

Sydney Theatre Company and Audi present



The Art of War

by Stephen Jeffreys
Directed by Annabel Arden

Teacher's Resource Kit

Written and compiled by Elizabeth Surbey

Acknowledgements

Sydney Theatre Company would like to thank the following for their invaluable material and practical support for these Teachers' Notes: Annabel Arden, Stephen Jeffreys, Laura Scrivano, Helen Hristofski, Barbara Vickery and Patrick Hobbs.

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***The Art of War* SCHOOLS DAY PERFORMANCE**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Date: 6th June 2007
Venue: Wharf 1 Theatre
Pre-performance forum 10.30 am
Lunch Break 11.15 am
Performance commences: 12.15 pm
Performance concludes: 3.15pm
Post performance Q+A concludes: 3.30pm

We respectfully ask that you discuss theatre etiquette with your students prior to coming to the performance.

Running Late?

Please contact Sydney Theatre Company's main switch on 9250 1700 and a message will be passed to Front of House.

Booking Queries

Please contact Barbara Vickery on 02 9250 1778 or bvickery@sydneytheatre.com.au

General Education Queries

Please contact Helen Hristofski, Education Manager, on 02 9250 1726 or hristofski@sydneytheatre.com.au

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Sydney Theatre Company

Sydney Theatre Company (STC) produces theatre of the highest standard that consistently illuminates, entertains and challenges. It is committed to the engagement between the imagination of its artists and its audiences, to the development of the art form of theatre, and to excellence in all its endeavours.

STC has been a major force in Australian drama since its establishment in 1978. It was created by the New South Wales Government, following the demise of the Old Tote Theatre Company. The original intention was to better utilise the Drama Theatre of the Sydney Opera House and the new Company comprised a small central administration staff, technical staff, workshop and rehearsal facilities. Richard Wherrett was appointed Artistic Director from 1979 to 1990.

The Wharf opened on 13 December, 1984 by Premier Neville Wran, which allowed all departments of the Company to be housed under one roof for the first time. The venue was to become the envy of the theatre world. From 1985, the Company could perform in two locations throughout the year, the Drama Theatre and The Wharf. From 1990 to 1999, Wayne Harrison served as Artistic Director. A third regular venue, Sydney Theatre, administered and operated by STC, opened in 2004.

The predominant financial commitment to STC is made by its audience. Of this audience, the Company's subscribers make a crucial commitment. The Company is also assisted annually by grants from the Federal Government through the Australia Council and the New South Wales Government through the Ministry for the Arts. STC also actively seeks sponsorship and donations from the corporate sector and from private individuals.

Under the leadership Artistic Director Robyn Nevin, STC's annual subscription season features up to 12 plays including: recent or new Australian works, interpretations of theatrical classics and contemporary foreign works. In addition STC regularly co-produces and tours productions throughout Australia, playing annually to audiences in excess of 300,000. STC actively fosters relationships and collaborations with international artists and companies. In 2006 STC began a new journey of artistic development with the inception of The Actors Company, the STC ensemble.

To access detailed information on Sydney Theatre Company, its history and productions please contact our Archivist Judith Seeff at jseeff@sydneytheatre.com.au

Sydney Theatre Company Education

Sydney Theatre Company is committed to education by programming original **productions** and **workshops** that enthuse and engage the next generation of theatre-goers. Within the education programme Sydney Theatre Company produces its own season of plays as well as collaborates with leading theatre-for-young-people companies across Australia.

Often a young person's first experience of theatre is facilitated by teachers. STC ensures access to all of its mainstage productions through the **schoolsdays** programme as well as produces and tours theatre specifically crafted to resonate with young people.

STC works to support educators in their Drama and English-teaching practices. Every year dynamic **workshops** are held by leading theatre practitioners to support curriculum content, detailed resources are provided for all productions and an extensive work-experience programme is available to students from across the state.

The annual Sydney Morning Herald and Sydney Theatre Company **Young Playwright's Award** continues to develop and encourage young writers. The winning students receive a cash prize and a two-day workshop with a professional director, dramaturg and cast – an invaluable opportunity and experience.

Sydney Theatre Company has an extensive **on-line resource** for teachers and students. Visit www.sydneytheatre.com.au/education.

We encourage teachers to subscribe to regular e-news to keep informed as well as access **heavily discounted** tickets and special offers/

For further information on STC Education programme, please contact the Education Manager Helen Hristofski at hristofski@sydneytheatre.com.au

Production Credits

BRETT/MIKE/CHORUS	MARTIN BLUM
ELLIOT/MONK/CHORUS	BRANDON BURKE
THE GENERAL/BRIAN/CHORUS	PETER CARROLL
WILL/CHORUS	EDEN FALK
PATTERSON BLAKE/EMMETT/CHORUS	JOHN GADEN
TANIA/CHORUS	HAYLEY McELHINNEY
JESSICA/CHORUS	AMBER McMAHON
GARRETT/CHORUS	COLIN MOODY
CRYSTAL/CHORUS	PAMELA RABE
CINDY/CHORUS	EMILY RUSSELL
LARRY/CHORUS	DAN SPIELMAN
FIONA/HANNAH/CHORUS	HELEN THOMSON
DIRECTOR	ANNABEL ARDEN
SET DESIGNER	ROBERT COUSINS
COSTUME DESIGNER	TESS SCHOFIELD
LIGHTING DESIGNER	DAMIEN COOPER
COMPOSER/SOUND DESIGNER	MAX LYANDVERT
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	LEE LEWIS
ACTORS COMPANY MOVEMENT	GAVIN ROBINS
SINGING COACH	JEREMY POWELL
PRODUCTION MANAGER	ANNIE EVES-BOLAND
ASSISTANT PRODUCTION MANAGER	TERRI RICHARDS
STAGE MANAGER	GEORGIA GILBERT
DEPUTY STAGE MANAGER	MINKA STEVENS
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER	PHOEBE COLLIER
HEAD MECHANIST	BRYTE CAMERON
BACKSTAGE WARDROBE SUPERVISOR	JANE SELDON
THEATRE TECHNICIAN	CAMERON MENZIES
PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHER	TANIA KELLEY

Plot Synopsis

Summary

The Art Of War has been specially commissioned for The Actors Company from the remarkable UK team of writer Stephen Jeffreys and director Annabel Arden. Annabel Arden is a co-founder of the much loved Théâtre de Complicité (The *Three Lives of Lucie Cabriol*). Stephen Jeffreys is a screenwriter and one of the world's leading playwrights, author of acclaimed plays such as *The Libertine*.

Twenty-First Century War: Abstract, Virtual, Glorious, Cruel, Evil, Inevitable. What difference does it make to the dead? Sun Tzu's two-and-a-half thousand year old manual, *The Art Of War*, is now used more often as management creed or a self-help primer.

In Stephen Jeffreys' new play, written at a time when all of us are potentially soldiers in the 'war on terror', the most influential treatise on warfare is reconfigured as drama to gauge how adequate war is as a model for life, relationships or making money.

