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Chapter 15. “To Keep Going the Spirit”: What Music and Theatre Meant to the POWs

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Chapter 15: “To Keep Going the Spirit”

What Music and Theatre Meant to the POWs

“To keep going the Spirit that kept us going.”

—motto of British FEPOW organization

In January 1945 at Chungkai hospital camp, G. E. Chippington heard disturbing rumors about the fate of the camp’s theatre:

The Japanese have ordered the demolition of the theatre. They have taken exception to the enjoyment we all derive from what have been truly magnificent productions of the highest quality displaying unsuspected talent in every department from the actual production, the acting and singing right through to the scenery, lighting, props, and even the posters. They have enabled us, if only for a brief moment, to escape from the harsh realities of this unreal life into that other civilized world from which we came and to which one day we hope to return.

The order to demolish the theatre is yet another humiliating admission of defeat on the part of the Japanese. They cannot destroy the spirit which created and gave rise to our theatre—so, their answer, destroy the fabric, the bits and pieces of the theatre—the inanimate expression of that spirit they have failed to conquer.¹

Fortunately for Chippington and the others at Chungkai, the rumors proved false. But his eloquent testimony in defense of their theatre’s worth encapsulates the various themes found in this final consideration of the ways in which music and theatre served as strategies for survival.

Other Strategies for Survival

Many activities were devised by the POWs to fill their few hours of free time between the evening meal and lights out. These included writing secret diaries, reading, playing chess or cards, *kongsi* discussionsⁱ and writing groups, hut lectures, and chapel services. One activity that benefitted John Lane was participation in the chapel choir. “[T]he existence of the choir,” he wrote, “was a tremendous psychological boost that helped us to ward off the danger of depression.”²

ⁱ A hut interest group.



FIGURE 15.1. POW [STANLEY GIMSON], CHUNGKAI THAILAND, JANUARY 1944. ASHELY GEORGE OLD. IWM ART COLLECTION. COURTESY OF THE FAMILY OF STANLEY GIMSON.

An activity much in evidence was making art. “My paints, too, helped tremendously,” wrote Norman Pritchard of how producing souvenir programs and set designs helped him survive.³ For us, these artifacts offer a compelling documentation of the lives of the POWs on the Thailand-Burma railway. But for the POWs, the artwork served as material witness to living memory. This point was explicitly made by Ray Parkin about the artwork he produced on the railway: “I feel if I can get them back the experience will not be entirely wasted. Memory is not enough.”⁴

But doing art and the other free-time activities listed were singular or small-group endeavors; large-group activities, such as sports and entertainment, were initiated to engage everyone’s time and attention. As there wasn’t always the energy to play games, few accounts of participation in sports are encountered in the POW literature.ⁱⁱ By contrast, as we’ve seen, there are numerous entries regarding entertainment, and the historical narrative records the parts played by the many officers and other ranks who participated in its production.

“The Enemy Within”

The ways in which camp entertainment proved beneficial to the POWs against the uncertainty, boredom, and despair that bedeviled their lives wasn’t only felt during the performances themselves but extended to the times beforehand and afterward as well.

Before Performances

Passage of Time/Calendar. Among the seemingly mundane benefits of camp entertainment

ⁱⁱ There are accounts of soccer matches at Nong Pladuk and cricket matches at Nakhon Pathom. And, of course, “race days,” when camps were turned into theme parks with people dressed in appropriate costumes for re-creations of the holiday horse races at Ascot or Melbourne.

was that weekly performances helped the POWs track the passage of time. “Quite miss the concerts,” W. W. Marsh wrote when entertainment at Chungkai stopped because the theatre was flooded by monsoon rains: “They serve as a land mark from week to week & one knows better which day is which.”⁵ In the day-to-day sameness of prison camp life, this benefit was not insignificant.

“**A night out.**” Of more value was the notion that going to a show was a special occasion—something to anticipate and plan for—expressed by an anonymous soldier in Changi POW camp, Singapore, early in their captivity:

We had not many clothes but in those days most of us had a second shirt and pair of shorts which we carefully kept for best. Some even had khaki slacks which had been issued in India. And we all had forage caps. These were all kept carefully pressed and when it was our turn to go to the theatre—for we had to take it in turns—we dressed very carefully, washed and shaved meticulously, cleaned our shoes, wore puttees. It was a night out.⁶

Two years later, attending the theatre Up Country was still considered a special event. “I think each concert was an occasion that I looked forward to with a great deal of anticipation,” wrote Tom Morris about Tamarkan, “and I was never once disappointed at what I saw.”⁷ Entertainment’s once-a-week break in the tedious daily routine is what Jack Chalker thought made it so important. “I mean, it was the one spot that people had to look forward to during the week,” he explained. “And then everybody came out for it. This was a day out, or an evening out, isn’t it?”ⁱⁱⁱ⁸

During Performances

Escape. The idea that entertainment provided a means of escape—even if only temporary—was recognized as its greatest benefit. As the POWs lived in a world where physical escape was deemed impossible,^{iv} mental and emotional escape became all the more important. With phrases such as “taken out of myself,” or “took me right away,” or “took them into another world,” the POWs expressed the liberating effect musical and theatrical performances had on them. As Chippington’s testimony at the opening of this chapter suggests, the nature of this escape was paradoxical. It involved a forgetting and a remembering, an “escape from” as well as an “escape into.”

The POWs’ longing to escape from the monotony of everyday life in the confines of their prison camps continued throughout the three and a half years of their captivity. But what the POWs on the railway endured during “the Speedo” pushed that need to the breaking point. E. R. Hall’s account of that time is typical:

. . . and then the rains and speedo work came. The hospital camp at the 55 Kilo mark, Kohn Kuhn,^v was the worst camp I was in. The incessant rain, the sickness all round us and the slow monotonous notes of the seemingly endless soundings

ⁱⁱⁱ “A night out” and “a day out” are common British expressions for an anticipated experience that would be very worthwhile or for one that had proven so. Since many of the POW performances took place during the day, the term “a night out” was used metaphorically.

^{iv} Although for most of their captivity Up Country there were only flimsy bamboo fences penning them in (that is, until moats and bunds were ordered built around the camps), an unfamiliar environment, a civilian population where most POWs could not blend in easily, and knowledge that the few POWs who had tried to escape were caught and executed inhibited further attempts.

