This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity.

Dramatic Publishing
SUN YAT SEN
IN THE MOUTH OF
THE DRAGON

A Play in Three Acts
by
EDWARD F. EMANUEL

Dramatic Publishing
Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

© The Dramatic Publishing Company, Woodstock, Illinois
*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty fees are given in our current catalog and are subject to change without notice. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. All inquiries concerning amateur and stock rights should be addressed to:

DRAMATIC PUBLISHING
P. O. Box 129, Woodstock, Illinois 60098

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR’S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including but not limited to the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

For performance of any songs and recordings mentioned in this play which are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

© MMI by
EDWARD F. EMANUEL

Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved
(SUN YAT SEN IN THE MOUTH OF THE DRAGON)

ISBN 1-58342-041-X
IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the play must give credit to the author(s) of the play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The name of the author(s) must also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and must appear in size of type not less than fifty percent the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author(s), if included in this book, may be used on all programs. On all programs this notice must appear:

“Produced by special arrangement with
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY of Woodstock, Illinois”
From the Playwright

*Sun Yat Sen In the Mouth of the Dragon* is based on the life of Dr. Sun Yat Sen, the founding father of the Republic of China. The play is based on the original writings by Dr. Sun and on contemporary news commentary detailing the twelve days in which he was held against his will in the Manchu Legation, London, October 10-22, 1896. Much of the play represents my dramatic interpretation of the events that took place in Dr. Sun’s life at this time. What is not dramatic interpretation is my undying admiration for his personal accomplishments, contributions to world democracy and unflagging devotion to the welfare of China. It is not my intention to glorify or deify Dr. Sun, although it may seem that way by the end of the play, but to represent what I think is the dynamic transformation of a good and honorable man to the status of a super patriot at a level rarely seen in history. This is a play that forges recognition of the truth out of the fire of near failure and threatened murder.

** * * * **

A Chinese translation by Mickey Lin Emanuel, James Shen and Lena Tsai is available through the publisher.

There is a percussion score available for the script composed by Louis Labovitch. He may be contacted through my office:

Edward Emanuel
California State University, Fresno, Dept. of Theatre Arts
5201 N. Maple Ave., Fresno CA 93740-0046
Ph: (209) 278-3987
Fax: (209) 278-7215
*Sun Yat Sen In the Mouth of the Dragon* gave its premiere performance at the California State University, Fresno, December 1999. The production was directed by Edward EmanuEl and included the following artists:

Sun Yat Sen  
Tang  
Guan Yu, the Red-Faced General  
Sir Halliday Macartney  
Sir James Cantlie  
Mrs. Cantlie  
Minister Gong  
Feng Ling  
George Cole  
Confucius  
Thomas Jefferson  
Dowager Empress of China  
Mother Sun/China  
Brother Sun  
Police Inspector  
Fitzhugh  
Reporters 1,2,3  
Cleaning Woman  
Emperor Chin  
Policeman  
Little Emperor of China  
Ping Ting  
Choreographer/Featured Dancer  
School Kids  

Khetphet Phagnasay  
Michael Reaves  
Hong P. Inthavong  
Josh Feemster  
James Runcorn  
Tena M. Runcorn  
Varten Hekimian  
Noé Espinoza Sanchez  
A. Robert Jacobs  
Chris Raiskup  
Scott J. Davis  
Shanna Lisa Scheppner  
Kristen Anne Aldana  
Leng Her  
Louis Labovitch  
Heath Kishpaugh  
Joseph Rosati  
Amy L. Wehrell  
Carlos Renteria  
A. Carlos Serrano  
Darrel Weng  
Elijah Runcorn  
Yu-Hsueh Wu  
Emily Barth,  
Maryann Barth,  
Ryan Reaves
Thugs, Soldiers, People of the Royal Court

JOSEPH ROSATI, ELVIA BAROCIO, DEAWNA MCGINLEY, BIANCA MARTINEZ, NICOLE HEDGES, JAMES R. MEDEIROS III, CARLOS RENTERIA, CHRISTOPHER ANTONIO VALLEZ JR.

