East 15 Acting School

MA Acting (International)

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Contextualizing Document

From Childhood Memory to East Asian Emotional Expression

Performing Lin Hai-yin's Memories of Peking as an Intercultural Solo and Examining Childhood, East Asian Family Dynamics, and Adaptation

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I. Introduction

As an artist-researcher developing a solo performance based on Lin Haiyin's My Memories of Old Beijing, I began with a burning question: How does an Eastern childhood narrative communicate across cultures through solo performance? My project, My Father's Flowers Have Fallen, explores universal themes of childhood innocence, memory, family, and intergenerational silence through the lens of a 12-year-old Chinese girl named Yingzi. Performing this Eastern childhood story in English for a UK audience became an experiment in intercultural storytelling – could the subtle emotions and values of a 1920s Beijing childhood resonate with people from a very different cultural context? This document chronicles that journey in a first-person academic voice, interweaving personal creative process with scholarly theory.[1]

Bridging cultural contexts required identifying elements in the story that transcend language and locale. I found that memory and childhood longing are near-universal experiences, providing a connective tissue between East and West. By emphasizing symbolic motifs like rain, flowers, and song, I aimed to evoke emotions that any audience can recognize. For instance, rain in my piece serves as a connector of time – the sound of rainfall triggers Yingzi's flashbacks, symbolizing how memories can wash over us and blur past with present. The oleander flower, which I chose as a recurring prop, carries a dual symbolism of beauty and toxicity. [2]

Oleander blooms were in the father's garden in the story, and in performance this flower became a metaphor for familial love that is gentle and beautiful but tinged with unspoken pain or "poison." Likewise, the farewell song from Yingzi's graduation ceremony

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[1] Lin Hai-yin, *Memories of Peking: South Side Stories*, trans. Nancy C. Ing & Chi Pang-yuan (Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 2002; reissued 2019/2020). Available at: https://cup.cuhk.edu.hk/index.php?product_id=3994&route=product/product (Accessed: 30 September 2025).

[2] S. Theresa Dietz, *The Complete Language of Flowers: A Definitive and Illustrated History* (Beverly, MA: Wellfleet Press/Quarto, 2020). Available at: https://www.quarto.com/books/9781577152835/the-complete-language-of-flowers (Accessed: 30 September 2025).

functions as an emotional motif, a haunting melody of goodbye that recurs throughout the performance to underscore the theme of growing up and letting go. By grounding these symbols in the performance, I hoped to create emotional entry points for the audience, regardless of cultural background, inviting them to empathize with Yingzi's inner world.

Ultimately, this introduction sets the stage for an intercultural inquiry. I situate my practice-as-research within broader theories of performance and adaptation. In the sections that follow, I reflect on how I developed the piece from its source material – including my internal struggle between Western and Chinese influences – and I discuss the theoretical frameworks that informed my approach. The goal is to demonstrate how an Eastern childhood narrative (mine and Yingzi's combined) can speak across cultures through the medium of solo performance. My guiding belief is that storytelling, when carefully adapted and sincerely performed, can traverse cultural divides by appealing to common human experiences.[3]

II. Development from Source Material

Choosing the right source material for this solo piece was an unexpectedly fraught process. At first, I felt torn between Western and Chinese literary inspirations. On one hand, I was tempted to use a Western story – something English-speaking audiences might readily recognize. On the other hand, I felt a deep internal pull towards the Chinese stories of my own heritage, especially narratives of childhood that reflected my experiences. This internal struggle was not merely about content, but about identity: would I present myself as a cosmopolitan artist fluent in Western canon, or as a cultural storyteller bringing a piece of "home" to the West? After much reflection, I realized that authenticity and emotional resonance had to lead my choice. I ultimately focused on Lin Haiyin's childhood novel because it spoke to me on a personal level – I saw myself in

[3] Erika Fischer-Lichte, 'Interweaving Performance Cultures—Rethinking "Intercultural Theatre",' in *The Politics of Interweaving Performance Cultures: Beyond Postcolonialism* (London: Routledge, 2014). DOI: 10.4324/9781315858142-1 https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315858142-1 (Accessed: 30 September 2025).

