

Red Dragonfly Productions presents

The Unforgettable Anna May Wong



The Unforgettable Anna May Wong

These foolish things remind me of you...

Join the inimitable Anna May Wong in one of her cabaret shows where, amongst some of her favourite songs and clips from her films, she tells us of her rise from laundry girl to one of Hollywood's most glamorous stars in the 1930s, and of her fight to prove that the world needed a Chinese star like her whether they wanted one or not.

The Unforgettable Anna May Wong celebrates the tragic and wonderful life of 1930s pioneering Chinese-American Hollywood Actress. Fighting against prejudice and ignorance Anna May rose from being a laundry girl in American to become one of the acting elite, an international leading lady, well-loved in Europe, that was not allowed to kiss her leading man. This is her story, her search for identity, her hopes and fears and the personal sacrifices she made for the art that she loved.

After the success of *The Empress and Me*, **An Evening with Miss Wong** is the second solo show commissioned by British East Asian actor and producer **Michelle Yim** and written by Bloomsbury playwright **Ross Ericson**. Ericson's critically acclaimed *Casualties* was nominated for an Off West End Award and his solo World War One play *The Unknown Soldier* officially sold out at Edinburgh Fringe 2016. Both plays, along with his adaptation of Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* and 5 star *Gratiano*, have been published by Methuen Drama, Bloomsbury.

The show has now been rebranded as **The Unforgettable Anna May Wong**. This project's development was supported using funding from **Arts Council England**. The play had a full run at Edinburgh Festival Fringe in Assembly Rooms in August 2018. The show was first produced by **Grist to the Mill Productions**, which championed new writing in British theatre, and is now presented by its sister company **Red Dragonfly Productions** aimed at bringing stories from the East to the British stage.

At **Red Dragonfly**, we take pride that our theatre productions are "British" – where East Asian stories are adapted specifically into a structure and language that would be familiar to European audiences whilst retaining the authenticity and spirit of the original text. Above all, our productions are great stories - entertaining introductions to Chinese culture and literature for the British and European audience; students of Chinese and East-Asian Studies; second generations of Chinese who are born in the UK; and students of Drama studies.



Reviews

Press Reviews:



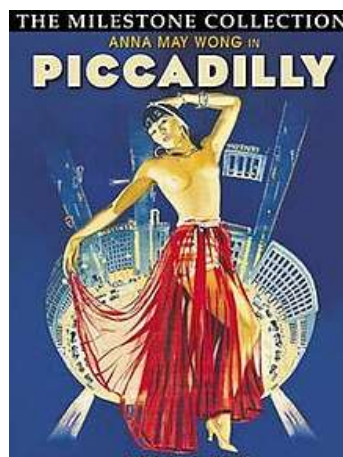
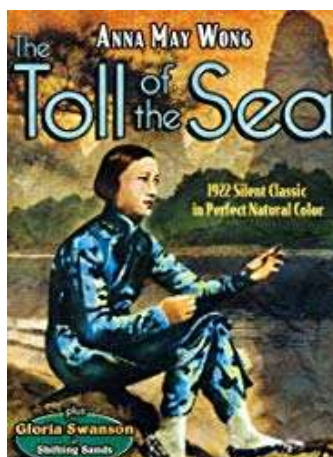
'You don't have to be a movie fan to enjoy this'
– **The Scotsman**



'Playful, entertaining documentary-theatre with a light touch and a pleasant appreciation for Old Hollywood charm'
– **Edinburgh49+3**

'The story is absorbing...' – **The Stage**

'Yim... beguiles the audience with a sly smile... and some truly impressive singing' – **British Theatre Guide**



Show Package Information

The Unforgettable Anna May Wong	
Genre:	Drama, solo show
Themes:	Identity, Culture, Film history, 1920s-1930s, China vs America
Availability:	Touring 2019-2020: please contact for dates: info@reddragonflyproductions.co.uk
Running time:	1 hr 15min
Post-show Discussion:	Available
Suitable for:	Adults, 12+
Insurance:	Full public liability cover
Marketing:	Press and marketing, A3 and A4 posters, DL flyers will be provided
Technical Requirements	
Minimum performance area:	3m x 2m
Layout:	Theatre: thrust, traverse etc.
Set:	Very flexible, depending on venue/space, will include free-standing props: a hat stand, a microphone and stand, a side table with champagne bottle and cocktail glass, a back project screen.
Lighting:	General wash through out Songs sections: wash with red tint, spotlight on microphone
Sound:	Sound on laptop, just need minijack connection into desk.
Blackout needed:	Yes
Get in & set up:	3 hr
Get out:	1 hr
Company:	1 actor & 1 stage manager
Parking:	1 car/ van
Hospitality:	If available – for two people



Michelle Yim as Anna May Wong (Production image from rehearsal) / Anna May Wong in her solo woman show in 1933 (taken by Carl Van Vechten)

