

# **Exploring How Community-based Theatre Praxes in the Philippines and Taiwan Tackling Climate Change-related Issues and Providing Alternative Philosophies and Aesthetics for Climate Change-induced Problems**

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## **Abstract**

Distances are created by geographical locations, fixed ideological cultural construction as well as social classes, race, nationalities and gender. However, facing the drastic climate change and continuous natural disasters brought by typhoons, flood and over-exploitation of natural resources in Asia, community theatre practitioners in the Philippines and Taiwan, located in the global south, tried to bridge the distances between countries and within their own societies. They reflect on and combat the impact caused by these challenges with community-based theatre praxes and musical praxes consecutively.

This paper aims to investigate how community theatre practitioners in the Philippines and Taiwan employ 4 different devised theatre productions using community members' voices and experiences, popular theatre techniques (such as musical forms), and indigenous rituals, dances and songs to reflect on the deterioration of the environment and climate change, as well as community disintegration. It also explores how we need

to save ourselves through vigilant supervision of government development projects and community reunification by rebuilding consensus and communal cultural identity. The ancient Asian indigenous natural beliefs, mythology and Chinese philosophy of co-existing peacefully with nature are also employed to reflect and criticise the myth of progress of modern technology and development.

*Keywords:* community-based musicals, community-engaged theatre praxes, cross-cultural theatre, environmental protection, Asian natural philosophy

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## Introduction

Climate change has been a prevalent phenomenon for over a decade and yet it is still a very visceral, palpable, and urgent issue in our lives today. Since 2000, Asia has been afflicted with numerous big-scale natural disasters such as tsunamis, typhoons, and floods caused by drastic climate change. Many applied theatre practitioners have been engaging with different types of theatre works addressing climate change-related issues in Asia. These praxes echoed with the four types of theatre works addressing climate change worldwide (Arons & May, 2012):

1. Revisiting theatre classics such as *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Birds* to re-enlighten their ecological themes or re-discover some forgotten environmental messages hidden in some classical or modern plays.

2. Raising environmental awareness by presenting the constant struggle between economic development and environmental protection. Two Theatre-in-Education productions, *When the Blackspill Returns, I*, and *II*, written and directed by Reyfang Hsu, dealt with the development of a fisherman village called Qigu in Tainan and its difficulty in balancing the protection of the sea farming industry. The play also addressed the environmental protection of the Blackspill which flew to Tainan for the winter, as well as the development of a local tourist hotel. Both plays engaged community members and students in debates and discussions on these issues with Theatre-in-Education interactive strategies, and involved lots of responses and discussions within the communities.

3. To engage with eco-activism to protest against ecological destructive actions such as anti-nuclear power. This kind of incident could also be highly relevant to climate change since the Japanese tsunami has caused the leak of radiate of Fukushima and has caused great damage to nearby communities and villages. In Taiwan, Assignment Theatre has devised and produced a production called *The Story of Taihsi Village*. The production interrogated the serious damage that the pollution caused by the nearby Taiwan Plastic Company has done to the local inhabitants and has impact on their health and their crops for years. The production has created a strong response both outside and inside the community to re-examine the pollution issues

and the problem of responsibility and compensation, which is unequal and unbalanced compared to the irretrievable harm and loss.

4. To create site-specific projects or productions to re-align and re-awaken the audience's awareness and sensitivity to our natural environment and other living beings such as animals, plants, stones, insects etc. The production of *The Man With The Compound Eyes*, a fiction adaptation of the novel of the same name written by Ming-Yi Wu, investigated the question of how a garbage island could affect the beauty of the eastern coast of Taiwan, such as Hualian. The moving garbage island also threatens the livelihood of the indigenous tribes who have been struggling to live in a more traditional indigenous way of living in the mountain. The production was directed by a German director and has attracted a lot of critical attention (Arons & May, 2012, pp. 3-12).

According to the above categories and examples, we can see the topics and issues closely and distantly related to climate change or its induced environmental issues have been heated themes in recent years in Asia as well. However, close and detailed research about these Asian productions, their impacts, and their philosophical and aesthetic meanings have been still lacking. Therefore, this paper aims to investigate four case studies held separately by Philippine Educational Theatre Association (PETA) in the Philippines and the National University of Tainan (NUTN) in Taiwan in metropolitan and rural areas in the Philippines and Taiwan on how they tackle climate change in their respective countries with applied theatre praxes through various strategies and aesthetics, as well as Asian philosophies and beliefs.

The reason for choosing these productions is that they are representative community theatre creative centres in Taiwan and the Philippines, and their continuous efforts in making community theatre are rarely known to the world but significant to their local communities. Their stories are worth exploring and being transmitted for the world to learn from, especially in our contemporary capitalistic and neoliberal society, as counter practices to resist their global overwhelming influence and for the other Asian countries

to follow and perhaps to adapt to their local situations. They are more inclined to the second and third types of theatre works as mentioned above, but they also add on their inventions and combinations of the stated types. It hopes to cultivate a systematic methodology of applied theatre praxes to adapt to the ever-present new normal way of climate change, which means coping and co-inhabiting with the climate change-induced problems in better and multiple ways (Billones, 2015). It also strives to establish ways to promote environmental education and awareness to lessen the degradation of living habitats by reminding people of ancient Asian and Chinese Taoist philosophies such as Laozi and Zhuangzi (Liu, 2013).

This paper also compares and contrasts Asian indigenous customs, traditions, and rituals in different Asian cultures that need to be preserved and revitalised so as to help our fellow human beings co-exist with nature in harmony in today's world. The research also highlights how these praxes re-invented the rich Asian traditions of performing arts, such as rituals, dances, and singing traditions as well as Asian popular theatre aesthetics to engage deeply with people and have a far-reaching emotional impact on the general public. In the following paper, the research discoveries will be divided into two parts for demonstration and argumentation. The related theories of theatre ecology and Taoist philosophy, as well as Nancy's theory of "inoperative community" and Seligman's theory of building resilience, will all be employed to examine and explore the four case studies involved, which are paired in two in each part for contextual purposes (Chiu, 2017; Kershaw, 2009; Nancy, 1986/1991; Liu, 2013; Heddon & Mackey, 2012; Seligman, 2011).