^v On the Burma side of the railway construction.

of the Last Post as we buried the dead left us morbid and unforgiving. I suffered from an excess of men and a feeling of disgust caused by a state of being satiated with their presence. I was tired of men—sick men, dying men, men talking, laughing, swearing and eating rice, men sleeping, near naked men, groaning and screaming men as they suffered; Australian men, English men, American men, white and brown Dutch men, Japanese men—they all irritated me and I longed for a change. A prisoner of war asked a chaplain if he still believed in “goodwill toward all men” and he replied “No. They are not men any longer.”⁹

To endure this hell, most POWs resorted to what J. Blattner, writing about an even more horrific German concentration camp context, called “the animal need to survive”:

The prisoners mind[set], the moral and philosophical decisions that had formed identity, were no longer of use. All they could rely on was the animal need to survive. In short the Nazis aimed to create a victim who was nothing more than a beast. All human value was extirpated. Only the power to work, the fear of pain, the ability to obey, and the will to live survived.¹⁰

Forswearing their capacity in caring for anything other than their own survival, the POWs on the railway “hardened their hearts” against their fellow prisoners. Ernest Gordon described how this was done:

When a man is dying we had no word of mercy. When he cried out for help, we averted our heads. Men cursed the Japanese, their neighbors, themselves, and God. Cursing became such an obsession that they constructed whole sentences in which every word was a curse.¹¹

But during “the Speedo” there was no escape, as there were no performances of music or theatre to offer respite. By late 1943, when the major railway construction was finished, the POWs needed to escape not only from the disease and death rampant in the overcrowded camps but from memories of their inhumanity as well.

Once the entertainers among them were able to regain their strength, the music and theatre they produced allowed the POWs to retreat into imaginative worlds where restoration to wholeness could begin. Such was G. E. Chippington’s experience when he attended the pantomime at Takanun/223 Kilo during Christmas 1943:

But, as I sat there under that canopy of stars and watched the pantomime just for a short while I forgot all about the Japanese and the railway, the sweat, the suffering and the pain and those who died. Just a rough and ready, makeshift pantomime by a bunch of amateurs who have probably never performed on a stage before in their whole lives—yet, for a brief moment, in the middle of our dark jungle, they brought us a shaft of light, a breath of freedom.

Afterwards, when I rolled myself in my blanket and settled down to sleep, I found my heart strangely refreshed.¹²

Camaraderie/Solidarity. The entertainment produced in hospital and relocation camps during 1944 restored the POWs' capacity for empathy and camaraderie lost during "the Speedo." In the collective sharing of weekly entertainment, a solidarity emerged in which each POW could feel he was not alone in fighting against "the enemy within" or "the enemy without."

Testimony

[Music and theatre] lifted our spirits immeasurably—something to look forward to! The "flattening" of people's feelings when they were cancelled was very obvious—there was little else. After years of slavery on the Railway, appalling treatment, few drugs, medical supplies non-existent, food appalling, chronic illness, cholera, the mental strain of believing our terrible lifestyle would ever end & that we would be freed & not dispatched by our captors—the endless "boghole" rumours. Morale was getting low & it took its toll on most ranks. Some diversion was essential—the precious short time you sat, enjoyed, laughed, sang & forgot were magic!¹³

**Fred Ransome Smith
Cartoonist and Set Designer**

After Performances

"Made men talk." Beyond the immediate sharing that took place in audiences during a show, performances gave the prisoners new topics for conversation, jokes to recall, and music to sing. "The catchy tunes of the eighteen nineties were sung and whistled all over the camp for weeks afterwards," observed Major Jim Jacobs about the effects Norman Carter's revue *Memories of the Gay 90s* had on the troops at Tamarkan.^{vi14}

Sense of accomplishment. Attending a concert party not only gave POWs the escape of a good night out, it also gave them something more that was psychologically important. Following a performance

^{vi} That is, until a year later, when whistling was forbidden at Kanburi Officers' Camp [Jacobs, 140].

at Changi early in their captivity, artist Murray Griffin wrote, you “come back in the semi-dark with the grand feeling of having achieved something.”^{vii}

“To lessen animosity.” Entertainment also came to play an important role in reducing national and ethnic rivalries and prejudices among the British, Australian, Dutch, and American troops. More importantly, it helped to lessen racial prejudice against the *indische jorgens* (mixed-race) or fully Indonesian Netherlands East Indies’ POWs through the integration of camp orchestras, separate Dutch/Indonesian musical and theatrical productions, and the appearance of performers from different nationalities and races in each other’s shows. As a consequence, some POWs became intensely interested in learning languages and understanding forms of music and dance previously unknown to them.

John Sharp thought that the entertainment may also have had some moderating effect on their treatment by their captors. “A side issue,” he wrote, “was that the camp guards attended and perhaps appreciated (without understanding) the performances and their presence in a relaxed atmosphere may have contributed in some measure to lessen animosity towards the prisoners. I believe that the Group Commandant (Colonel Yanagida) permitted the singing of the British and the Dutch national anthems.”^{viii}

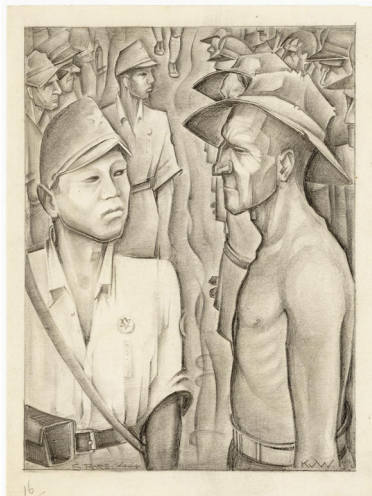


FIGURE 15.2. “ROLL CALL.” KEES VAN WILLIGEN.
IMAGE COPYRIGHT MUSEON, THE HAGUE,
NETHERLANDS.

“The Enemy Without”

Besides momentary escape from the enemy within, POW diaries, memoirs, and artifacts disclose that entertainment also abetted their efforts to deal with the outer world, including their Japanese captors..

Resistance

Entertainment provided the POWs with an opportunity for resistance, and the entertainers became the front-line troops in this covert war. Witnessed collectively and publicly, derogatory comments about their captors in jokes, songs, and sketches, strengthened everyone’s resolve to fight on. The trick

^{vii} Strictly against orders from Imperial Japanese Army headquarters.

on the entertainers' part was, of course, not to get caught. With Japanese commandants and their staffs, including the censors who had vetted the scripts, sitting in front rows, avoiding detection wasn't always easy.

Approval for concert parties on the railway was given by Japanese commanders with the understanding that they would attend as well. And deference must be paid to their presence. Shows could not start until they were seated. They would be the last to arrive and the first to leave, and when they did, POW audiences had to stand and bow in their direction.

