



**WILD  
RICE**

# **AN ACTRESS PREPARES**

**4 - 22 NOVEMBER 2020**

**THE Ngee ANN KONGSI THEATRE @ WILD RICE**

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Siti Khalijah Zainal is a familiar face on the Singapore stage. She's played a diverse range of roles, including a schizophrenic young woman, an Indonesian domestic worker and Singapore's first female Malay Prime Minister (not President!). But what challenges has she faced in her career?

Inspired by Konstantin Stanislavski's first handbook on acting, *An Actress Prepares* follows Siti on a journey through her life in theatre. She candidly shares various affecting and hilarious episodes: learning Chinese dance in primary school, falling in with the cool girls at the Bedok Institute of Technical Education, and being told that she might be 'too big' or 'too Malay' to get roles.

This is Siti as you've never seen her before – raw, vulnerable and achingly honest. In *An Actress Prepares*, Siti tackles the most difficult thing she has ever had to do as an actor: playing herself on stage.

*An Actress Prepares was commissioned for a single performance at the Singapore Writers Festival in 2016. It was revived and further developed for the 2018 Singapore Theatre Festival.*

IMDA Advisory: Some Mature Content

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# MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dear Audience,

What a joy and a privilege it is to welcome you back to the theatre – to *your* theatre.

*An Actress Prepares*, written by Alfian Sa'at and performed by Siti Khalijah Zainal, is a timely reflection on what it means to dedicate one's life to the acting profession, as well as a homage to Singapore theatre.



First scheduled as the curtain-raiser for our new theatre, it was cancelled due to delays in construction. It's poetic that we are now re-opening our theatre with this production, marking a milestone on what has been an incredible journey through a very tough year.

We have been busy over the past few months – from going digital with Wild@Home and collaborating with Singapore Repertory Theatre and Pandemonium to produce *The Pitch*, to pulling off our first virtual Rice Ball.

But we have also been investing in the future by incubating new work and empowering new artists. In the coming weeks, you will see four plays as part of our Directors' Residency programme, as well as two showcases featuring our Young & Wild and Singapore Youth Theatre ensembles.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to everyone who has helped us to get to this point, where we can make a return to producing live theatre. Thank you for your kind and generous support. The journey ahead is uncertain. But we are encouraged to keep dreaming and creating theatre that matters because of you.

Last but not least, thank you for your presence here today. We have looked forward to this moment – when artists and audiences can meet again, face to face, to share our stories. This is who we are and this is what we do. And we could not do it without you.

**IVAN HENG**

Founding Artistic Director  
Wild Rice

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# MESSAGE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

*An Actress Prepares.* Given our present circumstances, what does that title mean now? Do we have to prepare for a future where theatre-making (and theatre-going) is fundamentally changed? And how do we equip ourselves for such an eventuality?

Temperature checks at the lobby. Sitting two seats apart in the theatre. Recognising friends behind their masks. A full house on paper, but in reality, only one quarter full. And much colder than you remember, because there are less warm bodies in the space.

The theatre industry has been one of the hardest-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Even as cinemas cautiously reopened, theatres were still shuttered. Remember the sight of the actor on stage, sometimes so incandescent with passion you could see droplets of spittle flashing in the stage lights? Who knew that liveness, which we valued so much, would also be theatre's greatest liability?

The past few months have been a rollercoaster of anxiety, hope, frustration and optimism. Sandcastles were built only to crumble the next moment, devoured by a wave of new regulations. Circuit Breaker. Phase I. Phase II. Some activities and businesses were waved through. For us in theatre, still the red light.

In spite of the adjustments we have been making, like pivoting to the online world, there is nothing like gathering to experience a performance. Being present for one another, sharing space and time.

The Actress, after this long hiatus, is prepared to meet you.



**ALFIAN SA'AT**

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# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

*“A real artist must lead a full, interesting, beautiful, varied, exacting and inspiring life.”*

– Konstantin Stanislavski

2020! What a year it has been! It took a pandemic to shake us to the very core of our existence and create a great shift in our way of life. Through it all, we got to see the entire theatre industry and my peers in the arts community demonstrate resilience, strength and innovation. And now, we are at the cusp of a new way of making and experiencing art. The old way will be talked about in the past tense. We embrace this new phase. We will live this life to its fullest.



And in this newness, I am very blessed because I have had the opportunity to work with amazing, real artists like Siti Khalijah and Alfian Sa’at. Look at them and get to know them – you will be smitten by their ease of manner, humility and kindness. But the moment they are in their element and they show you a glimpse of their virtuosity, it makes you feel grateful that you are alive in this shared lifetime with them. Enjoy this amazing play by Siti and Alfian!

**AIDLI MOSBIT**

# CAST



## SITI KHALIJAH ZAINAL

Siti made her debut as a full-time theatre actress after she attended The Necessary Stage's year-long Theatre for Youth Ensemble programme in 2003. Since then, she has worked with a wide range of theatre companies, both locally and internationally, and she considers herself very lucky. She won the Best Actress Award twice at The Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards for her performances in *Model Citizens* (2010) and *Off Centre* (2015). She was awarded the Young Artist Award by the National Arts Council in 2014.

# CREATIVE TEAM



## ALFIAN SA'AT PLAYWRIGHT

Alfian is the Resident Playwright of Wild Rice. His published works include three collections of poetry (*One Fierce Hour*, *A History of Amnesia* and *The Invisible Manuscript*); a collection of short stories, *Corridor*; a collection of flash fiction, *Malay Sketches*; three collections of plays and the published play *Cooling-Off Day*. In 2001, Alfian won the Golden Point Award for Poetry as well as the National Arts Council Young Artist Award for Literature. His plays with Wild Rice include *Landmarks: Asian Boys Vol. 2*, *Cooling-Off Day* and *HOTEL* (with Marcia Vanderstraaten).