## **Metropolitan Community-inspired Musical Productions Help to Raise Environmental Awareness and to Bridge Dissonances in Different Involved Communities in Taiwan and the Philippines**

After a series of serious floods happening in Asia, affecting Japan, the Philippines, and Taiwan after the new millennium, hundreds of thousands of lives have been lost, and millions of homes have been destroyed and

displaced in 311 Tsunami in Japan, Typhoon Haiyan (also known locally as Typhoon Yolanda) in the Philippines and Typhoon Morakot in Taiwan<sup>1</sup>.

Applied theatre practitioners have not waited to join in setting up disaster relief projects and environmental protection play productions in the affected areas. These initiatives aimed to bring the disintegrated communities together after disasters and to reflect upon the causes and impacts of these disasters in their respective societies. Here I would like to focus on two case studies of musical productions. One of them is called *If We Still Have Tomorrow*, written and directed by the author, produced and performed in Tainan by the third-year university students from the Department of Drama Creation and Application in the National University of Tainan in Taiwan in 2016. The other is *Rak of Aegis*, directed by Mariel Legarda, produced and performed in Manila by Philippine Educational Theatre Association (one of the oldest community theatre organisations in Asia since 1967) in 2014.

The reason for choosing these two productions for comparison is that these two production sectors are important local community art creative centres, and they are both renowned for their applied theatre and educational theatre praxes dealing with different kinds of local social issues or crises. Both countries were colonised by different regimes and cultures, and their modern societies have similar traits of combining both post-colonial and post-modern culture. The cities in which these productions are produced are highly developed within the neoliberal capitalist economic system in general as well. However, these two organisations manage to apply for alternative funding to support their theatre productions and counter-productions to deliver and convey their criticism against the dominant ideology of capitalism and neoliberalism, while addressing urgent issues in their communities. In this comparison, they both seriously tackle the urgent social issues arising from climate change in both societies. With the above similarities and differences, I decided to compare the two productions using different ways to tackle the local issues induced by climate change, in this case, the strong and rampant typhoon and flood caused by the climate change.

## ***If We Still Have Tomorrow Exploring Complicated Reasons Behind Climate Change-Induced Disasters and Providing Alternative Reflections and Actions***

*If We Still Have Tomorrow* is an original play based on the author's field trips to the Philippines' typhoon-afflicted communities and areas in Manila, Taiwan's flood-inflicted town, Kobayashi Village, as well as the interviews with the afflicted inhabitants in the above areas. However, it combines the author's integration of ancient Asian mythology of water in China, Japan, and the Philippines with the adaptation of current local conflicting incidents between indigenous land development and environmental protection in Taiwan. I was originally inspired by the beautiful folk dance of the Sama Bajao people and their story of wandering around in big cities. I witnessed their destitute situation to cope with the postmodern world of our time, especially after the flood. They all live in small huts and bad sanitary condition in poor barangay along Manila River, and many have suffered disease after the flood since they don't have clean water and bathrooms. Sama Bajao is a branch of sea migrant of Southern Philippines introduced by my friend, Professor MCM Santamaria, teaching at the University of the Philippines. Their stories remind me of the Tavulon tribal villagers in Taiwan who have suffered the destruction of their village and families on a landside caused by Typhoon Morakot. During my Filipino field trip, I was led by my Japanese friend, Shoko Matsumoto, a lighting designer, who has dedicated her life and work to building up a Filipino Society of Theatre Design and Technology for 18 years. The flood in the Philippines destroyed all her documents stored in a hut, and many were soaked by the flood, and she was trapped in the water for a week during the flood.

All these details of real incidents and events struck me and they finally came to weave together to formulate a story composed of all these elements of these three countries (Japan, Taiwan, and the Philippines) and their similarities and differences. For me, Japan is a developed country, the Philippines is an underdeveloped country and Taiwan is just between them,

on the brink of developing and developed country. But I want to explore what has defined us in terms of development level besides our gross domestic product (GDP). The main purpose is to reflect upon Asian colonial history in the aspect of land and economic development in our modernisation processes and to re-examine the strengths and weaknesses behind this kind of thinking and actions, and interrogate and question what kind of price we all need to pay at the cost of environmental protection and indigenous cultural traditions at the beginning of a new millennium.

Therefore, I mixed myth and legends with true life encounters and experiences (such as I have described above) and fantasy to create an original story expanding from Japanese colonial time to our current time. The story starts with the end of the three main characters who have been dead and are given a second chance to try if they avoid their doomed disaster with different choices. The flashback tells about three brothers who were born with the same Japanese engineer father but with three different mothers in the father's big water construction mission during the Japanese colonial empire rule in Asia in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The eldest son, who is the chief executive officer of an international serial hotel business, has a Japanese mother. The second brother has a Filipino mother, who is the Filipino mayor of a developing indigenous town. The youngest brother has a Taiwanese mother, who is an engineer who dreams of building an environment-concerned cultural park hotel. The three of them teamed up and decided to carry on their father's dream to benefit people's lives by constructing and changing the natural environment to build a transnational cultural park hotel on the holy lake area of local indigenous people on one of the southern islands of the Philippines. Their construction aggravated the water God of the holy lake, and he decided to punish them with disasters. However, his three daughters – the water Goddesses – hold different opinions from their father.

The eldest daughter thinks all the greedy people must die to pay the price of the transgression of natural rule. The second daughter wants to



enjoy the human romance and the joy of life on earth as human beings, while the third daughter is merciful enough to hope she can save mankind from destruction. So, they asked their father to give them time to try to influence the three men's decision and to see who would succeed in stopping their plan. At every turn of the story, the three brothers can change, but none of them has made the move despite the three daughters falling in love with them and trying to save them from doom. So, one by one, they all died in the flood disasters in Japan, the Philippines, and Taiwan, reflecting the real floods happening in the three areas in Asia.

Since the theme is about disaster and death, the production team wants it to be more interesting in performing styles to make the play more accessible and attractive to the general public to have a greater impact on and reflection from the audience. The play is then produced in musical form with 12 original songs and modern dances, as well as transformed Filipino traditional and ritual tribal Igal Dances (an indigenous water dance from Mindanao Island originally). It has invited Filipino and Hong Kong artists to collaborate with Taiwanese artists and students together since it is a shared theme by Asian countries, and each nation and culture might have a different perspective and story to add on to the whole story. The below two photographs (i.e. Figure 1 and Figure 2) of the production can provide a clear sense of this urban musical engaged with community stories and research under the threat of climate change-induced disasters and aftermath through dramatisation, music and dance.