Guards, usually Korean conscripts, were stationed at the back and along the sides of auditoria to watch the audience for any signs of unrest. Sometimes a show's content proved just too much of a draw for the guards' attention. From his vantage point at the back of the audience, John Sharp watched as two guards on duty were slapped by a Japanese officer for watching the provocative antics of the "two fucking tarts" in *Café Colette* and not the audience, as assigned.^{viii17}

"To take the piss out." The record of entertainment on the railway is replete with attempts by entertainers "to take the piss out" of the Japanese through all the verbal and visual means available in their performers' toolkits. A summary of their techniques described in the literature includes allusions and coded [slang] phrases in songs and sketches mocking their captors' racial, physical, and cultural differences, as well as nonverbal gestures and vocal *pointing*^{ix}—possibilities not apparent to Japanese censors when they read the scripts submitted for approval. Like techniques were also used to inform POW audiences of the latest war news heard on secret radios. When the entertainers succeeded in their subterfuge, it gave POW audiences sitting behind the Japanese "little victories" to celebrate surreptitiously. As the Japanese caught on to these techniques, they tried to put a stop to them, but, as the historical narrative shows, this only challenged brave entertainers to concoct ever more clever ways to outwit them.

No theatre produced on the Thailand-Burma railway dealt directly with the Japanese captors or the men's lives as POWs. That was forbidden. But from the record of what shows were banned by censors at Nong Pladuk and elsewhere, it appears the Japanese suspected the POWs might be addressing those subject indirectly. They were right.

"In the face of the enemy." The POWs came to realize that performances in themselves were acts of resistance no matter what the content. On the way back to his hut after his brother Han's accordion concert, Frank Samethini was struck by an idea: in attending the performance, "had they not, for a little while at least, beaten the enemy?"¹⁸ Two performers agreed. "[I]t was something, perhaps, you did in the face of the enemy, you know," said Jack Chalker. "And I think that was quite wonderful."¹⁹ For drummer Wally Davis, "The shows went on as usual partly for morale and also to let the Japanese know they still could not break that Spirit that kept us going."²⁰ As Chippington indicates, nothing symbolized the POWs' resistance and "the Spirit that kept [them] going" more than their theatre.^x

viii See Chapter 6: "Chungkai Showcase," Part Two.

ix Pointing is a verbal technique whereby the actor hesitates briefly before an important word or phrase to make the audience listen to what follows more attentively.

x Some of the most startling information to come to light during the investigation into entertainment on the Thailand-Burma railway is the extent to which the Japanese came to depend on the POWs' entertainment for their survival as well. Only two Japanese entertainment units—a military band and a film projection crew—are recorded in the FEPOW records touring the construction camps to boost Japanese soldiers' morale. These were clearly not enough to keep I. J. A. troops happy in remote postings, so in addition to the POW shows there are several instances noted in which the Japanese mounted their own variety shows in emulation of the POWs'. At other times, command performances were ordered in which POWs grudgingly performed alongside Japanese soldiers to improve everyone's morale.

In the proliferation of POW entertainment that took place in the hospital and relocation camps during 1944, the Japanese found relief from their own boredom, though they had the opportunity for R & R trips to Kanchanaburi or even Bangkok. Two Japanese commandants gave the POW musicians special treatment because of their own personal interest in music. Taking a page from the POWs' efforts at maintaining morale, the I. J. A. headquarters at Kanburi ordered their troops stationed in the area to compete in an entertainment contest. The scenic technicians at Chungkai found themselves building sets for their two I. J. A. units. By late 1944/early 1945, as the war in the Pacific turned decisively against them, Japanese attitudes about POW entertainment held by commandants in the camps at Chungkai and the all-officers' camp at Kanburi changed (this was not true elsewhere). All of this is more fully detailed in the historical narrative.

Testimony

I think the concert parties were the consequence of a determination to live . . . I'd put it that way round, you know. That's why we did it. When we were surrendered we were not going to go under, you know, and that's why one did it.

And, of course, one wanted something that was fun amid all this horror, disgusting sanitary conditions, you know. I mean, it helps you to go on, doesn't it, if you can get the pleasure of people laughing at your own jokes. You know, it's a desperate day-to-day existence, you never know what's going to happen . . . you're completely at the mercy of your captors who could machine-gun the lot of you.

It was a determination to live. And the concert parties were evidence of your determination to live, you know. By doing it you were going to live if you could. I think, as it were, the concert parties could just as much come out of the necessity to fight back and to keep going as they were, you know, in terms of any great acknowledgment to serious drama.²¹

Audio



15.1

Robert Brazil
Actor and Set Designer

Valuing Music

“Whether anyone realised it or not,” wrote John Durnford, “one of the most important factors in our complete recovery at Chungkai was being able to listen to music. For music is not only the ‘food of love,’ so often quoted, but the food of the whole spirit.”²²

From the start of their imprisonment, the ability to sing, play, or listen to music was important to the POWs’ emotional health. “Music,” George McNeilly wrote, “was the means of keeping hundreds of men sane. It appealed to them in different ways, but it was a vital part in each man’s life, and added to the morale of the camp.”²³ McNeilly’s comments are about the effects the music concerts he sponsored outside the YMCA hut in Changi, Singapore, had on listeners, but they are even more relevant to the POWs on the railway. There, according to Ernest Gordon, the hunger for music seemed insatiable:

Whenever there was a performance, no one asked, “Are you going?” Everyone was going—if he could limp or crawl or hitch along on his artificial legs—or even if he couldn’t walk at all.

It was by no means unusual to see a man being carried up the incline^{xi} on a stretcher. In music was medicine for the soul.²⁴

POW records show that many instrumental and vocal groups were formed on the Thailand-Burma railway. “The most wonderful pleasure at Chungkai was the orchestra and concert party,” wrote Basil Peacock. “Though I am no music lover, I think one of the delights in my life on our return to Chungkai was hearing music being played by skilful [*sic*] musicians. Few of us had realized that music is almost a necessity.”²⁵

Testimony

This is the power of music. To me it has always been associated with friendship. It unites all sorts of people in a common bond. It is universal. It crosses all boundaries of race and belief. Whether it’s a simply strummed sentimental song like “Goldmine in the Sky” or a rousing Hungarian rhapsody or a Brahms lullaby, there is a moment in which the rest of life, the stresses and anxieties and doubts and fears, are held in suspense. This is what I believe the musician has to offer; and I have felt more rewarded by those moments of belonging to the enjoyment of an audience than by the recognition and honours that have come my way over the years.²⁶

**Herbert “Smoky” Dawson
Cowboy Singer**

First Australian Army Entertainment Unit^{xii}

Since most of the music heard by the POWs on the railway was the popular music they would have known from radio broadcasts, phonograph recordings, and films, its immediate emotional appeal evoked personal memories and encouraged camaraderie. “One could reconstruct one’s life from hearing the old, oft-plugged tunes of the years before the war,” wrote Ronald Hastain after hearing such music in a Thai construction camp. “The tunes often made men talk.”²⁷ Swing music made them want to dance.

