



-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-

WILD RICE'S ANIMAL FARM SQUEALS INTO HONG KONG & SINGAPORE

1 February 2010 – WILD RICE's acclaimed production of George Orwell's **ANIMAL FARM** will premiere this March at the prestigious Hong Kong Arts Festival, and will return to Singapore for a three week season in April to kick off the company's 10th Anniversary celebrations.

ANIMAL FARM, Orwell's most celebrated novel, is a startlingly relevant reminder that absolute power corrupts. In the hands WILD RICE's Artistic Director Ivan Heng, this deceptively simple tale of barnyard betrayal is transformed into exciting, provocative and urgent theatre.

A herd of Singapore's finest theatre talents will get down on all fours to breathe life into Orwell's characters. The cast, playing a whole menagerie of farmyard animals, includes Lim Yu-beng, Pam Oei, Gani A. Karim, Gene Sha Rudyn, Yeo Yann Yann, Denise Tan and Daniel Jenkins.

Combining physical theatre, innovative design and live and original music, this up to the minute, proudly "Made in Singapore" production will invigorate Orwell's fairytale with humour, integrity and clarity, proving **ANIMAL FARM** to be as relevant today as it was 65 years ago.

Tisa Ho, Executive Director of the Festival said, "I am delighted that this production will be coming to the Hong Kong Arts Festival (HKAF). We have a very strong theatre programme this year, and Ivan is in excellent company, with the likes of Steven Berkoff, Lin Zhaohua, and Sam Mendes; and top Hong Kong directors, Fred Mao, Danny Yung, CK Lee, and Wong Wing Sze. I still remember seeing this production at the Raffles Theatre years ago and being completely blown away. I look forward to its having the same impact on Hong Kong audiences."

ANIMAL FARM first opened to rave reviews in Singapore in 2002, and garnered 3 DBS Life! Theatre Awards for Best Director, Best Ensemble Acting and Best Music. It was the first Singapore theatre production to tour to the New Zealand Arts Festival in 2004 where it was a sell-out hit and a festival highlight. It will again make history as the first Singapore theatre production to be presented at the prestigious Hong Kong International Arts Festival this March.

Tickets for all performances for the Hong Kong season are sold out, and an additional matinee at 3pm on 7 March has been added to meet the overwhelming demand.



PRAISE FOR ANIMAL FARM

"With six well-matched and amazingly flexible actors and a marvelous percussionist who occasionally joins in the action on stage, Ivan Heng's robustly physical production blows away any cobwebs that you may feel have been covering the work that has been so often staged and filmed before... The stage bristles with invention"

The Dominion Post, New Zealand

"Director Ivan Heng has scored a new triumph with his highly enjoyable and thought-provoking Singaporean update of George Orwell's classic satire, Animal Farm. A triumph! Four legs good, your two legs better go and see."

The Straits Times Life!, Singapore

"In this sublime interpretation by the Singaporean theatre company, WILD RICE, the animals are created not by fancy costumes but by the human body, reminding us that the line that Napoleon and his pigs choose to cross is an ultra-fine one. An unforgettable production and a Festival highlight."

Capital Times, New Zealand

"Splendidly theatrical, infused with energy and power, dynamically paced and well-acted"

Quarterly Literary Review, Singapore

"The more-than-competent cast carries the play through effortlessly, hamming it up until the audience would roar with laughter. Possibly our revolution has started – for we can finally laugh at ourselves."

Happening.com, Singapore

"A vivid, satisfying and excellent production. I loved it."

Radio New Zealand

SYNOPSIS

"All animals are equal. But some animals are more equal than others."

Something is going on at Manor Farm. The animals have overthrown Farmer Jones and, with the pigs as leaders, have created a state for themselves called *Animal Farm*.

Vowing to eliminate the terrible inequities for animal life, a set of commandments is written as a guide for animal life. However, cunning propaganda hides the true agenda of the pigs and as the ideals of the revolution are gradually subverted.

ANIMAL FARM, George Orwell's most celebrated novel, is a startlingly relevant reminder that absolute power corrupts and that totalitarian regimes inevitably betray the trust of ordinary citizens.