**Figure 1**

*The final scene between God and Goddesses and mankind in "If We Still Have Tomorrow" to reflect on the dilemma of environmental protection and economic development*



**Figure 2**

*The flood afflicted people facing decisions again after the flood in "If We Still Have Tomorrow"*



During the rehearsal process, the production team shared the same mourning mood for the deceased and the afflicted by the flood and agreed to make this play as an elegy to those who have lost their lives and families in the flood. The cast has done thorough research about the influences and possible reasons for the three floods happening in Asia to understand the scale and the scope of the flood-inflicted disaster, as well as its influence and causes. The rehearsal process is not only about learning the songs and dances in the play but also about researching the natural disasters and the man-made reasons and mistakes involved in all these disasters.

They also need to research the different communities involved in the development issue of the indigenous town, including the businessman, the engineer, the politician, the indigenous communities who want to develop the traditional area to get new job opportunities, as well as those indigenous communities who want to keep traditional ways of living and protecting their holy lake. The cast needs to understand the complicated politics in the communities and the disagreement among divided groups to play out the dilemma and community dynamics involved as in real life. Therefore, the rehearsal process is a living classroom for raising environmental awareness and learning environmental ethics and aesthetics for the university students. The play's theme strongly echoes Laozi's natural philosophy of the preservation of nature and the minimal usage of nature, to learn that naturalness is simplicity, equality, and humility (Liu, 2013).

In Liu's argument, our modern world needs to embrace Laozi's idea of making minimum use of nature to sustain it as a new mindset of preservation of nature<sup>2</sup>. Taking Malos, the indigenous protest leader in the play, as a symbolic example, he has been exemplifying in his deeds and words to leave the holy lake as it is, respect the ancestor's tradition, and protect the indigenous holy lake, which is the source of all life in the community. The play also highlighted the reverence and beauty of nature through the Goddess' mercy and kindness to mankind, as well as Malo's respect for water and his adoration of the all-encompassing beauty of water present on the watery stage (Liu, 2013).

Moreover, the magical mystery and beauty of the Igal ritual dance and the priest's prayer singing are living proof of how natural law needs to be followed; otherwise, disaster will come, as Laozi has said, doing nothing is not to add artificial things to nature, and to follow the natural order (Tao) is the best De (virtue) (Liu, 2018). It also echoes what Zhuangzi has said: the best happiness is free of material burdens and free of self-interest and self-indulgence of material desires, as all the male characters have awakened to discover the best moment of their life in the end is the moment when they fall in love and feel loved by the Goddess, not when they are at the peak of their career, not when they are rich, not when they have achieved some social status in life (Liu, 2018).

The play suggests that the best way of life is to live in the present moment with your loved ones and follow the natural course of things rather than to change it to get rich, and to seek the public welfare and common interest rather than personal material gains. Since the play is set up to surround the three brothers who have a Japanese colonial empire's engineer father, it criticises the colonial empirical policy towards developing nature in the new colonies – to exploit all the natural resources and to make the best use of all natural resources to be able to control it, as well as to question the value system of modern technology that is to develop the economics, to develop the land and to cultivate wealth is beneficial to human beings.

The play also poses the tough question of the difficulty of choosing between economic development and environmental protection. For example, there is a resisting voice in the indigenous youth to fight for more work opportunities offered by the hotel industry to the local communities since the indigenous youth have no modern skills but instead of traditional way of living, and they support the hotel construction plan instead of preservation for their holy lake. It is a constant struggle, and the musical does not want to give a simple advocacy kind of play and intends to present various perspectives on the complicated conflict. The audience (mainly the citizens of Tainan, the actors' families and friends, and the theatre lovers of Tainan) are encouraged to take their stand in the final question of the play – what will

you do if you are the characters in the play?

The play does not give a definite answer but leaves all the decisions to the audience to make after they have watched the whole story and learned how and what the characters have been through. The play raises the question but leaves the audience to make their own choice and judgment to go back to their real life. Nevertheless, the play revived the reverence and respect towards nature through retelling the mythology about water and indigenous beliefs in water God to warn and remind people that nature has a life of its own, as Taoists have suggested that we should follow the natural way, not to be against it; otherwise, we will find our doom in its due day when all the natural resources have been exploited (Liu, 2018). Though the play looks very sad, it is not pessimistic because it lays the responsibility on every one of us watching the play, and it is our responsibility to decide how we are going to live for tomorrow if we still hope and aim to have tomorrow.

On the other hand, the play criticises the colonial and neo-colonial policy toward exploiting natural resources in the name of development and progress of modernisation in Asian governance since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This fact is usually taken for granted without critical thinking in general social psychology and is prone to a kind of historical resignation. The production tried to focus on facts and employ a focused storyline as a family of colonial and neocolonial leaders as the three brothers and criticise their powerful positions and partial decisions which will make all of us pay the price of life and casualties.

However, the play is not only naïve advocacy and criticism; it depicts the difficulty of the dilemma the indigenous youngsters face: to survive for the time being for job opportunities or to preserve the traditional territory, which is always not a simple question to answer. The production also employs the imaginary story to point out that the indigenous community suffered from the long-term exploitation of their land and resources from the above policies and always suffered from natural disasters mostly because they choose to live in the natural environment even under the threat of

environmental crisis.

Besides, they also endure and comply with the commodification of their indigenous arts and cultures such as transforming their ritualistic songs and dances into performances for tourists to consume to make a living. The preservation of the indigenous natural environment and their indigenous cultures is constantly against the progress discourse of modernisation and it is demonstrated and criticised in the production for the audience to see the deprived and constantly conflicting state within their communities. The extensive emphasis on presenting, promoting, revitalising, and carrying on the beauty of traditional indigenous Igal dance, as well as making it temporarily accessible in the dancing form to the audience in the production, is a vivid gesture to preserve and pass on the local indigenous culture through performing arts. The extensive usage of Igal dance in ritualistic forms in the production is a protest against the commodification of traditional indigenous dance prevalent on tourist sites nowadays in our globalisation time.

This might seem far-fetched from climate change, yet if we see it from a cultural ecology perspective, we will see the interconnectedness of cultural preservation with environmental preservation. When one culture has been appropriated and becomes extinct over time, the cultural diversity of all humanity has been diminished and will suffer from loss if we do not do environmental preservation. The climate change-induced disaster will harm us or our fellow human beings. The theme of cultural preservation without running the risk of appropriation of any culture is also part of our ways to counter-balance the neoliberal and capitalistic way of thinking to make the biggest profits without thinking about the cost.

