

**young  
& WILD**  
A DIVISION OF WILD RICE  
PRESENTS

EUGENE IONESCO'S  
**THE BALD  
SOPRANO**

DIRECTED BY **RODNEY OLIVEIRO**  
**DRAMA CENTRE BLACK BOX | 7 - 11 JUNE 2017**





**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**young & W!LD TACKLES IONESCO MASTERPIECE *THE BALD SOPRANO***

2 May 2017 – In June 2017, W!LD RICE will present *The Bald Soprano*, a bold, raucous production of Eugene Ionesco’s classic comedy about the tragedy of language.

This production marks the final showcase for the fourth cohort of young & W!LD, W!LD RICE’s youth development division.

Following *When S#IT Hits The Fam* and *Crossings*, two acclaimed, sold-out showcases of their own original writing, the seven members of the young & W!LD ensemble will be tackling one of the world’s most seminal absurdist plays.

The decision to stage *The Bald Soprano* was made together with Rodney Oliveiro, their programme co-director. He is keen to challenge his young theatre-makers, schooling them in the discipline, integrity and restraint necessary to perform good comedy.

“An absurdist comedy is doubly challenging because it is stripped of the usual conventions of story progression, character development and logic,” explains Oliveiro. “That is the final thing I’d like this batch of actors to take away from their journey with young & W!LD: theatre is life, and life is complex – as complex as the imaginary line between tragedy and comedy.”

Rehearsals for *The Bald Soprano* have been underway since March. To allow the ensemble to get more comfortable with the absurd dialogue and situations that make up Ionesco’s play, the young actors have been experimenting with mime, sounds and even different walking styles.

“I’m being completely thrown out of my comfort zone,” confesses Dwayne Ng, 21. “But *The Bald Soprano* is a classic for a reason, and I’ve found it to be ‘curious and so very bizarre’, full of clever nonsense, and like nothing you’ve ever watched. I’m confident we’ll put on a great show!”

*The Bald Soprano* marks the final chapter in a 14-month odyssey of learning and discovery for this cohort of young & W!LD.

“We believe it’s vital to give young, aspiring theatre-makers a platform to make art and to have their voices heard,” says Ivan Heng, Founding Artistic Director of W!LD RICE. “It’s been a true privilege to watch them grow in confidence and maturity and go from creating their own original pieces to putting their own young & W!LD stamp on one of the world’s finest plays.”

*The Bald Soprano* runs from 7 to 11 June 2017 at the Drama Centre Black Box.

Tickets go on sale from 3 May 2017 on SISTIC.

## ***THE BALD SOPRANO***

Welcome to the weird, wonderful world of *The Bald Soprano*! young & W!LD proudly presents its bold reimagining of Eugene Ionesco's classic comedy about the tragedy of language.

Over the course of one madcap evening, six characters meet. As they engage in conversation, sense and nonsense collide. Platitudes replace substance. And dialogue becomes drama. Soon enough, reality starts to break down as language loses all meaning.

From the madness and mayhem emerges Ionesco's brilliant play, an insightful examination of contemporary society, polite conversation and social customs. Join young & W!LD for one last hair-raising adventure as they leap into the absurd with *The Bald Soprano*, where communication itself is the greatest barrier to understanding.

## FAST FACTS

Title:	<b><i>THE BALD SOPRANO</i></b>
Playwright:	Eugene Ionesco
Director:	Rodney Oliveiro
The Company:	Alison Bickham Mel Bickham Jasmine Blundell Sharmaine Goh Natalie Koh Krish Natarajan Dwayne Ng
Venue:	Drama Centre Black Box 100 Victoria St #05-01, National Library Building Singapore 188064
Show Dates:	7 – 11 June 2017 8pm on all days 3pm on Saturday & Sunday
Ticketing Agent:	SISTIC SISTIC Hotline (65) 6348-5555 SISTIC Website <a href="http://www.sistic.com.sg">www.sistic.com.sg</a> SISTIC Authorised Agents
Ticket Prices:	S\$30 (Preview: 7 June, Wed, 8pm) S\$35 (Thu - Sun, 3pm & 8pm shows) <i>Prices exclude \$3 SISTIC handling fee</i>
Discounts:	Available for Students, NSFs and Senior Citizens S\$20 (Preview: 7 June, Wed, 8pm) S\$25 (Thu – Sun, 3pm & 8pm shows) <i>Prices exclude \$3 SISTIC handling fee</i>
Corporate & Group Deals:	For bookings of 20 or more tickets, please contact Ross Toh at 6292-2695 or <a href="mailto:sales@wildrice.com.sg">sales@wildrice.com.sg</a> .
Press Contact:	Albert Kok Sirius Art Pte Ltd DID: 6386-0920 / Tel: 9107-8386 <a href="mailto:albert@siriusart.com.sg">albert@siriusart.com.sg</a>