Frank Samethini’s description of his brother’s accordion performance at Chungkai is the best example in the FEPOW literature of the effect of popular music on POW psyches:^{xiii} It took place while Han was in hospital at Chungkai recuperating from malaria and leg ulcers.

^{xi} Audiences sat on an earthen slope.

^{xii} Dawson was not sent to Malaya and therefore was never a POW. He, instead, performed behind the lines at Balikpapan on Borneo.

^{xiii} A shorter version of this account appears in Chapter 6: “Chungkai Showcase,” Part One.

And so a time is set and one evening they take him [Han] to the stage on a stretcher. They place him on a chair before a large crowd assembled on the parade ground. For a moment or two his fingers run tentatively over the keyboard of his old accordion. A hush has fallen over the audience. Then—up spring and sparkle the notes, rising and tumbling down, in singles and in pairs, in chords of low and high notes like a musical fountain.

First they let him play a little while on his own, but not for long. As many times before the magic of the sweeping rhythm and harmony of his music make them burst forth into singing. The merry tune and sweet lilting ballads of an almost forgotten time glide over the parched grass. “Beautiful Dreamer, wake unto me. Starlight and dewdrops are waiting for Thee” sound over the heads of the men. “Home, home on the range” echoes against the dusty attap walls, touching the trees looming in the darkness, touching the hardened souls of these ragged, skinny people drawn together in close unity. A unity which goes beyond the boundaries of rank and standing. For now only the important thing is “Dinah” and “My Blue Heaven,” and “She’s my Lady Luck,” “Always” and more of the songs of old. But not “Home Sweet Home,” that is forbidden.

The accordion is only audible at the start of each tune, the voices taking over immediately, drowning the mechanical sound in the human voices of the one and same hope that all carry in their hearts.²⁸



FIGURE 15.3. HAN SAMETHINI IN ORCHESTRA PIT
AT CHUNGKAI. *WONDER BAR* PHOTOGRAPH DETAIL.
COURTESY OF MARTIN PERCIVAL.

In an effort to appeal to the musical tastes of all the men in their audiences, musical concerts

usually contained several “light” classical pieces, such as the selections from Gilbert and Sullivan and other well-known operettas sung at Chungkai by POW camp commandant Cary Owtram to great acclaim, or heard in the concerts Gus Harffey gave at Kanburi. At Aunganaung/105 Kilo in Burma, nursery rhymes transformed into “cod-operas” with their mix of melodies from operas, popular, and traditional music, were much appreciated:

It probably seems strange that men in that age group were so entertained by such child-like stories [wrote Ted Weller, one of the singers] but it seems the music just took them into another world and away from their miserable day to day existence, because these “plays” were very well received. . . . Just goes to prove what music will do to help anyone to stay alive.²⁹

Performances of classical music, on the other hand, presented some difficulties. Unlike popular music, classical music’s emotional appeal was not necessarily immediate. Audience members were required to listen to it more complexly, for longer duration, and to live with the uncertainty of its resolution. Fearing that many POWs who had never heard such music would be turned off by complete concerts of it, entertainment officers restricted how frequently it could be performed. They were not wrong to do so. After his experience of a few selections of classical music incorporated into a concert of other types, Geoffrey Gee was one other ranks soldier who declared, “Definitely too highbrow for the tone of this camp,”³⁰ and chose not to attend the next concert in which it was featured.

But the professionally trained musicians fervently believed that once the other, uninitiated POWs heard a full concert, they would come to appreciate it. Fergus Anckorn was an other ranks soldier who didn’t need convincing:

I’ve never been asked this: “What did you miss most?” Well, you might think of all sorts of answers, but I might as well start straight off that sex was down the list somewhere. The first thing that we missed more than anything else was music. You know, I used to imagine all day long I could hear orchestras playing, and I could visualize the violinists, the pianists playing.^{xiv31}

In fact, many POWs with no prior experience of classical music had their ears and minds opened to its value. Ian Mackintosh’s review of James Clarke’s renditions of Handel and Mendelssohn makes clear that audience responses to this type of music could be quite enthusiastic: “The really star performer is a Dr. Clarke who has a lovely tenor voice. He has obviously been well trained and always gets a tremendous ovation.”³²

Years after the war, John Durnford compared the relative value of the popular entertainment and music the men heard during captivity with that of the classical music: “The clowns, the knockabouts, the

xiv Unfortunately for Anckorn, his longing to hear classical music went unfulfilled until after the war, as he was transferred from Chungkai to Nong Pladuk before these types of concerts occurred. “And I imagine it was that,” he continued, “that got to me when, after the war, I went for the first time into a Lyons’ corner house [a pub], and there was this wonderful orchestra playing, all in white tie and tails. And it got to me to such an extent that I just burst into tears and put my head on the table. At last I could hear music again. The second thing on my list, by the way, was sugar” [Anckorn, “Recorded Answers to Questions,” 6].

ballad-singers raised our battered spirits. In the sound of great and unfamiliar music they entered new worlds of faith and imagination.”³³

Valuing Theatre

Numerous extant souvenir programs and show posters detail the astonishing assortment of theatrical forms witnessed by the POWs on the Thailand-Burma railway that included music halls, variety shows, cabarets, revues, minstrel shows, pantomimes, and plays.

Since variety theatre [American *vaudeville*] was the easiest form to produce, and the form taken by military concert parties prior to captivity, it was the type of theatre most in evidence on the railway. Mackintosh’s response to a Dutch/Indonesian revue at Chungkai explains how the kaleidoscopic array of talent in variety shows could provide enormous delight (even when performed in a foreign language):

Last night I went to a concert put on by the Dutch, they do one every month or so. It was superbly good and although nearly all the dialogue was in their own language I laughed heartily. They have a troop of acrobats who are amazing for this camp. The things they can do on a rice diet are almost incredible! Some of their balancing feats were on a very high standard. The last item on the programme was awfully good. It was entitled “A Thousand and One Nights” and featured Ali Bami [Baba?] and a few of his thieves! Two lads dressed as Nubian dancers were a howling success and with their very dark skins and truly magnificent dresses really looked the part! Where the stuff came from to make those dresses goodness knows. There was also a first rate comedian whose antics kept the whole audience in fits of laughter the entire evening. I hope they come on more frequently.³⁴



FIGURE 15.4. *1001 NIGHTS*. PETER VAN VELTHUISEN.
IMAGE COPYRIGHT MUSEON, THE HAGUE,
NETHERLANDS.