Three narratives collide – a love story, party political venality and corporate manoeuvring. Written with wit and intelligence, and directed with fire and great visceral urgency, this is a new work of insight and acuity.

And as the stories progress through these compelling worlds of passion, finance and intrigue, Sun Tzu's crucial moral, that, at best, victory should arrive without war, is increasingly ignored. To shattering effect.

Stephen Jeffreys

Playwright

Stephen Jeffreys was born in London and first attracted critical attention with his study of a stunt man on the skids, *Like Dolls Or Angels* (1977) which won the Sunday Times Playwriting Award at the National Student Drama Festival. He helped to set up the touring company Pocket Theatre Cumbria and wrote several plays for them including his adaptation of *Hard Times* (1982) which has been given many productions all over the world. His *Carmen 1936* performed by Communicado won him a second Fringe First in 1984 and ran at the Tricycle Theatre in London. This was followed by *Returning Fire* (1985) a monologue to welcome Halley's Comet and *The Garden Of Eden* (1986) a community play about nationalised beer performed by the people of Carlisle. His property comedy *Valued Friends* played to two sell-out runs at Hampstead Theatre in 1989 and 1990 and won him the Evening Standard and Critics' Circle Awards for Most Promising Playwright. This was followed by a Jacobean tragi-comedy, *The Clink* for Paines Plough, for whom he was Arts Council writer in residence from 1987-1989. He adapted *A Jovial Crew* for the RSC at the instigation of Max Stafford-Clark and in 1993 *A Going Concern* played another sell-out run at Hampstead Theatre. In 1994/1995 *The Libertine*, Jeffreys's raunchy play about the Earl of Rochester, was staged at The Royal Court Theatre and won great popular and critical acclaim. *The Libertine* was produced by Steppenwolf Theatre, Chicago in 1996, directed by Terry Johnson and starring John Malkovich. Stephen's screenplay version (starring Johnny Depp) was released in 2005. His play *I Just Stopped By To See The Man* was produced at the Royal Court Theatre, London directed by Richard Wilson and subsequently at Steppenwolf Theatre and many other American theatres. *Interruptions*, part one of a post-modern political trilogy of which *The Art Of War* is part two, was directed by Annabel Arden at the University of California, Davis, California in 2002. *Lost Land* was written for John Malkovich and was performed at the Steppenwolf Theatre in Spring 2005. Stephen is currently writing feature films for Ecosse and Fortune. He is on the Council of the Royal Court having been Literary Associate there between 1991 and 2002. He is married to Annabel Arden; they have two sons Jack and Ralph.

Writer's Note

Stephen Jeffreys

The Art of War is the second part of an intended trilogy for twelve actors which seeks to combine post-modern techniques and contemporary themes. The first part, *Interruptions*, was directed by Annabel Arden at the University of California in 2001. Using non-sequential time, it focused on issues of social organisation and leadership around an imaginary political coup. The third part of the trilogy, *The Rules of Conversation*, will put the spotlight on language – how we speak to (and define each other) with words.

The Art of War is partly inspired by the writings of Sun Tzu. When Robyn Nevin approached Annabel with an offer to direct the twelve members of the Actors Company, it seemed an ideal choice. Combining a two and half thousand year old book with a photograph of a dozen actors I had never met was an unusual starting point, but it proved curiously inspirational. Sun Tzu's work is enormously popular; I was amazed how many people I've spoken to over the past year have read and been influenced by the book.

Part of the play is about war in the specific sense. But I've widened the focus by writing about the tactical manoeuvring (to use Sun Tzu's phrase) we employ in sexual and business relationships. I've created a number of narratives which embody different approaches to strategy, deception, attack and defence. But the play is not just about the sixteen named characters. It also features a device which has been almost entirely neglected by contemporary playwrights: a chorus. The chorus are believers in Sun Tzu's work. But how far is it possible to live ones life in accord with any text, however inspirational, in the face of human waywardness and political chaos?

I hope audiences here in Sydney enjoy *The Art of War* and I thank Robyn and everyone at Sydney Theatre Company for commissioning the play and remaining so calm and restrained while I was writing it. I suspect the influence of Sun Tzu.

Director's Notes and Playwright's Resources

They turn the world into a wilderness and have the nerve to call it peace

TACITUS

Questions for Stephen Jeffreys:

Q How were you first introduced to ' *The Art of War*? Did that contribute to how you introduce it to us? As it is much abused do you still have respect for the philosopher's words?

I can't help you much here as I can't really remember. I know I took the book on holiday in July 2005, but got very involved with reading a biography of Mao Zedong instead. Clearly China was on my mind. I'd identified AOW as being a good idea for a play a few months before that, but unfortunately there was no Eureka moment.

I have a great deal of respect for the book but I think its application is more limited than other admirers of Sun Tzu. One of the ideas behind the play is to test the book in a number of situations - and also to test the notion that any book, be it the Bible the Qur'an or Das Kapital has all the answers. I do a Sun Tzu analysis of the Iraq war (influenced by a couple of maverick US army colonels) and I believe he would have handled the situation very differently.

Q As this is part of a trilogy, yet with a new company what difficulties were there for you in the writing - or was it better to begin fresh again?

I wrote the first part of the trilogy (*Interruptions*) without knowing much about the other two parts. I knew they would have 12 actors and be unusual in form and about politics in a general sense. I had expected to write *The Rules Of Conversation* before *The Art Of War* but Robyn (Nevin) was more interested in AOW. The real starting point was the Sydney Theatre Company's Actor's Company. I had to construct good parts for all these actors who I didn't know. So the play has been largely defined by my perceptions (based on very little knowledge) of them.

Q In the article for *Currents*, Annabel mentions meeting the company and taking back to you their "profiles" for want of the best term or word. How much of the structure or writing was already begun and how much did this inform you and your characters?

I began with the book, the idea to have a chorus and the notion that the play would look at war, business and love. A lot of the work consisted in re-arranging the structure of the book for the theatre and constructing narrative lines for the 12 actors.

As usual I spent very little time writing the dialogue. Most of the writing time was spent researching and shaping. When Bob Cousins, the designer, came over before Christmas I didn't have a word of dialogue but I could describe the action of the play to him. In turn, his visual ideas (eg the washing of the body) fed their way into the play. Annabel also provided ideas at this pre-dialogue phase.

Context of the Play / Historical reference points / Form Style

Overview

“This is not a play about war, but it’s a play about conflict and about how human beings deal with conflict” Annabel Arden

Sun Tzu’s text *The Art of War* is an absolutely pure text on how to wage war efficiently. It does not deal with any moral issues. It is not a question about whether war is right or wrong. That is not a question for Sun Tzu. He accepts that war is. What he is talking about more importantly is the responsibility of the ruler to the military not to stuff it up. Then we have Iraq as the example – where it is now common knowledge and readily accepted that the pentagon have left the soldiers ‘hanging out to dry’. That, for Sun Tzu, is a crime.

