

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Wild Rice Places Future Generations of
Young Theatre-Makers Front and Centre Stage**



The inaugural batch of Singapore Youth Theatre

Elevated (L-R): Sebastian Street & Björn Haakenson

Standing (L-R): Ewan Lim, Elizabeth Rei Ando, Erin Chen, Evangel Wong & Zoe Rowe

Seated (L-R): Chloe Choo, Seth Arri Azhar, Madeline Yeo, Sarah Syazlina & Rayen Hovinga

X November 2020 – Wild Rice today announced that it will be closing out its 2020 season with two exciting productions featuring Singapore’s most promising young performers.

The two shows – ***Candide*** and ***Schooled*** – are the respective graduating showcases for Wild Rice’s two youth ensembles:

- **Singapore Youth Theatre** (which launched this year as a platform for students from the ages of 13 to 17) and
- **Young & Wild** (Wild Rice’s award-winning youth division for participants between the ages of 18 and 30).

Both productions will play limited runs at The Ngee Ann Kongsi Theatre in December 2020. (See Annex for full details.)

The establishment of Singapore Youth Theatre means that Wild Rice now offers a comprehensive theatre education programme to nurture artists from the ages of 5 to 30.

Young talents can grow with the company, all the way from its initiatives for children (First Stage and Wild Rice Academy), through to Singapore Youth Theatre and Young & Wild.

“The theatre is the perfect training ground for young people – it’s a place where they can learn who they are and who they want to be, figure out what they believe in, and start to tell the stories the world needs to hear,” says Ivan Heng, Founding Artistic Director of Wild Rice.

“We’re incredibly proud to have offered a home to these young artists, who we know will be making waves in Singapore’s theatre community for generations to come.”

Singapore Youth Theatre Forges Its Own Path With New Work

Since the beginning of the year, Wild Rice’s inaugural **Singapore Youth Theatre** ensemble – comprising 12 young theatre-makers from the ages of 13 to 17 – have been hard at work creating their own original show.

Over the past year, they have worked with acclaimed playwright and director Thomas Lim to learn how to write, improvise and perform their own short plays.

The result is ***Schooled***, a devised play inspired by Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunberg’s speech at the 2019 United Nations Climate Action Summit – where she boldly told world leaders, “You are failing us.”

“We were inspired by this to create a play in which adults are sent back to school to learn lessons taught by young people,” explains Lim, who is also Wild Rice’s Associate Artistic Director for Youth & Education.

The play – with its conscious focus on what the young artists themselves want to say – reflects Wild Rice’s goal in launching the Singapore Youth Theatre programme.

“There are very few theatre-making platforms available for young people to express themselves and voice their concerns,” Lim says. “When you give them the keys and put them behind the wheel, you’ll be surprised where they take you!”

Young & Wild Tackles Modern Adaptation of French Classic



The sixth cohort of Young & Wild

(L-R) Joel Low, Flora Yeo, Muhd Nur Aliff, Chermaine Cham, Annie Low, Ryan Ang, Al Hafiz Sanusi, Fadhil Daud, Auderia Tan, Wan Jia Ling, Vanessa Arokiam Ronald, Asher Tan, Tan Yan Ru, Isabella Lew, Joash Zheng & Abul Yusof

At the same time, the 16 members of **Young & Wild** – the sixth cohort of Wild Rice’s acclaimed youth division – have been honing their skills and learning their craft from some of Singapore’s top professional theatre-makers.

In December, they will be graduating with a thrilling, bold production of ***Candide*** – Mark Ravenhill’s modern update of Voltaire’s classic novel centred on a relentlessly upbeat protagonist.

“*Candide* is a pitch-perfect play for our times – one that questions the value of optimism just as we are living through one of the darkest, most turbulent moments in human history,” notes Edith Podesta, Wild Rice’s Associate Artistic Director for Young & Wild.

“Working on *Candide* has challenged us all to think about what we can do, and how we can survive, when everything around us seems to be going badly wrong. It’s a lesson I think we can all – artists and audiences alike – afford to learn right now.”

Podesta, one of Singapore’s leading drama educators, is excited to see what her students in Young & Wild will do next.

“Over the past year, we have challenged, inspired and educated these gifted young artists – and they’ve done the same for us,” she says.

“It was our privilege to give them a platform through which they can become better artists as well as, hopefully, better people – and we can’t wait to see how they will be making a difference in Singapore’s theatre industry in time to come.”

