



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## SINGAPORE THEATRE FESTIVAL CLUB ROLLS INTO TOWN THIS JULY!

15 June 2016 – ShiGGa Shay. Tan Pin Pin. iNCH Chua. Sonny Liew. Daniel Goh. These are just a few of the exciting performers, artists and politicians you'll get to meet at the Singapore Theatre Festival!

Complementing the eight plays in the Festival's main season are the FEST!VITIES – a host of thrilling events designed to engage and entertain audiences beyond the rise and fall of the curtain. These public forums, cabarets and jam sessions will bring together some of the brightest, boldest talents Singapore has to offer.

"There is art everywhere we look," explains Ivan Heng, Artistic Director of the Festival. "The issues and ideas that we explore in the theatre are woven into the fabric of our daily lives. The FEST!VITIES give us the opportunity to kick back and relax, while also thinking and talking about the hot-button topics of the day."

The Festival Club throws open its doors on Saturday nights in July. This fun, fabulous late-night programme – encompassing *Songs of Protest*, *Drag Attack!* and *Stand Up for Singapore* – shines a spotlight on emerging and established talents in the respective fields of music, drag and stand-up comedy.

Some of Singapore's finest singer/songwriters will take to the stage of the Singapore Airlines Theatre to perform their very own ***Songs of Protest***. Each deeply personal anthem calls for action and brings attention to stories that need to be heard. This electrifying jam session features the likes of ShiGGa Shay, iNCH Chua, Sezairi, Pam Oei's rock band Ugly In The Morning and veteran actors Lim Kay Siu and Neo Swee Lin.

A rainbow of drag performers, led by *RIOT!*'s Becca D'Bus, will charm, shock and titillate in ***Drag Attack!***. This crazy, colourful evening demolishes societal stereotypes and conventional concepts of gender – even as it allows audiences to unleash their inner dancing queens!

***Stand Up for Singapore*** promises a WILD, wicked night of fun, laughter and comedy. Led by comedian and television host Fakkah Fuzz, a slate of up-and-coming comics – including Sam See and Qamarul – promise to tickle your funny bone as they excavate the lighter side to living in Singapore.

Beyond the Festival Club, expect fireworks during the ***Art & Life Sessions***. These public forums, which run throughout the Festival, will feature lively discussions about family values, free speech and revisionist histories. Forum speakers include Kok Heng Leun (Artistic Director of Drama Box and Nominated Member of Parliament); playwright Tan Tarn How (*Fear of Writing*); Daniel Goh (Non-Constituency Member of Parliament, Workers' Party); graphic artist Sonny Liew (*The Art of Charlie Chan Hock Chye*) and independent filmmaker Tan Pin Pin (*To Singapore, With Love*).

"The theatre is a space that inspires reflections and conversations – some of the best plays are not the ones that offer neat answers but instead raise questions, often about things that society does not question," says Festival Dramaturg Alfian Sa'at, who personally curated the



exciting line-up for most of the FEST!VITIES. “We have organised these parallel events, from forums to cabaret performances, to engage with some of the issues and ideas raised in the Festival’s plays.”

Tickets to *Songs of Protest* are priced at \$20 (inclusive of one free Peroni beer) and will be available through SISTIC from 17 June 2016. Admission is free for all other events in the FEST!VITIES.

Visit <http://www.singaporetheatrefestival.com> for more details.

## FAST FACTS

**Title:** FEST!VITIES @ The Singapore Theatre Festival  
**Venue:** LASALLE College of the Arts  
**Date:** 9, 10, 16, 17, 23 & 24 July 2016

**Drag Attack!**

9 July (Saturday), 10.15pm, Lowercase Café

**Art & Life #01: One Divided People?**

10 July (Sunday), 5.30pm, Lowercase Café

**Songs of Protest**

16 July (Saturday), 10.30pm, Singapore Airlines Theatre  
\$20

**Art & Life #02: Regardful of Race, Language and Religion**

17 July (Sunday), 5.30pm, Lowercase Café

**Stand Up For Singapore**

23 July (Saturday), 10.15pm, Lowercase Café

**Art & Life #03: History, His Story, Whose Story?**

24 July (Sunday), 5.30pm, Lowercase Café

Tickets to *Songs of Protest* are priced at \$20 (inclusive of one free Peroni beer) and will be available through SISTIC from 17 June 2016!