Yingzi. Lin Haiyin's My Memories of Old Beijing is celebrated for its delicate portrayal of a girl's youth in 1920s Beijing, told through the child's eyes. The novel's use of a child narrator was particularly compelling: it allowed complex social issues and family dynamics to be viewed with innocent honesty and subtlety. Scholars note that Lin's child narrator often challenges adult perspectives and "gives opportunities to the marginalized to make their voices heard," precisely through her naive but honest point of view.[4]

I was inspired by how the narratorial uncertainty of a child can subvert stereotypes and invite empathy.

Having committed to a Chinese source, I then grappled with how to condense and adapt the narrative into a solo performance format. Lin Haiyin's novel is episodic and rich with various characters on the fringes of society. I knew I could not cover all its events in a short solo piece. Instead, I honed in on one narrative thread that resonated most personally: the relationship between the young girl and her father. In one of Lin's stories (as well as in my own life), the father is often physically absent and emotionally reserved – a common dynamic in East Asian families where love is rarely verbalized. I scripted the performance around Yingzi's graduation day, a poignant moment of transition (childhood to adolescence) where she yearns for her father's presence. This allowed me to incorporate key moments from the source material (and my memories) that illustrate emotional subtlety: a child's quiet hope and disappointment. For example, I dramatized a scene of Yingzi scanning the audience in the rain on her graduation day, believing for a moment that her rain-soaked father might yet appear. This scene was adapted from a brief episode in the novel, expanded with my own recollection of looking for my father in countless school audiences. By blending Lin's narrative with autobiographical elements, I found a performance voice that was truthful and immediate. Everything was told through Yingzi's eyes, but filtered through my adult understanding – a first-person storytelling that could shift in an instant from the wide-eyed wonder of a child to the reflective aside of an adult narrator. This dual consciousness gave the piece layers of meaning: children

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[4] Kunkun Zhang, 'Child Narrator, Narratorial Uncertainty, and Ethics in Lin Haiyin's *My Memories of Old Beijing*,' *International Research in Children's Literature* 16(2) (2023): 213–226. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3366/ircl.2023.0509 (Accessed: 30 September 2025).

in the audience could relate to the literal story, while adults could sense the undercurrents of regret and realization beneath.

Crucially, I employed specific symbols and motifs from the source to maintain narrative cohesion and emotional depth in the condensed script. The rain became a theatrical device to transition between timeframes: a gentle pattering sound would cue flashbacks to earlier childhood mornings, effectively bridging past and present. The oleander flower took on a prominent metaphorical role. In the story, Yingzi's mother pins a pink oleander on her dress, saying it came from her father's beloved garden. I was struck by this detail and researched the flower's significance. Interestingly, the oleander has meant different things across cultures: ancient Greeks saw it as a flower of love, yet many traditions associate it with caution and danger due to its toxicity. [5]

This dual symbolism perfectly mirrored how I view parental love in my culture – beautiful and unconditional, but sometimes expressed through harsh discipline or silence that can hurt. In performance, each time Yingzi touched the oleander on her lapel, it signaled a shift in her emotional state, reminding viewers of the beautiful but painful love she carries for her father. The farewell song, finally, was drawn from the novel's depiction of a graduation ceremony and from my own school experience. I used a simple Chinese melody (the folk song "Song Bie," meaning farewell) as the graduation song in the show. This song recurs as an auditory motif, evoking the passage of time and the notion of unspoken goodbyes. I sang fragments of it at key points: when Yingzi imagines adulthood, when she realizes her father isn't coming, and at the end when she quietly "says goodbye" to her childhood self. The farewell song motif thus ties the narrative together emotionally – each repetition carrying more weight as Yingzi matures. It also allowed me to incorporate a bit of Chinese language and tonality into an English performance, subtly signaling the story's cultural origin in sound even as the words spoken were English.

Throughout the development process, I was mindful of balancing cultural specificity with accessibility. I preserved little cultural details from the source – like the image of a

[5] Dietz, *The Complete Language of Flowers* (2020). See footnote 2 for details.