Chinese Cast
(in alphabetical order)

MENG-CHIANG CHEN
SAIHON CHEN
BETS CHOU
MICKEY LIN EMANUEL
JOHN FU
IVAN HOONG
CIAO KU
SEW-PING LAI
JAMES SHEN

Production Staff and Crew

Scene Design: JEFF HUNTER
Lighting Design: CHRIS SOUSA-WYNN
Costume Design: M.C. DRAKE
Audio Design: DAN CARRION
Original Music Composed and Performed by: LOUIS LABOVITCH
Stage Manager: JENNIFER MARKS
Asst. Stage Manager/Crew Chief: KEVIN SIKORA

© The Dramatic Publishing Company, Woodstock, Illinois
Synopsis of Scenes

This play takes place in the mind of Dr. Sun Yat Sen while he was held captive and tortured in the Manchu Legation, London, October 10-22, 1896, to force him to confess to acts of treason against China so that he could be taken back to Peking and executed.

Act One
Scene 1. Court of Emperor Chin, First Emperor of China
Scene 2. Manchu Legation/Dr. Sun’s prison cell, October 22, 1896
Scene 3. Dr. Sun’s prison cell, October 22, 1896
Scene 4. A street in London, October 10, 1896
Scene 6. A street in London, October 10, 1896
Scene 7. Dr. Sun’s prison cell, October 11, 1896
Scene 8. A Chinese school in Hsiangshan village, 1876

Act Two
Scene 1. Manchu Court in the Forbidden City, Peking, 1861
Scene 2. Dr. Sun’s prison cell, October 13, 1896
Scene 3. A police station, London, October 13, 1896
Scene 6. Hsiangshan Kwangtung Province, 1879
Scene 7. Honolulu, 1879
Scene 8. A police station, London, October 14, 1896
Scene 9. Weymouth Street, London, October 14, 1896
Scene 10. Portland Place West, London, October 14, 1896
Scene 13. Dr. Sun’s prison cell, October 16, 1896
Scene 14. The Forbidden City, Peking, 1896

Ace Three
Scene 1. Manchu Legation, London, October 20, 1896
Scene 2. Dr. Sun’s prison cell, October 21, 1896
Scene 3. A battlefield, China, 3rd century B.C.
Scene 4. Dr. Sun’s prison cell, October 22, 1896
Scene 5. In front of Manchu Legation, London, October 22, 1896

© The Dramatic Publishing Company, Woodstock, Illinois
SUN YAT SEN IN THE MOUTH OF THE DRAGON

A Play in Three Acts
For 25 roles plus ensemble as needed
May be doubled to 12 actors (10 m., 2 w.)

CHARACTERS

SUN YAT SEN
TANG
GUAN YU, THE RED-FACED GENERAL
SIR HALLIDAY MACARTNEY
SIR JAMES CANTLIE
MRS. CANTLIE
MINISTER GONG
FENG LING
GEORGE COLE
CONFUCIUS
THOMAS JEFFERSON
DOWAGER EMPRESS OF CHINA
MOTHER SUN/CHINA
BROTHER SUN
POLICE INSPECTOR
FITZHUGH
REPORTERS 1,2,3
CLEANING WOMAN
EMPEROR CHIN
POLICEMAN
THUGS, SOLDIERS, PEOPLE OF THE ROYAL COURT
LITTLE EMPEROR OF CHINA
SCHOOL CHILDREN
CHOREOGRAPHER/FEATURED DANCER
ACT ONE

SCENE 1
Court of Emperor Chin, 3rd century.

(The theater is dark. We hear the sounds of distant drums which come closer and closer. The drums are mixed with gongs. Lights come up revealing the proces­sional entrance of the court of Emperor Chin, the first Emperor of China. It is opulent. We see soldiers, courte­sans, courtiers, entertainers of all sorts including tum­blers and acrobats. The court is busy and noisy. Sud­denly, an incredibly loud gong is heard and all members of the court turn toward the direction of an elegant silk, sedan chair bedecked in jewels being brought on stage on the backs of four guards. The drums take up a wild cadence. The guards place the sedan chair, which is closed to the view of the audience, on a platform over­looking the court. The prime minister of the court, TANG, takes his position next to the sedan chair. TANG lifts his hand and the drums and gongs come to an end.)