Admission is free for all other events.

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## APPENDIX I THE FESTIVAL CLUB: AFTER HOURS

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### DRAG ATTACK! 9 JULY / SATURDAY 10.15PM / LOWERCASE CAFÉ

Sexy. Raunchy. Naughty. Unleash your inner queen and dance the night away with a rainbow of drag performers who will charm, shock and titillate even as they demolish societal stereotypes and conventional concepts of gender. Don't miss out on this crazy, colourful evening featuring some of Singapore's Most Fabulous – Becca D'Bus, Ashley Fifty, Mona Kee Kee, Papa Cherry, Taylor Jin and Vyla Virus!

### BIOGRAPHIES

**BECCA D'BUS** was born at the age of 28 in Boston. She is currently the producer and host of *RIOT!*, which remains Singapore's only regular drag revue. Since her birth, she has performed in Boston, New York and Paris. She was last seen in Singapore at the Night Festival, the Singapore International Festival of Arts and the Neon Lights Festival, as well as the front page of The Financial Times. Becca is equal parts fat, glamorous, colourful and naked. TODAY has called her a "lively provocateur" and an "unpredictable livewire". Her tongue is probably sharper than her pirouettes, but her lips are luscious and her hair – non-existent.

**ASHLEY FIFTY** is Singapore's most patriotic drag queen. Since receiving an SG50 arts grant in 2015, her attempts at a performing career have deployed half-rate satire, bottom-of-the-barrel Singapore cultural artefacts and very ugly couture. She would like to thank her Lord and Saviour, *ham chim peng*.

**MONA KEE KEE** is a talentless drag queen whose only redeeming value is her good grammar and irresistible sex appeal. She lip-synchs, she dances, she can speak to you in tongues. (She is not good at any one of those things, but she is a riot!) Speaking of a riot, Mona Kee Kee performs monthly at *RIOT!*, hosted by Becca D'Bus ([www.riotdragshow.com](http://www.riotdragshow.com)). Currently, she is one of the three faces of Tantric ([www.homeofthebluespin.com](http://www.homeofthebluespin.com)) – the ugliest one, no doubt. On weekends, Mona can be seen at your friendly neighbourhood gay clubs (usually stalking young Asian boys). [www.monakeekee.com](http://www.monakeekee.com)

**PAPA CHERRY** was born in 2007 as part of The Beauty Kings, an LA-based drag king troupe. Papa Cherry has graced the stage at many Pride events, including Drag King nights at Hamburger Mary's and famous genderbending LA show *BENT*. After moving to Singapore in 2013, Papa Cherry immediately began performing at various Singapore nightclubs, including Play and Two Queens. Finally landing a spot in his favourite home of *RIOT!*, Papa Cherry hopes to train/mentor more drag kings to create a drag king community and troupe in Singapore.

**TAYLOR JIN** (a.k.a. Jo Tan) was born in 2015 in The Necessary Stage's *The Orange Playground*, for which participants were asked to come as any character they liked. The owner of a dodgy talent agency, Taylor Jin's greatest influence is J-pop. (Taylor Jin's alter ego, Jo, has since played Tan Chuan Jin – no relation.) After Taylor Jin received a couple of propositions and provoked discomfort from Jo's husband, Jo realised that this sad little man had something in him and is very glad Becca invited him out to play.



**VYLA VIRUS** was born in 2012 in Singapore, during a Drag Academy Competition. She was mentored by her drag mother, Noris. With her fashionable, edgy style and looks, she can 'vogue' the house down with just her demure personality!