## **A Parallel Study of How Filipino Musical Explores Different Ways to Deal with the Problems Arising from Climate Change-induced Problems**

*Rak of Aegis* is also a musical adapted from the playwright's (Liza

Magtoto's) interviews and fieldwork in the flood-affected communities in Manila, combined with her imagination to weave into an original play. The director, Maribel Legarda, expressed that the afflicted community did not want to see more gloomy reflections on the flood disasters, since they have been through suffering a lot in real life. They would rather see something more hopeful and happier to cheer them up and boost their spirits. The creative team then came up with the idea to integrate the hit band Rak of Aegis's popular love songs with the community stories after the flood and make it into a musical to demonstrate the tenacity of the community to brave the disasters with humour and vitality. The use of popular band songs is exactly how the Filipino tackled the challenges with humour and vitality. The story surrounds two families in the barangay with several unrequited love stories. For example, the leading daughter is in love with a guy who never gets a proper job, when a decent boatman adores her, but she does not pay attention to him at all. Additionally, a barangay female leader is in love with the leading daughter's father, who is never successful in his business, and she still holds grudges against his betrayal of her when young until now.

The main storyline is about the leading daughter's idea to attend the national singing contest and win the big prize to help the community survive the flood. The barangay is still full of floodwater and short of clean water and essential goods for survival, as the audience can see the funded resources traveling by boat on the stage to help the community. The play also satirises the irresponsible, empty-talking, and pompous politician and businessman in a white suit all the time who always sends goods to help the community. He is the one responsible for the improper development of the neighbouring land, which might cause serious flooding in this barangay. He still wants to perpetuate the disaster state of the barangay through the success of the leading daughter's singing contest on national broadcast so that he can continue to profit from the overflowing disaster-relief aids from the world. Nevertheless, the leading daughter sees through his trick and turns down the broadcasting offer smartly. She decides to abandon her unfulfilled lover and turns to the loyal and faithful boatman. They aspire to team up together to develop her family's hand-made shoe business (inherited from

her unsuccessful father) and employ her own inventive and fashionable shoe designs to reinvigorate the traditional family shoe business.

The story is simple, sweet, funny, and full of Filipino humour and vitality. It successfully employs the popular theatre techniques, which are popular rock songs everyone can sing along to, the dances that stir your blood, and the funny outstanding community characters like caricatures to make fun of as the politician, and enjoys the fun and boldness of their role-playing as the drag queen character, as well as some solid community leader characters like the barangay female leader of the play. The musical grabbed Filipino people's hearts after the disasters and it became a hit itself, with more than three hundred runs in Manila. It inspires people to laugh and love loudly despite the sufferings and chaos during and after the flood. It mirrors the Filipino characters with humour and tenacity when facing the challenges of life. On the other hand, the play also tries to reflect the state of the divided community after the flood, and the plotline embraces all the different characters with divergent means and objectives in the disaster for the audience to identify and think over.

For example, the politician who pretends to be kind and helpful to provide goods for the community but wants to perpetuate the community's weak image in need of help so that he can continue to profit from it. The unsuccessful father always mourns for his loss and past glory and he will not make a new move in life anyhow. However, there is still hope in the youngsters such as the leading daughter who has an unyielding will to be self-reliant and to shine with her talents in singing or designing.

On the other hand, the loyal and considerate boatman always takes care of the leading daughter secretly and sweetly, and finally he wins the girl's heart with his sincerity and wit. The play focuses on the importance of developing the unique characteristics of local industry based upon local traditions and resources such as the local business of hand-made shoe making. Only through standing on the community's legacy and resourcefulness, can it build the community's capacity for self-reliance and



sustainability instead of relying on disaster-relief aids all the time. Though it is not directly related to climate change, I do argue that we need to see the whole picture of climate change; How and why did climate change happen? (As I argue in the production of *If We Still Have Tomorrow*?) How can we adapt ourselves to the disasters induced by climate change and deal with the aftermath of the disasters induced by climate change? (As I have argued in *Rak of Aegis* to cultivate the humour and tenacity to face the challenges.) How are we going to prevent the disasters and their negative impacts by the disasters induced by climate change? (As I will argue later in the community DRRM [Disaster Risk Reduction and Management] projects done in the Vesaya areas by PETA.)

Furthermore, employing Nancy's argument of the inoperative community as well as Schaefer's argument of it to investigate the effect and impact of the applied theatre project, I would like to examine the above two case studies in Taiwan and the Philippines (Schaefer, 2012; Nancy, 1986/1991). It can be taken as a lucid example that the communities are inoperative in terms of their function. However, the natural disasters brought chances for the communities to come together in facing the challenges to rebuild the communities where the traits of the communities can be manifested and demonstrated most obviously. For example, there were different countries, Japan, Taiwan, and the Philippines. They all faced the challenges of tsunamis and typhoons, and they tried to help one another out in the disaster relief efforts to project their better communities for the future here and now. Though they have divided communities at home, *If We Still Have Tomorrow* tried to present various voices and concerns of the divided communities for the audience to argue and discuss how they think they should proceed to solve the ongoing problems brought about by the natural disasters.

Therefore, it proves that community is a process to make different voices be heard and negotiated rather than a fixed entity with common interests. In *Rak of Aegis*, the communities in the barangay are also disintegrated by the devastation of the typhoon; different individuals came up with different strategies to save the community. In the struggling process, they grew to

recognise their characteristics in the traditional shoe industry to resist the temptation of perpetuating their disaster state to depend upon external disaster relief and media-engendered attention as well as sympathy. In their inoperative situation, they strove to find their commonalities despite their differences to make their co-existing state better. This also demonstrates that the community is an ongoing process of negotiation and communication of different perspectives and interests. It shows that theatre can work as a model of representing and presenting the community negotiation process while they are engaged in reflection on their situations through involving different groups in the communities in the devising, rehearsal, and performance process. It demonstrates the possibility of finding a negotiating and communicating community through performance-making.

