

ONE PLAY SERIES

市中隱者  
invisibility

TRANSLATED BY SIM PERN YIAU 沈鵬耀  
BY QUAH SY REN 何思仁

ethos

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i n v i s i b i l i t y  
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## LIST OF CHARACTERS

### A

Man

Woman

B, C, D — ensemble (playing various roles)

The Hermit Master

The Pugilist

## 角色

### A

男人

女人

甲、乙、丙 — 群众

古人

侠士



## PROLOGUE

As the audience take their seats, music should be loud and noisy Pop music in Mandarin, Cantonese and English can be played simultaneously so that they overlap.

Gradually introduce noises of the city, e.g. the MRT, traffic on expressways, TV commentaries, pedestrians talking loudly. As these noises get louder, the songs fade out.

Enter B, C, and D, acting like objects of the city e.g. road signs, streetlights, traffic lights, billboards, festival decorations. Images of monuments such as the statue of Raffles, the Merlion, Kucinta, may be flashed on the walls, followed by moving objects such as trains, buses, taxis etc.

A loud siren sounds. Suddenly D stops, walks over to the audience area and looks about. Then he gestures to B, who stops, too. C, seeing the signal, stops as well.

D : (to audience) Hi, how are you?

B, C & D start talking to members of the audience, asking them questions, chatting them up, including personal and sensitive topics like salary.

B : Are you all here to watch a play?

D : What a stupid question! Of course lah, why else would they be sitting here?

C : Are you all watching this because you've got nothing better to do? Or perhaps you're here only because of the R(A) rating?

D : When I saw you guys coming in just now, I wanted to tell you to think carefully about it first.

B : Yah lor! Do you know where we are? This isn't Victoria Theatre, or Jubilee Hall, but the Substation! A frightful place, where anything can happen! And do you know about this theatre company? Some time back it did a kind of performance here, and now no company can do that kind of performance in Singapore anymore.

## 主侠

观众入席时，剧场中已经开始播放着非常嘈杂喧闹的流行歌曲，歌曲有时会重叠出现，以华语、粤语和英语为主，内容是都市生活，包括爱情、社会现象、或者歌词听起来毫无意义的，也可以。

开场后，淡入各种都市，单调而扰人的噪音，如汽车、地铁、高速公路上的车声。电视节目评述员讲话、行人走路等等，越来越大声，歌曲则淡出。

接着，甲、乙、丙三个人走进来，扮成都市中的各种机器和物件，如路标、灯柱、红绿灯、广告牌、节日装饰品，当然也可以有莱佛士塑像、鱼尾狮、可亲它等物。然后出现动态的如地铁、巴士、德士等。警报大声地响起。突然，甲停下来，走到观众席，四面观看，然后向乙打手势，跟着乙停下来，丙看到手势，也停下来。

甲 : 嗨! 嗨! 嗨! 你们好吗?

三人开始分别跟个别的观众打招呼、交谈，问他们吃饱了没有，做什么工作，薪水多少——越私人的问题越好。

乙 : 喂，你们是来看戏的吗?

甲 : 废话! 要不然坐在这里干什么?

丙 : 哇! 你们是不是太无聊了才来看这个戏? 还是为了为 R(A) 才来看的?

甲 : 我刚才看到你们进来，真想叫你们三思而后行。

乙 : 是罗! 你知道这里是哪里吗? 不是 Victoria Theatre, 不是 Jubilee Hall, 是电力站! 很可怕的地方，什么怪事都可能发生。你知道这个剧团吗? 它以前也在这里演过一种戏，现在全新加坡的剧团都不可以演了。



B : The playwright's worse. In the last play he wrote, which was also performed here, a member of the audience was shot dead with a real gun. So gory and violent.

D : And that director! Because his wife is going to give birth a week before the opening night, he just abandoned all of us.

B : And that is why, in actual fact, we've not finished rehearsing this play.

C : Yah lor! So unprofessional! No wonder there are so few audiences these days.

B : No wonder we need R(A) to draw audiences.