## SONGS OF PROTEST

16 JULY / SATURDAY 10.30PM / SINGAPORE AIRLINES THEATRE

Bob Dylan's *Blowin' In The Wind*. Joni Mitchell's *Big Yellow Taxi*. Pink Floyd's *Another Brick in the Wall*. Green Day's *American Idiot*. Hozier's *Take Me to Church*.

For centuries, songwriters have composed songs about war, civil rights, the environment, feminism and politics. These songs of protest call for action. They bring attention to stories that need to be heard. They move hearts and change minds.

**Songs of Protest** will feature performances by Singapore's most accomplished singer/songwriters. The thrilling line-up (in alphabetical order) includes: Andrew Marko, Art Fazil, Benjamin Chow, CECEY, Fakkah Fuzz, iNCH Chua, Joshua Chiang, Lim Kay Siu & Neo Swee Lin, Michaela Therese, Sezairi, ShiGGa Shay, The Observatory, Ugly In The Morning, Vandetta and X' Ho.

Stand in solidarity with us at this electrifying jam session! This is a gig you won't want to miss!

Tickets are priced at \$20 (inclusive of one free Peroni beer) and will be available through SISTIC from 17 June 2016.

## BIOGRAPHIES

**ANDREW MARKO** struggles, on an almost daily basis, to find time for all the things he is passionate about. On top of acting, Andrew is also a writer for Bandwagon; sings at 1855 every Tuesday night with his band, Van Milos; and is launching Crew, a start-up watch company, in July. He does all this while trying to wake up in time for school at the National University of Singapore, where he is currently pursuing a degree in Sociology and Theatre Studies. He cannot wait to be done with school. Andrew was last seen playing Joshua in Pangdemonium's *Falling*.

**ART FAZIL** is a singer-songwriter who composed English and Malay songs for regional acts after he was signed to Warner Music Publishing (Singapore) in 1990. As a solo artist with Pony Canyon Records (Singapore), Art released an eponymous album of self-penned English songs in 1993. The album produced two songs that made it to Singapore's Perfect 10 Chart – *Sometimes When I Feel Blue* (No. 2) and *Everybodyelse* (No. 4). Art has won COMPASS Awards for Best English Song (1995) and Best Malay Song (1997). Art moved to the UK in 1995 and remains active in the British acoustic music circuit.

**BENJAMIN CHOW** is a spoken-word artist who has been featured at poetry events such as The New Word Order, The SPORE Art Salon, SPEAK and the 2014 Singapore Biennale. Nowadays, he can often be found every second Monday of the month at destination: INK, an exciting and ever-growing open-mic event held on the top floor of Blujaz. Acting credits include *Romeo & Juliet* (SRT), *The Emperor's New Clothes* (WILD RICE) and Lim Chin Siong in *The LKY Musical*. Later this year, you can catch him in Pangdemonium's production of *Rent*.

**CECEY** (a.k.a. Cherilyn Woo) was exposed to the performing arts from a young age, which sparked off her passion for theatre-making. Her main interests include directing and



playwriting for theatre. She aims to seek out different opportunities to hone her craft as a director and playwright in the local and international arts scenes. This will be her first time performing a song for a live audience. Rap music is a constant reminder to her that inspiration often arises from the most surprising places. [www.cherilynwoo.com](http://www.cherilynwoo.com)

**FAKKAH FUZZ** is one of the fastest rising talents in the local comedy scene. He has won competitions as well as positive reviews from The Straits Times Life!, Berita Harian, The New Paper and Channel NewsAsia with his stand-up performances. In 2012, Fuzz headlined *Sons of Singapore*, a stand-up comedy show that he also produced. In 2014, Fuzz performed at the Esplanade in *Happy Ever Laughter* and *Kings and Queens of Comedy Asia*. Most recently, he performed *In Fuzz We Trust*, his first hour-long stand-up comedy special, at the 2016 Singapore Comedy Fringe.