Bagdad Campaign - Suicide of the Soldier

The suicide rate amongst soldiers in Iraq is more than 3 times that of any other campaign previously. Stephen Jeffreys (with Annabel) thought that was pertinent to this play and the soldier Mike’s story.

The Iraq conflict timeline

- Jan 2003 - Colin Powell speech
- Aug 2003 - The real insurgency
- Jan 2004 - Closer ties established between USA and Australia
- Nov 2004 - George W. Bush re-elected
- Jan 2005 - Iraqi elections
- Nov 2006 - Bush and the neo-conservative republicans are rebuffed by the US electorate in the mid-term elections. The democrats won control of the house of reps
- Rumsfeld resigns

Car bomb avalanche slaughters 190 in Baghdad

Thursday Apr 19 06:04 AEST



An avalanche of car bomb attacks on Shiite districts of Baghdad slaughtered 190 people on Wednesday and delivered a savage blow to the credibility of a two-month-old US security plan.

The series of blasts was the deadliest in the Iraqi capital since the launch of the massive crackdown; the single most devastating blast alone killed 140 people, mainly civilian commuters and shoppers.

The bombings ripped through five districts of the sprawling capital, where 80,000 Iraqi and US troops are straining to enforce order and contain the daily violence terrorising Baghdad's five million residents.

In the bloodiest attack, a parked car exploded on a principal intersection and in a busy market area in the downtown district of Al-Sadriyah, scattering charred corpses among a row of burnt-out buses.

After a deafening blast that sent a dense cloud of putrid black smoke spewing into the sky, a fire incinerated human flesh, cars and vehicles as rescue workers rushed to the scene.

Firefighters doused nearby cars and buses, as dozens of ambulances and pick-up trucks ferried wounded to hospital and volunteers wrapped charred bodies in carpets for transport to the city's overflowing mortuaries.

Angry Iraqis who lost loved ones lashed out at Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, blaming his beleaguered government for failing to bring law and order to the streets of the capital, nearly a year after it took office.

"Down with Maliki! Where is the security plan? We are not protected by this plan," they shouted, as an angry mob pelted stones at Iraqi and American soldiers who scrambled to the scene.

A security official put the Sadriyah blast death toll at 140.

The US military put Wednesday's combined death toll at 131 with 164 wounded in four car bomb attacks, several dozens lower than Iraqi security officials.

US Defence Secretary Robert Gates vowed that Washington would persevere with the security plan, saying a spike in violence was to be expected.

"We have anticipated from the very beginning... that the insurgency and others would increase the violence to make the people of Iraq believe the plan is a failure," Gates said in Tel Aviv.

"We intend to persist to show that it is not."

On February 3, a truck bomb in the same Baghdad market — a mixed Kurdish and Shiite area — killed at least 130 people in the final days before the official launch of the crackdown on February 14.

Iraq's Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki blamed the attack on infidels and "Takfiri vampires" — a reference to Sunni extremists — and demanded that politicians from both sides of the sectarian divide condemn it.

He also said that the Iraqi army regimental commander responsible for the area had been detained and would be investigated over "the weakness of the measures taken to protect civilians".

"This monstrous attack today did not distinguish between the old and young, between men and women. It targeted the population in a way that reminds us of the massacres and genocide committed by the former dictatorship," he said.

Markets are favourite targets for bomb attacks, the trademark tactic of Sunni extremists bent on slaughtering Shiites, the majority community in Iraq that today heads the government and dominates the security forces.

US military spokesman Rear Admiral Mark Fox admitted commanders were frustrated at their inability to prevent such car bombings, but insisted Iraq was not witnessing any further escalation of sectarian violence.

"It is very clear that it is a violent response from people who want the Baghdad security plan to fail. The pattern suggests the attacks are by Sunni extremists," he told AFP by telephone.

"There is frustration of not being ahead of what happened today. But we are not seeing a degradation... tit-for-tat sectarian attacks."

Another car bomb killed 28 people and wounded 44 after ripping through civilians near an Iraqi army checkpoint in east Baghdad's main Shiite district of Sadr City.

The neighbourhood is a bastion of Shiite militia faithful to radical cleric Moqtada al-Sadr and has frequently been targeted by car bombings blamed on Sunni extremists.

At least 11 civilians were killed and 12 wounded, including women and children, when a car bomb exploded on a main road near a private hospital in the central Karrada district, formerly upmarket but fallen on hard times.

Eleven other people, including four policemen, were killed in separate car bombings elsewhere in the capital.

On top of the Baghdad carnage, five people were killed elsewhere in Iraq and police found more than two dozen corpses, security officials said.

Wednesday's bloodshed overshadowed a ceremony in southern Iraq that saw government forces assume security control of the oil-rich Maysan province from British forces as part of plans in London to draw down troops.

Reading greetings from Maliki, national security adviser Mowaffaq al-Rubaie expressed the hope that Iraq would take full charge of all 18 provinces before the end of the year.

U.S. Media Coverage

The U.S. invasion of Iraq was the most widely and closely reported war in military history. Television network coverage was largely pro-war and viewers were six times more likely to see a pro-war source as one who was anti-war. The New York Times ran a number of articles describing Saddam Hussein's attempts to build weapons of mass destruction. The September 8th, 2002 article titled "U.S. Says Hussein Intensifies Quest for A-Bomb Parts" would be discredited, leading the New York Times to issue a public statement admitting it was not as rigorous as it should have been.

At the start of the war in March of 2003, as many as 775 reporters and photographers were traveling as embedded journalists. These reporters signed contracts with the military that limited what they were allowed to report on. When asked why the military decided to embed journalists with the troops, Lt. Col. Rick Long of the U.S. Marine Corps replied, "Frankly, our job is to win the war. Part of that is information warfare. So we are going to attempt to dominate the information environment."

A September 2003 poll revealed that seventy percent of Americans believed there was a link between Saddam Hussein and the attacks of 9/11. 80% of Fox viewers were found to hold at least one misperception about the invasion, compared to 23% of PBS viewers. Ted Turner, founder of CNN, said that Rupert Murdoch was using Fox News to advocate an invasion. Critics have argued that this statistic is indicative of misleading coverage by the U.S. media since viewers in other countries were less likely to have these misconceptions.

Independent Media Coverage

Independent media also played a prominent role in covering the invasion. The Media Workers Against the War and the Indymedia network, among many other independent networks including many journalists from the invading countries, provided reports in a way difficult to control by any government, corporation or political party. In the United States Democracy Now, hosted by Amy Goodman has been critical of the reasons for the 2003 invasion and the alleged crimes committed

by the U.S. authorities in Iraq. Australian war artist George Gittoes collected independent interviews with soldiers while producing his documentary *Soundtrack To War*. The war in Iraq provided the first time in history that military on the front lines were able to provide direct, uncensored reportage themselves, thanks to blogging software and the reach of the internet. Dozens of such reporting sites, known as soldier blogs or milblogs, were started during the war.

