

**TAN MINGWEI, 1989-2010**  
**MEMORIAL SERVICE**  
**THEATREWORKS, 73-13 MOHD. SULTAN RD**

**- FRIDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> OCTOBER 2010 at 8.00 p.m.**

Master of ceremonies: Chad Tan, family friend

***Welcome***

Friends and family, good evening, and thank you for coming to this memorial service for Tan Mingwei. This is a Private Memorial Service so hope that this will not be reported in the media. Thank you for your kind understanding.

I'm Uncle Chad, an old friend of Mingwei's parents, Li Chang and Tarn How, and it is my sad, but also great, honour to lead us through this memorial.

***Purpose and Form***

We are here not only to pay our respects, and to honour the memory of Mingwei, but we are here also to celebrate and to give thanks for her rich and full life, shockingly and tragically cut short just over three weeks ago in London, far far too early, at the age of 20. That night, she was on her way back from holiday in Cyprus with her best friends from college, and was on the way from the airport to the apartment of a friend when the accident happened.

For Mingwei's family - her loving grandparents, parents, sister, aunts and uncles, and cousins and also her godfather and godmother - we stand here with them in acknowledgement their utmost loss and grief, and hope that our presence will give them help and strength to bear the unbearable. For her closest friends, we share in their tears and sorrow.

For some of us, coming here has not been easy, but it is the right thing to do. Each of us has done the right thing in being here and sharing in this memorial. Although we are sad because we have lost someone we have known and loved, we know in our hearts that we also want to celebrate the many good times that we remember.

So we unite in our sense of loss, in our grief, in our comforting, and in our consoling for Mingwei's family and close friends, and in our thanksgiving for Mingwei as we honour and celebrate her.

In this memorial, we will recall the full personality of Mingwei, and we will share our memories and feelings, through readings and our own spoken words. We will have some moments of silence to reflect, and meditate or pray, and we will take our leave of these precious minutes to move out into the worlds we have left, to take up things where we left off, no longer the same as we were, but knowing that we have honoured the life and memory of Mingwei. But not before Tarn How has outlined how the family intends to keep Mingwei's active, caring, and positive spirit alive and flourishing through her memorial foundation.

### *Poem*

Before we begin the eulogies, let me read a poem that was read at Mingwei's cremation service in London on October 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **DO NOT STAND AT MY GRAVE AND WEEP**

Do not stand at my grave and weep  
I am not there, I do not sleep

I am a thousand winds that blow  
I am the diamond glints on snow

I am the sun on ripened grain  
I am the gentle autumn rain

When you awaken in the morning's hush  
I am the swift uplifting rush  
Of quiet birds in circled light  
I am the soft star that shines at night  
Do not stand at my grave and cry  
I am not there; I did not die.

### *Eulogies*

I have known Mingwei since she was born, but still not as well as the others who will speak later. But one thing I found striking about her, from quite a tender age, was her “edge”. What do I mean by this? To illustrate, I take the liberty of reading two paragraphs from a letter of recommendation by her Knowledge and Enquiry Tutor at RJC, Mr. Bernard Tan.

*The one thing I will probably miss most about having Mingwei in my class is how she will voice her concerns about public policy and politics in Singapore. Even among the brightest of students in Singapore, it's not often that one hears lucid, well-informed questions raised by the young of the authorities, or sees a genuine willingness to engage in public debate on issues that matter. In this, Mingwei has really outshone most in her graduating class; she's raised good arguments about the government's reliance on 'Asian-values' in Singapore, on local capital punishment (especially with regard to drug trafficking), and*

*about election practices of the ruling coalition. And Mingwei isn't a rebel without a cause. Her arguments are mature, balanced, well-thought through, and she makes her case with the civility and grace of someone twice her age. If I had my way, she's exactly the kind of questioning citizen and future leader Singapore needs.*

*Mingwei's wit and dry humour also deserve mentioning. In class discussions, I have learnt to count on Mingwei's incisive analyses; with a witty comment, she can cut through the smoke and get to the core of issues.*

Many of you will agree with me that this appreciation of Mingwei rings true. And I don't think that I go too far in saying that her loss is not limited to us, her friends and family, but is a loss also to medicine, and the wider human family.