TANG. China! This is China!

(The curtains around the sedan chair are drawn away revealing the magnificent EMPEROR CHIN. All of the actors bow to EMPEROR CHIN except for one who was masked from the audience’s view while the previous ac-
tion was going on. All fall to the floor in complete obeisance. Only one peculiarly dressed person, DR. SUN YAT SEN, remains standing in the middle of the stage. SUN is dressed in a bloody, white shirt, black pants and shoes of the 1890s. He looks broken and tired. He lifts his head to stare at TANG and EMPEROR CHIN. Slowly EMPEROR CHIN rises and steps out of the sedan chair. He looks at SUN. EMPEROR CHIN stares at TANG but says nothing.

TANG. His Imperial Majesty, the great Chin, Emperor of China, conqueror of nations, glorious in all ways, magnificent in name and spirit, bringer of wealth... (EMPEROR CHIN raises his hand as a signal to TANG that he has given enough introductions.) Who are you?

SUN (hesitates, as if trying to understand the question). I... don’t know.

(There is a loud rumbling from the court which stops as EMPEROR CHIN comes to the edge of the platform and looks directly into SUN’s face. TANG follows closely behind EMPEROR CHIN.)

TANG. His divine presence demands that you bow. (SUN tries to lower his head and bend his body but something keeps him from doing it.) Bow or die! (Immediately, several guards lift their axes and surround SUN.) The Emperor wants to know who you are and why you won’t bow to his exalted presence! Bow! This is China!

SUN. I... want to bow... I’m trying to bow... help me!
(TANG comes all the way down the stairs and whispers in SUN's ear.)

TANG. Do you want to die?
SUN. No ...
TANG. Then bow ...
SUN. I can't.
TANG. Now ...
SUN. I'm trying ...
TANG. Hurry, or you'll die.
SUN. No! No, don't kill me! I want to bow.
TANG. Emperor! He won't bow! He can't bow to China!

(The entire stage erupts in chaos! The court screams and rages at SUN. The guards lift their axes and begin to swing down on SUN. SUN breaks away from the crowd and races up the stairs. He stands face to face with EMPEROR CHIN. Everybody on stage freezes.)

SUN. Emperor Chin... you are a god... you are China!

(SUN tries to bow but he can't. EMPEROR CHIN slowly shakes his head.)

TANG. The Emperor says that you cannot bow to China because you are China's mortal enemy! You are the dagger at our throat, the poison in our tea, you are the destroyer of 5,000 years of Chinese culture!

(Again the stage erupts in chaos but this time the court vanishes. EMPEROR CHIN, the sedan chair, everybody except SUN and TANG have vanished. The lights have

© The Dramatic Publishing Company, Woodstock, Illinois
erupted into the same chaos but eventually focus on SUN who is in agony on the platform. The noise in the court has become a recorded cacophony and then fades out. Slowly the lights come up revealing TANG, now dressed in the European fashion of the 1890s. He stands behind SUN."

SCENE 2
Manchu Legation/Dr. Sun’s prison cell, Oct. 22, 1896.

TANG. You look tired. Please, sit down. Have some tea, something to eat... How long have you been without food? What is it now? You came to us twelve days ago...
SUN. I did not come to you...
TANG. Of course you did...you came to the legation to recruit us for your revolution...you thought we were all as disloyal to China and to the Emperor as you.
SUN. I was kidnapped! I was taken off the street against my will...you kidnapped me!
TANG. It never happened...
SUN. It’s true!
TANG. It’s not!
SUN. You did!
TANG. I did not. We had nothing to do with it! You had a guilty conscience, perhaps? Maybe that was it...you knew that your public statements, your traveling to the United States and then here in London, spreading your sedition, your treason, your hate for China... You see you’re weak...you’re hungry...you’re in need of refreshment...tea...have some tea, Sun Wen.
SUN. Sun Yat Sen... Dr. Sun Yat...
TANG. Sun Wen... and maybe you’re a doctor... maybe not... Have some tea... can I interest you in some green tea... hot green tea... soothing... medicinal... green tea... and maybe a cookie... a small almond cookie? We make them in our kitchen... our chef is famous. And he’s a proud man. He’s lost a great deal of honor because you won’t drink his tea... or eat his food. What do you say, Sun Wen?