**INCH CHUA** is a Singaporean singer-songwriter who is always looking to push her own limits, challenge popular perceptions and surprise people with her musicianship. A veteran on stage, she has performed at major local events, including Baybeats and the F1 Grand Prix, as well as arts festivals in Beijing, Texas, New York, Washington and Toronto. She has opened for international acts Katy Perry, Vampire Weekend and The Like. Her critically acclaimed recordings include her debut EP, *The Bedroom* (2009), *Wallflower* (2010) *Bumfuzzle* (2013) and, most recently, *Letters to Ubin* (2015).

**JOSHUA CHIANG** is a singer-songwriter who has been based in Cambodia since 2013 and is arguably the first Singaporean to be a regular on the Phnom Penh expat music scene. A former writer and chief editor of socio-political website The Online Citizen, Joshua is no stranger to being an outspoken critic of unfettered state power. He cites U2 and Bob Dylan as his main musical influences for songs of a socio-political nature.

**LIM KAY SIU & NEO SWEE LIN** love to make theatre and music together. As actors, they have performed together in shows from their very first collaboration in 1987, *Dragon's Teeth Gate*, to *HOTEL*, *Love Letters*, *Homesick*, *Cinderel-LAH!* (twice!), *Beauty World* and many more. As singers and musicians, they sing mostly in the privacy of the bedroom, though they have shared the stage in Dream Academy's *Crazy Christmas* as well as lots of impromptu birthday celebrations and wedding ceremonies. They are thrilled to have this opportunity to raise their voices in protest!

**MICHAELA THERESE** is a soul vocalist, pianist, songwriter and producer who has been at the forefront of Singapore's music scene for 15 years. Her most recent full-length album, *My Name Is MEEKELLAH* (2014), described as having "a verve that is as show-stopping as it is beautifully moving", was received with all the anticipation due to a soul queen. Michaela has played venues all over the world and was voted by The Straits Times Life! as one of the 'Top Live Acts in Singapore'. This year, Michaela is working on a new project while dividing her time between Singapore and London.

**SEZAIRI** has won the hearts of many with his boy-next-door charm and musicality. An excellent live performer and musician, Sezairi discovered music at the tender age of five. He won Singapore Idol in 2009. His debut album, *Take Two*, was released in June 2010. *Broken*, his first single, was the highest-ranking Asian song of 2010 on 987FM, one of Singapore's top radio stations. Most recently, Sezairi released his latest single, *Fire to the Floor*. It is currently available online and will be part of his upcoming self-titled English EP, which also includes songs inspired by his seven-year relationship with his wife.



**SHIGGA SHAY** is a Singapore-based rapper and filmmaker who directs and edits all of his own music videos. This hip-hop artist has performed at the National Day Parade (2010 & 2014), Singapore's most-watched live television event. ShiGGa Shay has a knack for crafting music that instantly connects with Singapore audiences. His hit singles include *Lion City Kia* and *LIMPEH* (No. 1 on the iTunes Singapore charts for 14 days). He released a mixtape, *ShiGGa Shay's In The Building*, in 2011; and an EP, *They Call Me ShiGGa*, in 2012. He collaborated with Stefanie Sun on SG50 music project *Sing, Love*.

**THE OBSERVATORY** is a name that implies passive objectivity, but it actually describes a band whose musical output is an impassioned response to the society in which it is enmeshed – a society divided and in tumult, where new forms of oppression must be actively met with new strategies for resistance. The Observatory currently features a constellation of shifting rhythms, synth bass space, oscillators and abused guitars, with repetition and urgency at the heart of their riffs. These all combine amidst the noise, rock and melancholy to hammer out a certain kind of truth.

**UGLY IN THE MORNING** is an alternative funk rock band formed in 1999. The band's sound can best be described as an eclectic mix of funk, blues and rock, with liberal doses of R&B/soul and an emphasis on vocal harmonies. The Ugliers have recorded two albums: a self-titled album released in 2004 and *For, Nikette Frehley* in 2009. The band comprises Noel Ong (guitar), David Baptista (guitar), Clement Yang (bass) and Joseph Saleem (drums), who were joined in late 2013 by actor/singer/Dim Sum Dolly Pam Oei as their frontwoman. They are currently working on their third album and plan to release it in 2016/17.