International Media Coverage

International coverage of the war differed from coverage in the U.S. in a number of ways. The Arab-language news channel Al Jazeera and the German Satellite channel Deutsche Welle featured almost twice as much information on the political background of the war. Al Jazeera also showed scenes of civilian casualties which were rarely seen in the U.S.

The Conflict in Iraq

Military operations to remove the Iraqi regime from power (*Operation Iraqi Freedom*) began officially at 0234 GMT on 20 March 2003. Coalition forces advanced rapidly into Iraq, encountering sporadic resistance from Iraqi military and paramilitary forces. By mid-April major combat operations had come to an end, with coalition forces in effective control of the whole country, including the capital Baghdad.

This paper provides a summary of events in the build-up to the conflict, a general outline of the main developments during the military campaign between 20 March and mid-April 2003 and an initial post-conflict assessment of the conduct of operations.

The build up of Coalition forces in the Gulf region began in late December 2002 and continued through until March 2003. By mid-March 220,000 Coalition troops had been deployed, including 45,000 British personnel.

Diplomatic efforts to secure agreement within the UN Security Council on a further resolution explicitly authorising the use of force met with failure and on 17 March President George Bush declared a 48-hour deadline for Saddam Hussein and his sons to leave Iraq or face military action at a time of the Coalition's choosing.

Operation Iraqi Freedom officially began at 0234 GMT on 20 March 2003, although some preparatory air operations had been undertaken in the southern no-fly zone on 19 March 2003. A limited air strike on the Iraqi leadership opened the campaign, followed by the launch of simultaneous air and ground operations. British and US Marines were deployed into the south of the country to secure the Al Faw Peninsula, the southern oilfields, the port of Umm Qasr and the region around Basra. The US Army 5th Corps advanced rapidly north towards Baghdad.

After several weeks of heavy fighting and air strikes British troops launched an assault on Basra on 6 April and succeeded in capturing the city centre. After several days of incursions into the capital, US forces took effective control of Baghdad on 8 and 9 April. Tikrit fell to the Coalition on 13 April, bringing the main combat phase of the campaign to a close. Major combat operations were officially declared to be over on 1 May 2003.

The intense media coverage and analysis of the conduct of military operations was a key feature during the conflict. The simultaneous execution of an air and ground campaign, preceded by an opportunistic strike on the Iraqi leadership, initially defied many commentators' expectations. The apparent strength of Iraqi resistance encountered by Coalition forces, the use of unconventional tactics by Iraqi paramilitaries, and the absence of a popular uprising against the regime, provoked considerable debate about the effectiveness of the Coalition's strategy and the adequacy of the forces deployed. The campaign brought together a number of new or unusual elements, some of which were apparent during the campaign, others of which are only now emerging, and it will take some time for a complete picture to emerge.

The Outbreak of Conflict

Military operations began at 0234 (GMT) on 20 March, shortly after the expiry of the 48-hour ultimatum. President Bush addressed the nation to declare that military action had commenced:

American and coalition forces are in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger.

On my orders, coalition forces have begun striking selected targets of military importance to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war. These are opening stages of what will be a broad and concerted campaign. More than 35 countries are giving crucial support -- from the use of naval and air bases, to help with intelligence and logistics, to the deployment of combat units. Every nation in this coalition has chosen to bear the duty and share the honour of serving in our common defense.³⁹

In a television address on 20 March Prime Minister Tony Blair announced that: Tonight, British servicemen and women are engaged from air, land and sea. Their mission: to remove Saddam Hussein from power, and disarm Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction. I know this course of action has produced deep divisions of opinion in our country. But I know also the British people will now be united in sending our armed forces our thoughts and prayers. They are the finest in the world and their families and all of Britain can have great pride in them.

Reference <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2003/rp03-050.pdf>

Sun Tzu – The Art of War

Sun Tzu as a historical figure

The only surviving source on the life of Sun Tzu is the biography written in the 2nd century BC by the historian Sima Qian, who describes him as a general who lived in the state of Wu in the 6th century BC, and therefore a contemporary of one of the great Chinese thinkers of ancient times—Confucius. According to tradition, Sun Tzu was a member of the landless Chinese aristocracy, the shi, descendants of nobility who had lost their dukedoms during the consolidation of the Spring and Autumn Period. Unlike most shi, who were traveling academics, Sun Tzu worked as a mercenary (similar to a modern military consultant).

The Art of War has been one of the most popular combat collections in history. Ancient Chinese long viewed this book as one of the entrance test materials, and it is one of the most important collections of books in the Chinese literature. It is said that Mao Zedong and Joseph Stalin both read this book while in war.

Sun Tzu's work is also one of the first to recommend the physical conditioning of armies prior to combat. He stated that exercises should be basic in nature, with exercises similar to today's jumping jacks and arm circles, et al.

The Art of War is a Chinese military treatise written during the 6th century BC by Sun Tzu. Composed of 13 chapters, each of which is devoted to one aspect of warfare, it has long been praised as the definitive work on military strategies and tactics of its time.

The Art of War is one of the oldest books on military strategy in the world. It is also one of the most famous studies of strategy and has had a huge influence on Eastern and Western military planning, business tactics, and beyond.

The book has gained popularity in corporate culture; there have been a variety of business books written applying its lessons to "office politics" and corporate strategy. Many Japanese companies make the book required reading for their key executives. The book is also popular among Western business management, who have turned to it for inspiration and advice on how to succeed in competitive business situations.

It has also crept its way into sport: Australian cricket coach John Buchanan handed out excerpts from the book to his players before a match against England in 2001

Some have also interpreted *The Art of War* as providing methods for developing social strategies, such as social relationships, maintaining romantic relationships, and seduction. The book stresses subtlety and always making it appear like one is trying to achieve something other than one's actual intention.

The use of individual quotations from the book as a source of fortune cookie-like proverbs and not seeing the general coherence of the text has been criticized by many scholars of Chinese history.

Thoughts Of Sun Tzu

Translated By Lionel Giles

- All warfare is based on deception.
- There is no instance of a country having benefited from prolonged warfare. Therefore in war let your great object be victory, not lengthy campaigns.
- To fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting.
- The skilful leader subdues the enemy's troops without any fighting; he captures their cities without laying siege to them; he overthrows their kingdom without lengthy operations in the field.
- If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.
- To secure ourselves against defeat lies in our own hands, but the opportunity of defeating the enemy is provided by the enemy himself.
- Military tactics are like water; for water in its natural course runs away from high places and hastens downwards. So in war, the way is to avoid what is strong and to strike at what is weak.
- All armies prefer high ground to low and sunny places to dark.
- Peace proposals unaccompanied by a sworn covenant indicate a plot.
- When an army feeds its horses with grain and kills its cattle for food, and when the men do not hang their cooking-pots over the camp-fires (showing that they will not return to their tents) you may know that they are determined to fight to the death.
- When the common soldiers are too strong and their officers too weak, the result is insubordination. When the officers are too strong and the common soldiers too weak, the result is collapse.
- Anger may in time change to gladness; vexation may be succeeded by content. But a kingdom that has once been destroyed can never come again into being; nor can the dead ever be brought back to life.
- Be subtle! Be subtle! And use your spies for every kind of business.