FAST FACTS

Title : Animal Farm
Written by : George Orwell
Adaptation by : Ian Wooldridge
Directed by : Ivan Heng
Music by : Jenson Koh
Set Design : Ivan Heng
Lighting Design : Teo Kuang Han
Costume Design : Lai Chan
Hair Design : Ashley Lim
Sound Design : Bob Wong
Make-Up : M.A.C
Producer : Tony Trickett
Cast : Lim Yu-beng as Napoleon
Pam Oei as Squealer
Gene Sha Rudyn as Snowball
Yeo Yann Yann as Clover
Gani Abdul Karim as Boxer
Denise Tan as Mollie
Daniel Jenkins as Farmer Jones
Press Contact : Sirius Art
Aryanti Kamar, PR Manager
(65) 6324 8721
aryanti@siriusart.com.sg

HONG KONG

Veune : Shouson Theatre, HK Arts Centre
Dates : 5 March, 8:00pm
6 March, 3:00pm
6 March, 8:00pm
7 March, 3:00pm
7 March, 8:00pm



Ticketing Agents : URBTIX
www.urbtix.hk
URBTIX Outlets
URBTIX Credit Card Booking (852) 2111 5999
URBTIX Telephone Booking (852) 2734 9009

HK Ticketing
www.hkticketing.com
HK Ticketing Outlets
HK Ticketing Telephone Booking (852) 31 288 288

Overseas Fax Booking (852) 2734 9011

Ticket Prices : Adult – HK\$280, HK\$220, HK\$140
Student – HK\$110, HK\$70

SINGAPORE

Venue : Drama Centre Theatre, National Library Building

Dates : 21 April – 08 May 2010

Ticket Agent : SISTIC.com Pte Ltd
SISTIC Hotline (65) 6348 5555
SISTIC Website www.sistic.com.sg
SISTIC Authorised Agents

Ticket Prices : S\$34, S\$39 S\$49, S\$59
(8.00pm Previews 21 & 22 April)
S\$39, S\$44, S\$54, S\$64
(8:00pm Tues, Wed, Thu, Sun & 3.00pm Sat, Sun)
S\$44, S\$49, S\$59, S\$69 (8.00pm Fri & Sat)
Prices exclude \$3 SISTIC handling fee

Priority Booking : 01 – 14 March 2010
20% Discount for OCBC Credit/Debit Cardmembers

Early Bird : 15 – 31 March 2010
20% Discount for OCBC Credit/Debit Cardmembers
15% Discount for General Public

BIOGRAPHIES

IVAN HENG – Director/Set Designer/Movement & Choreographer

In a pioneering theatre career over two decades, Ivan's theatre productions have been performed in more than 20 cities throughout Europe, Asia, North America, Australia and New Zealand.

Ivan's experiences as director and actor at international theatre festivals have been a source of strength and inspiration for the Singapore Theatre Festival. These include: Melbourne International Arts Festival, New Zealand International Arts Festival, Hong Kong City Festival, ICA International Festival of the Chinese Diaspora (London), Chinese Karakters Festival (Netherlands) and Re:Map Festival (Copenhagen).

Recent directing credits include: *Generation/s*, a Singapore-Russia collaboration for Spotlight Singapore in Moscow, the 20th Anniversary revival of *Beauty World*, and the first productions of Alfian Sa'at's *Happy Endings: Asian Boys Vol.3* and Eleanor Wong's *The Campaign to Confer the Public Service Star on JBJ*.

Ivan has a law degree from the National University of Singapore and trained at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (Glasgow). He is the Founder and Artistic Director of WILD RICE.

Ivan was the Creative Director for Singapore's National Day Parade 2009 and for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the inaugural Youth Olympic Games, Singapore 2010.

IAN WOOLDRIDGE – Playwright

Ian Wooldridge is a freelance director and also Dean of The British American Drama Academy, where he works alongside leading British actors and directors training American theatre students.

He was Artistic Director of the Royal Lyceum Theatre Company, Edinburgh, where he produced 100 plays, directing 41 of them himself. Before this he was Artistic Director of TAG Theatre Company, based at the Citizens Theatre in Glasgow.

For more information go to www.ian-wooldridge.com

TONY TRICKETT – Producer

Born in Liverpool, Tony moved to Singapore from the UK in 1997. Prior to joining WILD RICE, he worked as a management consultant, specialising in leadership



coaching and team-development for multinational companies in London and subsequently in South East Asia.

Tony acted as consultant in the establishment of WILD RICE and became a Director of the company in 2001. In August 2002, Tony was appointed as Executive Director, responsible for the overall management of the company. His portfolio encompasses finance, administration, marketing, fund-raising and sponsorship.