Beijing hutong (courtyard) in summer rain, or the way Yingzi refers to her father as Papa – to maintain an authentic flavor. Yet I also made deliberate adjustments so that non-Chinese audiences could follow the story. For example, rather than assuming familiarity with Beijing of the 1920s, I added descriptive lines to paint that world: "the dilapidated city walls… the camel bells on a winter morning," brief sensory cues to invite the audience into Yingzi's environment. I also translated any Chinese phrases or songs within the performance context, ensuring they enhanced rather than impeded understanding. This careful adaptation process was guided in part by adaptation theory: I embraced Linda Hutcheon's idea that an adaptation should be a "creative and interpretive act" in its own right, "a work that is second without being secondary". [6]

In other words, I did not aim for a line-by-line faithful reproduction of Lin Haiyin's text – instead I created a palimpsest, a new original performance that carries traces of the novel but speaks in its own theatrical language. By the time I finalized the script, My Father's Flowers Have Fallen had become a personal re-imagining of Lin's story. It condensed multiple episodes into one narrative arc, always centered on the child's emotional journey. This development phase taught me that focusing on childhood and emotional subtlety was the key to unlocking cross-cultural communication: those qualities formed a narrative "bridge" that allowed a story born in old Beijing to bloom anew on a modern British stage.

III. Inspirations & Theoretical Framework

My approach to this intercultural solo performance was informed by three main scholarly frameworks: intercultural performance theory, adaptation theory, and insights from diaspora literature (Chinese stories told in English). These provided a theoretical backbone for understanding the challenges and opportunities of performing an Eastern story in a Western context. In this section, I discuss how each frame influenced my project, drawing on the work of Erika Fischer-Lichte, Patrice Pavis, Linda Hutcheon, Lin Yutang, and Ha Jin, among others.

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[6] Linda Hutcheon (with Siobhan O'Flynn), *A Theory of Adaptation*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2013). Available at: https://www.routledge.com/A-Theory-of-Adaptation/Hutcheon/p/book/9780415539388 (Accessed: 30 September 2025).

1) Intercultural Performance Theory: The very premise of my project – bringing a Chinese tale to an English solo performance – situates it in the realm of intercultural theatre. Patrice Pavis defines intercultural performance as "the mixing of performance traditions traceable to distinct cultural areas", such that the original forms intermingle and may no longer be separately identifiable. [7]

In my performance, I indeed mix cultural codes: traditional Chinese imagery and themes are delivered through Western-style dramatic monologue in English. Erika Fischer-Lichte's work further guided me in navigating this mixture. Fischer-Lichte warns that the term "intercultural theatre" can be misleading if it assumes all cultures meet on equal footing; historically, Western directors borrowing Asian forms often did so from a position of dominance or exoticism. [8]

I was conscious of this critique. However, my situation is somewhat reversed – I am a Chinese artist presenting my own cultural narrative to a Western audience – which aligns more with what Fischer-Lichte later calls "interweaving performance cultures". [8]

This concept emphasizes a two-way, dialogic exchange rather than one culture passively serving another. It acknowledges that in today's world, due to migration and globalization, cultural performance traditions often coexist and intermix within a single artist or production. [8]

Intercultural theory also alerted me to the ethical dimension of my work. Pavis notes that when two cultures meet on stage, issues of power and representation are inevitable – there is a risk of one culture being appropriated or reduced to fit the expectations of the other. [7]

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[7] Patrice Pavis (ed.), *The Intercultural Performance Reader* (London: Routledge, 1996). Available at: https://www.routledge.com/The-Intercultural-Performance-Reader-1st-Edition/Pavis/p/book/9780415081535 (Accessed: 30 September 2025).

[8] Fischer-Lichte, 'Interweaving Performance Cultures—Rethinking "Intercultural Theatre",' in *The Politics of Interweaving Performance Cultures* (Routledge, 2014). See footnote 3.

I navigated this by constantly checking my choices: Was I portraying Chinese characters with nuance, or was there a chance the Western audience might read them as stereotypes? One example is the father figure – a strict, emotionally reserved Asian father could easily become a cliché. I countered this by writing layers into his portrayal: through Yingzi's recollections, we also see his tenderness (she remembers him quietly tucking a blanket around her one night, or the way he maintained a beautiful garden of oleanders). Additionally, I ensured that any comedic moments laughed with the cultural context, not at it. This approach was influenced by intercultural performance scholars who advocate "productive misinterpretation" – a concept Pavis mentions, where elements from one culture, when viewed by another, might be understood differently but in a creatively meaningful way.[7]

2) Adaptation Theory: Adapting a literary work into a solo theatre script required me to engage deeply with adaptation theory, especially as articulated by Linda Hutcheon. Hutcheon describes adaptation as a dual process: it is "repetition without replication", a creative act of both reinterpretation and creation.