D : If you want to leave, you can, y'know. The director and the playwright aren't here anyway, so we ...

C : ... at the risk of death...

D : ... at the risk of death, persuade you to leave.

B : That's right! Why waste your time? Why not go shopping, or go for a drink, or sleep ...

**They start to persuade audience to leave. But no one does.**

D : You really don't want to go?

B : You really don't want to go?

C : You really don't want to go?

**From persuasion, it escalates to aggressive shouting at the audience. Suddenly, a loud sound of doors slamming. Blackout.**

乙 : 那个编剧更糟。他上次写的戏, 在剧场里, 哪, 就是在这里, 电力站, 开真枪把一个观众打死, 真是血腥暴力。

甲 : 还有那个导演。要演出前的一个星期, 老婆要生孩子, 他就丢下我们不管, 让我们自生自灭。

乙 : 所以, 我们的戏根本就没有排好!

丙 : 就是罗! 没有一点的专业道德。怪不得现在很多人都来看戏了。

乙 : 怪不得要用 R(A) 来吸引你们来看戏! 唉!

甲 : 你们要走可以的咧! 反正导演和编剧都不在, 所有我们就——

丙 : —— 冒死——

甲 : 冒死劝你们。

乙 : 对! 为什么要浪费时间呢? 倒不如去 shopping, 喝咖啡, 睡觉!

三人开始劝观众离开。观众显然不为所动。

甲 : 你们真的不要走?

丙 : 你们真的不要走?

乙 : 你们真的不要走?

甲、乙、丙三人越说越大声, 接近喊叫。突然, 响起关门声, 灯暗。



## SCENE 1

## THE ART OF INVISIBILITY

The space is lit by rotating siren lights. A strong wind blows, and leaves fall from above.

The rotating lights stop. Lights up on a scene strewn with leaves. A enters. He picks up a leaf, holds it before him, and checks out audience reaction, as well as reaction of B, C and D. He clears a space on the ground, in which he places leaves that he has already tried. He continues trying other leaves.

B : And this is the protagonist of our play. He does not have a name. In the script, he is known only as 'A'. A as in A for apple. I asked the playwright, what's his name? The playwright gave me a mystified look and said—

D : (acting as playwright) 'A' lor!

C : But why isn't he given a name? The playwright gave me an even more mystified look and said—

D : Is a name really that important?

C : Then what does he do? What's his work? The playwright gave me an absolutely mystified look and said—

D : Is work really, really that important?

C : Then how is he going to act the role? No name and no background.

D : Just act A lor!

C : But what is A? A for apple? Or A for Automatic? Or what?

第一场  
隐身术

黑暗中，剧场里亮起旋转的红色警示灯。狂风大起，许多树叶从上空飘落。

A进。警示灯停。灯渐亮。

A从地上捡起树叶，放在自己的面前，看看观众的反应，再看看其他三人的反应。又捡起一片树叶，再看看观众和三人的反应。A把四周的落叶扫开，把试过的树叶摆在空地上。然后，又开始试树叶。

乙 : 他就是这个戏的男主角。他没有名字。剧本上只写着A。A for Apple，那个A。我问编剧，他叫什么名字。编剧就用一个很疑惑的眼神看着我——

甲 : (扮演编剧) A 罗!

丙 : 为什么不给他一个名字呢? 编剧用一个更加疑惑的眼神看着我——

甲 : 名字真的那么重要吗?

丙 : 那他是做什么工作的? 编剧用一个绝对疑惑的眼神看着我——

甲 : 工作绝对那么重要吗?

丙 : 那你叫他怎么演? 没有名字，没有背景。

甲 : 就演A罗!

丙 : A是什么? A for Apple 吗? 还是 A for Automatic? 还是什么?



D : Just act Apple lor! Automatic's good too. We'll take Automatic! Director, what say you?

B : (as director) Eh, what shall I call my baby? (pause)

D : We really felt like quitting, These guys are so unprofessional! But WE are professional actors, and furthermore, we've already signed contracts. Since the guys in charge are useless, we actors will do it ourselves. After a long thinking process, we finally discovered what A's occupation was. Or to put it more accurately, we discovered what is occupying A. (pause) Searching for the secret recipe of Invisibility. Invisibility – you know what it is?

