THEATRE REVIEW

Father’s unreliable storytelling makes for an inspiring play

Gold Mountain is an immigrant’s odyssey

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Talk about a match made in heav-
en. The combination of the multimedia expertise of Montreal’s Les
ness and empathy recompense and the rare and fascinating tale of a Chinese woman who
settles down in a seannan’s strike remains
Yip and Kevin Wong, co-produced by the Unity Theatre of Liverpool and Les Femmes, makes for
inspiring, memorable theatre.

Gold Mountain, now playing at Auc Roueries, is a remarkably suc-
cinct immigrant’s odyssey loosely based on the life story of Yip’s father. But Yip and co-author Wong make it clear from the outset that this elder was not a reliable nar-
rator: In some ways, the minimal-
ism Gold Mountain is reminiscent of the Canadian Jewish classic, Lies My Father Told Me. A father’s dreams of financial success (in this case, finding a mountain made of gold, or winning at the gam-
bling tables) lead to a huge letdown for the entire family.

Yip has said it was only in his later years, after taking up Bud-
 dhism, that he found the forgive-
ness necessary to try to
draw out his father’s story through a series of taped interviews. At the time, his father was in the early stages of dementia, so the lines of reality were doubly blurred.

In the play, the son (played by Eugene Saleh) frequently calls his father (played by Yip) into ac-
count. Following the old man’s anecdotes about meeting Sun Yat-
 sen, founding father of the Repub-
lic of China, the son reminds him that Sun Yat-sen had died before he was born. As for the letters that the father claims to have written to Chairman Mao, telling him how to run his revolution — it turns out that they were never mailed.

Whether he was actually involved in a séance meeting Sun Yat-

sen, the question as does how he avoided the crucifixion and repara-
tion of his family, remain from Liverpool in 1945.

Daniel Meilleur’s imaginative director-

From left: David Yip and Eugene Saleh in Gold Mountain by David Yip.