SUN. Sun Yat Sen... Dr.... Sun Yat Sen...
TANG. Tea?
SUN. Yes.
TANG. Yes?
SUN. Yes.
TANG. Yes to what? Yes that your name is Sun Wen? Yes that you’re an enemy of China! Yes that you are the leader of a seditionist gang of terrorists called Young China! Yes that you want to destroy all that is Chinese! (Begins to fly into a terrible rage.) Yes that you are a coward and a traitor! Yes that every breath you take suffocates the Chinese peasants who can only survive because they are bound spiritually and culturally and faithfully to our Emperor! Yes to the fact that you’re in league with this rotting, opium-pimping British vampire government that will not be satisfied until every Chinese lord and peasant sits on the filthy ground with glassy eyes and drool running down his unshaven chin! Is this what you’re saying yes to, Sun Wen?!

(There is a pause after this furious onslaught by TANG. Slowly SUN YAT SEN speaks.)
SUN. Yes...I would like some green tea...hot...and perhaps a cookie...please.

(TANG smiles. He reaches into his pocket and takes out a silver bell. He shakes it once. At the sound of the bell GEORGE COLE enters. He is a major-domo of sorts. He is in his 20s. He limps. His face is bandaged. He has a tray of hot tea, two cups, and cookies. He comes to a table and sets it down. He stares at SUN. SUN looks at him. COLE looks at the tea and the cookies and then back to SUN. COLE tries to talk. This exchange gets TANG's attention.)

TANG. That's enough, Mr. Cole. I'll take care of our Sun Wen.

(COLE nods and steps back. TANG pours the tea but only one cup. He takes a cookie and puts it on a plate and hands the tea and cookie to SUN. SUN stares at the drink and food. Then he stares at COLE.)

TANG. Mr. Cole is silent. I have his tongue in my pocket. Go on, enjoy the tea...have some.
SUN. Aren't you having any?
TANG. No...too rich for me...might disagree with me...and besides, this was prepared just for you, Sun Wen.
SUN (picks up the cookie and smells it). It smells bitter.
TANG. Must be the almonds...almonds smell bitter...go on, drink the tea...or does it smell bitter too?

(SUN YAT SEN smells the tea and then pushes it away. He takes a position indicating that he won't eat or drink.)

© The Dramatic Publishing Company, Woodstock, Illinois
TANG. I see. The chef has taken great pain to prepare this and you have insulted him again. (Turns to COLE.) Go on. Tell the chef what has happened. Tell him he has displeased Sun Yat Sen. Write it down. He isn’t fit to live! Tell him that he embarrassed me and dishonored me before this man, this doctor... Go on, tell him.

(COLE nods and exits.)

SUN. That wasn’t necessary.

TANG. I have a paper for you to sign. I’ve promised my superiors that you will sign it. If you don’t sign it I’ll be embarrassed. I’ll be dishonored. Go on... read it... go on, read... but sign it.

(TANG hands SUN the paper. SUN stares at TANG without reading.)

SUN. I can’t sign this... this isn’t true... It’s a confession... and I have nothing to confess... I didn’t do any of these things. I am not an enemy of China! I am not an enemy of the Chinese people!

TANG. I told you that if you don’t sign this I’ll be dishonored just the way you’ve dishonored the chef... didn’t you hear me? Don’t you understand?

SUN. You’ve been giving me lies to sign for twelve days.

TANG. What’s a lie? What’s the truth? What difference does it make? It’ll settle everything. You’ll be set free... Isn’t that what you want, Sun Wen? You want to walk out of this place to the open arms of all those fawning English peasants downstairs? All your friends! All your supporters! Isn’t that it?
SUN. You’ll let me go?