WILD RICE'S FUTURE GENERATIONS SEASON

CANDIDE:	10 – 13 December 2020 Thurs & Fri: 7.30pm Sat: 2.30pm & 7.30pm Sun: 2pm & 6pm
SCHOOLED:	17 – 20 December 2020 Thurs & Fri: 7.30pm Sat: 2.30pm & 7.30pm Sun: 2pm & 6pm
Producer:	Koh Bee Bee
Venue:	The Ngee Ann Kongsi Theatre @ Wild Rice
Press Contacts:	Samantha Jong (samantha.jong@distilleri.com.sg) Linda Tan (lindatan@wildrice.com.sg)
Ticket Prices:	\$30, \$25, \$20
Public Sales:	From 23 November 2020
Discounts:	\$20 Category 1 tickets for Wild Rice Angels, Students & Senior Citizens
Ticketing Agent:	SISTIC.com Pte Ltd SISTIC Website www.sistic.com.sg SISTIC Hotline (+65) 6348-5555

CANDIDE

A Young & Wild Production

10-13 December 2020

The Ngee Ann Kongsi Theatre @ Wild Rice

Written By: Mark Ravenhill

Directed By: Edith Podesta

Cast: Abul Yusof, Al Hafiz Sanusi, Ryan Ang, Chermaine Cham, Fadhil Daud, Isabella Lew, Annie Low, Joel Low, Muhd Nur Aliff, Vanessa Arokiam Ronald, Asher Tan, Auderia Tan, Tan Yan Ru, Wan Jia Ling, Flora Yeo & Joash Zheng

Candide is an optimist. A dreamer. He believes that everything is for the best in the best of all possible worlds.

But that belief is about to be tested when Candide's comfortable life is overtaken by an endless barrage of misfortune. As his world collapses around him, Candide attempts to reunite with his love, Cunegonde.

At the same time, the story travels across the centuries to new locations and parallel universes, where a woman tries to find a way back to happiness after experiencing a hugely traumatic event.

How will Candide's optimism fare when it collides with life in the 21st century?

Candide is the graduation showcase of Young & Wild, the sixth cohort of Wild Rice's award-winning youth ensemble. Under the guidance and direction of acclaimed theatre-maker Edith Podesta, Young & Wild breathes fresh life into *Candide*, Mark Ravenhill's brilliantly inventive, modern adaptation of Voltaire's classic satire.

Candide was commissioned and presented by the Royal Shakespeare Company and first performed in the Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, on 29 August 2013. This Young & Wild production is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. www.concordtheatricals.co.uk.

About Young & Wild

Young & Wild is a year-long, comprehensive acting programme dedicated to training and nurturing future generations of actors in Singapore, preparing promising young talents for careers in the creative industry. By giving participants the opportunity to work alongside local and international career professionals, Young & Wild offers participants unique insights into how a professional theatre company creates work, connects with an audience and engages with the community.

About Edith Podesta

Edith is a theatre-maker, choreographer and actor. In 2017, she won the Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards for Best Original Script and Production of the Year for *BITCH: The Origin of the Female Species*. More recently, her production of *Leda and The Rage* was named Production of the Year at the 2019 Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards. For eight years, she was the Programme Leader of the BA (Hons) Acting course at LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore. Edith is currently Wild Rice's Associate Artistic Director for Young & Wild.

SCHOOLED

A Singapore Youth Theatre Production

17-20 December 2020

The Ngee Ann Kongsi Theatre @ Wild Rice

Devised By: The Singapore Youth Theatre ensemble

Directed By: Thomas Lim

Cast: Elizabeth Rei Ando, Erin Chen, Chloe Choo, Björn Haakenson, Rayen Hovinga, Ewan Lim, Sarah Syazlina, Seth Arri Azhar, Sebastian Street, Zoe Rowe, Evangel Wong & Madeline Yeo

Revolutions happen. Governments change. The one thing that has stayed the same throughout the course of human history? Adults always think they know better than the young.

But that's not necessarily true. There are so many lessons that grown-ups can afford to learn from the young people who will one day run the world.

Schooled is a devised theatre production written and conceptualised by the 12 fearless young theatre-makers in Wild Rice's inaugural Singapore Youth Theatre ensemble. Over the course of the past year, they have learnt to write, perform and make theatre in order to tell their own stories.

This is their message to the adults. And it's time for us to shut up, sit down, and start taking notes...

About Singapore Youth Theatre

This new initiative is a year-long holistic theatre-making programme for young people and students from the ages of 13 to 17. It provides a platform for young people to make and present theatre that speaks to and for people of their own generation. Guided by experienced playwrights, directors and designers, participants will gain first-hand experience of how theatre is made – from writing and directing to performing, designing and stage-managing.

About Thomas Lim

Thomas made his professional debut as a playwright and director with *Grandmother Tongue*, which was performed in Teochew, English and Mandarin. His sophomore work, *Supervision*, won Best Original Script at the 2019 Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards. He has worked as a drama educator in secondary schools and junior colleges across Singapore, and is currently Associate Artistic Director for Youth & Education at Wild Rice.