



China // Theatre

TWO DOGS

National Theatre of China

Director Meng Jinghui

A hilariously dark comedy following the trials and tribulations of a couple of country canines heading for the big smoke, China's most popular contemporary drama, *Two Dogs* comes to Melbourne for the very first time.

A story of two brother dogs and the hardship and injustices they encounter as they travel to the city to pursue their dreams, when they fall into a metropolitan miasma of reality TV, Viagra, SARS and Louis Vuitton knockoffs, they begin to realise a dog's life is not what it used to be.

Pinballing from punk rock to commedia dell'arte, broad slapstick to delicate social satire, performers **Liu Xiaoye** and **Han Pengyi** have notched up more than 1,000 performances in the lead roles as these resilient canines. Staged on a minimal and modern set, with an ever-flexible script, impeccable timing and rapid-fire delivery, this comfortably twinned comedy duo are a guarantee that no two shows are ever the same.

The smash-hit success of this production has been attributed to its representative storytelling on the frustrations and suffering of the lower class in China. Light hearted on the surface, with tragic connotations, *Two Dogs* practices a kind of comic acupuncture on the nerve points of both Chinese and global culture.

Last seen in Melbourne in 2014 to direct *The Good Person of Szechuan* at Malthouse Theatre and also at the 2011 Melbourne Festival with *Rhinoceros in Love*, one of the most influential theatre mavericks in Asia today, avant-garde director **Meng Jinghui** returns with this record breaking production. Meng has established his position as one of China's most successful directors: broadly considered a cult superstar, he has deconstructed classic works and reinterpreted absurdist theatre of the West, but most of all through staged his own experimental works.

Founded in 2001, combining the former China National Youth Theatre and China National Experimental Theatre, the National Theatre Company of China is the largest state performing arts organisation of the People's Republic of China, based in Beijing. They strive to create and perform both Chinese and foreign dramas of excellence, exploring

"A tossed salad of improv, rock music, Laurel-and-Hardy-style double act and careful social satire." – Washington Post (USA)

THE COOPERS MALHOUSE
MERLYN THEATRE
THU 06 – SUN 09 OCTOBER

Thu-Sat 7.30pm
Sun 5pm

1 hr 45 mins, no interval
Mandarin with English surtitles
A Reserve \$49 / \$39
B Reserve \$39 / \$29
Students \$25

www.festival.melbourne
The Coopers Malthouse
03 9685 5111
#melbfest

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both classical and experimental forms of theatrical arts and have toured internationally to Edinburgh Festival, Hong Kong Arts Festival, Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London, to name just a few.

An extraordinary theatrical insight into the flawed human condition, *Two Dogs* is a soul-scape of the contemporary Chinese consciousness and theatre making at its most visionary, controversial and inspiring.

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