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## APPENDIX I ABOUT young & W!LD

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young & W!LD is a division of W!LD RICE dedicated to training and nurturing Singapore's most promising young talents. Under the stewardship of programme directors Serena Ho and Rodney Oliveiro, this innovative training programme aims to prepare the next generation of theatre practitioners for careers in our professional theatre industry.

In addition to practical training that emphasises versatility, dedication, discipline and a deeper understanding of all aspects of theatre-making, the young & W!LD philosophy also stresses the role that theatre and its practitioners play in shaping our society.

The young & W!LD team learn that, as artists, they have a responsibility to the audience and the wider public – to illuminate, to educate, to communicate; and to always share in the common experience of theatre.

W!LD RICE is proud to invest in the future of Singapore theatre by playing its part in developing our next generation of multi-skilled, socially aware and creatively versatile theatre practitioners.



## APPENDIX II SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS

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young & WILD is a division of WILD RICE dedicated to training and nurturing Singapore's most promising young talents. This programme is made possible by the generous support of Simone Lourey and William Randall.

## APPENDIX III young & WILD BIOGRAPHIES

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### ALISON BICKHAM

After spending 15 years in Hong Kong, where she studied Drama for her GCSEs, Alison returned to Singapore. As a member of Victoria Junior College's Drama Club, she performed in a production of Kuo Pao Kun's *Mama Looking For Her Cat* and student-led play *Sketch Night Live*. Willing to take risks, Alison is always open to new opportunities to develop her potential as an actor. She is currently studying Business and Management under the aegis of the University of London's International Programme.

### MEL BICKHAM

Mel's journey on the road of theatre began in Hong Kong, where she studied Drama and Literature for her GCSEs. After returning to Singapore in 2012, she continued to fuel her passion for theatre by studying Literature in both St Theresa's Convent and Catholic Junior College. She prefers acting in self-penned pieces, including her personal highlight: a new work blending *The Scarlet Letter* and *Othello*. More recently, she worked as a member of Resorts World Sentosa Theatre's stage crew and is happy to now be a part of young & WILD.

### JASMINE BLUNDELL

Jasmine is a graduate of East 15 Acting School, where she trained in World Performance. During her time at East 15, she studied different types of global theatre, and acted in several Brechtian plays, namely *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* and *The Exception and the Rule*. Now based in Singapore, Jasmine has performed in new local shows, such as *EMILY the Musical* (MTL), *Balek Kampung* (Twenty-Something Theatre Festival) and *Every Singaporean Daughter* (UNSAID). As an educator, she teaches drama to students of all shapes and sizes, and is passionate about passing her love and knowledge of theatre onto the next generation.

### SHARMAINE GOH

Sharmaine is currently specialising in Management as she studies for her Diploma in Arts and Theatre Management at Republic Polytechnic. She also underwent theatre training at Singapore's School of the Arts (SOTA) from 2009 to 2013. She has performed in countless school productions, and is looking forward to working in Singapore's theatre industry. By exploring and presenting truths on the theatre stage, Sharmaine hopes to inspire and move audiences. She also loves food and cat videos.

### NATALIE KOH

Natalie began her theatre journey as an avid performer in several primary and secondary school productions. After graduating from LASALLE College of the Arts, where she specialised in production work, she has been a part of stage management and production design teams for various shows, events and festivals. Apart from theatre, Natalie also has an interest in acting on camera and has acted in several film projects. She aims to be a versatile performer both on stage and in film. Natalie also has a growing interest in music and is excited to work towards gaining more experience and skills in that field.

