BERKELEY REP’S CHINGLISH:
SO GOOD IN SO-CAL, SOLD OUT IN HONG KONG!

Hi, folks-

Berkeley Rep is thrilled by the early reports on its first export to Asia: *Chinglish has already sold every ticket for its hotly anticipated appearance at the Hong Kong Arts Festival* next month! The 1,200-seat Lyric Theatre at the Hong Kong Academy for the Performing Arts is filled to capacity for eight shows from March 1 through March 6, including prime seats snapped up by passionate fans from the Bay Area. As one reviewer wrote, we can’t wait "to see how the other half laughs."

Speaking of reviews, we also want to congratulate the cast, crew, and creative team for the raves that are rolling in right now down in Costa Mesa. *Chinglish* is a co-production with South Coast Repertory, where it continues through February 24.

Check out what they're saying in Southern California:

- **Los Angeles Times:** “Impressive… The play, which had a modest run on Broadway last season and is now at South Coast Repertory in a tip-top co-production with Berkeley Repertory Theatre, was underappreciated in New York. Directed by Leigh Silverman, who staged the work on Broadway, *Chinglish* gleams with witty intelligence about the dizzying divide that separates the world’s two economic superpowers… Krusiec’s Xi makes a particularly sharp impression. She’s at once seductive and terrorizing, a master manipulator of a system no outsider can possibly figure out.”

- **LA Weekly:** “Outstanding… Verbally thrilling playwright David Henry Hwang uses these misadventures in translation as a springboard into a fascinating tale of colliding cultures in a new world… Hwang slyly captures the cliché about Asian inscrutability with remarkably biting humor as well as sharp ethical questioning of capitalism, international distrust and the meaning of marriage… Sex, corporate intrigue and political conspiracy swirl through director Leigh Silverman's fast-paced, brilliantly acted production. That swirl is matched by David Korins' perfectly crafted sets, which move in fascinating patterns through the nimble use of two turntables.”

- **Back Stage:** “Darkly comic… a dazzling, intimate, brutally funny, and frighteningly honest look at a communications gap that even the most brilliant interpreter could never hope to bridge… Hwang brilliantly blends character, dialogue, and the idea that even when bilingual interpreters are present, translations are fraught with errors and misconceptions, resulting in an often uproarious mangling of both languages. Unlike his characters, Hwang’s text has no weaknesses, the product of a deft writer and observer of human nature working at the top of his game. His tragicomic masterpiece of failed communication captures the complexities of all human relationships. At South Coast Repertory, Leigh Silverman, who also directed the show on Broadway, has fielded an outstanding cast and a superb production team.”

- **Hollywood Reporter:** “Compelling… For all its unremitting relevance, this persistently funny and uncomfortably timely play boasts the bones of vaudeville comedy routines… The production is sharply turned out, light on its feet, with a refreshing pace of forward momentum, especially for a two-act rib-tickler. For a show in which the English supertitles often get the actual laughs, the actors display impeccable timing… The bottom line: Pointed comedy of linguistic and cultural misunderstandings makes accessible the important challenges of communication in the modern global village.”

(MORE)
• **LA Stage Times:** “A winner… You might say that *Chinglish* is a sex farce, or you might say that it’s a romantic comedy – depending on which character’s perspective you prefer. Of course it’s also a satirical comedy about the gulf between these two cultures – and the paradoxical fact that each culture finds aspects of the other culture irresistible. *Chinglish* itself becomes irresistible, given this potent combination of themes and characters who are so far removed from the themes and characters who usually populate our stages. And the staging by Leigh Silverman, who directed it on Broadway and of course at Berkeley, is exceptional.”

• **Orange County Register:** “Endlessly crafty… An intricate game of power politics and competing interests… Moggridge is the picture of American can-do optimism, but his white-bread Midwestern demeanor hides more complex machinations that fool even seasoned Chinese businesspeople, as we discover during late-play revelations. Krusiec toggles enticingly between icy hauteur and passion, and you’re never quite sure where her allegiances reside. Ma’s jolly Cai is a delicious character – a backslapping, two-faced old politico, a familiar figure in any culture, who has no idea that he’s being outfoxed. And Nishii finds an undertone of rage and frustration in Peter, a character who might bring Neil Heywood to mind, the British businessman who met a bad end under mysterious circumstances in China.”

• **LAist:** “An entirely theatrical delight… a smart, funny look at cultural differences… Leigh Silverman's direction is deft, swiftly paced and alive to every detail... Hwang's play is clever, moving and perspicacious, and has the added virtue of being entirely of the present. It's not political, but the wisdom of this microcosm can certainly apply to our macrocosm.”

• **LA Splash:** “Brilliant… Magical… Tony Award-winning playwright David Henry Hwang explores the issues of language barriers and misunderstandings in his hilarious and insightful comedy … The actors’ fluency and eloquence of the adapted dialogue is a feat to behold, as well as their group chemistry on stage. As the two leads in the production, Moggridge and Krusiec possess that necessary romantic and especially comedic chemistry which beautifully drives the smooth pacing of the play without it being rushed. Their enjoyment with each other during their scenes is evident; they are having fun during their comedic and tender moments.”

• **Theater Times:** “Hilarious… a delightfully even-handed comedy about misinterpretation between American and Chinese business partners. *Chinglish*, at South Coast Repertory in the second part of a two-company West Coast premiere, heads to Hong Kong next month to see how the other half laughs. Like the play's characters, who struggle to get a piece of potential Sino-American trade, the play itself has opportunities to foster and profit from cooperation between the countries. And, as the groundbreakers often do, *Chinglish* sets a high standard, integrating the conceptual subject of global commerce with the personal business of human emotions. As she did with Hwang's under-appreciated *Yellow Face*, director Leigh Silverman sounds each comic style Hwang touches – from romantic to political to screwball – while letting the deeper strata resonate.”

Berkeley Rep has a long history of presenting work by Asian and Asian-American artists, yet this will be the first time that one of its shows is seen on the other side of the Pacific. We are enormously proud to be part of this international adventure.

Thanks as always for your time and attention,

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For more details on *Chinglish* in Hong Kong, click here.

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