

Fringe 2025: Practice of ZEN

AISYA IMYA · CULTURE · FRINGE · FRINGE 2025 · THEATRE · 2 WEEKS AGO · 1 MIN READ



★★★★★

Practice of ZEN is a beautiful, poignant performance piece, following the legend of Wuxia — a mythical world that contains ancient martial artists armed with supernatural powers (translating to “martial arts and chivalry”). We follow the tale of a heroine navigating fate and emotional complexity, as she interacts with different characters along the way, who will ultimately impact her, and who she is.

With the performers acting in the foreground, there lay a screen beside them for subtitles in English, live-translating the audible Cantonese in the actors’ scripts. At first, I was hesitant about whether this factor would disturb my viewing of the show, from having to focus on both the acting and the subtitles, but I was quickly proven wrong as the plot started to unfold.

Accompanying the eloquent combination of lighting and music, the acting felt harmonious and held a perfect, smooth flow amongst the cast’s chemistry.

The storytelling created by the director, playwright, stage designer and founder of Theatre Ronin, Alex Tam, is exquisite in its own unique way. The main cast of four (To Yim Shan, Wong Ka Chun, Choy Kai Fung, and Ng Wing Ha) deliver a balance of impressive acting, shadow puppetry and regular puppetry, and a beautiful display of martial arts to the audience. Their ability to switch between multitudes of different characters alludes to the actors’ incredible talents – to the point where I felt like I was enraptured, witnessing this tale with complete interest and my mouth agape.

Overall, *Practice of ZEN* allowed me to ponder on what the meaning of life is. In terms of how we conceptualise emotions like resentment, peace, karma — and what we, as humans, choose to do with these emotions and whether we should enact upon them or let fate take its course.

Image by Fung Wai Sun, provided to The Student as press.

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