMCPRC, HMQ (UK), HMQ (HK), and HME (Imperial China).

The managing director of the company could be STD.

There would need to be financial sponsors for the project. These could include airline companies, hoteliers, hospitality services, bars, restaurants and banks.

The company would need to employ an architect, a structural engineer, a lighting engineer, a sound / acoustic engineer, a stage manager, actors, actresses, accountants, lawyers, insurance brokers, personnel mangers, a stage designer, a costume designer and manager, an artistic director, a deputy artistic director and security personnel. (I have already recommended Zhang Yimou as the artistic director for the three historical plays. However, to save costs, he could perhaps take on the task of artistic director for the entire festival, if he feels up to the job. Chen Kaige could be the deputy artistic director.)

Finally, some of the works will need to be translated from the PRC Chinese English / Hong Kong Area Chinese English / English into PRC Putonghua / Hong Kong Area Imperial Chinese Mandarin, and PRC Cantonese / Hong Kong Area Cantonese.

I can only recommend D.C. Lau of The Chinese University of Hong Kong to do the task, or at least under his directorship. He is obviously the best translator in the business at this time. I only hope he can live long enough to complete the task. If employed to do so. (Note 7)

END



## **Notes**

Note 1: This is not yet the name of a railway station in *Cymru*, but it could qualify as one. I think. If the DMZ in Korea ever gets a railway station, I would definitely recommend giving it this name. (Shenzhen railway station already has a name. I understand. It's called Shenzhen.) Once the PDRK and the ROK governments have cleared the necessary mine fields, the DMZ may well make an excellent destination for bird watchers and ornithologists. However, I couldn't possibly comment. It's simply not my field of expertise.

Note 2: Apparently Rex Hunt was a member, but that must have been before my time in the basement. In any case, I suspect, it was just a rumour. We can allow that sort of rumour.

Note 3: The name is unusual. One expects to read "Indigo", not "Inigo".

Note 4: The bilingual Hong Kong people and English and Cantonese speaking Thespians will not, I think, find their enjoyment impaired by the proposed languages of the three historical plays. They will know the story before hand in any case. LED readers could also be utilized on either side of the stage for those that don't understand PRC Putonghua / Imperial Chinese Mandarin. For every play the LED's could show Chinese text in English, 1958 Simplified Characters, and ordinary Imperial Complex Characters.

Note 5: There is no doubt that "Lady Macbeth" was a most unusual housewife.

Note 6: This is a problem that many writers, directors and actors still face. For example, the Sino-Manchurian actress, Gong Li, was also 'butchered' over the billing in her recent film, "Miami Vice", at least in Canada anyway.

Note 7: I am surprised that HMQ did not award him a knighthood, or even feudal barony, for his life long commitment to translating Chinese hieroglyphics in to plain English. I suppose it's simply because Hong Kong is now considered to be foreign turf. Alas. No doubt he will get an order of the Bauhinia, or something, instead. However, it is a pity. "Lord Lau of Tai Po" has a certain ring to it. I think.

## **The Glossary**

BOT	Build Operate Transfer
CAD	Central Academy of Drama (Peking, China P.R.)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CMC	Central Military Commission (of the CPC)
CPC	Communist Party of China
CPPCC	Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
CPG	Central People's Government
CPGPRC	Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China
DMZ	Demilitarized Zone
HK	Hong Kong
HKSAR	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
HKSARPRC	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of The People's Republic of China
HME (NT)	HME (NT, (Imperial) China)
HMG (HK)	Her Majesty's Government (Hong Kong, China)
HMG (UK)	Her Majesty's Government (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
HMQ (HK)	HMQ (Hong Kong, China)
HMQ (UK)	Her Majesty The Queen (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
HP	The Royal Hong Kong China Players ('The Three Sisters')
IOC	International Olympic Committee
NPC	National People's Congress
PDRK	The People's Democratic Republic of Korea
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PLA	The People's Liberation Army
PFI	Private Finance Initiative
PR	People's Republic
PRC	The People's Republic of China
RHKRA	The Royal Hong Kong Regiment Association
ROC	The Republic of China
ROK	The Republic of Korea
RSC	The Royal Shakespeare Company
SAR	Special Administrative Region
SCNPC	Standing Committee of the National People's Congress
SCMCPRC	State Central Military Commission of the People's Republic of China
STD	(Sir) Tsang, Donald
UK	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
UN	United Nations
UNO	United Nations Organization
VIP	Very Important Person

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Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC)	<u>“RAIC Document 6” (2002)</u>  <a href="http://en.wikipedia.org">http://en.wikipedia.org</a>

## **PNAP, Regulations & Ordinances**

The Government of The Hong Kong SAR of The PRC	<u>Building (Planning) Regulations (Cap.123)</u>
The Government of The Hong Kong SAR of The PRC	<u>Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131)</u>

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<http://www.geocities.com/jukeshughes/>

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