### **AIDLI MOSBIT** DIRECTOR

Aidli graduated from Queensland University of Technology and was the recipient of the National Arts Council's Young Artist Award for Theatre in 2008. Aidli is currently working in Temasek Polytechnic as the Senior Manager of the Arts Division in the Student Development Department and has a Master of Education from the University of Adelaide.



### **ASHLEY LIM** HAIR DESIGNER

Ashley started his hairstyling career in 1986. In 1999, he set up Ashley Salon to further pursue his dedication towards the art of hairdressing, especially for the theatre. He has worked on over 300 productions locally and abroad, and recently took home the Lifetime Achievement Award for Theatre, presented by Mediacorp.

# MUSICIANS



## **JULIAN WONG** MUSIC ARRANGER/PIANIST

Julian is a composer, arranger and music director. He has been making music with Wild Rice since 2007. Collaborations include *Peter Pan in Serangoon Gardens*, *Faghag*, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *Own Time Own Target*, the *Raise the Roof* fundraiser, *Rice Ball 2020* and more.



## **FERI SUSANTO** GUITARIST

As a guitarist, Feri has performed in various concerts and musicals such as *Peter Pan in Serangoon Gardens*, *Dim Sum Dollies: The History of Singapore Part 1*, *Lao Jiu*, *If There're Seasons* and *Liao Zhai Rocks!*, as well as Esplanade productions like the Hua Yi Festival and *Flipside: Sensing the Dark*. He was also involved in Hollywood movie *Crazy Rich Asians*. Feri is very grateful to be a part of another Wild Rice show.





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# CREDITS

## CAST

Siti Khalijah Zainal

## CREATIVE TEAM

Text By **Alfian Sa'at & Siti Khalijah Zainal**

Directed By **Aidli Mosbit**

Hair Design & Styling By **Ashley Lim**

Lighting Design By **Wild Rice Technical Team**

## MUSICIANS

Music Arranger/Pianist **Julian Wong**

Guitarist **Feri Susanto**

## PRODUCTION TEAM

Producer **Koh Bee Bee**

Production Manager **Melissa Teoh**

Technical Manager **David Sagaya**

Production Co-ordinator **Phua Yun Yun**

Production Assistant **Angela Ee**

Stage Manager **Elnie Shumastri Mashari**

Assistant Stage Manager **Nur Aisyah Zuhairiya Bte Zulaimi**

Stage Assistants **Nabilah Syahirah Bte Mohd Abdillah,**

**Nurulain Kaiyisah Bte Md Kahar & Syafiqah Binte Ramli**

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# 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.**

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
- + New interpretations of world classics

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

- + Wild Rice Academy and First Stage, which offer drama and training programmes to nurture young talents from the ages of 5 to 12
- + Singapore Youth Theatre, which develops and empowers young people aged 13 to 17 through theatre
- + Young & Wild, which identifies and develops Singapore's young theatre professionals from the ages of 18 to 30

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.

Wild Rice @ Funan is the company's new home in the heart of Singapore's civic and cultural district. This groundbreaking performing arts complex promises to be an iconic destination theatre for Singapore, one dedicated to creating and presenting the best of Singapore theatre, while nurturing the artists and audiences of tomorrow.

# WILD RICE TEAM

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# HELP US SECURE THE FUTURE OF SINGAPORE THEATRE

## Please kindly consider being an Angel.

Times are hard and we know this is a big ask. But if you are in a position to do so, we would greatly appreciate your support to help us survive these difficult times.

As a leading Singapore theatre company, Wild Rice has blazed the trail for over two decades in the relentless pursuit of excellence.

We have created and presented the best of Singapore theatre - reaching out to more than a million audience members here and around the world, whilst nurturing and developing the artists and audiences of tomorrow. As one of the largest employers in the Singapore theatre industry, we provide gainful employment to hundreds of people, on stage and off, every year.

Last, but certainly not least, our award-winning, independently-run venue has brought unprecedented visibility and prominence to Singapore theatre, while also creating a home for the performing arts where all are welcome.

If you share our belief in the power of theatre as a force for good and for change, please consider coming on board as a Wild Rice Angel. Your support will enable us to face the future with courage and confidence, and to achieve all that we set out to do.



## AS AN ANGEL, YOU WILL ENJOY:

- Complimentary Tickets
- Special Discounts on all Wild Rice Shows
- Priority Booking
- 250% Tax Deduction
- Special Events
- Backstage Tours
- Meeting the Artists
- Acknowledgements in Promotional Material

Sign up now at [wildrice.com.sg/angel](https://wildrice.com.sg/angel) or contact [angels@wildrice.com.sg](mailto:angels@wildrice.com.sg).

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

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# WILD RICE ACADEMY

Holiday Camps  
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Weekly drama classes for children aged 5 to 12

## Learning Comes Alive through Drama and Storytelling!

Ignite your child's imagination, inspire their confidence and equip them with skills for life. Wild Rice is proud to present drama classes conducted by experienced teachers who are passionate about bringing out the best in your child.

What you and your child can expect:

- **Learn to Perform**

Fun-filled lessons in drama skills like storytelling, role-playing, music and dance

- **Develop Social and Emotional Skills**

Self-awareness, empathy, and appreciating differences through working with others

- **Think Creatively and Critically**

Appreciating and relating to stories of people from different cultures, backgrounds and ways of thinking

- **Grow Confidence in Expression and Communication**

Perform in front of a live audience of teachers, family and friends

Sign up today or enquire:  
[academy@wildrice.com.sg](mailto:academy@wildrice.com.sg)

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