Through the representation of their common beliefs and performing traditions in the productions, the community came together as a group to identify their similarities and acknowledge as well as accept their differences. In *If We Still Have Tomorrow*, the community members from Japan, Taiwan, and the Philippines came to realise they faced the same natural environmental challenges such as floods and typhoons as island countries. They shared the same Japanese colonial and imperial policy of developing and exploiting nature for human usage and suffered from the similar consequences, as well as faced the same challenges of how they are going to develop the economy as well as protect their environment in their respective society. The productions unite the different island countries' communities in facing the flood and raise their similar awareness of environmental protection and indigenous cultural preservation, as well as their similar myth and respect for their natural philosophies and traditional beliefs. It bridges the different cultures through similar historical development and environmental crises, as well as similar empathy towards the common will of survival despite their different contexts. The different strategies and sentiments presented by various characters in facing the flood crisis of the community also dissolve gradually by recognising and identifying their similarities and characteristics in the community to find their tenacity to move on beyond the disaster.

Another common characteristic of the two productions is the choice of the musical. Since the audience seemed hard to take the seriousness of the disaster issue, the creative team decided to choose the more entertaining and accessible form to approach the audience. It worked as a successful strategy in both cultures, and *Rak of Aegis* has become an OPM (Original Pinoy Musical) hit with more than 300 shows in Manila already. *If We Still Have Tomorrow* also created a five full-house performances record in a local university production. Nevertheless, one of the critics warned that the success of upholding the humour and resilience of the Pinoy community should not become an excuse to tolerate the unreasonable political maladministration and slowness of social reform in the Filipino governance (Rappler.com, 2014).

Metropolitan audience in Manila and Tainan, who have been disintegrated by their perspectives and experience in facing natural disaster and receiving disaster relief, has been re-united by the above two musicals to re-consider the causes and responsibilities of the natural disasters, as well as to re-evaluate how they have to come to terms with the means and strategies of rebuilding and reconstructing their communities, despite of their disagreement and differences in race, gender, profession, and class. I argue theatre devising and communicative dialogical processes brought different people within the two groups and beyond the two groups from differences and incongruences towards consensuses, and you can still see their individualities. This is exactly what Nancy (1986/1991) has argued about the coexistence of duality in inoperative communities working in reality.

## **Exploring How Rural Community Theatre Praxes Help Psychological Rebuilding and Disaster Management and Prevention After Climate Change-induced Problems in Taiwan and the Philippines**

### **1. Investigating How Lingap Sinag Helps Community Members to Employ DRRM to Better Cope with Typhoon-Inflicted Psychological Problems and Better Prevent Future Damages of the Typhoon-related Disasters**

On the other hand, rural areas have faced different challenges before, during, and after natural disasters such as typhoons and floods. NUTN and PETA have also dedicated long-term projects to help their respective rural afflicted communities recover and rebuild their communities psychologically and culturally, as well as to establish their capacity to manage and prevent damages caused by the disasters to the minimum degree through systematic assessment and collaboration within the community. In 2013, after Typhoon Haiyan hit the rural seaside villages in the middle and northern parts of the Philippines, PETA set up the Lingap Sining Project organised and led by Abigail Guanlao-Billones. The project aimed to help the afflicted communities to process and support them psychologically through art-related workshops, as well as establish practical workshops to train the community members in calamity assessment, hazard knowledge, and relevant safety measures when facing natural hazard (Lifestyle.Inq, 2015).

The projects involved schools, parents, teachers, local government, and barangay leaders to build the community's capacity to rebuild their community and move on with life after the disasters. I think it is highly related to what I have argued, emphasising the need to think about effective ways to prevent and prepare our mentality and community to face the future challenges of climate change-induced disasters and crises.

The project has been practiced for more than six years in different rural afflicted communities and has created different drama productions devised with facilitators and various groups of community members to tackle their experiences and reflections on disasters. Among them, *Padayon* is the most popular and heavily toured musical production in the afflicted communities in Leyte. The play was devised and performed with the Leyte community members with the facilitation and collaboration of the PETA director, playwright, and actors, drawing from their reality and imagination of facing the challenges of the flood. The director reflected, saying that, "The residents do not want tragedy anymore in the play; instead, they want something fun and uplifting, a comedy with vaudeville, singing and dancing to share with their community." *Padayon* was thus created based upon local family disputes

caused by business competition, but they were reunited by their children's falling in love with each other and working together to face the challenges of the flood for the whole community.

"Padayon" means "move on" and "go on" in the local dialect, and the play reached thousands of audiences in the rural afflicted communities in Leyte with heartwarming acclaim with its relevant message of community rebuilding and unification, as well as its fun and resilience. The play is presented in the local dialect, Tagalog, and some English to reflect the local character and flair. It successfully toured the rural afflicted communities, conveying its simple but important message of disaster management and prevention through evacuation and communication. The play uses entertaining comedy with song and dance to change the stubbornness of some residents who have the habit of staying behind to watch their familial property and goods during flood calamity and thus lost their lives.

The Lingap Sining Project has engaged professional psychologists in designing the debriefing processing programs for the disaster-afflicted community members through the artistic measures of PETA's Basic Integrated Theatre Arts Workshop (BITAW). It also engaged many community stakeholders from different sections of the community including local civil servants, community leaders, school teachers, school children, and parents to have a holistic impact on the community. The project proved to be very effective in providing support and implementing disaster risk reduction and management in the afflicted community. This coping and adaptation ability-building program is exactly what we need to prepare ourselves and our communities to face the possible challenges that climate change might and will induce in the future. Many participants have been exposed to the project workshops and information, and the municipal mayor Remedios Petilla expressed, "The people are interested in theatre plays. They would rather watch shows than attend meetings, so the message is delivered and well-imprinted in their minds."

*Padayon* reached more than seven thousand rural people since it started.

No matter they are in a school classroom or community outdoor basketball ground, the production gathered its audience's full attention with shining eyes, smiling faces, and lightening hearts after the disaster. This energised the rebuilding of the community and gave them hope, strength and sustainable safety measures to move on with their lives. As the project coordinator, Abigail has proclaimed "DRRM should be a lifestyle... it's a change to educate people who have been caught up in a disaster as their primary concern is to survive... Ensuring safety in a disaster is the most important thing. They need to be able to assess the disaster risk, their capacities, and vulnerabilities ...our perspective on disaster has to change." (De Guzman, 2015)

## **2. Unpacking How *See You Again, Kobayashi Village* Helps Community Members Adapt to the Issues and Losses Caused by Climate Change-related Natural Disasters**

