

**WILD
RICE**

**VICTORIAN
OPERA**



THE BUTTERFLY LOVERS

**CONCEIVED & DIRECTED BY
IVAN HENG**

**COMPOSED BY
RICHARD MILLS**

**LIBRETTO BY
JOEL TAN**

3 – 7 MAY 2023 | VICTORIA THEATRE

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SYNOPSIS

Wild Rice and Victorian Opera proudly present *The Butterfly Lovers* like you have never seen it before. Fresh from its critically acclaimed world premiere in Australia, this thrilling international collaboration marks the first time this classic Chinese folktale takes flight as an original English-language opera.

Trapped by the constraints of a rigidly patriarchal society, Zhu Yingtai boldly disguises herself as a man to pursue higher education. At school, she meets the bookish Liang Shanbo, and the proverbial sparks fly. What begins as a friendship between equals soon deepens into love between soulmates. But tragedy beckons when Yingtai is called home to be married to a wealthy suitor.

Inspiring and bittersweet in equal measure, the star-crossed love between Yingtai and Shanbo transcends barriers like family, societal expectations, and – in this new incarnation – gender and sexuality.

Conceived and directed with visionary flair by Ivan Heng, *The Butterfly Lovers* features a sensational new score by Richard Mills, one of Australia's most distinguished composers, and a soul-stirring libretto by Joel Tan, one of Singapore's most exciting young playwrights. Created in collaboration with a team of Singapore's top theatre-makers and an international cast led by soprano Cathy-Di Zhang, countertenor Austin Haynes and baritone Haotian Qi, *The Butterfly Lovers* reaches across borders and cultures to bring this epic love story to exhilarating new heights.

IMDA Advisory: Some Mature Content

ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION

Wild Rice and Victorian Opera's groundbreaking new production of *The Butterfly Lovers* made its world premiere at the Arts Centre in Melbourne, Australia, in October 2022. The core creative team and lead cast members have reunited in Singapore for this production's Asian premiere at the Victoria Theatre in May 2023. Our orchestra in Singapore features some of the country's finest musicians from Resound Collective.



The Butterfly Lovers (2022)
Cathy-Di Zhang as Zhu Yingtai and Meili Li as Liang Shanbo
Photo: Charlie Kinross

MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



In 2015, Richard Mills and I met for the first time and, upon making an instant connection, we resolved to collaborate on a new opera, an international collaboration that would speak to both our audiences in Melbourne and Singapore. Instead of choosing a work from the existing Western canon, I proposed that we tell the story of *The Butterfly Lovers*, a beloved classic and one of the four great folktales of China.

Known as the Chinese *Romeo & Juliet*, Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai's tragic, but ultimately transcendent, love story has inspired artists through the ages. But it had not, to our knowledge, been adapted into an English-language opera. We both became quite excited by the prospect.

What distinguishes our version is that it unpacks what largely exists as subtext in more conventional adaptations of the tale. When Shanbo first meets Yingtai, she is disguised as a man to get herself an education. Shanbo never questions Yingtai's identity, even though she persistently hints at it; and he only reciprocates her love when she reveals that she is a woman. But what if Shanbo had in fact fallen in love with Yingtai as a man?

With plans to premiere the work in Melbourne in September 2020, we commissioned Joel Tan, one of Singapore's most talented emerging playwrights, to adapt the story, and he sent us a libretto that we loved. In early 2019, Richard and I met in Singapore to workshop the production at Wild Rice.

As with so much else, the pandemic threw a spanner in the works. The show was postponed twice, but we persisted through the most extraordinary conditions, virtually, in different countries, and across time zones. Listening and learning from one another, we approached the collaborative process with mutual respect for our diverse cultural traditions, disciplines, and industry practices.

We trust that this brand-new production of *The Butterfly Lovers*, an intricate tapestry of myriad elements, will be greater than the sum of its parts. Richard's finely wrought score is at once grand and intimate, mining the layers of Joel's elegiac libretto to illuminate the characters' emotional journeys. The drama unfolds on a bare stage rooted in the Chinese opera tradition – a canvas for Brian Gothong Tan's striking multimedia, Philip Lethlean's atmospheric lighting and Max Tan's splendid costumes.

