

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WILD RICE CELEBRATES ITS 15TH ANNIVERSARY WITH

imagination

“Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life's coming attractions.”

- Albert Einstein

16 January 2015 – WILD RICE, Singapore’s leading professional theatre company, celebrates its 15th anniversary in 2015.

To mark this milestone, which coincides with Singapore’s 50th anniversary celebrations, the company will present ‘imagination’, a season of five exciting new productions inspired by the stars of the Singapore flag.

Illuminating and reflecting the ideas of democracy, peace, progress, equality and justice, the productions will include:

- **Public Enemy**, an adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's powerful and timely classic, directed by Glen Goei and starring Ivan Heng and Lim Kay Siu, which will challenge the easy assumptions associated with **DEMOCRACY**;
- **Another Country**, a Singapore-Malaysia co-production that brings together the finest writers and performers from both sides of the Causeway to reflect on the history, culture and **PEACE** shared by two countries that were separated at birth;
- **Hotel**, a stirring epic that observes Singapore's **PROGRESS** through the prism of one hotel room and its inhabitants over the past ten decades, A Singapore International Festival of Arts commission, this production is written by Alfian Sa'at and directed by Ivan Heng and Glen Goei;
- **The Emperor's New Clothes**, a brand-new pantomime directed by Pam Oei and scripted by Joel Tan, that adds a cheeky local twist to Hans Christian Andersen's classic fairy tale about **EQUALITY**; and
- A new production - presently a production a work in progress - examining the concept of **JUSTICE**.

“WR15 coincides, of course, with SG50,” said Ivan Heng, Artistic Director of WILD RICE. “The entire country will be caught up in a year-long celebration of what makes



us uniquely Singaporean, and we plan to join in the festivities in our very own WILD way.”

“Inspired by the stars of our flag, our goal is to give expression to the aspirations and values that have brought us thus far as a nation, and to understand them in the context of an increasingly complex modern society. Audiences can look forward to a surprising, thought-provoking and perhaps more nuanced celebration of who we are, and what it means to live in Singapore today.”

WILD RICE's 'imagination' season runs from April 2015 to April 2016.

PRESS CONTACT:

Lew Yook Kim

Manager

Sirius Art PR Pte Ltd

DID:+65 6435-0627

yookkim@siriusart.com.sg

imagination^{WR 15}NATION

*"Imagination is the beginning of creation. You imagine what you desire,
you will what you imagine and at last you create what you will."*

- George Bernard Shaw

PUBLIC ENEMY ★ Democracy
9 APRIL – 25 APRIL 2015
VICTORIA THEATRE

Directed by **Glen Goei**

Written by **Henrik Ibsen**

A new version by **David Harrower**

Starring **Ivan Heng** with **Ghafir Akbar, R Chandran, Serene Chen, Gerald Chew, Brendon Fernandez, Kee Thuan Chye, Lim Kay Siu, Yap Yi Kai**

What happens when you speak your mind and your entire community turns against you? Do you stand by what you believe is right? Or do you tell your colleagues, your family and your friends what they *want* to hear?

In a town that's preparing to market itself as a world-class resort spa, Dr. Thomas Chee (Ivan Heng) discovers that the water supply is riddled with bacteria. He resolves to go public with the information. It's a decision that pits him against his entire community. The mayor (Lim Kay Siu), who also happens to be his brother, works with vested interests to silence him. Overnight, Dr. Chee becomes the enemy of the people – the man who insists on telling truths that no one wants to hear.

One of the world's most powerful classics, *Public Enemy* asks thought-provoking questions about democracy and the freedom of expression. What does it mean to hold firmly to an unpopular opinion in a world where it's easier to conform? Can one man stand up to the tyranny of the majority? When does bravery become naivety?

Henrik Ibsen's electrifying satire comes to life under Glen Goei's direction. Exploring issues of politics, principles and power, *Public Enemy* tells a timeless tale of courage and corruption that has challenged and entertained audiences for over a hundred years.

ANOTHER COUNTRY ★ Peace
25 JUNE – 11 JULY 2015
DRAMA CENTRE THEATRE

Directed by **Ivan Heng & Jo Kukathas**

Curated by **Alfian Sa'at & Leow Puay Tin**

Starring **Sharda Harrison, Gani Karim, Lim Yu Beng, Lydia Look, Siti Khalijah Zainal, Ghafir Akbar, Sharifah Amani, Anne James, Alfred Loh, Iedil Putra**



In 1965, one country became two. In the fifty years since, maps have been revised and, on occasion, battle lines have been drawn. And yet, amidst political squabbles about water and airspace, Singapore and Malaysia remain closely intertwined: neighbours who share history, culture and many, many stories.

Provocative, insightful and humorous, *Another Country* celebrates the work of the finest writers on both sides of the Causeway. An accomplished cast of ten brilliant actors – including Singapore's Lim Yu-Beng and Siti Khalijah Zainal and Malaysia's Ghafir Akbar and Sharifah Amani – will explore issues and ideas that bubble up in plays, novels and poetry by Elangovan, Jit Murad, Kuo Pao Kun, Amanda Lee Koe, Catherine Lim, Tash Aw, Tan Twan Eng and more.

In an earlier incarnation, this explosive physical theatre showcase of more than 50 celebrated texts was a hit with audiences and critics in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Hong Kong. *Another Country*, which will be staged in both Singapore and Malaysia, is co-directed by renowned theatre practitioners Ivan Heng and Jo Kukathas.