Large-cast revues and musical comedies, such as Norman Carter's *Memories of the Gay 90s*, Leo Britt's *Wonder Bar*, and Bob Gale's *Escapado Argentino*, thrilled audiences with their music and dance and wowed them with elaborate sets and props, costumes, and lighting seemingly created out of nothing. Extended accounts in the FEPOW literature have allowed for a more detailed description of these productions in the historical narrative.

Christmas pantomimes delighted POWs with their over-the-top humor, audience participation, and memories of childhood glee. The triumph of Good over Evil had never been so meaningful.

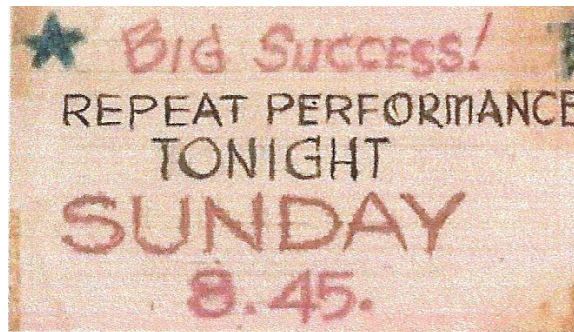


FIGURE 15.5. CAMP ANNOUNCEMENT: CHUNGKAI. IMAGE COPYRIGHT MUSEON, THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS.

Straight plays^{xv} were the most challenging form of theatre to present in the camps and the most challenging for audiences to receive. They were difficult to produce because they were dependent upon the availability of scripts (whether printed or remembered), actors who could perform them, and producers with the requisite skills to direct them. Nevertheless, FEPOW records reveal that most hospital and relocation camps produced this type of theatre. Without a ready source for scripts, budding playwrights at Nong Pladuk and Nakhon Pathom wrote original mystery-thriller dramas for stage presentation.

Unlike the short duration and immediate effect of variety show acts, or the predictable plots and stereotypical characters of musical theatre, plays required audiences to follow plots involving more developed characters caught in conflict with unknown outcomes. These factors caused some concern among entertainment officers that plays might prove psychologically problematic for prisoners undergoing rehabilitation. But the reactions of POWs tell a different story. What happened at Chungkai is a case in point.

Following the belief that POWs in rehabilitation needed first of all to relearn how to laugh, the earliest plays performed at Chungkai were comedies:

The plays were mostly the sort of comedies or farces that have long runs in London's West End [wrote Ernest Gordon]; but they brought back the tonic sound of men laughing together. This was a welcome contrast to the long months when the sullen silence was never broken except by snarls or complaints.³⁵

After witnessing one of these comedies, medical officer Patrick MacArthur wrote, "I have been to an

^{xv} Plays without music.

absolutely magnificent production of Somerset Maugham's 'The Circle' and enjoyed every moment of it."³⁶

When producer Leo Britt tested his audiences' ability to accept more intellectual and emotionally demanding content with his production of Emlyn Williams' mystery-thriller *Night Must Fall* two months later, they loved it. "We owe our theatre experts a great deal," wrote G. E. Chippington. "They feed the imagination and sustain the spirit within. We lesser mortals are grateful to them."³⁷ The audiences' clamor for more "whodunits" signaled further growth in their psychological health.

But no one on the railway produced a tragedy. Even Leo Britt's attempt to present Sutton Vane's fantasy-drama *Outward Bound*, with its shipboard of recently deceased passengers sailing to an unknown fate, caused some concern among the cast about how it would "go over" with a POW audience who had been waiting years for release from captivity.^{xvi}

Valuing Dance

Some of the most intriguing materials unearthed in the records of entertainment on the Thailand-Burma railway concern the numerous references to dance performances. Since participation in dance and exposure to its representation on stage and in films had been a huge part of the POWs' nights out prior to their captivity, it should have come as no surprise to find that dance played a significant role in their entertainment. The range of dance performances seen by the POWs included popular types such as ballroom and club, traditional and ethnic, and—most surprising of all—classical.

Watching presentations of ballroom and club dancing on stage must have given the POWs an impression of normalcy, even though the couples were men (one partner being a female impersonator). Performances of regional *Hollandsche* dances, "Sambal Sue's" hulas, and Norman Carter's incorporation of a French cancan in one show and an American Indian powwow dance in another kept memories of cultural traditions alive.

Most extraordinary was John Coast and Philip Brugman's all-dancing show *On Your Toes* that contained popular, traditional, and ethnic dances as well as a twenty-minute version of the *Sleeping Beauty* ballet. When the Indonesian dancer Tari performed his classical dances at Chungkai, the British and Australian POWs, who had never heard of, or witnessed, such dances before, were entranced. And the artistry of Philip Brugman's "Mystery of the Lotus" choreography stunned everyone with its ethereal beauty and metaphorical significance.

^{xvi} See Chapter 6: "Chungkai Showcase," Part Two.



FIGURE 15.6. "LOTUS MYSTERY." PASTEL. PETER VAN VELTHUYSEN. IMAGE COPYRIGHT MUSEON, THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS.

Peter van Velthuysen's pastel sketch of the dance, drawn nearly a week after its performance, may have been his attempt, like Ray Parkin's, to capture and hold onto an extraordinary experience "because memory was not enough."

Valuing Performers

It is impossible to write about the significance of the performing arts to the POWs without mentioning the the men who did the performing—and without whom the arts could not have been experienced.^{xvii} In speaking about the impact of entertainment on his survival, Tom Morris quickly turned his attention to the performers:

*And I had a great admiration for the people who did give so much of their time, you know, not only in the times when the pressure was off, but who, when the pressure was absolutely on, could still find it in their hearts to come in and do rehearsals and actually perform with the barest of materials, and basically built around their own talent. Magnificent stuff!*³⁸

"When the pressure was absolutely on"

"When the pressure was absolutely on" was in the railway construction camps, where there was an urgent need for any kind of entertainment to keep the POWs from sinking into despair. Norman Pritchard

^{xvii} As Eleanore Vail, one of my former colleagues at Earlham College and a concert pianist, used to say: "Without me, Beethoven would only be notes on a page."

believed the entertainers' willingness to perform "was over and above the call of duty. Didn't have to do it. Did it because they honestly wanted to do it."³⁹ But Jimmy Walker, one of these construction camp performers, admitted to motivations that were a bit more complex: "Some entertained on makeshift stages partly for the amusement of their fellows and partly as a prop to their own sanity."⁴⁰

