

April 21 – 25, 2007



Screening of *A Dream in Hanoi*

Fri. and Sat. 7 & 9 p.m.; Sat. and Sun. matinee at 2 p.m.; Sun. through Thurs. at 7 p.m Putnam Theatre, Keene State College, Keene, NH

Twenty five years after the end of the Vietnam War, Vietnamese and Americans join forces in a unique collaboration. Two theater companies, one American, one Vietnamese, come together to stage the first performances in Vietnam of Shakespeare's play *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. *A DREAM IN HANOI* follows the actors, directors, producers and technicians from both countries as they struggle to surmount the obstacles of language, culture, ideology and a history of war—on their journey to opening night at Hanoi's famous Opera House.

The relationship between the Americans and the Vietnamese begins to unravel when the celebrated Vietnamese director, Doan Hoang Giang, decides to add a few characters to Shakespeare's play, much to the dismay of the American director Allen Nause and producer Lorelle Browning. At the same time, stage manager Stephanie Mulligan rails against 2-hour lunch breaks while Vietnamese producer Do Doan Chau laments the pathological American obsession with timetables.

Meanwhile, lead actor Doug Miller (Lysander), starts a small revolution by introducing his beautiful leading lady, Ngan Hoa (Hermia), to full-mouth kissing on stage—an intimacy that's taboo in traditional Vietnamese theater. American feminism clashes with Vietnamese expectations of female behavior when leading man Do Ky (Demetrius) chastises his co-star, Kristen Brown (Helena) for her in-your-face portrayal of "a woman that no Vietnamese man ever could love." And that's only the beginning.

The stakes rise with the news that president of the United States, Bill Clinton may attend the opening night performance in Hanoi's Opera House. As the production hurtles towards that day it seems the entire collaboration will founder under the weight of a series of disasters, each more improbable than the last. Yet for all the cross-cultural angst, misunderstanding and mishaps, the relationship between the artists of the two nations is revealed for what it is: a tumultuous love affair born out of a yearning to be understood and to find meaning beyond their disparate histories and culture.

The film features Vietnam's renowned theater, the Central Dramatic Company of Vietnam, and the Artists Repertory Theater of Portland, Oregon. Music is performed by artists of Vietnam's National Theater of Music, Dance and Song and the Cheo Theater of Hanoi. Narrated by F. Murray Abraham (*Amadeus*, *Finding Forrester*). Directed by Tom Weidlinger (*Making Peace*, *Boys Will Be Men*), and edited by Maureen Gosling (*Burden of Dreams*, *Blossoms of Fire*). In English and Vietnamese with English subtitles.