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Un-stuck for words

By GRAEME MCRANOR, 24 HOURS

Unable to meet the \$10,000 cost of standard above-stage text translation, the Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre took some advice and then improvised.

"We had called Vancouver Opera and ... basically were told to do it simply with a PowerPoint presentation," says artistic producer Joyce Lam. "We also had to request permission from Neil Simon to do a translation of *The Odd Couple* to Mandarin."

Translator Sarah S.Y. Chen was enlisted and an operator with an LCD projector and a laptop will project the dialogue on a specially built screen above the stage. Lam said the slides are also readable by Cantonese speakers.

"We felt that this would be more inclusive of the population of greater Vancouver and to have them experience English-speaking theatre in a more comfortable environment."

Lam says the aim of the nine-year-old "humble little theatre company" is the production of quality plays that provide culturally or artistically significant roles for Asian-Canadians.

VACT, she says, "works to dispel Asian stereotypes by producing leading and/or supporting roles where Asian-Canadians are depicted realistically in the performing arts."