Creatives



Director, Playwright & Show Operator: **Ross Ericson**

Ross has been acting since the mid 1990s and has appeared in productions of *Othello*, *Teachers*, *Macbeth*, *A Man for All Seasons*, and *The Little Shop of Horrors* and, more recently, as Lennie in *Of Mice and Men* (Lighthouse, Poole), a Corner man/Bailiff in *Sucker Punch* (Royal Court, London), Ben in *The Dumb Waiter* (The Mill Theatre, Guildford), Number 4 in *Fewer Emergencies* (The Print Room, London), Pembroke/Austria in *King John* (Union Theatre, London), Ned in *Parlour Song* (Cockpit Theatre, London), Jake in *27 Wagons Full of Cotton* (Riverside Studios, London) and The Stage Manager in *Our Town* (Apollo Theatre Company, Touring).

Ross is the resident playwright of **Grist to the Mill Productions**. Among his writing credits are a stage adaptation of Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* – which has been optioned by LA Theatre Works in California – *Punchline*, *Life*, *The Autumn of Han* and the critically acclaimed, and OffWestend Awards nominated, *Casualties*, which is published by Methuen Drama. His solo-show *The Unknown Soldier* sold-out its run at Edfringe 2016 and his most recent play *Gratiano* received 4 and 5 star reviews in Edfringe 2017. www.rossericson.co.uk



Anna May Wong interview in 1931 / Anna May Wong and sister Mary Wong / Anna May Wong was born "Wong Liu Tsiong" in LA Chinatown, second daughter in the family, here pictured in her mother's lap

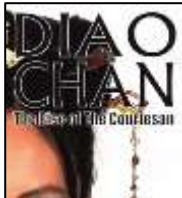


Actor & Producer: **Michelle Yim**

Michelle is a British-East-Asian actor and graduated from ALRA. Theatre: *DiaoChan: The Rise of the Courtesan* (UK Tour); *From Shore to Shore* (Freedom Studios, Leeds); *The Autumn of Han* (UK Tour); *Arrivals* (NI tour); *The King and I* (Theatre at the Mill); *The Translator* (play-reading, Soho theatre) & *Writers Pathway Project* (play-readings, Octagon Bolton). She has also appeared in numerous short films and in small roles on TV (*Sherlock & Blue Murder*), and works as a voice over artist in English, Cantonese and Mandarin.

She is also one of the founders of **Red Dragonfly Productions**, which strives to bring stories from the East and Far East to a British and European audience. Working in collaboration with **Grist to the Mill Productions**, the team has started on a three year programme to bring three classic Chinese stories to the British stage. *The Autumn of Han* 2014-2015 and *DiaoChan: The Rise of the Courtesan* 2015-2016 have now successfully toured the UK and the third year will see *Monkey and The Cave of the Spider Demons* grace the British stage in 2018. Red Dragonfly also encourages and nurtures new BEA and BSA playwrights through their annual new-writing competition *Taking Flight Festival*.

www.reddragonflyproductions.co.uk



'Beautifully realised, captivating piece of theatre.'

★★★★★ **LondonTheatre1 on *DiaoChan: The Rise of the Courtesan***



'An exquisite little piece of theatre, a respectful bow to the era with an aura of authenticity and intrigue.'

★★★★★ **Everything Theatre on *DiaoChan: The Rise of the Courtesan***

'A wonderful experience to explore the culture and traditions of ancient China through their own mythology, in a manner that will appeal to everyone.'

★★★★★ **British Theatre Guide on *The Autumn of Han***



'I cried twice and lost count of the times I laughed... it hits all the right notes'

★★★★★ **Everything Theatre on *Taking Flight New Writing Festival 2017***



'Fast paced... with much entertainment... Red Dragonfly Productions has exceeded expectations'

★★★★★ **LiveTheatreUK on *Taking Flight New Writing Festival 2017***



Grist to the Mill was founded in 2012 with a specific aim to bring new writing to the world's stages. Resident writer **Ross Ericson** has had noted success with his critically acclaimed adaptation of Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* and his play *Casualties*, which was nominated for Best New Play at the OffWestend Awards and published by Methuen. Grist also co-produced *The Autumn of Han* and *DiaoChan* with Red Dragonfly. 5 stars *The Unknown Soldier* **sold-out** it's run at Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2016 and is also published by Methuen Bloomsbury.

www.gristtheatre.co.uk



'If you don't ever want to see another WW1 play, then you want to see *this*. Superb!'