Tony is the Producer for all WILD RICE productions. Shows include: *Boeing Boeing*, *Oi! Sleeping Beauty!!*, *The Magic Fundoshi*, *Jack & The Bean-Sprout!*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Asian Boys Vol. 3*, Eleanor Wong's *The Campaign to Confer the Public Service Star on JBJ*, *Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs* and the 20th Anniversary production of *Beauty World*. Tony also produced the 2006 and 2008 OCBC Singapore Theatre Festivals, which he conceived together with Artistic Director Ivan Heng.

DANIEL JENKINS – Farmer Jones

Daniel began acting with The National Youth Theatre of Great Britain and trained at the Guildford School of Acting, receiving the Yvonne Arnaud award for acting. He has an Acting Diploma, a Licentiate in Drama, and a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Degree in Theatre.

Singapore theatre credits include, *Lonely Planet*, *Popcorn*, *The Physicists*, *Quills* (luna-id), *The Deep Blue Sea*, *Death and the Maiden* (Escape) for which he was nominated for Best Supporting Actor at the 2007 Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards. *A Christmas Carrot*, *The Lost Star*, *A Right Rubbish Christmas*, *Snow Worries*, *Bouncers and Teechers* (Centre Stage Productions). Oberon and Theseus in Fort Canning's open-air production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, (Singapore Repertory Theatre) and the lead role in their critically acclaimed sell out production of *The Pillowman*, for which Dan was nominated Best Actor at the 2008 Life! Theatre Awards. *Cabaret*, *Shanghai Blues* (Toy Factory), *Do Not Disturb – Brunch* (Spare Room), and the winning production *I'll Have The Special* (Short and Sweet Singapore 2008).

Dan has twice won the coveted Best Supporting Actor Award at the 2006 and 2007 Life! Theatre Awards for his roles in *Quills*, and *Cabaret*.

More recently this year's credits include the first sell-out season of *Defending the Caveman* (SRT), *Members Only* (Sing Theatre), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Fort Canning Park, SRT) the new 14 part series for okto Channel, Café 13 and the feature film *The Genius of Beauty*. Dan also turned his hand to directing with SRT's The Young Company's production of *The Crucible*.

Dan is the proud father of two beautiful children, Dylan 5 and Lily 2 and considers himself unbelievably lucky to be married to the most understanding and supportive wife ever, Jules.

DENISE TAN – Mollie

From her very first role as a duck in her kindergarten graduation play, five-year-old Denise knew she'd fallen in love with performance. Since then, this accomplished actress, radio presenter and voice-over artiste has appeared in numerous short films, television sitcoms and has lent her voice to animated series including *Detective Conan*, *Doraemon*, *One Piece*, Nickelodean's *Tomato Twins* and 20th Century Fox's *Book of Virtues*.

Denise is also currently heard stimulating eardrums every weekday as co-host of the popular *Gold Breakfast Show* on Mediacorp Radio's Gold 90FM.

Before graduating with honours from Leeds University's Theatre Studies programme in the UK, she staged two original works at Leeds Workshop Theatre and also played Sarah Brown in *Guys and Dolls*, Chava in *Fiddler on the Roof* and Charity in *Sweet Charity*.

Denise was last seen at the Esplanade Theatre in the wildly received fourth installment of *Broadway Beng* (Dream Academy). Other Singapore credits include *Chang and Eng* (Action Theatre), *M. Butterfly* (Singapore Repertory Theatre) and *LovePuke* (TheatreWorks).

Her favourite roles seem to have involved sequins, singing and false eye-lashes - like the Electric Geisha in *Kara-You-OK*, Audrey in *The Little Shop of Horrors* and Lulu in *Beauty World* - so she's delighted to be taking on a refreshingly different challenge in this daring, new WILD RICE production. From her humble beginnings as a duck to her current role as Mollie the horse, Denise is starting to realize that life, truly, is one big Animal Farm!

GANI ABDUL KARIM – Boxer

Gani Abdul Karim is a multi-disciplinary performer who is also a sort after choreographer, director and arts educator in Singapore. He has performed extensively locally and abroad covering a myriad of performance genres from operas, musical theatre, cross-cultural, multi-media, physical theatre and even avante garde to name a few. He has appeared in a number of WILD RICE productions which included *Connecting The Dots* which performed at the Fringe Club (2006) and *Second Link* which also performed in Kuala Lumpur Bangsar Theatre (2007). He has also developed a solo physical theatre work-in-progress piece which was last staged at The Hong Kong Fringe Club entitled *Salusuah*. He is happy to return to theatre after a long sabbatical.