Sun Tzu, The Concubines And The King Of Wu

Ho Lu, the King of Wu, read *The Art of War* and decided to test Sun Tzu by challenging him to transform a group of concubines into an army. Accordingly, 180 concubines were taken from the Palace. Sun Tzu divided them into two companies, and placed one of the King's favourite concubines at the head of each. He then bade them all take spears in their hands, and said "When I say "Eyes front," you must look straight ahead. When I say "Left turn," you must face towards your left hand. When I say "Right turn," you must face towards your right hand. When I say "About turn," you must face right round towards your back."

The words of command having been thus explained, he gave the women weapons to begin the drill. Then, to the sound of drums, he gave the order "Right turn." But the women only burst out laughing. Sun Tzu said: "If words of command are not clear and distinct, if orders are not thoroughly understood, then the general is to blame." So he started drilling them again, and this time gave the order "Left turn," whereupon the women once more burst into fits of laughter.

Sun Tzu said: "If words of command are not clear and distinct, if orders are not thoroughly understood, the general is to blame. But if his orders ARE clear, and the soldiers nevertheless disobey, then it is the fault of their officers." So saying, he ordered the leaders of the two companies to be beheaded. Now the king of Wu was watching the scene and when he saw that his favourite concubines were about to be executed, he sent the following message: "We are now quite satisfied as to our general's ability to handle troops. If we are bereft of these two concubines, our meat and drink will lose their savour. It is our wish that they shall not be beheaded."

Sun Tzu replied: "Having once received His Majesty's commission to be the general of his forces, there are certain commands of His Majesty which, acting in that capacity, I am unable to accept." Accordingly, he had the two leaders beheaded, and straightway installed the pair next in order as leaders in their place. When this had been done, the drum was sounded for the drill once more; and the women silently carried out all the manoeuvres with perfect accuracy. Then Sun Tzu sent a messenger to the King saying: "Your soldiers, Sire, are now properly drilled and disciplined, and ready for your majesty's inspection. They can be put to any use that their sovereign may desire; bid them go through fire and water, and they will not disobey."

But the King replied: "Let our general cease drilling and return to camp. As for us, we have no wish to come down and inspect the troops." Thereupon Sun Tzu said: "The King is only fond of words, and cannot translate them into deeds." After that, Ho Lu saw that Sun Tzu was one who knew how to handle an army, and finally appointed him general. In the west, he defeated the Ch`u State and forced his way into Ying, the capital; to the north he put fear into the States of Ch`i and Chin, and spread his fame abroad amongst the feudal princes.

A man will fight harder for his interests than for his rights.

NAPOLEON

Martial Arts

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Martial arts are systems of codified practices and traditions of training for combat. Martial arts are studied for various reasons including combat skills, fitness, self-defense, sport, self-cultivation (meditation), mental discipline, character development and building self-confidence. A practitioner of martial arts is referred to as a martial artist.

Worldwide, there is a great diversity and abundance of martial arts. Broadly speaking, martial arts share a common goal: to defeat a person physically or to defend oneself from physical threat. There is also a deep sense of spirituality within some martial arts. Each style has different facets that make them unique from other martial arts.

A common characteristic of martial arts is the systemization of fighting techniques. One common method of training, particularly in the Asian martial arts, is the form or kata (other names may be used in specific styles). This is a set routine of techniques performed alone, or sometimes with a partner.

Many martial arts also strive to teach moral values and provide guidance for children who join the ranks of those learning the art. Many arts require those who achieve black belt or the equivalent to take an oath restricting their use of their knowledge. Martial artists may also receive specific instruction in mental and emotional discipline.

The history of martial arts around the world is complex. Most groups of people have had to physically defend themselves at some time and have developed fighting techniques for that purpose. Development of many martial arts was related to military development, but many of those techniques have been rendered technologically obsolete over the centuries. In the modern day, most populations would be more likely to face adversaries wielding firearms than melee weapons during battle. Furthermore, the preservation of a martial art requires many years of teaching at the hands of a good instructor to pass on the art for a single generation. Given these circumstances, not all martial arts from a particular era have been passed down to following generations.

SUN TZU AND CRICKET

AUSTRALIANS CLOSE RANKS AFTER LEAK OF MEMO

The Australian cricket team backed their coach, John Buchanan, after the embarrassing leak of team briefing documents based around the teachings of a fifth-century Chinese warlord.

Steve Bernard, the Australian tour manager, said "It's something put around for the guys to look at and see if they can make anything of it."

The fast bowler Brett Lee, explaining the relevance of the teachings, said: "Things are changing in the way we're coached and we're approaching things from a slightly different angle."

Handwritten on two pages of A4 paper, the teachings of the fifth century Chinese military leader Sun Tzu are adapted by Buchanan to urge the world's best modern cricket team to inflict more misery on England's beleaguered side. One by one, he takes Sun Tzu's "varieties of war", or military positions, and applies them to the Australians' task in hand: obliterating the England team.

Circled at the top of the page is the heading 'Leading Up To 3rd Test' and below that: "Thoughts from 'the Tzu' [pronounced zoo]". Marked for "All Australian team members" the two sheets are accompanied by a photocopied version of the chapter 'The Nine Situations' from Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*.

John Buchanan's 'nine situations'

Dispersive Ground We enter this last phase of tour with partners nearby: having just left, or not far off in terms of getting home. If these thoughts occupy our minds, at critical preparation of game times, we make ourselves vulnerable.

Facile Ground We have won two tests of a five-test series. Now is no time to ease up, as we have only done part of the job.

Contentious Ground The contentious ground which neither side has claimed yet and which is critical to success is "discipline for the whole game".

Open Ground Open ground could relate to selections. Let us do what we wish to do about our selections, but not interfere or attack English selections - give them no "fuel", or insights to our thinking. (Buchanan appears to refer to Shane Warne's attack on the England team's selection)

Ground of Intersecting Highways We have "joined hands" with public, sponsors and media about the way the English team plays its cricket and thus its "ability" to play Australia. Consequently, we have currently gained "psychological control" over England.

Serious Ground We have damaged England, not only by our performance, but also by the way we have achieved these results, and our manner, behaviour and image. It is essential that these standards are maintained to ensure we do not have to spend unnecessary time and energies on putting out "bushfires".

Difficult Ground This “ground” may be typified by difficult wicket, difficult conditions, difficult game circumstances. It is our strategy/our belief that we are capable of adjusting to the difficulties/the challenges in order to keep going forward, rather than “treading water” and waiting for something to change.

Hemmed-in Ground This is ground that is “foreign” to us. However we must be better prepared to face such situations, as these will inevitably arise (eg. India). In order to devise and enact appropriate strategies to win seemingly unwinnable positions will require flexibility in our thinking, creativity and initiative.