*See You Again, Kobayashi Village* was instigated by the tragedy happening in Typhoon Morakot in 2009, which, with heavy rainfall and floods, caused a serious landslide burying the entire mountain village of Kobayashi in Kaohsiung City. The tragedy resulted in the loss of more than four hundred lives, and many people went missing, and many residents lost their families, properties, and homes. Following the disaster, the author decided to explore the village's history, investigate the reasons for this tragedy, and help the villagers in the psychological rebuilding process. She traced back the history of the town and found out that the village was relocated from Tainan to Kaohsiung during Japanese colonial times by a Japanese policeman named Mr. Kobayashi, so he named the village after his name. That is because the Japanese police wanted to dissipate the anti-Japanese riots led by the Ping Pu indigenous people rampant in the Tainan mountain area during the 1920s in colonial Taiwan. Afterward, the author brought with her two Japanese primary teachers and started her fieldwork in the rebuilt Xiao Ling (Kobayashi's Mandarin name) village. They attended the village's night ritual, which is a local Ping Pu tribe - Tavulong's annual tribal ritual to worship their ancestors during harvest time in the mid-October. Figure 3

shows the field work scene in the memorial park beside the cherry blossoms to mourn for the deceased families in *See You Again, Kobayashi Village*.

**Figure 3**

*The field work scene for "See You Again, Kobayashi Village"*



In the ritual, the descendant villagers of Xiao Ling will come back from cities to gather together to sing, dance, and drink millet wine from the afternoon till the moon is way up in the middle of the sky, with their relatives and families in the village. Almost all the women in the village will prepare food and cook many of their local delicious dishes for the whole community and visitors as a banquet to celebrate their ancestors' yearly homecoming and tribal reunion. However, the author and the two Japanese teachers not only found out the Japanese connection of the village, but also its history of the development and exploitation of its natural resources from Japanese colonial time until the Kuomintang's (also known as the Nationalist Party of China) nationalist rule.

After attending the night ritual and feeling the sadness of the crying ritual from the tribal priest, who has been in a trance for the ancestors to descend and speak through him to convey how sad he or she is to see



the tribe's fate, always wandering without find a place to live in peace and happiness for long, a whole story has emerged in the author's mind, becoming the play *See You Again, Kobayashi Village*. The author was struck by the fact that the mountain area where Xiao Ling's people dwell has long been exploited by Japanese colonial development policy, as well as Kuomintang's nationalist rule's mountain development plan for over a hundred years. She understands that the flood is not the sole reason for this tragedy but rather the accumulated result caused by the long-term exploitation development policy of dominating political governance over the marginalised and assimilated Ping Pu Tribal Tavulong people. The play is written to echo strongly with indigenous reflections on protecting and recovering their own traditional land, culture and philosophy through their own voices, gathered in workshops and interviews, to resist the appropriation of their cultures for commercial gains in a capitalistic society. The play also activated their preservation against the long-term exploitation of different colonial political and economic systems such as Japanese and Kuomintang's political regimes to exploit their forestry, land, and culture of indigenous tribes (Chen, 1999, pp.78-82).

Nevertheless, the author also heard the villagers' voices during the ritual, hoping to preserve and recover their histories and cultures, especially after the flood. The author decided to come to the village to work with the community members to retrieve their oral histories and their memories of their past village life. Employing theatre workshops of working movement, storytelling, and singing, sharing with the four or five community members attending the three-day workshops in 2014, the author has gathered truthful stories from the villagers about their past daily life, exchanging work during harvest time to help each other, and their tribal female ritual in the middle of January in the Lunar calendar for women to drink and dance to their hearts' content. Let alone their resilient and unyielding spirit after the flood to restore their memories, cultures, and traditions, as well as to pass on these precious memories to the next generation.

I remember very clearly they always avoided watching the past



photographs and talking about the past in the beginning. Gradually, through the workshops and sharing, they opened up to talk about their memorable past, and they felt the strong urge to preserve and pass on what they have had in their memory since that is the only way to prove what they have lost now has existed before. In the final performance in Xiao Ling primary school, the community members and many residents all came and shed tears together in the dark while they watched the representation of the night ritual, listened to the university students singing their tribal songs as well, and they shared the survivors' stories of missing their lost families and friends, and they dreamt of their past and the future of the beautiful mountains, trees, and villages intact.

In the rehearsal process, the author brought her university students in their third year taking the course of community theatre in NUTN, who will be performing the villagers in the play, to attend the whole day's ritual in the village from the preparation of the harvest food to interview the community members who shared their life experience in the play as well as to dance and sing with the villagers in the night. The university students have finally come to realise why and how they should perform in the play as the villagers. One of them said, "Standing together and singing and dancing in a circle with the indigenous villagers makes me realise how important the ritual is for everyone in the community to come together as a group of people, living or dead, to make a circle together, to become one and whole again as a group, as a person."

The play employed the Tavulong night ritual's dance steps, singing, and the community members' memories and oral histories of their lives in the village before the flood and after the flood, as well as the working Taiwanese and Hakka song and dance, to reflect the ethnic integration of the village, including all the ethnic groups in Taiwan from all over the island. This aesthetic and ritualistic recuperation is a solid and symbolic way to help the communities recover from the loss of their histories, land, and families after the climate change-induced disasters. Figure 4 shows the ending scene of *See You Again, Kobayashi Village*. The university students reenacted the Ping Pu

tribal ritual to console for the living survivors who lost their loved ones in the landslide there.

**Figure 4**

*The ending scene of See You Again, Kobayashi Village*



It also included the Japanese colonial history and a fictional Japanese policeman's unfulfilled love story with a local village indigenous girl whose husband is an anti-Japanese local rebellious hero, Jiang Bao Cheng, who protested against Japanese over-exploitation of the forest and the local workers. The production even recorded and represented the legend that Jiang Bao Cheng has sacrificed his life for the village, and his body have turned into the mountain wild vegetables to keep on guarding the beautiful forest in his hometown. The university students not only learn to respect and carry on the indigenous Tavulong ancestral ritual and its unique solemn song and dance but also the local history of environmental exploitation and protection.

Most importantly, the play hopes to raise the question of the responsibility of environmental protection and points out that this responsibility is on every person's shoulder, nobody can be a bystander in this war of survival and death. It criticises the government's irresponsibility

in blaming the natural disasters and avoiding taking on the blame for maladministration, as well as the public and media's complicity in their one-sided and short-vision coverage and responses. The indigenous tribe and people of Xiao Ling are treated as scapegoats for the long-term exploitation policy towards our natural environment, and this has been clearly criticised and mourned for in the play as the final act of ritual is to pay tribute to all the sacrificed villagers and warn not to let this happen again in the future, so as to vow to protect our beautiful nature as it is now and forever.