**VANDETTA** (a.k.a. Vanessa Fernandez) has been part of the music and entertainment world since the age of 12, when she took part in national talent show Rolling Good Times. She has made music with several artists and bands, including Urban Xchange, Parking Lot Pimp and Syndicate. With veteran producer Jason Tan, she released an album titled *Octover* in January 2013. Radio listeners may recognise her from her DJ stints for Mediacorp Radio's 987FM and Lush 99.5FM. *Fly*, the first single off her upcoming EP, received positive reviews from influential media outlets such as Pitchfork, MTV Iggy and LA Weekly.

**X' HO** is a Singaporean musician/author/experimental filmmaker who is better known as Chris Ho, the DJ. To date, he has written three books about Singapore and made six short films – the fourth, *Allen Ginsberg Gives Great Head*, was the only short from Singapore to be in competition at the International Film Festival Rotterdam in 2008. His 2009 solo effort, *No Ordinary Country*, is Singapore's first 'protest folk' album; it was praised by The Business Times as "required listening for anyone interested in plugging into a part of Singapore's zeitgeist that too often lies simmering below the surface". [www.xhosux.com](http://www.xhosux.com)



## STAND UP FOR SINGAPORE

23 JULY / SATURDAY 10.15PM / LOWERCASE CAFÉ

Looking to have a WILD, wicked night of fun, laughter and comedy? Join some of the nation's finest stand-up comics for a raucous show that promises to tickle your funny bone as it excavates the lighter side to living in Singapore! Fakkah Fuzz leads a hilarious line-up that includes up-and-coming comedians Jacky, Qamarul, Sam See and Deonn Yang!

### BIOGRAPHIES

**FAKKAH FUZZ** is one of the fastest rising talents on the local comedy scene. He has won competitions as well as positive reviews from The Straits Times Life!, Berita Harian, The New Paper and Channel NewsAsia with his stand-up performances. In 2012, Fuzz headlined *Sons of Singapore*, a stand-up comedy show that he also produced. In 2014, Fuzz performed at the Esplanade in *Happy Ever Laughter* and *Kings and Queens of Comedy Asia*. Most recently, he performed *In Fuzz We Trust*, his first hour-long stand-up comedy special, at the 2016 Singapore Comedy Fringe.

**JACKY** is Singapore's youngest working comedian. With a unique sense of style and humour, Jacky's stories about his hopes and dreams, as well as his observations of daily life, have made him a popular figure on the local stand-up scene. At only 22 years of age, he has performed all over Asia, including in Singapore, Taipei, Manila and Kuala Lumpur. He was also the youngest comedian to perform at the 2016 Singapore Comedy Fringe, playing to a crowd of over 400 people.

**QAMARUL** hails from the heartlands, and is a Singaporean comic who has been performing regularly all over the country ever since his debut in 2015. Packed with jokes and his current eating habits, his act is impossible to miss!

**SAM SEE** is part of the region's new wave of stand-up comedians, with all the wit, skill and liver capacity necessary to entertain audiences from all walks of life. Based in Singapore, he has performed in numerous comedy festivals in Asia, including the Singapore Comedy Fringe, Wagner's International Comedy Festival and the Crackhouse Comedy Carnival. Sam has also been working with Comedy Central Asia on both live and televised performances since the channel's inception. He was one of their featured comedians online in 2014 and 2015. Sam's work has been described as "whip-smart" and "risqué" by Esquire Magazine.