Lights up on A.

A : It is the act of disappearing in the blink of an eye. No, not David Copperfield, that's fake, that's illusion. What I'm talking about is not a show or a performance.

Just think about it, with the art of invisibility, you can leave now if you wish, and no one would know. You can watch movies for free, take the bus for free, litter with no fear, stick chewing gum on the MRT without being caught, stick anywhere you like, the ceiling, the seats, the door, even on the hair of the person sitting next to you. *Shiok*, right?

Idiotic, huh? You think all this sounds idiotic, right? True, I used to be doubtful myself. Where got so powerful one, right? If there are people so powerful, then wouldn't the government be useless? Invisibility, I thought, was a stupid idea thought up by TV station idiots for spastic viewers. Just like in the "Golden Pillow", pot-bellied Alex Man, running as if he was Forrest Gump. What a joke! And since when did

甲 : 就演 Apple 罗! 不然 Automatic 也可以。就 Automatic 好了! (转向乙) 导演, 你觉得怎么样?

乙 : (扮演导演) 我的 baby 要叫什么名字吓? (稍顿。)

甲 : 我们都不想演下去了。这些导演和编剧真的很不专业! 可是我们几个都是很有专业精神的演员, 而且还签了 contract, 就不可以反悔了。既然负责人不能帮忙, 我们演员就自己来。经过我们反复的推敲, 终于知道了 A 的工作是什么。不, 更准确的说法是, 他主要是在做什么的。(稍顿) 找隐身术的秘方。隐身术知道吗?

A 的位置灯亮。

A : 就是那种“叮”, 一转眼你就不见掉的法术。不是 David Copperfield, 那个是骗人的, 那是幻术。Illusion。我说的不是要来表演给人看的。你想想看, 如果学会了隐身术, 你现在想走, 就可以悄悄地走掉, 谁都不会发现。啊呀, 还不只呢, 看戏不用买票, 搭车不用给钱, 随便丢垃圾不会被发现, 吃 chewing gum 黏在地铁上不会被抓, 黏哪里都可以, 车顶、座位上、车门。甚至坐你旁边那个人的头发都可以, 爽死了! 很废呵? 你们以为我在说废话? 的确, 我以前也是不相信。哪里有人这样厉害? 如果真的有, 那么政府不是很废? 隐身术, 以为是低能的电视编剧写给白痴的观众看的, 就好像《金枕头》里, 顶着大肚腩的万梓良, 学 Forrest Gump 跑步。开玩笑嘛! 哪里有老师的头发像陈汉伟那么长? 你几时看到老师拿着 saxophone 到处吹?



Pages have been omitted from this book preview.



“mindlessness of city living  
convincingly portrayed”

— The Straits Times, 1996

“逼真地展现了城市生活的  
空洞”

— 海峡时报, 1996

“the whole production was so fluid,  
yet simple ... a mature production”

— Ming Sheng Pao, 1997, Taiwan

“整出剧很流畅，也很简单  
... 是一出成熟的舞台剧”

— 台湾报章民生报, 1997

**Invisibility** is a poignant tale about alienation and the search for meaning in modern urban society — scenes of various people on the margins of society seeking to connect with others are juxtaposition with the tale of a man searching for the secret to make himself invisible.

Drawing from diverse sources of Chinese literary classics and graffiti as modern social commentary, and moving from the private space of the lavatory to the public park, this critically-acclaimed play by Quah Sy Ren takes you on a voyeuristic ride towards urban myth.

在一个充斥着疏离感的现代城市中，他尝试寻找人与人的联系。他从古籍的记载中，了解古代的隐身术，以为可以找到生存的意义。他又发现，在幽僻的公园角落，污秽的公共厕所，这些空间里，似乎更隐藏着个人内心深处的灵光。

**市中隐者** 是柯思仁的代表作，通过迷离交错的时空，带领读者进入一个现代城市的神话世界。



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