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the arts at a glance BY Elaine Lau



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caught up with matters of the war," says Van Driesen. "She doesn't see it coming, and she pleads her case right to the end, but never in an aggressive way. It's always about how can I help you... It reflects women today who want to rescue their husbands and change them."

The play will be presented in original Shakespearean English, but sans period costumes, sets and props. Instead, the costumes will be neutral, and the set very minimal, with four boxes as the main props.

"The human bodies then become the pillars and create the atmosphere of this environment that we are performing in," explains Gani. "It also opens up a lot of room for the audience to imagine. It's no more just the audience coming in and being entertained. They have to think about it; they have to engage with us."

Shakespearean English, lyrical though it may be, isn't exactly easy to understand. To keep the audience engaged, the director, Larsen, is incorporating an ensemble of five actors, of which Sham is a part of, that's somewhat like a Greek chorus – they are there to create counterpoints throughout the play and comment on what's going on.

"The ensemble enhances the scene," says Sham. "And Tage has made the scenes really alive. The boxes move – they form shapes, become pillars, become walkways and hiding places."

Quips Gani, "The unspoken, whether in the mind or heart, is played by them. I stand there feeling something but the audience obviously

From left: Sham, Gani and Van Driesen

Bard's foresight

Shakespeare's play, *Othello*, is a reflection on today's society