**DEONN YANG** was born and raised in Singapore. A graduate of LASALLE College of the Arts with a BA (Hons) in Acting, her recent theatre credits include: *The Hummingbird* (dir. Edith Podesta), a commissioned work by Zizi Azah; *Revolutionary Model Play 2.0* (dir. Wang Chong), commissioned for Singapore International Festival of Arts 2015; *4.48 Psychosis* (dir. Natalie Henedige); and *Holidays* (dir. Chen Ying Xuan), with Take Off Productions. Deonn hopes to use comedy to effect change. She also enjoys wearing button-down shirts.

## APPENDIX II THE ART & LIFE SESSIONS

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*What is it in real LIFE that inspires the ART onstage?  
How does ART relate to, engage with, and resonate with LIFE?*

The ART & LIFE SESSIONS is a series of free lively forums about the urgent issues of the day. Engage with some of the most forward-thinking minds of “the concerned citizenry” – including artists, activists, academics and politicians – to exchange views and opinions about the pressing issues of our times.

### #01: ONE DIVIDED PEOPLE? 10 JULY / SUNDAY 5.30PM / LOWERCASE CAFÉ

From the controversies stirred up over Adam Lambert’s New Year Countdown appearance and Madonna’s *Rebel Heart* concert, to the ‘sex objects’ that were removed from a queer-themed exhibition, Singapore’s self-professed ‘moral majority’ appears to have become an increasingly strident force of censorship. Join our panel of artists, activists and advocates as we discuss the ways in which sex and sexuality remain taboos for many Singaporeans, and how we can expand or defend the spaces for its various expressions.

**Speakers:** Vanessa Ho, Kok Heng Leun, Prashant Somosundram & Tan Tarn How  
**Moderator:** Alfian Sa’at

## BIOGRAPHIES

**VANESSA HO** is a founder and project co-ordinator with Project X, an advocacy group dedicated to de-stigmatising sex work and protecting the rights of sex workers. She holds a master’s degree in Gender, Society and Representation from University College London. Some of her education/awareness projects include SlutWalk Singapore and Queer Publics.

**KOK HENG LEUN** is the Artistic Director of Drama Box and one of the most respected specialists in forum theatre in Asia. Thus far, he has directed over 80 plays, including Kuo Pao Kun’s *The Spirits Play*, *It Won’t Be Too Long* (Singapore International Festival of Arts, 2015) and *Manifesto* (with The Necessary Stage). He is currently a Nominated Member of Parliament, representing the arts sector.

**PRASHANT SOMOSUNDRAM** is on the organising committee of Pink Dot, an annual event and campaign in support of the LGBT community in Singapore. He runs Artistry, a café that regularly hosts myriad art events, ranging from exhibitions to literary reading and open-mic music sessions.

**TAN TARN HOW** is a playwright and research fellow at the Institute of Policy Studies. He was a former journalist and has mentored various emerging playwrights while serving as TheatreWorks’ Associate Artistic Director. His plays include *The Lady of Soul and the Ultimate ‘S’ Machine* and *Undercover*, both of which broke new ground in political theatre. Two of his works, *Machine* and *Fear of Writing*, were awarded Best Original Script at the Straits Times! Life Theatre Awards.



**#02: REGARDFUL OF RACE, LANGUAGE AND RELIGION**  
**17 JULY / SUNDAY 5.30PM / LOWERCASE CAFÉ**

In recent years, more and more people have taken to lodging police reports against 'racially or religiously insensitive' speech in Singapore. While doing so can protect those who have genuine cause to be offended, it also imposes vague limits on free speech. Can rigid adherence to being 'politically correct' become an act of silencing? Is it possible to draw a clear line between the spouting of hate speech and the exercising of free speech? Join our panel of politicians and inter-faith activists as we examine the ways in which public discussions about hot-button issues such as race, language and religion are policed – both by society and by ourselves.

**Speakers:** Alfian Sa'at, Daniel Goh, Braema Mathi & Mohamed Imran Mohamed Taib  
**Moderator:** Janice Koh

**BIOGRAPHIES**

**ALFIAN SA'AT** is the Resident Playwright of WILD RICE. He has been nominated at the Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards for Best Original Script 10 times, and has received the award thrice. He was the winner of the Golden Point Award for Poetry and the National Arts Council Young Artist Award for Literature in 2001. His publications include *Collected Plays One and Two*; poetry collections *One Fierce Hour* and *A History of Amnesia*; and short-story collections *Corridor* and *Malay Sketches*.

