Introductory Notes

1. Introductory and access information

Welcome to this audio introduction for **Single Asian Female** presented by the State Theatre Company of South Australia in association with OZAsia Festival 2022. Written by Michelle Law, Single Asian Female was originally commissioned and first produced at The round House by LaBoite Theatre Company Brisbane, in 2016.

Inside the Golden Phoenix, a humble Chinese restaurant on the Sunshine Coast, two generations of Wong women stand at a crossroads. Mei is a teenager grappling with her identity and getting ready for her school formal; older sister Zoe is eternally single and having a quarter-life crisis after some seriously terrible dates. At the centre of it all is Pearl, the whip-smart, brutally honest matriarch of the family. But Pearl is harbouring a secret that could change their lives forever.

1. Set description

The action moves from the Restaurant, to Mei's upstairs bedroom, the storage room, a waiting room for an Orchestra audition, a seedy cocktail bar, the bathroom, and Pearl's upstairs bedroom, revealed later in the play, from behind a billboard which reads Single Asian Female in neon light.

The main stage houses the interior of the restaurant with it's retro 70's style, mix and match Chinese inspired decor.

The play begins with Pearl, singing in a spot light. The restaurant is dimly lit, a large mirror ball revolves shedding glinting sparkles around the stage and auditorium.

As the lights brighten, the restaurant has a red floor, 3 rectangular simple tables each with four orange vinyl chairs tucked under. A yellow table cloth with a smaller white centre cloth lies on each table with dark purple napkins folded into a standing crown shape, arranged on top. Rice bowls and side plates are set with orange chopsticks along side. A smaller table with two chairs also has the cloths but is strewed with paperwork and ledgers. In the centre of the floor set further back is a semi circular booth, with a continuous purple vinyl cushion seat, around a rectangular table. This booth also becomes the cocktail bar later in the play.

To the left of the booth is a sideboard where a shrine with a religious picture and incense sticks are the focus of Pearl's prayers. A bowl of oranges and two candles are arranged along side.

Across the back of the restaurant runs a long bar and serving station. A calendar with tear off numbers is attached to one side. It begins displaying the number 1. On top are menus, and a gold Fortune cat statue with a swinging /waving paw. Two ornate carved pillars hold up a canopy with red cut out diamond shapes around Gold Chinese calligraphy. 4 small glass spherical lights in the shape of round red lanterns hang from the canopy. The back wall behind the bar is covered in retro 70's wall paper with a repeated curvy lined motif in orange. A doorway with a red string curtain, separates us from the kitchen out the back unseen. On either side the walls are adorned with a pale cherry blossom scene in a frame and large paper fans depicting dragons, snakes or tigers. Bottles of various spirits and a pot plant are lined up on the shelf.

Above the restaurant bar hangs a TV screen where images and karaoke words, scroll through as they sing their favourite songs.

A short step up on either side of the restaurant is a 2x2m square platform. The left side is the bathroom complete with a white ceramic toilet, wash basin on a plinth and series of labelled boxes contain cans of soft drink such as Coca-Cola. At the back, the wall has mustard yellow wallpaper with white tiles below, an opaque glass door with back trim and a round wall light.

The platform on the right side is the Storage room. A grey metal three drawer filing cabinet stands with a large cardboard box of junk on top. In front are a stack of orange plastic chairs and a stand up vacuum cleaner. The wood veneer back wall has a long red and white geometric patterned curtain across the door way.

To the far right is a staircase painted red which rises up in two portions to a platform over the top of the restaurant. A predominantly pink teenage girl's bedroom has a single bed covered with pink doona, a bed head with a string of paper lantern lights, next to a tall white wardrobe with Polaroid photos arranged into the shape of a heart. There is a chest of drawers with a pink patterned cloth where a lamp in the shape of a Japanese "Kitty" doll sits against the pale pink wall. Posters of Asian models, pin ups and pop stars, are plastered on the wall and inside the cupboard door. A couple of bean bags are strewn on the floor and a wash of pink purple and green twinkling fairy lights illuminate the tiny room.