HOTEL ★ Progress
AUGUST 2015, part of the Singapore International Festival of Arts
VENUE to be confirmed

Directed by **Ivan Heng & Glen Goei**

Written by **Alfian Sa'at**

Starring **Ghafir Akbar, Brendon Fernandez, Sharda Harrison, Jo Kukathas, Dwayne Lau, Lim Kay Siu, Moo Siew Kay, Neo Swee Lin, Pam Oei, Julie Wee, Yap Yi Kai, Daniel York, Siti Khalijah Zainal**

Interior: Hotel room. Time span: A hundred years.

A hotel in Singapore is opened at the turn of the century, when the island is still a jewel in the British Crown. It serves as an exotic pit stop for travelers who wish to explore the glittering expanse of the British Empire.

Each day, new faces appear and swiftly disappear – guests and staff alike. Every ten years, we check into the hotel and meet its residents. As Singapore morphs from British colony to Malaysian state to sovereign nation, its people and demographics experience profound and dramatic changes. We meet Indian mutineers, Cantonese nannies, Malay film stars, mining magnates, prisoners-of-war, drag queens, rogue traders and even holograms...

An immersive, multi-generational epic, *Hotel* explores the notions of cyclical time and recurring histories in the stories of the guests, the chambermaids, the bellhops and the owners of the hotel — Singaporeans, Malaysians, British subjects, and migrant workers from all over the world. Ghosts communicate with the living, doubles are separated by decades, and ancestors leave their stubborn traces behind. Empires die, and new ones are born from their ashes.



THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES ★ Equality
20 NOVEMBER – 12 DECEMBER 2015
DRAMA CENTRE THEATRE

Directed by **Pam Oei**
Written by **Joel Tan**
Music by **Julian Wong**
Starring **Benjamin Kheng, Lim Kay Siu**

Slip into your best birthday suit and join WILD RICE as we take Hans Christian Andersen's classic fairy tale out for a cheeky, affectionate and very local spin!

In a kingdom far, far away in the distant Woodlands, there lives a vain and pompous Emperor who cares for nothing but fashion. His courtiers are kept busy with his constant demands for the newest and most exquisite designs in all the land. As he primps and preens, he neglects his own people – the humble Grass Roots, who can only win his favour if they compliment him on his appearance.

One day, a pair of mischievous tailors decide to teach him a lesson he won't forget. They present the Emperor with a stunning suit woven out of thin air – and convince him that it can only be seen and appreciated by the smartest and most competent people in the kingdom.

Talk about a wardrobe malfunction!

What's the naked truth? Is there more than meets the eye?

Find out in this hilarious pantomime about the ultimate fashion victim, directed by Pam Oei, with a witty script by Joel Tan and a sparkling score by Julian Wong.

WORK IN PROGRESS ★ Justice
APRIL 2016
VENUE TO BE CONFIRMED

TICKETS

Tickets for all shows will be available from SISTIC Hotline 6348 5555 ★ SISTIC Website www.sistic.com.sg ★ SISTIC Authorised Agents

CORPORATE, GROUP & SCHOOL BOOKINGS – SAVE up to 25% **

For bookings of 20 or more tickets, please contact Ross Toh at 6292-2695 or sales@wildrice.com.sg

WILD RICE ANGELS – SAVE 20% **

Angels receive complimentary tickets and special discounts. They are also entitled to reserve their seats before the general public, and enjoy benefits including 250% tax deduction and invitations to exclusive events. To find out how you can become an Angel, please visit www.wildrice.com.sg or email us at angels@wildrice.com.sg

*** Applicable for Public Enemy, Another Country and The Emperor's New Clothes.*

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WILD Rice Ltd is a recipient of the National Arts Council's Major Grant for the period from 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2016.



ABOUT WILD RICE

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.

Our 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.
- 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 which nurtures young talents from the ages of 5 to 12.
- young & WILD, which identifies and trains 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, a biennial new writing festival committed to developing, presenting and promoting Singapore theatre. Renamed the OCBC SINGAPORE THEATRE FESTIVAL in 2008 and MAN SINGAPORE THEATRE FESTIVAL in 2011, this festival has to date produced 22 World Premieres of new Singapore writing, and has been hailed as "the main event in the world of the arts" (SPH The Straits Times, 2006), and the "Blockbuster Event of the Year" (TODAY, 2008).

In July 2013, WILD RICE launched IN THE SPOTLIGHT, a festival commissioning and presenting a representative survey of a local playwright's body of work. The inaugural festival shone a spotlight on our resident playwright, Alfian Sa'at.



PRAISE FOR WILD RICE

“Theatre that’s **ACCESSIBLE** and **INTELLIGENT**, which combines serious intent with serious entertainment.”

- The Straits Times, Singapore

“Singapore’s **SEXIEST** theatre company!

- Lonely Planet, Best of Singapore

“**BOLD** and **INSIGHTFUL**. Scintillatingly funny and thought-provoking.”

- The Business Times, Singapore

“**EXCITING** and **HUGELY ENTERTAINING**... this is rich and tender theatre!”

- South China Morning Post, Hong Kong

‘Clearly one of the most **DYNAMIC**, **INNOVATIVE** and **EXCITING** theatre companies in town!’

- 938Live, Singapore

“Moving, **FUNNY** and accomplished. The stage bristles with invention.”

- The Dominion Post, New Zealand

“This is entertaining and **CHALLENGING THEATRE**.”

- The Age, Australia

“The zenith of **FINELY WROUGHT ARTISTRY**.”

- The Arts Magazine, Singapore

“A **DYNAMIC** and **ENERGETIC** theatre company!”

- Macautheatre.blogspot

“Always the sense that you are attending **A THEATRICAL EVENT**.”

- The Flying Inkpot