

**Media Release**  
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Alice Canton/White\_mess in collaboration with The Court Theatre presents:

**ARTIST RETURNS TO CHRISTCHURCH FOR DOCUMENTARY PROJECT: SEEKS LOCAL PARTICIPANTS TO INVESTIGATE CHINESE IDENTITY**



*White\_mess artists Alice Canton (left) and Sherry Zhang (right)*

Auckland-based artists White\_mess are currently seeking participants for their award-winning theatre project ***OTHER [chinese]***, coming to **The Court Theatre (Christchurch)** this September.

The project explores what it means to be Chinese in Aotearoa, inviting real people to share their stories in a live, documentary-style presentation, facilitated in real-time by director, **Alice Canton**.

Canton, who produces under the name White\_mess, is no stranger to The Court where she began as a **Court Jester** in 2003, performing regularly in the late night show **Scared Scriptless**. After training at **Toi Whakaari: NZ Drama School**, she returned in 2013 as the Education Manager and founding Director of The Court Youth Company. "I feel honoured and excited to be back at The Court, this time with my own work" says Canton, "it's such a special way to reconnect to the company that started my career and fostered my love of theatre."

Local Chinese people from Christchurch and the surrounding areas are invited to participate in the project. “We hold group workshops where we ask about what it means to be Chinese” says Canton, “like, what kinds of cultural practices do you hold onto? What’s your favourite food? What’s it like living here in New Zealand?”.

As participants become more familiar with sharing their thoughts on a range of topics, Canton weaves the stories together, eventually forming the show which includes clips from the media, and interviews with prominent Chinese New Zealanders.

Joining Canton on the road is producer **Sherry Zhang**, who participated in the premier season in Auckland in 2017. “I found myself engaging in conversations about identity, self, family and Chinese-ness in ways I’d never been able to before” says Zhang, “it was particularly inspiring listening to the different journeys and experiences everyone had.”

Canton and Zhang are excited to uncover the stories from Christchurch locals, and hear the issues facing the community. “Christchurch has a significant place in our collective history” says Canton, “and we want to use this to illuminate the cultural richness of the region, and how things have changed over time.”

Expressions of interest are now open, with workshops kicking off from 11th of September. Canton is eager to connect to locals and urges people to come forward. “Ultimately,” Zhang adds, “it’s about creating a platform for people to tell their own story”.

**Register to participate in *OTHER [chinese]* as part of The Court Theatre (Christchurch). This is a volunteer opportunity, and open to anyone who identifies as Chinese (all nationalities welcome).**

Register [here](#), or visit <https://courttheatre.org.nz/whats-on/other-chinese/> for more information.

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