On the left of this room is a large black billboard with a palm tree and the words Single, Asian, Female, one below the other, in curvy neon tubing which lights up at different times during the play.

At the foot of the staircase is a wooden shoe rack where the characters collect and deposit their indoor and outdoor shoes and around the edges of the playing space, assorted furniture has been placed in the dark off stage areas, ready to be utilised with in the play.

1. Characters and Costumes

**Fiona Choi as Pearl**, the Matriarch of the family, although not mentioned, we assume she is in her early fifties. When we first meet Pearl, she is wearing a traditional Chinese dress called a Cheongsam, with a high collar & elaborate gold tassel buttons along the neckline. The dress is an emerald green with gold tread detailed pattern of flowers, the material is silk. Her everyday outfits are more practical, white three-quarter length pants, white crocs shoes for comfort, her shirts show off her flare, silky and shiny with soft water colour like details of landscapes, clouds, trees, etc. Her hair is well kept, with a fringe, a small bouffant held together with silver clip, with the rest of her hair flowing out from the clip.

**Juanita Navas-Nguyen as Zoe**, the eldest daughter, she twenty-nine years old. Zoe’s style is much more casual than her mum, her regular look is a pair of baggy light denim jeans and oversized band t-shirts, including her favourite Missy Higgins tee. When auditioning, she wears black trousers and a charcoal grey tunic, and in the final scenes she is wearing a bright pink top covered in small red hearts, on top of those baggy jeans. Zoe’s hair is long, straight, shiny & jet black, it is worn down and up in a low ponytail, Zoe plays with her hair and changes the style regularly, as she moves around the house.

**Elvy-Lee Quici as Mei**, the youngest daughter who is seventeen and in her last year of high school. Mei wears light denim shorts, that sit just above her knees, at the start she is wearing a one-piece bathing suits under the shorts, later she wears a yellow t-shirt and then a white capped sleeve top with pink & blue strips. Like her sister Zoe, Mei’s hair is long, straight, shiny & jet black, mostly worn up in a high ponytail, sometimes she wears it down. Mei is meant to wear glasses, she has a pair that are round with a thin black plastic frame, as she rebels against her Chinese roots, the glasses are abandoned.

The sisters and mum are barefoot when they are upstairs in their house. when they get to the bottom of the stairs before entering the restaurant, they put on their house shoes, the sisters have white slides, and the mum has her crocs.

**Allan Lyra Chang as Paul**, he has been on some dates with Zoe and is in his early thirties. Paul is bald, has a beard and moustache, he wears a grey shirt and jeans.

**Kristen O’Dwyer as Katie**, Mei’s best friend since they were kids, she is also seventeen. Katie’s style is different, she always wears pigtails, either out straight or as buns on either side, with pink scrunchies. She wears a lot of pink, her shoes are platform pink crocs, she wears pink short puffy skirts, pink tees with stripes and other patterns. For her formal outfit Katie wears a manga cosplay costume, on over the top skilly dress with a mix of red & black oversized ruffles, with a high collar and a hat.

**Kathryn Adams as Lana**, one of the popular girls from Mei’s school who has struck up a new friendship with Mei & Katie, also seventeen. Lana wears two outfits, very current styles, a floral-patterned dress with colours of orange, yellow & brown, with a low-cut neckline and ruffled sleeves, she wears her flat sandals inside the house, much to Mei’s dismay. Later Lana wears brown, fake leather pants and a tight black top, she has light brown shoulder length hair that she always wears down.

**Kathryn Adams also plays a** Violin player- waiting for an audition, as is Zoe. She tunes her violin and chats to Zoe; they went to university together. She wears black pants & a white shirt.

Man at the bar #1 – as part of a montage of some bad dates Zoe has been on. This character is a stereotypical bogan man who keeps asking where she is from on focusing on her being Chinese. This man wears jeans, a blue & white flannel shirt & a baseball cap, his hair has a disgusting long rat’s tail.

