

**PRESS RELEASE  
WEDNESDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2018**

## **ROYAL COURT THEATRE ANNOUNCES NEW AND NOW: PLAYS FROM CHINA, A SERIES OF NEW READINGS**



Photo credit: Christopher Cherry

The Royal Court Theatre in partnership with the British Council announce new readings of work with writers based in China. This series of public readings titled *New and Now: Plays from China* will take place in The Site at the Royal Court Theatre from Tuesday 4 December 2018 to Thursday 6 December 2018.

The Royal Court Theatre began working in China in 2015. Fifteen young playwrights were chosen to take part in workshops in Chengdu, Beijing and Wuzhen over a two year period and invited to address subjects they felt urgent to write about in contemporary China.

Three of these writers, CHEN Si'an (陈思安), YANG Jingguan (杨静观) and ZHANG Zai (张在), will spend two weeks at the Royal Court Theatre working with directors Jude Christian and Royal Court Associate Director (International) Sam Pritchard and a company of actors. The plays will then be presented as rehearsed readings in English translation.

*Contemporary China from the inside: a chance to hear new writers tell stories about the country as it is right now. The Royal Court presents its first ever programme of plays by Chinese playwrights - a unique opportunity for British audiences to hear from a generation of writers who have grown up in a transforming nation.*

*The voices of three Chinese female writers express with power, humour and originality surprising insights into a fascinating and fast-changing society.*



Please find details of the readings below;

**在荒野 (*Underpass*)**

**Written by CHEN Si'an (陈思安)**

**Translated by Jeremy Tiang**

The Site, Royal Court Theatre

6.15pm Tuesday 4 December 2018 & 8.15pm Wednesday 5 December 2018

*In the depths of a Beijing underpass, a homeless mother struggles to protect her child. A disturbing panorama of the city's hidden underside, asking urgent questions about the value of human lives in an urban jungle.*

**咸城 (*Salt City*)**

**Written by YANG Jingguan (杨静观)**

**Translated by Sophie Gregg**

The Site, Royal Court Theatre

6.15pm Wednesday 5 December 2018 & 8.15pm Thursday 6 December 2018

*A retired clerk searches for meaning in a city he helped create but no longer recognises. Is the appearance of a meteorite the opportunity for local renewal, as his children claim? Or do the answers he seeks lie with a strange young woman he meets outside a corner shop? A poetic dystopian drama packed with the tension between generations that marks Chinese life today.*

**三月天, 娃娃脸 (*Babyface*)**

**Written by ZHANG Zai (张在)**

**Translated by Jeremy Tiang**

The Site, Royal Court Theatre

8.15pm Tuesday 4 December 2018 & 6.15pm Thursday 6 December 2018

*A young, single woman. An older, married man. A passionate on-again, off-again love affair. The Chinese term 'little three' has become shorthand for a national phenomenon - but what human story lies behind that phrase? A funny, erotic and surreal journey into modern Chinese love lives.*

There will also be a discussion event about the development of all three plays and the impact of contemporary writing in Chinese Theatre with playwrights CHEN Si'an (陈思安), YANG Jingguan (杨静观) and ZHANG Zai (张在), chaired by Elyse Dodgson, International Director, Royal Court Theatre. *Discussion: New Writing In China* will take place in The Site on Thursday 6 December at 9:30pm and is free with a ticket to any of the readings.

Public booking opens Friday 21 September 2018. Tickets are £10 (£8 concession) per reading or £15 for two readings and can be purchased here:

<https://royalcourttheatre.com/whats-on/new-and-now-plays-from-china>

Full biography information below.

The Royal Court Theatre's work in China is in partnership with the British Council.

**Ends:-**

For more information or images please contact Anoushka Warden on 0207 565 5063 /

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**Notes to Editors:**





Image link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/lc5rwwuqh5r4fxr/China%20Workshop%20Credit%20Christopher%20Cherry.jpg?dl=0>

### Biographies:

**CHEN Si'an (陈思安)**

**CHEN Si'an (陈思安)** is a playwright, theatre director, poet, short story writer and literary translator. She was born in Inner Mongolia and now lives and works in Beijing. She has published two collections of short stories, and translated a collection of plays from English to Chinese (*The Second Coming of Joan of Arc* and selected plays by Carolyn Gage, USA). She has written six plays including *Underpass*; *Drowning*, 2012, Penghao Theatre, Beijing; *Rabbit Hole*, 2012, Trojan Theatre Beijing; *The Spacing of Silence*, 2013, Beijing International Fringe Festival; *Mountain Temple*, 2015, published in Today Magazine; *Fake Brand Life*, 2018, to be produced by Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center in 2019.

**YANG Jingguan (杨静观)**

**YANG Jingguan (杨静观)** was born in Chengdu (where all the pandas are), Sichuan Province, China, and has lived in Beijing for ten years, including seven years spent at the Central Academy of Drama studying playwriting. At the moment she makes a living from writing short scripts for a famous video blogger in China. *Salt City* is Jingguan's first play to be shown in front of an audience outside the Drama Academy.

**ZHANG Zai (张在)**, formerly known as ZHANG Bing

**ZHANG Zai (张在)**, formerly known as ZHANG Bing, was born in Shandong Province, China, and graduated from East China Normal University, majoring in Chinese literature. She lives in Shanghai and works full-time for a film production company. Her previous play *Startled Mountain Birds* won the third place in the World Sinophone Drama Competition for Young Playwrights in 2017, and was performed at the 25th International University Theatre Festival in Mexico.



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