The community members who shared the stories and attended the performance did not say a word; instead, they shed tears together with the cast while watching the show and they cooked two roundtables of delicious local food to thank the performing team from NUTN after the show. Their silent gesture of thanks deeply moved our hearts. I only hope we have fulfilled their dream to pass on their memories of the village's past to the next generation, and I also hope we have expressed through the play that the losses of their families and homes are not inevitable and can be avoided and supervised to prevent it to happen again. They are not in vain, since it exposed the fact that the long-term exploiting policy towards nature is questionable and needs to be highly vigilant and considered in future policy-making in our modern society.

Last but not least, we hope to mourn for the deceased and comfort the living through the ritual in the play. Since the incident is like making a symbolic hole in the village and the whole society, our efforts aim to use the play as a ritual for the community to fill the hole by coming together in a circle as a community in the ritual to heal and comfort one another. Recovering their memories of the lost village and reenacting their cultural rituals and customs through performance can act as part of the healing process for the whole community in their long journey of recovery.

## Rural Community Applied Theatre Projects Can Help to Build Resilience Towards Natural Disasters

Rural community-oriented applied theatre projects always tackle the process of helping rebuild the communities as well as their resilience. Now I would like to investigate how and why these two projects achieved the rebuilding of disintegrated communities caused by natural disasters by employing related healing and resilience-building theories. According to the British Medical Bulletin's 2004, the healing process can involve different levels of organisation and their related mode of healing and mediating processes (Kirmayer, 2004). Applying it to examine the two case studies stated above, we can discover that both projects have involved social, environmental, and community levels of organisation in mobilising the mode of healing in the care of the environment, political, religious, or spiritual activism as well as activating communal and religious ritual to recover the community's morale and collective identity after the climate change-induced disasters.

In *See You Again, Kobayashi Village*, the re-enactment and representation of the night ritual of the community is spiritual as well as environmental activism to reclaim the Ping Pu people's belief and cultural identity in respecting the land and nature, as well as their ancestors, to re-balance nature and culture. The same strategy is applied to *Padayon* for their choice of recovering and protecting the local farming industry by reuniting two disputed families as the community's communal environmental activism and their collaborative spirit in helping each other despite differences as a collective community identity.

The other aspect of healing is through rebuilding the relationship. This can be combined in the resilience building model of applying the five elements of building well-being as well as resilience in terms of Seligman's theory (Seligman, 2011). These five elements are shortened as PERMA: positive emotions, engagement, relationship, meaning, and accomplishment (Seligman, 2011, p.12), and they can be found prevalent and activated in the process of applied theatre projects to help rebuild the resilience of disaster-

afflicted communities. For example, in *See You Again, Kobayashi Village*, the author brought a positive attitude into the Xiao Ling village to support the community members and praise their tenacity in singing games, and then she engaged them in sharing stories of their past life in the village. In the process, the community members built a relationship and bonding in memorising and reconstructing their past together. Through the process, they found out that reconstructing their memories of Xiao Ling Village is the communal meaning they all seek to realise and fulfil.

Finally, they gathered together to approve the story, songs, and dance they shared and recorded by the author. They considered the play a co-created accomplishment and found a sense of satisfaction in the accomplishment of the play and production. Through the sensitive care and bonding process, resilience is gradually and naturally built in the community group. The same situation applies to the Lingap Sining Project, however, on a much larger scale. The Filipino project set out with positive emotions to help the community move forward after the blow of Typhoon Haiyan.

The community-involved workshops engaged all the stakeholders in the different communities for them to debrief the disasters, undergo DRRM training and devise related performances to share with their communities. In the engaging and sharing process, they built a strong relationship and bonding by sharing their similar experiences during the disasters, and it contributed to a part of their healing process. Through the sharing process, they discovered multiple meanings in their shared sufferings and found accomplishment in their creation of artworks, forming their community alliance, and re-building their communities together to enhance their capacities to face the future challenges of their communities. From personal, environmental, and social, as well as community settings, the two projects help rebuild the communities through various and systematic theatre and artistic strategies based upon solid psychologically informed processes.

## Conclusion

Natural disasters brought different communities in Asia together to tackle the challenges from different perspectives and through various strategies from the above analyses. There are similarities and differences in tackling the challenges brought by floods and typhoons in the urban and rural communities in Taiwan and the Philippines. Several conclusive observations can be shared with other communities in the world from these case studies.

First, the goal and style of the praxes can be varied according to the objectives and needs of the communities. The applied theatre praxes created in urban settings tended to aim to raise awareness of environmental protection by exploring conflicts between development and environmental protection through more entertaining styles, such as musicals, to reach a wider urban audience and engender more impact and reflections among different communities.

Second, the applied theatre praxes in rural and urban settings also tried to present different voices and concerns through theatre representations to negotiate and contest different ways and actions to solve the environmental crisis. In the rural communities, the devised applied theatre praxes were more directly inclined to promote and implement the DRRM among various community members or to help the community members with the practical psychological rebuilding process by reconstructing their community histories and rituals through artistic expression and companionship, as well as practicing their ritual reenactment and passing on their traditional songs and dance in the performance. The latter is even more important for the indigenous tribal people whose traditions have already been assimilated into the modern Han culture in Taiwan. The direct representation of the disaster-afflicted experience is usually avoided and transformed to lessen the exploitation of the afflicted communities.

Third, the emphasis on environmental aesthetics and ethics, including

the Chinese, Asian traditions and indigenous environmental aesthetics and ethics, is prominent and prevalent in these case studies. Nature is portrayed as a home for all living beings, so one should be restrained in exploiting its natural resources to ensure a liveable environment. Taoist philosophy echoes the Asian indigenous way of living with hunter-gatherer and limited farming style to develop nature according to its original nature, and let nature has enough time to rest to recover itself (Wang, 2001; Chen, 2015). Additionally, the idea and action of unification of nature and humans in the landscape, which also means that man should be in harmony and balance with nature, echoing the contemporary eco-humanism. As in *If We Still Have Tomorrow*, the indigenous leader, Malos, considers nature as his mother, and he does not see nature as an object but as a subject to give him life and resources to nurture him and his tribal community. This contrasts with the three brothers who consider nature as an object for them to develop and exploit to fulfil human needs, leading to the disasters destroying all living beings in the end. This is the idea of respecting nature in awe and beauty which reflects the indigenous pantheist belief and the ancient Chinese mythology to perceive natural landscapes such as mountains, rivers, and lakes as Gods and Goddesses. One should follow the rules and orders of nature, and appreciate as well as cherish its magnificent and subtle beauty since they are holy. Failure to abide by these rules may result in punishment by Gods and Goddesses, since they disrespect the rule of nature and ruin the natural beauty (Chen, 2015). That is why the lake was portrayed as Goddesses to reflect its beauty in the play *If We Still Have Tomorrow*.