Desperate Ground This ground requires good and skilful leadership. When we are really up against it (ie either batsmen opposite in full flight/on flat wicket/fast ground/ball soft/new ball long way off; or, opposing bowlers taking wickets quickly and regularly) while the Captain is charged with ultimate decisions, he requires the clear thinking, options and alternatives provided by all his leaders to be able to strike swiftly and decisively.

Eight further pages of Sun Tzu’s teachings follow. Each page is littered with Buchanan’s underlining and annotations culminating with the remark that England are “hanging on to excuses”.

Australia won the 2001 series 4-1

BY SAM WALLACE.

THIS ARTICLE FIRST APPEARED IN *THE DAILY TELEGRAPH*, LONDON © 2007

Chorus Works

DEAD SOLDIERS

JAMES FENTON

When His Excellency Prince Norodom Chantaraingsey
Invited me to lunch on the battlefield
I was glad of my white suit for the first time that day
They lived well, the mad Norodoms, they had style.
The brandy and the soda arrived in crates.
Bricks of ice, tied around with raffia,
Dripped from the orderlies' handlebars.

And I remember the dazzling tablecloth
As the APCs fanned out along the road,
The dishes piled high with frog's legs,
Pregnant turtles, their eggs boiled in the carapace,
Marsh irises in fish sauce

And inflorescence of a banana salad.
On every bottle, Napoleon Bonaparte
Pleaded for the authenticity of the spirit.
They called the empties Dead Soldiers

And rejoiced to see them pile up at our feet.
Each diner was attended by one of the other ranks
Whirling a table-napkin to keep off the flies.
It was like eating between rows of morris dancers-
Only they didn't kick.

On my left sat the prince;
On my right his drunken aide.
The frogs' thighs leapt into the sad purple face
Like fish to the sound of a Chinese flute.
I wanted to talk to the prince. I wish now
I had collared his aide, who was Saloth Sar's brother.
We treated him as the club bore. He was always
Boasting of his connections, boasting with a head-shake
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase.
And well might he boast. Saloth Sar, for instance,
Was Pol Pot's real name. The APCs
Fired into the sugar palms but met no resistance.

In a diary, I refer to Pol Pot's brother as the Jockey Cap.
A few weeks later, I find him 'in good form
And very sceptical about Chantaraingsey.'
'But one eats well there,' I remark.
'So one should,' says the Jockey Cap:
'The tiger always eats well,
It eats the raw flesh of the deer,
And Chantaraingsey was born in the year of the tiger.
So, did they show you the things they do
With the young refugee girls?'

And he tells me how he will one day give me the gen.
He will tell me how the prince financed the casino
And how the casino brought Lon Nol to power.

He will tell me this.
He will tell me all these things.
All I must do is drink and listen.

In those days, I thought that when the game was up
The prince would be far, far away-
In a limestone faubourg, on the promenade at Nice,
Reduced in circumstances but well enough provided for.
In Paris, he would hardly require his private army.
The Jockey Cap might suffice for café warfare,
And matchboxes for APCs.

But we were always wrong in these predictions.
It was family war. Whatever happened,
The principals were obliged to attend its issue.
A few were cajoled into leaving, a few were expelled,
And there were villains enough, but none of them
Slipped away with the swag.

For the prince was fighting Sihanouk, his nephew,
And the Jockey Cap was ranged against his brother
Of whom I remember nothing more
Than an obscure reputation for virtue.
I have been told that the prince is still fighting
Somewhere in the Cardamoms or the Elephant Mountains.
But I doubt that the Jockey Cap would have survived his good connections,
I think the lunches would have done for him-
Either the lunches or the dead soldiers.

REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF JAMES FENTON

Quotes - War

In Time Of War The First Casualty Is Truth.

BOAKE CARTER

Never, never, never believe any war will be smooth and easy, or that anyone who embarks on the strange voyage can measure the tides and hurricanes he will encounter. The statesman who yields to war fever must realise that once the signal is given, he is no longer the master of policy but the slave of unforeseeable and uncontrollable events.

Winston Churchill

The enemy is anybody who's going to get you killed, no matter which side he's on.

Joseph Heller, *Catch 22*

The object of war is not to die

for your country but to make the other bastard die for his.

George Patton

The problem in defence is how far you can go without destroying from within what you are trying to defend from without.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

Jaw-jaw is better than War-war.

Winston Churchill

Defeat in battle starts with the eyes.

Tacitus

Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.

Mao Tse-tung

It's not the one with your name on it; it's the one addressed "to whom it may concern" you've got to think about.

Murphy's Combat Laws

War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things. The decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse. The person who has nothing for which he is willing to fight, nothing which is more important than his own personal safety, is a miserable creature and has no chance of being free unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself.

John Stuart Mill

An unjust peace is better than just war.

Cicero

I ain't got no quarrel with the Vietcong.

Muhammad Ali

Of course the people don't want war. Why should some poor slob on a farm want to risk his life in a war when the best he can get out of it is to come back to his farm in one piece? It is the leaders of the country who determine the policy, and it is always a simple matter to drag the people along. All you have to do is to tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for exposing the country to danger.

Hermann Goering (at the Nuremberg Trials, shortly before being sentenced to death)

The only winner in the War of 1812 was Tchaikovsky.

Solomon Short

The whole art of war consists of guessing at what is on the other side of the hill.

Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington

They wrote in the old days that it is sweet and fitting to die for one's country. But in modern war, there is nothing sweet nor fitting in your dying.

You will die like a dog for no good reason.

Ernest Hemingway

You can no more win a war than you can win an earthquake.

Jeannette Rankin

I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones.

Albert Einstein

Character Summaries

With some wording directly taken from the stage directions

Sun Tzu said:

Chorus / Actors – all twelve actors, they address the audience and in the beginning they believe absolutely in what they are saying and wish to convince everyone who's listening

War

General Webster – “of Kurdistan” – “He saved a lot of lives”
Colonel Garrett Gray – “Vietnam. The Gulf. Afghanistan. Bit of a maverick.”
Patterson Blake – politician, American under-secretary at the Pentagon

Hannah – an American Corporal
Mike – American Lieutenant
Soldiers – from the chorus of soldiers participating in war exercises
Monk - Iraq

Media

Crystal McCabe – Newspaper journalist and writer

Emmett – her editor

Business

Cindy Marston – sole inheritor of a wealthy family business
Larry Canning – corporate trainer – uses Sun Tzu's Art of War as the key to success in the global business world
Elliot - team leader, comfortable
Brett – young bull on the team
Tania – design, serious and has gone to some trouble to appear less attractive than she is
Brian – another team leader
Fiona - customer services, bubbly and has done a major clothes, nails and hair job.
Will – site management, warm and slightly withdrawn
Jessica – sales, gives off eccentric signals as if she deliberately dressed and behaved to separate herself from the group.