TANG. Free as the sunrise. Just chop your name... Sun Wen. And... tell us where to find the other names on the list at the bottom... you see that list? That’s all.

SUN. That’s all... just sign my name and help you find these people.

TANG. As a loyal Chinese subject to the Emperor... but of course there’ll be a small punishment for your bad behavior... what you’ve done to your hair... And we didn’t like several speeches that you gave criticizing China... so maybe your tongue will have to be... well, compared to what might happen to you... what will happen to you... it’s a small price. Go on, sign. (SUN slowly tears the paper in half and throws it on the floor. TANG kneels on the floor and picks up the pieces.) I’m very disappointed. You didn’t drink our tea. You didn’t taste our cookie. You didn’t sign our paper. There’s a price to pay for all of this. Twelve days you’ve been here and you’ve learned nothing... it makes me sad. You ignore all of my arguments... I’m just trying to save your life... we both want that, don’t we Sun Wen? (Suddenly we hear a scream from downstairs. TANG ignores it.) That was the chef. He cut his finger. It’s bleeding. He’ll bleed to death. Too bad. I liked him. I liked him very much. (TANG turns to leave. Before he exits he turns back to SUN.) Sun Wen... did I tell you how much I like you. I like you very much.

(The screams continue. He stares at SUN YAT SEN and then exits. SUN puts his hands over his ears and the screams stop. The lights dim in SUN’s prison room. TANG walks down the stairs to what appears to be the
central room of the legation. There is a large Englishman waiting there. He is a well-dressed man in his 60s. He is SIR HALLIDAY MACARTNEY. He is pacing. He smokes a cigar. When he sees TANG he looks anxiously at him.)

MACARTNEY. Well? Mr. Tang? Did he sign the document? Mr. Tang?

TANG. No. We'll have to kill him.

MACARTNEY. Not until he signs... and not here... You're still trying to poison him, aren't you? I've told you that we can't kill him in the legation! It can't be done! The legal consequences would sink us all!

TANG. And we can't smuggle him out because of the crowds hanging about the street and the police and the news reporters and his friends... how did he make so many friends in such a short time?!

MACARTNEY. We have a problem here, you know that, don't you? A huge problem and not easily solved. Are you listening to me? I'm under investigation by the Foreign Office! I could be arrested at any moment! We've got to settle this thing right now! Tang! Pay attention! The sky is falling, man, and it's going to crush all of us!

TANG. I know, I know... and it's all your fault.

MACARTNEY. What are you saying? Are you crazy?

TANG. You know what I'm saying! Don't play the fool with me, you know exactly what I'm saying!

MACARTNEY. If you had taken my advice, nothing like this...

TANG. And I'll see that the Emperor knows exactly what...
MACARTNEY. The Emperor! It's not the Emperor I'm afraid of! No, no, no! It's the Dowager Empress! She'll cut our throats.

TANG. Cut your salary! That's what you mean!

MACARTNEY. Same thing to me, Mr. Tang! My money is my life! I've got a soft job here. Easy money. Big money and I'm not going to lose it because of some wild-eyed fanatic with delusions of an ethical revolution that nobody in the world cares about!

TANG. He cares about it! He cares! Don’t you see, you selfish, greedy, ignorant, pompous ghost!

MACARTNEY. I beg your pardon!

TANG. Haven't you learned anything about this man? He'll destroy 5,000 years of Chinese civilization with this insane notion that Chinese peasants ought to govern themselves! Don’t you see, you Anglo pimp, you degenerate agent of western civilization! ...this man, this Sun Yat Sen could bring an end to a way of life...to a culture that I have sworn an oath and promised to defend to the death! This isn't some legal game we're playing here, some foolish burlesque-house comedy! That man upstairs is no clown! He's a devil! And I will kill him! Listen to me! I will kill him! And I don't care what the "legal consequences" are. Sun Yat Sen and what he represents will die...no discussion...no debate...no advice!

MACARTNEY. You hate him that much.

TANG. No...I don’t hate him...I hate you. I hate Britain... I hate every western rapist and carpetbagger from Marco Polo to Queen Victoria... No, I don’t hate Sun Yat Sen... I’m afraid of him.