

There have been great changes in China since I first lived there in 1948. We are all very conscious of its increasingly important role in international politics and the global economy. However, China's modern culture, and in particular its modern drama, is still little known in the West. I am delighted to see that a series of events is to be organised to commemorate the centenary of Cao Yu, the great Chinese playwright. Cao Yu was the foremost pioneer of the modern Chinese drama movement of the early 20th century. He sought to use the imported form of Western drama to reflect the political and social dilemmas facing China. In doing so, he made it a popular theatrical form in Chinese cities. I hope that the commemoration of his centenary will raise awareness in this country of both the playwright and the modern Chinese stage.

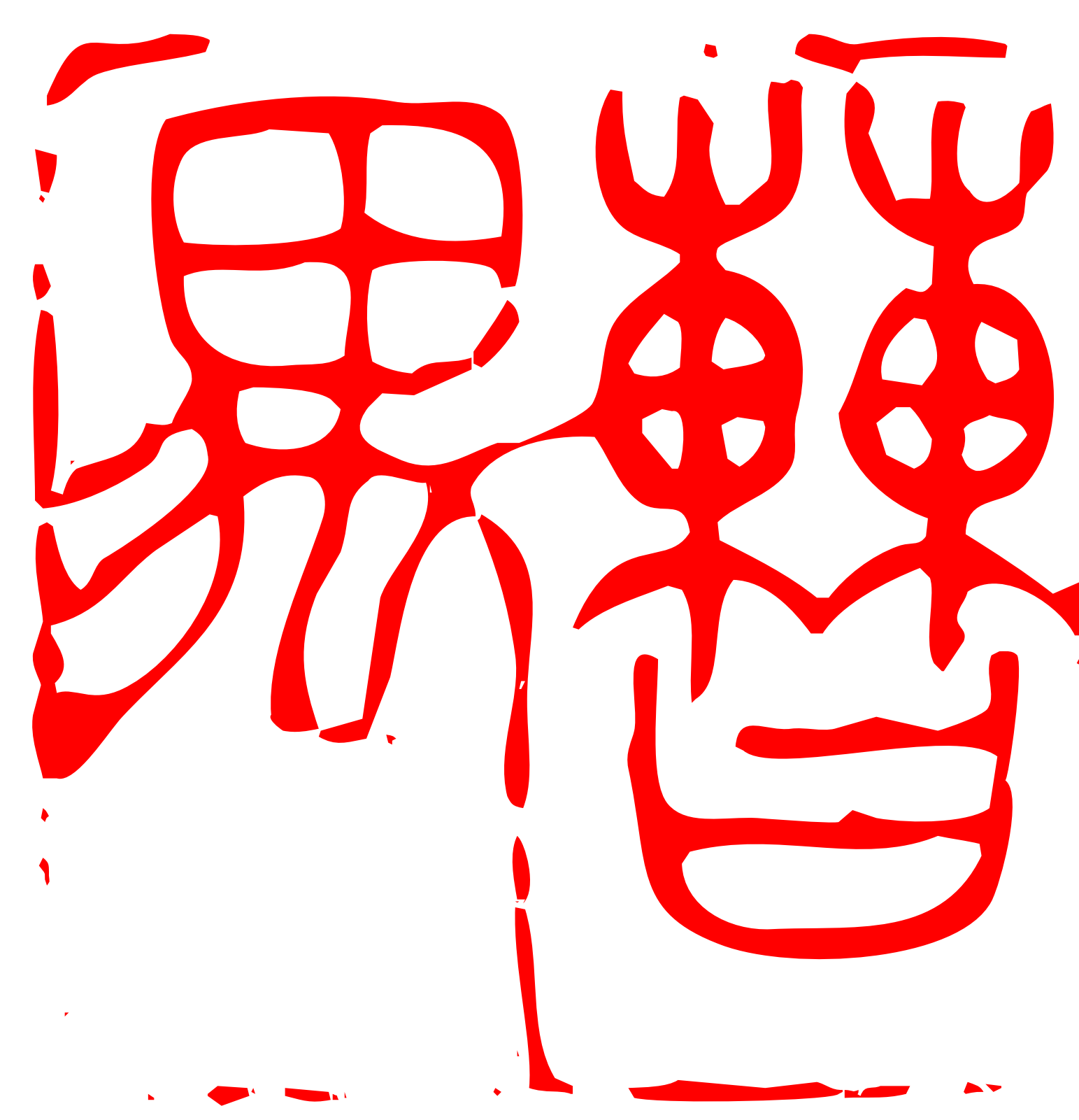
— Lady Youde OBE

This is an important and revealing exhibition that allows us to understand the work of Cao Yu, the founding father of modern Chinese drama. Anyone involved or interested in theatre will be fascinated by his life and career and how he navigated the twists and turns of the Chinese political regimes and in particular the communist ideology and Cultural Revolution. His writing has influenced two generations of young Chinese artists and been the catalyst for the burgeoning non-state run theatre industry in Beijing, Shanghai and other cities. Cao Yu is one of the most influential playwrights of the 20th century and I am delighted that this exhibition helps us to recognise and applaud his influence.

— Jude Kelly OBE

CAO YU

(1910-1996): Pioneer of Modern Chinese Drama



Supported by:

White Rose East Asia Centre, London Confucius Institute, Confucius Institute for Scotland, Chinese Embassy Cultural Section, Shanghai Theatre Academy Theatre Museum, Theatre Museum of Beijing People's Art Theatre