Interview 1 with Director Annabel Arden

Elizabeth Surby spoke with Annabel Arden when the company were only 4 weeks into the process. Such a production has a much longer process than a regular play.

Chorus and the Complicité influence:

Annabel came to the project with many questions as any good director must. There will be evidence of her time with *Complicité*, of course, and this production has a chorus in it – and this would be very familiar as chorus is a key element to the work of *Complicité* – yet in this play it is now finding its own form and its own life – in this play (unlike *Complicité*) the chorus speaks. Annabel is finding that the text dictates form. This play has a unique form that is developing as the rehearsal proceeds. “very interesting and very different, and very modern and very kind of ambiguous.”

Perhaps this play’s central character has become THE CHORUS. It certainly has suggested itself to Annabel during her process as director. The chorus will be key to our journey as an audience – as the chorus has been throughout theatre history in its many incarnations.

The chorus begin very strong and very unified – then throughout the process they begin to doubt and to intervene in the destinies of the characters. Then essentially, they die. Thus is very odd as the chorus in the classical Greek plays never dies.

The placement of the chorus stepping in and out of the action as they do – is like presenting parallel realities. The chorus are then a version or part of the character that they play – as it were a sub-conscious or a memory....

This is a play that has taken its writer and director on new journeys in the form that is theatre. Much of the work has been organic perhaps – Annabel suggests that Stephen doesn’t know why much of what he wrote had to happen – like why the chorus dies for example – but they must and it works. So much of what works has been supported by the process as well as formally discovered or uncovered in the directors and company’s process. It’s only by doing it that you understand it – and there is no doubt that the audience will form their own personal ‘take’ on the play.

There is humour in the play – the register goes in and out. The chorus has some funny business, but they are mostly very serious. The rehearsal process has also been about allocation of lines to which actor/chorus member – there is so much resonance and echo that even the company has had input here. That should be my characters line because.... and actively asking for lines. There is an organic discovery in the action that feeds the lines and the timing and the location of a chorus member on stage as well.

Annabel says there is a lot of action in what I called ‘wordy’ text. She says it has meant that the delivery of the lines / dialogue / text has had to be fast, accurate, rhythmic and truthful.

Design

The design has been incredibly important in this play. Not to diminish what the actors have been contributing but the design has been crucial. Bob Cousins has been very flexible during the process (set design) – changing enormous amounts and cutting whole bits of set.

At the stage when we spoke Annabel had planned that most of the changes would happen on stage – ie: costume and location etc. It is one of the later parts in the

process to be fully realised – the machinations of what and how. The actors will wear the costume they do for their characters (mostly) and then change by adding bits and pieces, as she says, some sneaky goings off but predominantly altering onstage where necessary.

Annabel looks at what theatre can do that nothing else can do – making it distinctive in form – having a chorus and actors changing roles and places etc, is nothing new – but it is done fairly infrequently (lets agree that ensembles this size are not found in many mainstream theatres today, because of cost) – so we presume it is a modern or ‘contemporary’ form. Describing the conventions will find many historical forms overlap. This form can only be theatre not film – it must be done live in front of people and in a form that is basically not technological. “Happening in real time, and real space.”

Sound Design

The sound is the thirteenth actor – is the idea that Annabel would leave me with – as when I mentioned that the sound designers profile was very impressive and that I assumed therefore that sound was important she shuddered and half laughed “hohohohoh yes, (slight pause) it is *very* important.”

Interview 2 with Director Annabel Arden

From the *Currents*, STC’s Subscriber Magazine

***The Art of War* is the second collaboration between playwright Stephen Jefferys and director Annabel Arden. Annabel Arden, co-founder of Theatre de Complicité, talks about this exciting collaboration with the STC Actors Company.**

The Art of War is part of a trilogy which was begun at The University of California in 2001. The first part, called *Interruptions* was a play for twelve actors, dealing with democracy in the twentieth century. It had several narratives and a clever non-linear time frame, so that the audience pieced the story of a political coup together bit by bit. One could feel the audience quicken like dogs on a scent when they realised that the game was to be like detectives putting the evidence together. It was a great experience for us both, a real experiment in form, and it played to packed and delighted houses. We aimed to create a piece of political theatre which was visually and theatrically exciting, and we did just that, plus laughs.

The second part of the trilogy, *The Art of War*, also needed twelve actors. So when Robyn Nevin approached me with an invitation to direct for the Sydney Theatre Company Actors Company, it seemed the perfect opportunity. The play is inspired by and uses text from the ancient Chinese classic by Sun Tzu- *The Art of War*. This is a textbook written two and a half thousand years ago on how to wage war with the maximum success and minimum human damage. It is widely read today by many different people: in the business world, the world of professional sport, by generals and politicians. Sometimes people become obsessed by it and find an answer for everything in their lives in *The Art of War*. I suppose one of the things the play does is ask: Is the metaphor of warfare at all adequate to describe human experience? Can you apply these precepts to situations which are not actual military warfare? Are we intrinsically aggressive and territorial? It also examines the relationship between the political ruler and the military general; a relationship which is crucial to the survival of nations, and which is currently under the microscope as we all look at the situation which has been created in Iraq.

The play takes place today, and has several stories within it. There are love stories, business stories and war stories. It has in a sense been written especially for this company of actors. I came out to Sydney last year to see them, and then described them all to Stephen, who finds it exciting thinking about a specific company when he is writing, as the characters start to emerge, they may reflect some of the actors' qualities.

My theatre background is with Theatre de Complicite which I co-founded in 1983. Since 1995 I have been freelance, although I'm still a Complicite associate, and have directed a lot of opera. Stephen has been closely associated with the Royal Court Theatre, Hampstead Theatre and with Steppenwolf in Chicago, who have produced many of his plays. His film *The Libertine* (about John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester) which starred Johnny Depp was released last year.

Stephen and I also happen to be married!

It makes it more exciting to work together and we feel very lucky to have this opportunity. Having worked so much on operas, which often involves releasing a freshness, or a personal interpretation of a classic which has become overgrown with familiarity, it is a joy, but quite scary to work on something coming into existence for the first time. But the operatic training is very useful when considering multi-narrative plays, because this is what opera so often does: think of *The Magic Flute* for example, or *Don Carlos*, or *The Ring* for that matter.

Working in The Wharf will be a welcome change from the large proscenium stages I have animated recently! We are looking forward enormously to working in Sydney, and to being a part of the very wonderful enterprise which is STC Actors Company.

Review

A stimulating and stunning play about the invasive culture of war and the struggle for love.

Bryce Hallett, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, May 21, 2007

Photo: John Gaden in *The Art of War*
(photographer: Tania Kelley)

Stephen Jeffreys has written a stimulating and stunning play about the invasive culture of war and the struggle for love.

The playwright has turned to the thoughts and teachings of the ancient Chinese militarist-philosopher Sun Tzu and his manual *The Art of War* as a springboard and framing device to explore the nature of personal and business relationships.