This idea freed me from feeling overly beholden to the original novel. I understood that I was not making a carbon copy of Lin Haiyin's story; rather, I was transposing it into a new medium (live performance) and a new cultural setting, which inevitably meant changes. In practice, this led to several adaptation strategies. First, I maintained what Hutcheon would call the "recognizable core" of the story – the emotional through-line of a child's coming-of-age and her yearning for her father's approval. As long as that remained intact, I felt justified in altering other aspects. For example, I compressed timelines and omitted characters unsuited to solo performance. I often recalled Hutcheon's assertion that an adaptation is "its own palimpsestic thing" – like a parchment that has been written over but still bears traces of its former text.

One challenge I faced was the issue of fidelity. Hutcheon argues that fidelity should not be the sole yardstick; the success of an adaptation lies in how well it works as a standalone piece and in dialogue with the source, not in how minutely it matches it. Throughout, I kept in mind that I was adapting across languages as well; adapters often act as translators, especially in cross-cultural contexts.

3) Diaspora Narratives in English (Lin Yutang and Ha Jin as models): As I worked on telling a Chinese story in English, I looked to earlier precedents. Lin Yutang is widely recognized for bridging Eastern and Western cultures through literature, conveying the complexities of Chinese culture to Western audiences. [9]

This resonated with my aims in My Father's Flowers Have Fallen. Another lesson from Lin Yutang is that one can be bicultural and still authentic. Scholarly debates around his bicultural authorship are surveyed by Suoqiao Qian, which helped me frame anxieties about "catering" to Western tastes as part of a longer intellectual history. [10]

Ha Jin provides a contemporary perspective. His reflections on writing in English acknowledge the guilt some migrants feel when working in a second language but justify the choice as a path to truthful communication and freedom from constraint. [11]

Critics have also observed that Ha Jin's English sometimes carries a cadence influenced by Chinese idiom; for stylistic analysis, I draw on a peer-reviewed study as a reference point. [12]

In conclusion, these frameworks offered justification and guidance for my artistic choices, and they located my project within a lineage of cross-cultural storytelling. The resulting performance suggests that an Eastern childhood narrative can communicate across cultures by finding the universal in the specific and by adapting form while honoring content.

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[9] "Lin Yutang," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. https://www.britannica.com/biography/Lin-Yutang (Accessed: 30 September 2025).

[10] Suoqiao Qian, *Liberal Cosmopolitan: Lin Yutang and Middling Chinese Modernity* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2011). Available at: https://brill.com/display/title/19224 (Accessed: 30 September 2025).

[11] Ha Jin, *The Writer as Migrant* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008). Available at: https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/W/bo6007124.html (Accessed: 30 September 2025).

[12] Ilaria Marinaro, 'Ha Jin's Ecocritical Irony in the Stylistic Analysis of the Personal Pronouns in "A Tiger-Fighter is Hard to Find",' *Il Tolomeo* 22 (2020). Open access: https://edizionicafoscari.unive.it/media/pdf/article/il-tolomeo/2020/1/art-10.14277-Tol-2499-5975-2020-01-023.pdf (Accessed: 30 September 2025).

IV. Major Themes Explored

1.Childhood and Memory. One of the performance's central concerns is how childhood memories shape the narrative's structure and emotional core. I framed the solo piece as a series of recollections: adult-Yingzi looks back on her 12-year-old self, and scenes often unfold as flashbacks triggered by sensory cues (for example, the sound of rain spurs a drift into an earlier memory of a Beijing courtyard). By structuring the storytelling through memory, I created an intimate, reflective tone—inviting the audience to experience events through the haze of nostalgia. Childhood nostalgia becomes a cross-cultural bridge in this context. Even though the story is set in 1920s China, the act of reminiscing about one's youth is universal. As I performed Yingzi's longing for simpler times and past comforts, I could sense the audience relating it to their own childhoods. In practical terms, this meant balancing first-person narration and enacted memories: I sometimes stepped out to describe what used to be, then slipped back into the child's voice to relive it. This dual perspective (the child's wonderment filtered through an adult's understanding) gave the narrative a poignant layering. It underscored that memory is not just a theme but the engine of the story's delivery—emotionally anchoring the performance and making an Eastern childhood feel familiar to Western viewers. In essence, memory served as both content and form: it was the subject (Yingzi remembering her youth) and the method (the play itself unfolding as a memory), demonstrating how deeply personal nostalgia can transcend cultural boundaries when shared sincerely.