**DANIEL GOH** is an Associate Professor in Sociology who specialises in cultural sociology and the sociology of religion. Some of his publications include *Race and Multiculturalism in Malaysia and Singapore* (co-edited with Philip Holden and Khoo Gaik Cheng) and the upcoming *Regulating Religion: Norms, Modes and Challenges* with Jaclyn Neo and Arif Jamal. He is currently a Non-Constituency Member of Parliament representing the Workers' Party.

**JANICE KOH** is a stage and television actress and a former Nominated Member of Parliament with a special interest in culture, heritage and the arts. She holds a master's degree in Theatre with Distinction from Goldsmiths College, London. She has been nominated at the Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards for her performances in *Hitting (on) Women*, *Rabbit Hole* and *The Optic Trilogy*, and won for *Proof*.

**BRAEMA MATHI** is a consultant on corporate communications, the non-profit sector and social policies. She leads MARUAH, a human rights group, and is a founder of Transient Workers Count Too (TWC2). Formerly, she was a Nominated Member of Parliament and President of AWARE, Singapore's leading gender equality advocacy group. Braema is also an award-winning journalist and a researcher.

**MOHAMED IMRAN MOHAMED TAIB** is an inter-faith activist who writes regularly on issues relating to religion, society and multiculturalism. He is also an active member of The Reading Group and founding member of Leftwrite Center. He was chief editor of regional Malay socio-religious journal *Tafkir* (2009), and has co-edited and published two books: *Islam, Religion and Progress: Critical Perspectives* (2006) and *Moral Vision and Social Critique: Selected Essays of Syed Hussein Alatas* (2007).



### #03: HISTORY, HIS STORY, WHOSE STORY?

24 JULY / SUNDAY 5.30PM / LOWERCASE CAFÉ

Tan Pin Pin's *To Singapore, With Love* was banned in Singapore, and the National Arts Council withdrew a publishing grant earlier awarded to Sonny Liew's *The Art of Charlie Chan Hock Chye*. Both works dealt with Singapore's history in the '50s and '60s, and raised questions about the state's demonisation of left-wing movements and figures. Is history becoming a new contentious terrain? What kind of chilling effect will this have on theatre-makers who explore history in their works? Join our panel of historians, writers and filmmakers as we unpack the official and alternative versions of 'The Singapore Story'.

**Speakers:** Sonny Liew, Jason Soo, Tan Pin Pin & Thum Ping Tjin

**Moderator:** Alfian Sa'at

### BIOGRAPHIES

**SONNY LIEW** is a comic artist, painter and illustrator whose work includes New York Times bestsellers *The Art of Charlie Chan Hock Chye*, *The Shadow Hero* (with Gene Luen Yang), *My Faith in Frankie* (with Mike Carey) and *Doctor Fate* (with Paul Levitz). He has been nominated for three Eisner Awards and has been awarded the Young Artist Award by Singapore's National Arts Council.

**JASON SOO** is an independent filmmaker. He is also an adjunct lecturer in art history and a graduate of visual and media arts from the University of Melbourne. In 1999, he was awarded first prize at the Jacques Derrida Exhibition and Prize in Melbourne. Some of his films include *A Short Film on The May 13 Generation* and *1987: Untracing the Conspiracy*.

**TAN PIN PIN** is a film director from Singapore. Her films are explorations of Singapore and its histories, contexts and limits. They have been screened internationally. Some of her award-winning films include *To Singapore, With Love*, *Invisible City*, *Singapore Gaga* and *Pineapple Town*, her contribution to the *7 Letters* anthology film.