GENE SHA RUDYN – Snowball

Born in 1968, Singaporean-Baweanese-Muslim Gene Sha Rudyn joined the theatre industry in 1991 and has performed at international arts festivals in Australia, Hungary, Japan, New Zealand and Singapore.

He played Faustus in *DIE FAUSTUS DIE!!!*, Datuk Zainal in *Pulau Antara: The Island In-Between*, Crew in *Furthest North Deepest South* (Best Acting Ensemble; Best Production), XYZ in *WHAT BIG BOMBS YOU HAVE!!!* (Best Supporting Actor nominee), Kucinta in *Oi! Sleeping Beauty!!* (Best Acting Ensemble nominee), The Car in *The Car*, Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Prime Minister General Abdul Aziz in *Apocalypse: LIVE!*, and The Wizard in *The Wizard Of Oz*. Two landmark moments in his career were the 2007 six-state Malaysian tour of *Anak Bulan Di Kampong Wa' Hassan* and the 2009 mosque premier of *AL-IKHLAS (SINCERITY)* – a monologue in seven acts re-introducing God.

Gene Sha Rudyn currently leads Keelat Theatre Ensemble.

LIM YU-BENG – Napoleon

Yu-Beng won Best Actor in 2005, Best Supporting Actor in 2004, and was in the Best Acting Ensemble in 2002, all for the Life! Theatre Awards. In 2005 he was nominated for Best Actor in the Asian Television Awards.

On film he has played leads in *Singapore Dreaming*, *Solos and Kung Fu Killers II*, and supporting roles in *Anna and the King*, *The Lost Empire* and *A.D. 2000*.

For Singapore television he has played several leads over the years, but is perhaps still best remembered for the series *Triple 9*, which ran five years.

He recently wrote and directed *It's My Life*, an original musical, and continues to work extensively as an actor, director, acting coach, lighting designer and fight choreographer.

PAM OEI – Squealer

Pam has been in over 50 theatre, television and film productions. Some of her stage credits include *Titoudao*, *Everything But The Brain*, *The Campaign to Confer the Public Service Star on JBJ*, *Everything But The Brain*, *Animal Farm*, *Rent*, *Boeing Boeing*, *Blithe Spirit*, *The Yang Family*, *Broken Birds*, *Agnes of God* and *A Night Out With Michael Chiang*.

Pam is probably most known on stage for being one third of the delicious Dim Sum Dollies.

For film, she played the title role of *Peggy Su!* (BBC Films) and was also in Glen

Goei's *Forever Fever* (Miramax Films). Most recently she had a cameo role in Glen Goei's film *The Blue Mansion*, that was released in October 2009.

She has also been in several English & Mandarin TV programmes including the sitcom *Ah Girl*, *OK No Problem*, *Money No Problem*, *Heal and be Healed* and *Ground Zero*, *Parental Guidance*, *9 Lives* and *Tiramisu*.

She was nominated Best Actress in a Comedy at the Asian Television Awards for three consecutive years (2002 – 2004).

Musically, Pam composed and performed with her band Peculiar Remedies, producing and releasing their self-titled debut album in 1998. She continues to write and perform music.

YEO YANN YANN – Clover

Yeo Yann Yann is a versatile and talented actor who has built a successful career across the mediums of theatre, television and film. Her work spans large scale commercial stage and feature films to cutting edge experimental works in theatre and short film. She has worked with many theatre companies and leading film directors in Singapore and internationally.

Yann Yann has enjoyed both critical acclaim and popular appeal. She had a starring role in the Singapore box office hit *881* as well as in the award winning *Singapore Dreaming*. She also won "Best Actress" in the Life Theatre Awards with her portrayal of the iconic role of Fan Yi in the Chinese classic *Thunderstorm* by Cao Yu.

In 2009 she played the title role in the 35 part Malaysian TV drama series *Iron Lady* which broke viewership records. She also has a leading role in Jack Neo's upcoming comedy *Being Human Being*.

Yann Yann performs in both English, Mandarin and other Chinese dialects.

JENSON KOH – The Musician

Jenson graduated with a BA (Hons) in Music majoring in Composition at LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore. He has been actively involved in local Indonesian Fusion works and performs as a musician with People's Association.

His work *Living Alive* premiered at the World Gamelan Festival 2008 held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. This piece was also used as the opening piece for Kite Festival Singapore 09 hosted by NTUC Income Singapore. Other fusion works by Jenson were also featured in Pasta Raya @ Esplanade.