★★★★★ **FringeGuru on *The Unknown Soldier***

'An unmissable and thought-provoking play that has so much relevance in today's society'

★★★★★ **Edinburgh Festival Mag on *The Unknown Soldier***

'An original perspective on a story we think we all know, and offer a reminiscence that... is poignant and thought-provoking'

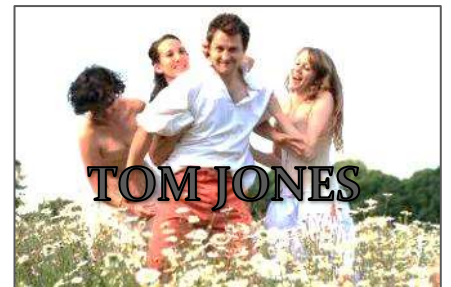
★★★★★ **The Independent on *The Unknown Soldier***

'It's not about glory or futility, it's about the loyalty forged between friends'

★★★★★ **The Scotsman on *The Unknown Soldier***

'The quality of the adaptation and the wit of the cast ensure that... it makes for a thoroughly entertaining evening'

★★★★★ **The Public Reviews on *Tom Jones***



Casualties 2013 at Park Theatre, Photo by Simon Annand



Simon Annand
(The Half) –
"Contained, but
Epic"



'*Casualties* is perfectly executed... and will easily leave you reeling.'

★★★★★ **What's on Stage on *Casualties***

'A play of extremely high standard both in writing, direction and performance.'

★★★★★ **LiveTheatre.co on *Casualties***

'Wonderful piece of work... would have gladly gone back for more'

★★★★★ **One Stop Arts on *Casualties***

'Be prepared to be harrowed, to be moved to tears and to fall in love with the characters'

★★★★★ **Remotegoat on *Casualties***

Show Copy

Tagline

The Tragic and Wonderful Life of Anna May Wong
A Play with Songs

(52 words)

From laundry girl to one of 1930s Hollywood's most glamorous stars, the tragic and wonderful life of Anna May Wong. Inter-weaved with songs and clips from her films. This is her story, her search for identity, her hopes and fears, and the personal sacrifices she made for the art that she loved.

(105 words)

Miss Anna May Wong invites you to join her in an evening of song and remembrance, as she tells us of her life. A tragic and wonderful life that saw her rise from laundry girl to become one of the acting elite - although she was the only leading lady that was never allowed to kiss her leading man. This is her story, her search for identity, her hopes and fears and the personal sacrifices she made for the art that she loved. Anna May Wong, the pioneering Chinese American actress who, despite all the odds, became one of Hollywood's best loved stars in 1930s.

From the teams behind 'The Unknown Soldier' and 'The Autumn of Han'
Presented by Grist to the Mill and Red Dragonfly Productions
Written and Directed by Ross Ericson
Performed by Michelle Yim

Links:

Website: <https://www.reddragonflyproductions.co.uk/unforgettable-anna-may-wong>

Website: <https://www.gristtheatre.co.uk/unforgettable-anna-may-wong>

Website: <https://www.micyim.co.uk/unforgettable-anna-may-wong>

Twitter: @RDprod_theatre #AnnaMayWong

Press Release

Red Dragonfly Productions

Presents

The Unforgettable Anna May Wong

The Tragic and Wonderful Life of Hollywood's Anna May Wong

XXX Venue sees the performance of an insightful play about the pioneering Chinese-American 1930s Hollywood actress who inspired the song "*These Foolish Things (Remind Me of You)*" (by English writer Eric Maschwitz) and allegedly had a relationship with German actress Marlene Dietrich.

In *The Unforgettable Anna May Wong* we join the inimitable Anna May in one of her cabaret shows where, amongst some of her favourite songs, she tells us of her rise from laundry girl to one of Hollywood's most glamorous stars, and of her fight to prove that the world needed a star like her whether they wanted one or not. It is not only a story about a search for identity, about sacrifices made, but about a woman who was determined to make her mark on the world and have a damned good time doing it.

British East Asian theatre company **Red Dragonfly Productions** has strived to bring stories from the East and Far East to the British Stage since 2014. Their three-year classic programme had seen three classic Chinese stories grace the British stage in an accessible and entertaining format to British and European audiences: *The Autumn of Han* and *DiaoChan: The Rise of the Courtesan*, and *Monkey and The White Bone Demon*. Previously known as *An Evening with Miss Wong*, **The Unforgettable Anna May Wong** is their second production of a solo performance.

'You don't have to be a movie fan to enjoy this' ★★★★★ **The Scotsman**

'Playful, entertaining... and a pleasant appreciation for Old Hollywood charm'

★★★★ **Edinburgh49+3**

'Yim... beguiles the audience with a sly smile... and some truly impressive singing'

– **British Theatre Guide**

Web: www.reddragonflyproductions.co.uk

Twitter: @rdprod_theatre

LISTING INFORMATION

Venue:

Dates/Time:

Running Time: 75mins

Tickets:

Bookings:

PRESS CONTACT – name: Michelle Yim e: info@reddragonflyproductions.co.uk

t:07833 538318

Contact Details

Any enquiries, questions on shows and interests in booking, please contact:

Michelle Yim

Tel: 07833538318

Email: info@reddragonflyproductions.co.uk