The indigenous people were portrayed as keener to the awareness of living in harmony with nature however they tended to be marginalised and silenced by the political and economic dominating groups of people. The play criticised harshly that the rough, under-evaluated, and interest-oriented environmental decisions will often lead to communal destruction.

Fourth, the re-unification of the communities through disasters, as well as the recuperation of local or indigenous cultures and industries, have been highlighted and upheld in these case studies as effective ways to rebuild the

afflicted communities as a whole. For example, *Padayon* pointed out that the local industry can win for all only if the competitive families unite to develop the traditional farming industry after the flood. *Rak of Aegis* presented how the leading daughter's creative idea and tenacious spirit can help save the shaky traditional community shoe industry.

In *See You Again, Kobayashi Village*, all the painful memories seemed to be uplifted and redeemed in the solemn communal singing and dancing in a circle during the performance. It reflected and demonstrated the importance of recovering the indigenous cultures and rituals to re-establish their identity and dignity. This is no less significant than rebuilding their houses and businesses to ensure their well-being and sustainability in the future (Huang, 2009; Chen, 2011; Chen, 2013) Disasters also dissipate the cultural differences among Japan, the Philippines, and Taiwan. People seem to be equal in suffering the terror of flood threat and the loss of loved ones, cherished possessions, homes, and belongings in the overwhelming disasters.

Compassion, empathy and sympathy thus naturally emerged to help one another survive the disasters, reflecting the reality in Asia's aid connection during flood as well as in *If We Still Have Tomorrow*. However, there are still people taking advantage of the disasters to make profits from the afflicted, employing the capitalistic system and ideology, as well as media, to traffic the relief aid and perpetuate the disaster state without really wanting to improve after the disaster, as *Rak of Aegis* poignantly revealed and criticised.

In the new normal time in which we come to terms with natural disasters as normal, the four case studies explored here provided concrete ways to present people's problems in tackling environmental issues in different communities through various theatre projects. They also documented and tested various strategies that people can employ to design and devise these theatre projects to help their communities in different contexts.



Most importantly, they also offer their philosophical, aesthetic, and ethical insight into how we can live in harmony with our communal nature, resorting to Asian, Chinese, and indigenous traditional environmental philosophy in the hope that we will all sustain a better tomorrow if we all take actions to protect our environment in each decision we may face and make each day. It also resonates strongly with Daura's insight that the key to solving the crisis of global modernity is to go back to review historical circular history (which he argues with historical evidence that Asia used to be the most civilised society on earth but it got overthrown by other civilisations which valued material culture over spiritual culture, but he warns that history always repeats itself if it does not learn from itself) and he suggests we all go back to re-utilise Asian traditions to have a sustainable future for the whole world (Duara, 2014).

## Notes

- 1 The 311 Tsunami in Japan happened on 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2011 causing approximately 18,430 deaths or disappearances, and more than 25,000 houses were destroyed. Hundreds of thousands of people were left homeless, and a power plant experienced a nuclear radiation leak, severely affecting the neighboring communities, crops and food. Typhoon Haiyan happened in Vesaya and the central area of the Philippines on 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2013, causing 5,680 deaths, and leaving 10 million and 124 thousand people homeless. The Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) program has thus been initiated and implemented by PETA to help strengthen people's awareness and prevent further damage after flood disasters. Typhoon Morakot happened in Southern Taiwan on 8<sup>th</sup> August, 2009, causing 681 deaths. The Kobayashi village was buried in a landslide, claiming 474 lives in 169 families. The village was where a Ping Pu tribal division - Tavulon tribe dwelt and lived in peacefully and happily, after they have been moved from Tainan to Kaohsiung in the Japanese colonial time due to an anti-Japanese riot broke out in Yujing, Tainan. The Japanese government intended to dissipate the tribal congregational power to stop the riot. These consecutive and serious tsunamis and typhoons in Asia have brought many casualties and also prompted a shift in policy-making in Taiwan to prevent future damage, as well as a recall of recuperating Asian traditional philosophy of co-living peacefully and harmoniously with nature in general social psychology. There is also a great deal of evocation and discussion about returning to indigenous wisdom and their way of natural living without destroying the environment further, so that nature can be recovered from economic destruction and withstand the environmental challenges that climate change might bring for the future.

- 2 Liu (2013) also illustrated Laozi's idea to adapt to our contemporary environmental protection strategies such as the simplicity of employing natural resources rather than exploitation, and equality among all living beings besides human beings including animals, plants, insects as well as bacteria. He also advocates the humility of human beings and humble to the greater power of nature to respect it in awe.

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# 菲律賓與台灣的社區參與式劇場如何藉由戲劇創作展演面對由氣候變遷所引發的天然災害相關之議題探討及其相應之另類哲學與美學策略之探究分析

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## 摘要

面對眾多由地理位置與文化建構所造成的社群及人群距離，在颱風、水災和自然資源過度耗損的亞洲情形尤為劇烈。因此，許多地處在全球南方位置的菲律賓和台灣的社區劇場工作者，開始嘗試減少各種距離，也藉由社區劇場反思許多氣候變遷之下所引發的環境天災挑戰，以及四齣劇場創作所提出對應的不同美學策略。

當中包括了城鄉差距的社區劇場音樂劇和鄉間與民眾共同一起創作發展的社區敘事劇場，這四齣戲運用了大量的大眾劇場策略以及原住民的祭典歌舞，也引用了原住民的自然哲學與亞洲的老莊思想中的環境自然倫理哲學，來提供當代氣候變遷下全球環境危機的另類面對及調整之道。另一方面，也提出藝術陪伴以及化解紛爭凝聚社區認同的美學策略，同時也協助災區的居民做心理韌性的建立與防災知識和策略的訓練與覺察，希望能夠協助居民面對未來的天然災害。

**關鍵詞：**社區參與創作為基礎的音樂劇、社區參與式劇場創作、跨文化劇場、環境保護、亞洲自然哲學