2.East Asian Family Dynamics. Another major theme I explored was the nuanced dynamic of family love and communication in an East Asian context—particularly the unspoken love and restraint between parent and child. In both Lin Haiyin's novel and my own life experience, the father figure is often physically absent and emotionally reserved. I brought this to the stage by showing a father-daughter relationship full of subtle signals rather than overt expressions. For instance, in the performance Yingzi's father never rushes onstage for a warm embrace; instead, his love appears in memories and small gestures (the careful way he once tucked a blanket over her at night, the pride implied in maintaining a beautiful garden of oleanders for his family). These quiet moments speak

volumes precisely because the father does not say “I love you” aloud. Such emotional restraint is characteristic of East Asian family culture, where devotion is typically demonstrated through duty, care, and sacrifice rather than verbal affection. I wanted the audience to understand that Yingzi’s father, though distant, is not cold-hearted—his love is a steady undercurrent, felt in what he does not say. This theme required delicate handling onstage. I often conveyed it through silence and body language: a slight nod from the father, or Yingzi’s hopeful eyes searching for approval, followed by a resigned smile when she receives only a terse nod in return. By highlighting these restrained interactions, I aimed to deepen cross-cultural empathy. Western audiences, who might be used to more demonstrative parental affection, were given insight into a different mode of family love—one where care is implicit. The complexity of this dynamic comes through in Yingzi’s conflicted feelings: she adores her father and craves his attention, yet she has been raised to accept that love often hides behind strictness or quietness. Exploring this on stage not only added emotional realism, it also celebrated the cultural specificity of East Asian filial piety and parental roles. It turned a potentially stereotypical “strict father” character into a more rounded portrayal, showing how cultural norms shape the way love is expressed in the family.

3.Loss and Nostalgia. Finally, the performance is permeated by the theme of loss—especially the poignant loss of the father and the inevitable fading of childhood itself. From the outset, My Father’s Flowers Have Fallen carries an elegiac tone: the title evokes images of blooms that were once vibrant now lying on the ground. In narrative terms, Yingzi is confronted with losing two things she holds dear: her father’s presence (he is absent on her graduation day, and there is an implicit sense that he may never be as present as she hoped) and the innocence of childhood as she transitions into adolescence. I expressed this sense of loss both emotionally and symbolically throughout the piece. The rain that falls during the graduation scene is not only a realistic detail but also a symbol of melancholy and farewell—rainwater washes things away, much as time washes away childhood moments. I often let the rain sound play softly under my monologues, as if the world itself were gently crying with Yingzi. The oleander flower pinned to Yingzi’s chest became another key symbol: it comes from her father’s garden and thus represents her connection to him. Each time I touched or glanced at that flower,

the audience could sense that Yingzi was feeling the pain of her father's absence. By the end, when a petal falls (in my staging I let a petal drop to the floor during the final scene), it wordlessly signified the fall of the father's flower—a moment of acceptance that her childhood adoration of "Papa" must change as she grows. The farewell song tied everything together. This gentle Chinese melody ("Song Bie") recurred at pivotal moments: when the young Yingzi imagined her future self, when she realized her father isn't coming to celebrate her achievement, and finally as a closing lullaby to her own childhood. Each reprise of the song carried more weight, the simple lyrics of parting accumulating meaning. In the final moments, I—as Yingzi—sang the last lines directly to the space where I imagined my father to be, then to the little stool that represented my childhood self, effectively saying goodbye. By using these symbols and motifs, I was able to externalize the internal feelings of nostalgia and grief. The audience might not share the specific memory of a father missing a graduation, but most have experienced the ache of goodbye—be it to a person, a time of life, or a place. In dramatizing loss and nostalgia in this way, the solo performance created a space for viewers to reflect on their own bittersweet partings, making Yingzi's personal farewell feel like a collective catharsis.