Pritchard acknowledged the importance of this performer-audience reciprocity to their survival: "This two way interest was vital. It helped the chap who was doing it, by giving him an object in life, and it helped the recipient who without some encouragement and hope, could easily slip down that no-return path of boredom, self-pity, complacency and despair to an early and very often unnecessary death."⁴¹

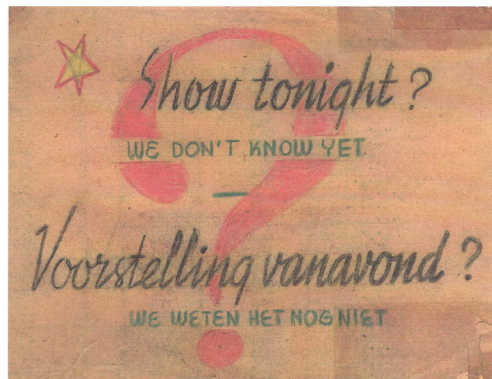


FIGURE 15.7. CAMP ANNOUNCEMENT: CHUNGKAI. HUIB VAN LAAR.
IMAGE COPYRIGHT MUSEON, THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS.

“When the pressure was off”

“When the pressure was off” referred to the hospital and relocation camps. But even there, with more leisure time in which to ruminate, anxieties about the future grew in importance.

Call of duty. For the entertainers who became members of official concert parties, performing *was* their “call of duty,” and the seriousness of this obligation was well understood by musicians like Wally Davis:

[W]ith the band and concerts it was “The Show must go on” regardless of whether any of them had malaria with temperatures well over 100, touch of the trots, or feeling rough otherwise because a very close friend had passed away that day.⁴²

And, according to actor-producer Ted Ingram, by actors:

[T]he actors were splendid. Quite often, they attended a call and rehearsed with tremendous enthusiasm after a hard day's work, a hurried “meal” of rice and jungle stew, and perhaps nursing an attack of malaria. The show

always went on even if most of the actors were sick. They carried on cheerfully and the audience of thousands was never disappointed.⁴³

Heroes. It wasn't just productions of music, theatre, and dance that became vital to the POWs' survival: so did the performers themselves. When G. E. Chippington saw Fred Thompson once again on stage at Kanburi Officers' Camp in 1945, he recalled his first meeting with Thompson back in Changi and the serious facial wound he had received in the battle for Singapore, as well as his previous appearances in shows at Takanun and Chungkai. "I can hardly, even now, believe the transformation," he exclaimed. "Just another demonstration, as so often here, of the triumph of the indomitable human spirit over adversity."⁴⁴

At Nong Pladuk, Rob Brazil found himself the recipient of attention off stage as well as on:

I mean it sounds like [bragging?] but a lot of people said to me, "Kept close to you, Rob, you were always laughing." I don't know but I always laughed at my own jokes . . . that's the basis of it . . . and I was determined I would survive it if I possibly could, you know.

I've got [something] which is the greatest survival kit of all: a will to laugh . . . that makes all the difference, doesn't it?⁴⁵

In a world without heroes,^{xviii} camp entertainers were elevated to the status of "aristocrats," "precious personalities,"⁴⁶ and "stars."⁴⁷ Watching entertainers week after week act out seemingly normal lives and express a variety of emotions on stage not usually shown between men in a POW camp^{xix} gave spectators a vision of "the other civilized world" to which they hoped to return. The entertainers became an embodiment of their own hopes for continuity and liberation. With the exception of the Dutch *cabaretier* Wim Kan, none of these entertainers ever received official recognition after the war for their role in helping fellow POWs survive.

How Entertainment Helped Performers Survive

"There was no formula for survival," wrote Norman Pritchard. "But those of us who were able found great strength in helping our fellows. . . . The Concert Parties helped the men who took part in them as well. It gave us something to look forward to, and it kept our minds active."⁴⁸

Sense of Accomplishment

In a world where they otherwise had no control over their lives, the ability to decide what to produce and then take that choice from its planning stage through to performance gave the POWs involved an enormous sense of control, even if it was only momentary. The future, represented by the date set for opening night, was anticipated, planned for, and once the curtain went up, fulfilled. Audience confirmation of their achievements through laughter and applause kept their spirits going.

^{xviii} An idea voiced by Tom Wade in Chapter 1: "In The Bag."

^{xix} An idea taken from Joe White's "The Prisoner's Voice," found in *Prison Theatre: Perspectives and Practices*, edited by James Thompson (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 1998), 186.

Higher Levels of Achievement

As official camp entertainers, their charge was to not disappoint audiences who counted on them for a weekly infusion of morale. Although more than one POW stated that “they were never disappointed” by what they saw, records show this was not actually the case. As should be expected, over the three and half years of imprisonment, there were a number of times when entertainers burnt out or their material became stale from repetition.

What is remarkable, though, is how often “new” talent stepped forward to rekindle audience enthusiasm and how many times the “old” talent was able to rediscover wellsprings of inspiration that allowed them to reach higher levels of achievement. Following his attendance at *Night Must Fall* in June 1944, Patrick MacArthur exclaimed, “These concerts have, in performance, production, stage management, acting, advertisement etc. reached well into the ‘Brandon Thomas’ class^{xx} and made a big difference to the weeks enjoyment.”⁴⁹ Constantly stretching their talents and skills helped entertainers survive.

Camaraderie and Community

Working creatively and cooperatively together in rehearsals or backstage on technical crews fostered camaraderie and community. For magician Fergus Anckorn, the interactions with other actors during rehearsals were a major factor in his survival:

*I remember when we rehearsed and all that sort of thing, you quite forgot that you were in these terrible circumstances. We were learning a script and getting on with it, and doing our little show. Lots of laughs backstage, and that sort of thing . . . and it undoubtedly helped us along as well. In fact, there's lots of performers survived the war when others didn't.*⁵⁰

Besides performing as a female impersonator, Jack Chalker believed that working on a wardrobe staff also contributed to his survival:

Generally exciting times with a great deal of laughter and enthusiasm both on our bamboo bed-spaces or, when allowed, back-stage, where the groups were bigger doing all manner of productive things, including rehearsing, developing ideas, discussing scripts and stage movements.⁵¹

“A sense of identity”

Because no POW records address the question directly, it can only be surmised what effect the music, dancing, or theatre had on those who performed it. In her study of theatrical performances in Jewish concentration camps during the Second World War, Rebecca Rovit asserts that for actors “the solace in ‘being someone else’ aided in retaining one’s humanity.”⁵² For Joe White, a prisoner’s performance was

^{xx} Brandon Thomas was the author of the wildly popular late-nineteenth-century farce *Charley’s Aunt* and is not otherwise known as a playwright or producer. So MacArthur’s reference is peculiar, unless, as seems likely, he was trying to indicate that the Chungkai productions had reached professional standards.

