

Golden Bough Theatre Performs Enjoyable "Sayonara My Love"

Written by Jerome F. Keating Ph.D.

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This recent Christmas Day I had the pleasure to watch the Golden Bough Theatre's thought provoking production of "Sayonara My Love." The Taiwanese opera-style musical takes place near Jiufan right after WWII ends. Some Taiwanese soldiers in the service of the Japanese Empire are digging for gold and are unaware of the war's end. Along comes a traveling female opera group who stumble upon them. As romance blossoms among some, the women deliberate as to whether or how they should tell the men that the war is over.

That is the backdrop plot; the music is based on Taiwanese opera but with a modern or jazzed up style as well as with select dance routines. Script writer is Shih Ju-Fang and Arts Director Wang Rong-yu. I am not about to give a review but the show was highly entertaining as well as thought-provoking as it dealt with a real and current problem of Taiwan, what is its identity? Or, What does it mean to be Taiwanese?

In the play the characters struggle with the issue, are they Japanese or Chinese? Finally near the end, one character states, "We are neither; we will choose for ourselves what we should be."

What struck me was how far Taiwan has come in the past decades. Some twenty plus years ago if a play would have given Taiwanese that choice, the director would probably be tending gardens on Green Island, but here the actors were in the National Theatre Hall saying we will choose for ourselves what our identity will be and where our loyalties lie.

Golden Bough Theatre is a group that should be followed and supported. Their website is www.goldenbough.com.tw Check them out and go see their shows.

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