V. Pedagogical & Educational Dimensions (Drama Education)

Beyond its artistic goals, this solo adaptation project also illuminated important pedagogical values. As a drama practitioner, I found that creating and performing My Father's Flowers Have Fallen was not only a personal journey but also an educational experience in empathy, cultural understanding, and emotional development. Solo performance and autobiographical storytelling prove to be powerful tools in drama education.

1.By crafting a one-person show drawn from my cultural heritage and personal memories, I essentially took on multiple roles—playwright, performer, and even "living archive" of my culture. This process required me to deeply empathize with the character and to make meaning of every moment in the story. This aligns with Dorothy Heathcote's use of role

as a bridge to empathy—placing participants in role to step into others' shoes and experience the fiction as if it were real. [13]

2.Likewise, Gavin Bolton stresses that educational drama should be an act of personal meaning-making rather than mere display. Devising a solo autobiographical show is exactly such a meaning-making practice: at every turn the performer must decide why a moment matters and how to communicate its significance. [14]

In my case, interpreting an East Asian tale for a British audience demanded that I articulate cultural nuances clearly, which in turn cultivated intercultural awareness. At the same time, embodying subtle feelings (pride and sadness in a graduation farewell; conflicted love toward an imperfect parent) strengthened my emotional intelligence. For student performers and audiences, similar solo-adaptation projects can become microcosms of intercultural education: a single actor stages a dialogue between cultures and invites others into it—an efficient way to build empathy, reflective thinking, and cultural literacy.

VI. Reflections on Process (Practice-as-Research)

In reflecting on my creative process, I must acknowledge the lingering sense of inadequacy that accompanied this project. I set out to capture the emotional truth of a childhood story, yet the final 7-minute performance felt shallower than intended. The brevity of the piece forced me to simplify complex feelings, and I worried that I delivered only a surface-level portrayal. Rather than treating this discomfort as failure, I used it as a catalyst for inquiry—an impulse central to practice-as-research. As Robin Nelson argues,

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[13] Dorothy Heathcote and Gavin Bolton, *Drama for Learning: Dorothy Heathcote's Mantle of the Expert Approach to Education* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1995).

[14] Gavin Bolton, *Drama as Education: An Argument for Placing Drama at the Centre of the Curriculum* (Harlow: Longman, 1984).

critical reflection on one's process is an imperative element that transforms practice into research. [15]

A significant point of reflection was the cultural authenticity of my storytelling. I found myself asking: Is the story I'm telling truly Chinese, or have I unintentionally mimicked a Western perspective? The solo form I adopted—jumping in and out of roles—felt to me like a Western technique, and I worried that form might dilute content. My core intention was to convey a quintessentially Chinese childhood experience in which children often show more love and yearning for genuine affection than parents overtly reciprocate, because parental love is conveyed through guidance, expectation, and sacrifice. Distilling this nuance into a short solo was daunting; I feared I had portrayed only a generic "child" rather than the layered perspective of an adult looking back.

Throughout the process, I oscillated between confidence in my vision and deep doubt about my abilities. I grappled with the question of what it means to "grow up" in the world of the piece—whether growth is forgiving our parents, meeting their expectations, or defining a path of our own. In the end I learned to embrace uncertainty and prioritize sincerity over perfection. By letting go of the need to "prove" authenticity and instead telling the story honestly, I became more present in performance. The outcome surprised me: audience members reported that the piece prompted reflections on their own childhoods. In this sense, the struggle itself became insight; completion was not a compromise but a necessary step in the research journey.

VII. Conclusion

This project began as an inquiry into childhood, memory, and cultural identity and culminated in a deeper understanding of both the work and myself. I examined how a simple story of a child's longing for parental love carries different meanings in Chinese and Western contexts, and how performing it in a solo form created both opportunities and constraints. Across the sections, key themes emerged: balancing authenticity and adaptation; recognizing how cultural perspective shapes narrative choices; and

[15] Robin Nelson, *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). Available at: https://link.springer.com/book/10.1057/9781137282900 (Accessed: 30 September 2025).

acknowledging reflective doubt as a creative engine. Despite the limits of a short format, the emotional core resonated with audiences, suggesting that sincere storytelling can traverse cultural boundaries. Grounded in adaptation and intercultural frameworks—and sustained by practice-as-research reflection—this project affirms that an Eastern childhood narrative can communicate across cultures when it finds the universal in the specific and speaks it with honesty.

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