“part of a much deeper and fundamental necessity: the need to establish, or to re-establish, a sense of identity.”^{xxi53}

Actor and designer Rob Brazil thought performing was “a lark. And the audience was part of it, as much as the players really. . . . They, like everyone, was fighting to survive, and the whole objective was to still be alive when it was all over, you know.”⁵⁴ C. W. Wells also thought it “great fun acting and rehearsing these shows, and it certainly makes the days race by.”⁵⁵ Oliver Thomas^{xxii} agreed “it was much more fun” and added, “we who performed got the most out of it.”⁵⁶ Performing on the bamboo and atap stage at Nong Pladuk felt to Fergus Anckorn like he was home again:

It was just as though we were performing in any theater in England. And the audience . . . you lost sight of the fact that they were sitting on the ground. It was an audience. And you got this rapport.

Well we knew we were doing it for the pleasure of others. We knew that it was a morale job. And Colonel Toosey said, “You know, you chaps are doing the best thing you could ever do. You’re keeping the spirits up.” And we knew we were doing that. But, like all performers, we loved doing it. And it wouldn’t have mattered if there was anyone there or not. So it was very, very normal when we were performing.”⁵⁷

Testimony

Theatre/music/lectures played a vitally important part in our survival, and gave hope to thousands—to see a “show” in the midst of appalling illness, and to be involved as so many were from all walks of life and experience in contributing to it, whether making up a small prop on their bed-space, helping to repair the stage, or stealing paper from the Jap compound for us to write out our scripts—or perform, make music. . . . It was a great business and embraced all POW’s of whatever nation, either in separate or combined performances.⁵⁸

**Jack Chalker
Actor, Costume Designer**

^{xxi} When he wrote this observation, Joe White was a civilian prisoner in England who had participated in several prison theatre productions.
^{xxii} Oliver Thomas was one of the original members of *The Optimists* concert party. He was not sent Up Country.

Rapport: “Much More Than Mere Entertainment”

Anckorn’s observation about the presence of “rapport” during his performance is critical to an understanding of the performing arts’ role in survival. When rapport between a performer and audience members takes place, both experience a feeling of “one-ness” and “alive-ness” beyond the particulars of the moment. Spectators taken out of themselves “live” in the dancer’s movement, the vocalist’s song, and the character’s struggle with adversity. In return, the performer is empowered by the rapt attention and energy coming back from the audience.

This is what Hugh de Wardener came to feel during his performance as the young woman in *Night Must Fall*:

It’s a marvelous play, wonderful play . . . but I had a pretty tough start, because everybody knew me, and there I was appearing as this girl. And there were a lot of titters. I could feel the audience was not exactly with me in the part. . . . And you could tell how taken up the audience was by the number of glowing ends of cigarettes. And when there weren’t any, you had ’em. You had ’em. Absolutely. [Laughs.]

I have never had such sense of power in all my life, as in that play. It was amazing. Because I had started off being laughed at—being known. By the end of play . . . they forget. They [were] totally, totally absorbed, in the play. It was the play; it was a good play.

At the end—the last act—the entrance of this character, she comes in out of breath. So I, before coming in I ran like mad, it was easy to do at the site, you know, on the spot. So I came in, I was breathless. And I remember leaning against the wing, puffing away and looking at the audience. Not a cigarette can be seen, not a single [one]. And I paused a long time before [speaking]. Well, I held it—I held them you see.⁵⁹

Audio



15.2

Exhausted construction camp entertainers like Jimmy Walker felt revitalized when rapport with their audiences was established. As they told their jokes, sang their songs, and played their musical instruments—and audiences warmed to their efforts—their own tiredness fell away, their energy returned, and they, as well as their audiences, were enlivened and given the will to live a bit longer.

For audiences, the experience of rapport prompted metaphysical speculations.



FIGURE 15.8. "DUET." RAY PARKIN. COURTESY OF RAY PARKIN.

Since it was impossible to capture the experience of rapport directly, Ray Parkin used the color, line, and play of light and shadow in his painting of an impromptu performance at Kanyu/151 Kilo to illustrate the moment in which it took place. He later explained what he believed it meant:

In my experience, I felt that these plays, sing-alongs, stump concerts, etc., so spontaneously emerging, even in the darkest days of the Railway and the Jungle, was a measure of the morale still surviving within us and thus being mutually expressed. The Captors could deny us many things but not this deep inner feeling. It was much more than mere entertainment. But you had to "be there" to experience it.⁶⁰

Following a similar experience of rapport during another performance, Parkin used a musical/philosophical term to express its significance: "The harmony of people together: the theatre and make-believe seems to be an important thing to humanity—particularly in primitive states."⁶¹

"Harmony" was also how Ernest Gordon characterized what he felt during a performance at Chungkai: "A unity rare in the theater existed between audience and actors. Each understood the other. This understanding bridged the gaps in the production and glossed over the rough spots in the dialogue."⁶² Later, the "sheer beauty" of the "Mystery of the Lotus" dance revealed to him other aspects of what may come to consciousness in moments of rapport: "by its sheer beauty, the dance reached into our minds and hearts to call forth memories and aspirations we had all but forgotten."⁶³

As the dance concluded, there was a long moment of silence before the spellbound audience responded.^{xxiii}

For performers and audiences alike, the experience of rapport is a liberation from temporal boundaries. G. E. Chippington felt it as "a shaft of light, a breath of freedom."⁶⁴ In these moments, performers feel they are never more alive—and so do audiences.

^{xxiii} See Chapter 6: "Chungkai Showcase," Part One.

Music, Theatre, and Healing

Aboard a transport ship sailing home following liberation, Norman Pritchard was present when several medical doctors who had served on the Thailand-Burma railway spoke about the value that entertainment had played in the lives of the POWs: “Many lives were saved, said the Medical Officers. Not only those who were actually sick, but those who might easily have succumbed if they hadn’t had some reason for living.”⁶⁶

Testimony

I think the poor old POW audiences had their morale vastly lifted by the shows—I know I did—and I feel that the uplift helped many weary men in their fight against sickness and death.⁶⁵

**Lieutenant-Colonel Tom Hamilton
Chief Medical Officer, Tamarkan**

“To stimulate the healing process”

Since the First World War, if not before, music and theatre’s therapeutic effect on wounded soldiers’ mental and emotional condition was well-known.” In *Werkers Aan De Burma-Spoorweg*, H. L. Leffelaar and E. van Witsen note the rationale given for the introduction of entertainment in hospital camps on the Burma side of the railway.

