

## arts &amp; culture

# “The Chinese Lady” Thought-Provoking Long After it’s Over

**The Studio Theatre Tierra Del Sol brings another strong piece of serious theater to The Villages.**

**By LEAH SHEWMAKER**  
*Daily Sun Staff Writer*

“The Chinese Lady” left audiences thinking long after they gave a standing ovation.

Thursday evening’s performance of the show at The Studio Theatre Tierra Del Sol left behind it the lingering poignancy of the story of Afong Moy, the first Chinese woman to set foot in the United States.

“It was thought-provoking and reflective,” said Robert Tindall, of the Village of Sunset Pointe. “It was well done.”

“The Chinese Lady” will continue at 2 and 7 p.m. on select days through Dec. 17.

**T**ickets for the show can be found at [thevillagesentertainment.com](http://thevillagesentertainment.com) or any Villages Box Office location.

For a complete list of trigger warnings and for more information, visit [thesharonstudio.com](http://thesharonstudio.com).

“The Chinese Lady” is a two-person play written by Lloyd Suh.

The play centers around Afong Moy (Melody Lou) and her life after she arrives in the U.S. in 1834 from Guangzhou, China.

When she first arrives at 14 years old, Moy is full of hope, believing she is an ambassador for Chinese culture.

Through her interactions with her interpreter, Atung (Yongwoo Park), the audience understands that she is treated as a traveling exhibit.

Crowds pay to gawk at her as she eats with chopsticks, drinks tea and walks on bound feet.



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**JUDY KEMP**  
*Village Hacienda*

The play takes a hard look at exoticization and racism during the time and how it continues today.

Judy Kemp, of the Village Hacienda, said she was interested in Moy’s experience and hoped to learn about her life and culture.

She said she and her



*Submitted photo*

**Yongwoo Park (left) and Melody Lou perform in Lloyd Suh’s “The Chinese Lady,” a story about the first woman to set foot in the U.S.**

husband are always impressed by the shows that artistic director Whitney Morse brings to the theater.

“I know why I came now,” said Kemp. “It’s such a powerful story. Everyone needs to see this.”

**B**oth Lou and Park did an excellent job portraying their characters’ emotions as each year and decade passes in the play.

They show their ability to express the complexities of their characters and their character’s understanding of the world around them.

Because this show is a

two-person play, the story relies heavily on these actors and both rose to the challenge.

The set represented Moy’s room, where she spent much of her life “performing” for crowds.

The stage’s turntable and creative use of lighting was used to illustrate the passing of time, even though the room itself doesn’t change much.

**T**he direction showed the monotony of Moy and Atung’s lives, while revealing how the characters themselves continue to change.

Suh does not shy away from showing how Moy was mistreated during her life, but does not leave her as a victim.

He highlights her dignity and strength of character, despite her dashed hopes.

This play makes audiences ponder what it truly means to understand others and what it means to be understood.

*Staff writer Leah Shewmaker can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 5228, or [leah.shewmaker@thevillagesmedia.com](mailto:leah.shewmaker@thevillagesmedia.com)*