## **KRISH NATARAJAN**

Krish is currently in his first year of the BA (Hons) acting programme in LASALLE College of the Arts. In 2013, he graduated from SOTA, where he had the privilege of learning many theatre forms and techniques – from Noh to Shakespeare and beyond. His personal highlights include conducting theatre workshops for children and mothers in Cebu and his final-year SOTA solo piece. He hopes to create work in the future that inspires and provokes and is excited about what lies ahead.

## **DWAYNE NG**

Dwayne's first experience with theatre was in secondary school, where his passion for performance first sparked and grew. He gained experience in theatre-making when he joined Singapore Polytechnic Theatre Compass (SPTC) in 2014. He has thus far worked on four productions with SPTC, racking up credits in acting and stage-managing. Besides theatre, Dwayne enjoys writing poetry and prose, and the occasional monologue. He loves experimenting with different art forms and techniques, including theatre, graphics, literature, and craftwork. Dwayne holds a Diploma in Architecture from Singapore Polytechnic.

**APPENDIX IV  
CREATIVE TEAM BIOGRAPHIES**

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**RODNEY OLIVEIRO – Director and Programme Co-Director**

Rodney has been working as an actor, director and drama educator since graduating from NUS' Theatre Studies Department in 2000. A versatile performer, he has performed in more than 50 productions and was a series regular for three years on Mediacorp Channel 5's *Spin*. As a drama educator, he has seen many of his secondary and tertiary students venture into a career in the arts. With Serena Ho, he has been the programme co-ordinator for young & W!LD since 2014, and has also written and directed three of its showcases – *Little Riots and Other Stories*, *Geylang* and *Crossings*. He staged a revised version of *Geylang* as part of the 2016 Singapore Theatre Festival.

**SERENA HO – Programme Co-Director**

Serena graduated from LASALLE College of the Arts, where she received the 1999 Outstanding Student Award for Drama. Over the years, she has worked professionally as a director, educator and actress with several theatre companies and institutions. Serena believes that one of the best kinds of theatre comes from the creativity and energy of young people. She constantly seeks new ways of empowering youths through meaningful facilitation and interaction in the classroom or rehearsal space.

## **APPENDIX V ABOUT WILD RICE**

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WILD RICE was founded in 2000 by Ivan Heng, an internationally acclaimed and award-winning theatre practitioner, and is recognised today as one of Singapore's leading professional theatre companies.

Its mission is to provide an open forum for the shared experience of theatre: celebrating our diversity, reflecting on the problems and possibilities of our times, and presenting productions that inspire, challenge and entertain.

A commitment to the highest standards informs every aspect of WILD RICE's creative work, which is first and foremost a celebration of Singapore's theatrical talent. By producing and touring productions that are distinctively local in flavour and yet universal in vision and concerns, the company creates memorable experiences for audiences in Singapore and across the world.

The company's exciting and varied programming for the main stage includes:

- New and original works;
- New productions of the Singapore repertoire; and
- New interpretations of world classics.

The company's mission to build a theatre culture also extends to the wider community through the following divisions:

- FIRST STAGE!, a project that nurtures young talents from the ages of 5 to 12; and
- young & WILD, which identifies and develops Singapore's young theatre professionals.

WILD RICE is committed to touring its shows internationally to raise the profile of Singapore theatre, to create an international awareness of its unique productions, and to engage its artists and collaborators in creative dialogues with the international arts community. Its distinctively Singaporean productions have won great acclaim in major international arts festivals in Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Macau, Malaysia, New Zealand and Russia.

In August 2006, WILD RICE presented the inaugural Singapore Theatre Festival, an event dedicated to celebrating contemporary Singaporean theatre through the development and presentation of new and original local writing. Over 10 years and five editions, the Festival has collaborated with local theatre companies and artists to present 32 productions, including 19 world premieres, of new local writing. In 2013, the Festival launched 'In The Spotlight' to present a season dedicated to the works of a single local playwright. The Festival has been hailed as "the main event in the world of the arts" (SPH The Straits Times) and the "Blockbuster Event of the Year" (TODAY).