The work begins with the actors casually assembling on designer Robert Cousins' suitably spare and monumental set. With the gestures and poses of politicians they convincingly state what Sun Tzu observed were the five elements ever-present in strife: belief in the cause, the hand of nature, terrain, the commander, and method and discipline.



"All warfare is based on deception," exhorts the chorus. "When able to attack, he [the general] must seem unable. When deploying forces, he must seem at rest. Is your foe asleep? Wake him up. Is he irritable? Irritate him. Appear where you are not expected. Because all warfare is based on deception ..."

Jeffreys has created an epic cycle about winning and losing, and the extent to which relationships are characterised by the terminology and tactics of war. The drama seeks to gauge how effective war is as a model for life.

The play draws together three narratives: a love story between a career soldier and journalist, a story of political intrigue and a bungled military operation, and a corporation setting its sights on the Chinese market or what Sun Tzu called "terrain". His profound and often poorly interpreted messages are resolutely expressed at the outset but as the stories develop and relationships are muddled through disloyalty, deception, stalking and betrayal, history appears doomed to repeat itself.

"Governments have a reflex," says the veteran soldier Garrett. "They apply the lessons they learnt from the last war to the next one, so they're always one war behind ..."

The clarity and depth of the writing is brilliantly served by the director, Annabel Arden. The production, devised to showcase the Sydney Theatre Company's ensemble, the Actor's Company, is seamless and potent. The excellent lighting by Damien Cooper and Max Lyandvert's score and sound design add greatly to the stark yet imaginative spectacle.

The ensemble rises to the occasion although there are limitations in the approach and inconsistencies in some performances. Colin Moody is outstanding as the benevolent and strict Garrett, while Pamela Rabe is a force to be reckoned with when she moves outside her comfort zone. She makes the doubting journalist a credible and compassionate figure but she's at her finest when trying valiantly to rebuild emotional defences while revealing a core of loneliness.

Peter Carroll has greater success playing the indecisive office manager Brian than The General, given his wavering American accent and pitch. He more than compensates in his deeply etched portrayal of the destined-for-the-scrap-heap executive in the face of his perky and shallow boss Cindy's (Emily Russell) strategy to capture territory in Asia.

Hayley McElhinney and Eden Falk delight as the ill-matched couple and conspiratorial colleagues. Dan Spielman is a picture of assurance and calm as the motivational speaker Larry. He shrewdly maps his terrain and makes a retreat when his lover-turned-enemy Jessica (a fun and feisty Amber McMahon) closes in.

The Art of War offers insights about the war in Iraq but its scope is philosophically wider and more purposeful. Jeffreys and Arden have crafted an intelligent, witty, paradoxical and gut-wrenching work in which prolonged attacks and convenient myth-making reveal how weak the powerful can be. On that terrain alone the collaboration is a triumph

Resources for Teachers

Chapter titles (projected on the rear walls during the play)

- Laying Plans
- Manoeuvring
- The Nine Situations
- Attack by Stratagem
- Energy
- Variation in Tactics
- The Army on the March
- The Use of Spies
- Weak Points and Strong
- Terrain
- Tactical Dispositions
- Waging War
- The Attack by Fire

CATHARSIS: (Gk 'purgation') Aristotle uses the word in his definition of tragedy (*q.v.*) in chapter VI of *Poetics*, and there has been much debate (still inconclusive) on exactly what he meant. The key sentence is: "Tragedy through pity and fear effects a purgation of such emotions". So, in a sense, the tragedy (*q.v.*) having aroused powerful feelings in the spectator, has also a therapeutic effect; after the storm and climax there comes a sense of release from tension, of calm.

From a Dictionary of Literary Terms by J. A. Cuddon revised edition, Penguin Books 1977

TRAGEDY: (Gk 'goat song') In his *poetics* Aristotle defined tragedy as: "the imitation of an action that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself; in language with pleasurable accessories, each kind brought in separately in the parts of the work; in a dramatic, not in a narrative form; with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its catharsis of such emotions".....tragedy has tended to be a form of drama concerned with the fortunes and misfortunes, and, ultimately, the disasters, that befall human beings of title, power and position.....What makes them tragic figures is that they have qualities of excellence, of nobleness, of passion; they have virtues and gifts that lift them above the ordinary run of moral men and women. IN tragedy these attributes are seen to be insufficient to save them either from self-destruction or from destruction brought upon them. And there is no hope for them.....if tragedy, like other major art forms, is to be taken as an expression and reflection of man's nature and his vision of the universe and his role and position in it, in any society or period, then the concept of tragedy has changed greatly since the 16thC. The scale and tone of tragedy or anything resembling it has been modified. We now have the grief, the misery, the disaster, of the ordinary man.

From a Dictionary of Literary Terms by J. A. Cuddon revised edition, Penguin Books 1977

Questions and workshop Before the Play

This is a new work written with these actors in mind. What impact would this have on the writer and the director?

You are **designing** for a contemporary work - the 12 person chorus play a chorus as well as all other roles and remain on stage the entire time. Your **set** must represent scenes in the Iraq conflict, war games situation room, formal political drinks events, private homes, offices and corporate training, overseas trade fairs and a book launch. Work in small groups to discuss options and solve problems.

Read the brief descriptions of the characters and design their costumes.

Read the notes and **research** further into 1) the Iraq conflict, Modern warfare and soldier suicide rates 2) Corporate life and corporate training, 3) Sun Tzu and the Art of War text, 4) Martial Arts.

Discuss what **the role of a chorus** might be in a contemporary play. Research the role of chorus from other theatrical traditions eg Greek Tragedy.

The **structure** of a contemporary tragedy should have what? (see definition pg 27)

Workshop how a chorus might behave on stage. Have your chorus(es) do simple tasks so you can explore **their physical presence** in a space and how they might perform together eg: give instructions for a healthy lifestyle. / move as one (like a flock of birds)

Questions After the Play

Read over **the summary of the play** from earlier in the notes. How do you feel about this now you have seen the play? What would you add? What comment can you make on the summary suiting the end product?

Write a formal **review**.

Discuss your costume choices now that you have seen the play and compare the designer's choices to your own.

In a tragedy, traditionally there is some form of **catharsis**. Using the formal definition from the resource section of the notes discuss whether there is such a thing for which characters or for the chorus. Discuss the play as a **modern tragedy**. (pg 27)

Discuss the humorous moments – were there for any of you? – for the audience?

What was the climax or point of no return for you?

Was there a main character? Was it the chorus?

There are love stories, business stories and war stories – what was the main way in for you as an audience member? Why?

Key ideas for discussion points as well as possible workshop exploration:

- Death of the soldier through suicide
- Religious motifs and referencing – eg the body washing
- Fire as purification
- The titles of the chapters and their meaning for an audience since they were displayed (see resources for teachers section pg 26)
- The change(or development) in the chorus as character(s) and their relationship to the characters they actually played
- The sound design – chanting, battle sounds, amplification choices.