Man at the bar #2 – an older man, grey hair, wearing brown trousers and a tweed suit jacket. He swills is his wine and keeps touching & sniffing Zoe’s hair

**Kristen O’Dwyer also plays** Man at the bar #3 – another stereotype bogan, with mullet & dark sunnies, wearing jeans & a band tee-shirt.

Man at the bar #4 – hipster guy in a band, wearing a shirt over a white tee & a wide brimmed brown fedora. He went to high school with Zoe.

**Content warning:**
Coarse language, adult themes, sexual content, burning of incense sticks, haze and strobes.

1. Cast and Creatives

**Cast:**

**Pearl** Fiona Choi

**Zoe** Juanita Navas-Nguyen

**Mei** Elvy-Lee Quici

**Paul** Allan Lyra Chang

**Katie** Kristen O'Dwyer

**Lana** Kathryn Adams

**Production**:

Writer – Michelle Law

Director - Nescha Jelk

Set & Costume Designer - Ailsa Paterson

Lighting Designer - Chris Petridis

Composition & Sound Design - Andrew Howard

Fight Choreographer - Ruth Fallon

1. Event details

**Event date and time**: **Audio Described Performances and Pre-Show Briefing**
[Saturday 12 November, 1pm (briefing), 2pm (performance)](https://my.statetheatrecompany.com.au/single-asian-female/1371) – Please select the orange Audio Described seats when booking
[Monday 14 November, 5.30pm (briefing), 6.30pm (performance with post-show Q and A)](https://my.statetheatrecompany.com.au/single-asian-female/1372) – Please select the orange Audio Described seats when booking

The performance in 2 Acts lasts 2h 30mins ( including interval). The audio description will be given by Carol Wellman Kelly and Ruth Weldon from Access2Arts.

**Event location:** The show is performed in the Dunstan Playhouse (accessible only via the Dunstan Playhouse foyer).

1. Access information

**Getting to the Venue**

Adelaide Festival Centre is easily accessible by [public transport](http://www.adelaidemetro.com.au/), including the tram (stop at Railway Station), trains, buses and a [free bus service](https://www.adelaidemetro.com.au/Timetables-Maps/Special-Services/Free-City-Services) that operates on a loop throughout the city and North Adelaide with stops on the corner of King William Road and North Terrace. There is entry from the train station onto the Dunstan Plaza.

For more information visit <https://www.adelaidemetro.com.au/>

**Pedestrian access and drop off points:** Arrive via the northern end of the Riverbank Footbridge on War Memorial Drive (walk across the bridge) or via the Intercontinental Hotel on North Terrace. (Walk north between the hotel and the Railway Station and down the stairs or lift to the Dunstan Playhouse). An accessible drop off area with two disability access parking spaces is accessible from Montefiore Road via Festival Drive (west).

Please note: due to construction at the Festival Theatre and road closures, drop off at King William St may not be accessible. Please use one of the other drop off options listed above.

**Car Parking:**

For visitors to the Dunstan Playhouse, the nearest car park is located behind Adelaide Convention Centre on Festival Drive - next to the Riverbank Footbridge. The eastern lift will take you to the promenade level where it's a short walk to the theatre entrance and Walk of Fame. Visit the [Adelaide Convention Centre website](https://www.adelaidecc.com.au/visiting/the-centre/) for more information.

The Festival Car Park is now open with the entrance via King William road.

The Dunstan Playhouse is guide dog friendly and there are accessible toilets in the venue. One is close to the Space foyer and another is between Door 1 and the stairs to the Artspace.

Please note: Adelaide Festival Centre’s food and beverage outlets and box office no longer accept cash.

For all other disability access enquiries please contact Patron Services: access@adelaidefestivalcentre.com.au or ring 08 8216 8600.

For more information on audio described performances please contact Access2Arts using the email address audio.describer@access2arts.org.au or speak to the audio describers at the theatre.