care week a time to consider 'What Matters Most'



urged to consider 'What Matters' Most' to them as part of National Palliative Care activities next week.

National Palliative Care week is an annual awareness-raising week organised by Palliative Care Australia, with this year's theme calling on Australians to reflect on what would be important to them if they became seriously unwell.

Sunraysia Community Health Services (SCHS) will host a Palliative Care Memorial Service on Sunday from 2pm at its Thirteenth Street offices as part of the week's activities, with palliative care staff

and volunteers to also join a walking group at Mildura Central on Tuesday, May 22, and Thursday, May 24, to answer questions from the public.

Palliative Care week will also celebrate, acknowledge and thank palliative care workers for making a difference in people's lives.

A recent report commissioned by the Productivity Commission report into human services found that between 80,000 and 140,000 of the 160,000 people who die each year in Australia could benefit from high quality end of-life care.

SCHS executive manager Clinical Services, Melissa Wade, PIC-TURED, said that dying is a normal part of life, and that it is important for Australians to have discussions about death and dying, and the type of care they would want to receive if they could no longer speak for themselves.

"Demand for palliative care is increasing," she said. "Professionals and volunteers are needed in our community to support patients and carers deal with dying, death and bereavement.

"By having the conversation with their loved ones and health

aligns with their values and ences regarding both the ty place of care, and a place of "We encourage every discuss their end of life with their loved ones and care team using the Dying Resources. Knowing what portant to you will reduce burden at a difficult time a sure you get the care you do More information aboutional Palliative Care Week able online at palliative_care_au/nationalpalliative_care_

ntemporary ife

STAGED: Hungry Ghost cast members Jing-Xuan Chan, right, and Bernard Sam.

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at the Melbourne Theatre Company's (MTC) 'Cybec Electric' play readings in 2017 is on its way to the Mildura Arts Centre.

Exciting new playwright lean Tong will bring her abstract play 'Hungry Ghosts' to the Arts Centre on Friday, May 25, with the play now part of MTC's award-winning education program which aims to reach thousands of students across Victoria every year through regional touring, scholarships, workshops and their celebrated, 'Sharing the Light' initiative.

Hungry Ghosts offers an unconventional take on contemporary life. Ms Tong's play has three central threads – the fate of Malaysian Airlines flight MH370, the 1Malaysia, and the exploration of identity after her own migration from Malaysia to Australia.

These threads all speak to loss and asking who we are and how we define identity.

Speaking in an interview posted on the MTC website, Ms Tong explained how she realised the three parallel stories in Hungry Ghosts could work together in a full-length play.

"I'd been interested in IMDB and MH370 for a while, but couldn't quite pinpoint what it was about those events that interested me," she said. "Then, in early 2016, I came across a conspiracy theory about how some individuals involved in IMDB might have instigated the disappearance of MH370 due to certain passengers' knowledge about the financial scandal.

"Something clicked – the

nature of grasping at straws during a tragedy, the scale of the financial operations and volume of assets, my physical distance from home and inability to fully contribute to the discussions that were unfolding about the country's socio-politics – it all fell into place so suddenly."

Ms Tong said she noticed that the common thread seemed to be a sense of loss, or an inability to speak due to either the suppression or lack of knowledge, or the wistful melancholy for something missing.

"The writing unfolded from there. The beginning of the process was just me making lists about how

these three things were like each other, whether in terms of abstract concepts like loss and distance, or more tangible things, like coinciding dates and personal experiences of flying with Malaysia Airlines," she said.

Hungry Ghost director, Petra Kalive, told the Mildura Weekly this week that the play was about identity, explaining how the creator had cleverly woven three narratives together.

"In doing so Jean has 'unpacked' the feelings of the disaster experience of loss and disconnection, and feeling apart from her home was she Malaysian or Australian? — and then there

is the corruption thread as well, compounding the sense of loss," she said.

"She also feels ashamed of her country in regard to the corruption, and although that sort of issue isn't unique to Malaysia, for Jean it conjures up a love/hate relationship toward her country.

"Jean uses these huge, epic worldwide events to expose something very small and personal in her life, and this is borne out in the production, where we are existing in the macro and micro at the same time."

the same time."

Ms Kalive said that, a state of the same time. The state of the state of the work was challenging. "However, with the in

signers, the comp sound designer a tuming – all of us together to develop duction made it al the amazing play the she said.

"The great thin the play is that in many metaphors a

the play is that in many metaphors a ery ideas. There's if fuselage, and a crus the form of a pist that makes a piercia and the concept of small person being have a very large if the world, and the ing theme of disconge for the produms Kalive said dents would find "enormously engathought-provoking she particularly eafter performance and was curious the many metaphores."

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