

# Director's Notes for *Si Medea*



## **Blonski Cruz** **Director**

Raymund (Blonski) is a photographer, filmmaker, and theater practitioner. He is a Production Design graduate from De La Salle-College of St. Benilde. He has held different positions in the production, namely as a producer, writer, production designer, cinematographer, and editor. He co-founded LPT with his wife, Jenny, in 2012.

As part of our on-going instalment, "Dealing with Our Old Masters," Langgam Performance Troupe is now tackling a play from Ancient Greece. In this case, the troupe picked Euripides' (in)famous Medea.

Medea blurs the lines between right and wrong, shatters expectations between man and woman, and overlaps the borders of justice and crime, revenge and remorse. Medea, together with her many personas— a witch, barbarian, foreigner, scorned lover, mother, traitor, murderer—stands as a perpetual question mark. These questions often challenge audience members— regardless of gender, race, class, and religion— of what potentially "being human" really means. Because of such depth and ambiguity found in a single character, Medea has become a classic feast to countless of adaptations, interpretations, translations, and reincarnations—from the time of Antiquity all the way to the contemporary era. Sadly however, the original text of Euripides did not survive beyond the Greek period. Majority of these adaptations are based on a text that was careful translated by historians and scholars. So how does one translate a translation?

The production team decided to explore this problem through an exercise dubbed as an "exercise on translation and adaptation". We divided the text and designated it to three contributors: namely our two actors and a contributing writer. An underlying rule was that each contributor strictly worked on their own. The goal was to create individualistic treatments that were fresh and unique. As a result, I can confidently say that the two versions achieved that goal thanks to the efforts of every single member of the production team. This exercise showed our team the acceptance of diversity. These classical pieces are, most of the time, better than us. One learns immensely from these theatrical masters if everyone submits ourselves to it.

Although mounting a back-to-back show was daunting, the process showed me that a skill that every director has to hone is flexibility. Each version, translation and cast is different and should be customized with the best approach to maximize the talent of everyone involved. Let's also not forget: a director is only as good as his cast, writer and backstage crew. This show wouldn't have been possible without collectively working hard and full dedication.

As I conclude this "exercise on translation", I leave you with the man who wrote the play himself. Each artist must aim to dig deeper, push harder and find answers:

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*"Question everything. Learn something. Answer nothing." —Euripides*

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