

Shoe-horn sonata

[Experience](#), [Human Nature](#)



An individual's perception of the world is unique, conflicted by emotions and heavily influenced by their surroundings, thus giving individuals a distinct interpretation of how distinctive experiences convey meaning. The play "the Shoehorn Sonata" composed by John Misto in which he explores distinctive experiences highlighting themes and memories, evidently both characters Bridie and Sheila overcame themes of adversity, captivity, human rights and ultimately friendship through embracing their experiences.

Misto's main focus was to bring forth awareness for the nurses through distinctive experiences. John Misto cleverly instigates aspects of lack of freedom via bringing forth past experiences involved in shaping the character's state of mind. Moreover Misto explores the theme captivity and notions of lack of human rights through Bridie's traumatic war experiences, "Filthy pits-dug out in the open. We weren't allowed privacy", a basic human right stripped away by the Japanese in which Misto used the pits-dug out to symbolise lack of freedom.

Furthermore Bridie's past experiences introduced via anecdotes evoked past emotions of hatred and fear amongst the Japanese when situated near them, "Bus load of Japanese tourists... surrounded me, my heart began to pound in terror", Bridie's past experiences manipulated her state of mind, this is evident in Bridie's perception of harmless Japanese tourists. More so Misto's utilisation of hyperbole, "pound in terror" while facing the audience, Bridie broke the fourth wall as a result it displayed Bridie's fragile condition allowing the audience to sympathise for Bridie.

This notion further reinforced by the incorporation of juxtaposition contrasting past experiences within the camp to her response while

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surrounded by harmless Japanese tourists 50 years later. Additionally, Misto's purpose was to bring light to the lack of awareness of the nurses to ensure they received recognition for the events they've endured. Throughout the play Misto's input of projections of war atrocities reinforce Bridie and Sheila's anecdotes of pain and hardship.

In addition this not only reinforces the distinctively visual that are being perceived through the dialogue but as well concrete images Misto utilises in conjunction to the abstract stories to reflect the period Bridie and Sheila was in the camp. In particular Misto's application of symbolism in scenes 13 creates emphasis on the diaries; " those diaries were our only hope". A piece of history that re-tell the events which occurred during WWII in the Japanese camps were burned by

British, Misto ideally wanted this scene to be acknowledged by audience in order for them to understand Sheila's perspective. It was apparent the British did not want the events that impacted the women's lives to be known, as they would be considered a shame to the empire. Furthermore it is transparent that the British's response to burn the diaries affected Sheila's decision to stay in Perth instead of moving back to her homeland, this notion of staying in Australia is strongly juxtaposed as Sheila is patriotic " one never stops being British. Nor does one not want to. "