**THUM PING TJIN** is a historian and research fellow at the Oxford Centre of Global History. He is also the co-ordinator of Project Southeast Asia at Oxford University and the creator and host of *The History of Singapore*, an online radio show/podcast. One of his upcoming publications will be *The Malayan Generation: Nationalism and Decolonisation in Singapore, 1953 – 63*.

## APPENDIX III THE SINGAPORE THEATRE FESTIVAL

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Presented by WILD RICE, the Singapore Theatre Festival is an event dedicated to celebrating contemporary Singaporean theatre through the development and presentation of new and original local writing. The Festival takes place in the months of July and August, when Singapore celebrates National Day; it is in this context that theatre artists and the public are encouraged to engage in a conversation about theatre, Singapore and the world.

In four editions since 2006, the Festival has collaborated with local theatre companies and artists to present 25 productions, including 17 world premieres, of new local writing. The Festival prides itself on having collaborated with undiscovered, emerging and established playwrights, including Alfian Sa'at, Eleanor Wong, Huzir Sulaiman, Chong Tze Chien, Ovidia Yu and Joel Tan. In 2013, the Festival launched 'In The Spotlight' to present a season dedicated to the works of a single local playwright. It remains the only festival in Singapore that focuses on presenting fully realised productions of new local writing.

### The Aims of the Festival

- To develop, produce and promote Singapore theatre, with a focus on new works;
- To re-appraise Singapore's existing repertoire of plays with today's audiences, thereby creating the country's own classics;
- To present the best of contemporary Singapore theatre-making; and
- To engage audiences and artists in a conversation about theatre, Singapore and the world.

Since 2006, the Festival has:

- Enriched the social, cultural and intellectual life of Singapore;
- Raised the levels of awareness and appreciation for Singapore theatre;
- Encouraged the creation of distinctive homegrown work;
- Enhanced the international image of Singapore as a vibrant creative city; and
- Created a literary and artistic legacy for future generations of Singaporeans.

### PRAISE FOR THE SINGAPORE THEATRE FESTIVAL

"It was a year in which ambitious, heartfelt local productions outshone lacklustre, lumbering art imports... the main event in the world of the arts this year was arguably WILD RICE's inaugural Singapore Theatre Festival in August."

– *SPH The Straits Times, Life!*

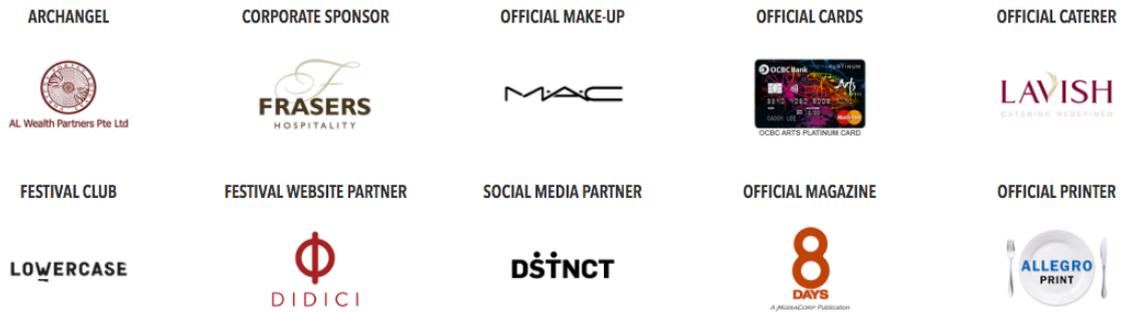
"Statistics compact the inaugural Singapore Theatre Festival to three weeks, nine plays and 11,500 sold tickets. But the expanded version is more interesting: as many as 200 people showing up for the various forums held to discuss topics raised by the plays... the issues being debated island-wide; and the demonstration that the arts are an integral part of an urban society, not to be relegated to suburbia."

– *The Business Times*

## APPENDIX IV THE SPONSORS

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The Singapore Theatre Festival is made possible by the kind support of the following sponsors and partners:



WITH SUPPORT FROM



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