When, during the building of the railway line, many sick POWs were transported to hospital camps in Thanbyuzayat (and other camps) doctors did what they could to elevate the health of these people. However they had insufficient means. To stimulate the healing process under these terrible circumstances, efforts were undertaken by groups existing mainly of amateurs, to look after entertainment.⁵⁸

Besides the entertainment on outdoor stages for the light sick and fit POWs, hut shows for the bed-down on hospital wards became an integral part of each camp’s recuperation program on both sides of the railway.

Numerous examples of the POWs’ physical health being positively affected by music and theatre are found in the historical narrative. Perhaps the most vivid example is David Ffolkes’ belief that he was “brought back to life” by Len Gibson strumming on his guitar in Tarsao/125 Kilo.^{xxiv} Performing’s “two-way” exchange had a positive effect on entertainers’ health as well. “What I noticed during the interviews with people who did a lot of cabaret and entertainment,” remarked Dolf Winkler during his interview with Joop Postma after the war, “was they got out of the camps in a better physical condition than people who did not participate in such things. Your singing took care of you.”⁶⁸

^{xxiv} See Chapter 2: “Jungle Shows”: Thailand.

Final Testimony

In his “Foreword” to Norman Carter’s POW memoir, *G-String Jesters*, Sir Albert Coates, Chief Medical Officer at Nakhon Pathom hospital camp, wrote how the performers and the entertainment they produced were instrumental in the POWs’ survival.

In a sad world, with no relief in sight, only hope and a profound faith in ultimate victory kept men alive. The flesh was weak; malnutrition, overwork, disease impossible to treat because of absence of drugs—in these conditions [Norman] Carter and his merry men performed their parts.

Just as the doctors did what they could with their meagre resources, so the actors, singers, comic artists exercised their talents for the edification of their compatriots. Tired men momentarily rejoiced, sick men laughed, the melancholy were temporarily uplifted.

I think the psychotherapy at a jungle concert was, perhaps, of more value than the ministrations of the men of medicine. At any rate, my medical colleagues and I would regard Norman Carter’s concerts as complementary to the work of the doctors—prophylactic mental hygiene.⁶⁹

Though Coates’ comments refer to the activities of one particular producer and group of entertainers, they are, by implication, applicable to all the performers and the whole musical and theatrical endeavor on the Thailand-Burma railway.

Afterword: “Performing Art”

In her study of theatrical performances in Jewish concentration camps during the Holocaust, Rebecca Rovit questioned the possible role “performing art” has in survival:

One has to wonder whether the act of performing art—whether theatre or music—may be accompanied by a wholeness of self that transcends time and place and creates a buoyancy of mood and spirit. By engaging an audience who needed something meaningful emotionally to hold on to, perhaps they temporarily sustained the will to live.⁷⁰

Rovit's "they" refers to the performers, but its ambiguity allows, as it should, for the inclusion of the audience in the experience of "wholeness," "buoyancy," and "the will to live." Though these prisoners most likely did not survive their monstrous captivity, they were, through the performance of art, momentarily made worthy.

And in that crucial existential moment, something else of immense psychological importance may have been experienced as well—something voiced by playwright Howard Barker after watching a performance by life prisoners: "In the moment of performance they were not in custody."⁷¹

Endnotes

- 1 Chippington, 447.
- 2 Lane, 126–127.
- 3 Pritchard, "Christmas Behind Bamboo," 3.
- 4 Parkin, *Into the Smother*, 79.
- 5 Marsh, 211.
- 6 Anonymous, IWM 95/9/1, 44.
- 7 Jim "Tom" Morris, Interview, 34.
- 8 Chalker, Interview, 40.
- 9 Hall, 114.
- 10 Quote from J. Blattner, *Art of the Holocaust* (London: Orbis, 1982), as found in Michael Balfour's *Theatre and War: Performance in Extremis*, 2.
- 11 Gordon, 75.
- 12 Chippington, 309–310.
- 13 Ransome Smith, "Answers to Questionnaire," n.d.
- 14 Jacobs, 107.
- 15 Griffin, 56.
- 16 John Sharp, "Report on Camps and Entertainments," 2.
- 17 John Sharp, Diary, 1 January 1945.
- 18 Frank Samethini, 90–91.
- 19 Chalker, Interview, 33.
- 20 "Chunkai [*sic*] 'P.O.W. Camp Theatre,'" n.d., n.p.
- 21 Brazil, Interview, 65.
- 22 Durnford, 144.
- 23 McNeilly, "Music in the Prisoner of War Camp Changi Singapore," n.p.
- 24 Gordon, 162–164.
- 25 Peacock, 223–224.
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- 30 Gee, Diary, 10 March 1944.
- 31 Anckorn, "Recorded Answers to Questions," 6.
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- 34 Mackintosh, Diary, 18 March 1944.
- 35 Gordon, 165.
- 36 MacArthur, Diary, 5 April 1944.
- 37 Chippington, 401.
- 38 Jim "Tom" Morris, Interview, 34.

- 39 Pritchard, Interview, 85.
- 40 Walker, *Of Rice and Men*, 50.
- 41 Pritchard, "the undefeated," 3.
- 42 "Chunkai [sic] 'P.O.W. Camp Theatre,'" n.d., n.p.
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- 44 Ingram, "Paddy Field Playhouse," 1–2.
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- 46 Peacock, 224.
- 47 Cosford, 110.
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- 49 MacArthur, Diary, 30 June 1944.
- 50 Anckorn, Interview, 50–51.
- 51 Chalker, Letter, 3 March 2000.
- 52 Rovit, *Theatrical Performance at Auschwitz-Birkenau*, 3.
- 53 White, "The Prisoner's Voice," in Thompson, *Prison Theatre: Perspectives and Practices*, 187.
- 54 Brazil, Interview, 44–45, 80.
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- 56 Thomas, Fax letter, 31 March 2001.
- 57 Anckorn, Interview, 50–51.
- 58 *Workers*, 238–239; translation by Sheri Tromp.
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- 60 Parkin, Letter, 27 August 2003.
- 61 Parkin, *Into the Smother*, 255.
- 62 Gordon, 165.
- 63 Gordon, 166–167.
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- 66 Pritchard, "the undefeated," 3.
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- 68 Winkler in Leffelaar, et al, *Workers*, 250; translation by Sheri Tromp.
- 69 Coates, "Foreword" to Norman Carter's *G-String Jesters*, vii.
- 70 Rovit, 9.
- 71 Barker, "On watching a performance by life prisoners," *Arguments for a Theatre*, 65.