It is nothing short of a miracle that we are premiering a new work in these times, and we are thrilled and gratified that the production is finally here in Singapore. Following a critically acclaimed premiere in Melbourne in October last year, we have taken the opportunity to continue developing and refining this new opera for the Singapore stage. Last November, Richard came to Singapore for another workshop with Joel and myself, during which we made revisions to the libretto, score and direction. We have also refreshed the production with new costumes, multimedia, lighting and choreography inspired by Chinese opera, and we have a marvellous Chorus featuring Singapore's best classical singers.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the singers, our creative and production teams, and everyone at Wild Rice and Victorian Opera who have rallied behind our shared vision to tell this story. Thank you from the bottom of my heart, dear Richard and Elizabeth Hill-Cooper, for your trust, care and the amazing journey we have shared with Victorian Opera. Special thanks must also go out to the Cultural Matching Fund, Simone Lourey and Will Randall, and our Wild Rice Angels for making this production possible.

Last but not least, thank you for coming to share in the experience of *The Butterfly Lovers* today. "Beyond form, beyond language and thought" – we hope you will find something here that delights, moves and inspires you.

IVAN HENG

Founding Artistic Director, Wild Rice

MESSAGE FROM THE COMPOSER



This chamber opera project is the result of my admiration for Ivan Heng and the wonderful Wild Rice theatre company based in Singapore. Ivan is, in my opinion, one of the great theatre-makers of Asia.

The theatrical process of this work is founded in the ritual language of Chinese opera, which is characterised by highly stylised storytelling, visual spectacle and formalised interactions between characters.

The Singaporean poet and playwright, Joel Tan, has made a libretto that reflects in contemporary English language the time-honoured formalities of traditional Chinese opera in an eminently singable and concise text.

The musical language and the instrumental textures similarly incorporate traditional elements in the form of subliminal pentatonic references, folk-like interludes and the presence of both *pipa* (Chinese lute) and *dizi* (Chinese flute) in the instrumentation. These elements are subsumed into my own musical process – not simply ‘added in’ – so the music is contemporary, a counterpart to Joel’s libretto in contemporary English.

Opera (both Eastern and Western) is an artform of synthesis – a fusion of disparate elements to form a new statement. It became a new theatrical adventure via a process of amalgamation that is present in both the traditional Chinese opera, which was established during the Song Dynasty (960-1279), and European opera, which can be said to have begun with Monteverdi’s *Orfeo* in 1607, in a fusion of myth-based scenography with the different styles of baroque and late renaissance music. The richness of synthesis is present in our current undertaking, which celebrates both contemporary and traditional musical practice – an ancient love story to which we have given new meaning, and which celebrates the redeeming potential of love in all its forms and possibilities.

RICHARD MILLS

MESSAGE FROM THE LIBRETTIST



This is a story energised by ancient archetypes: the authoritarian father, suppressed libidinal and intellectual appetites, desire made silent, the solace of recognising oneself in another, the double-edge of piety...

Today, we tell ourselves we are allergic to archetypes. We want constantly to subvert and outsmart them. But some archetypes connect us to strangers from long ago: people who felt the same deep stirrings of longing, the same prickly ironies, the same despair. Stories like *The Butterfly Lovers* endure because they tap into something that lives in the gaps between language and feeling—something like music. These feelings call out to be set in opera.

For me, this is an opera about desire: the way the object of desire makes itself known to you as if it's always lived in your body. The way it grows and consumes you. The way it is always intermingled with shame and prohibition. The way it builds new worlds. The way some desires feel like they belong to some other time, some other body. Queerness, in other words, a feeling of alienation from one's body. It is such an odd comfort to know that these feelings have been with us since the earliest times.

I've tremendously enjoyed my first foray into this mysterious art form. It's been such a pleasure developing this opera with Ivan and Richard since 2017. Thank you for sharing this strange, bitter fruit with us.

JOEL TAN

FROM SINGAPORE TO MELBOURNE AND BACK AGAIN



Austin Haynes, Haotian Qi & Cathy-Di Zhang rehearsing in full costume and make-up at Victoria Theatre, Singapore



Austin and Cathy-Di during a costume fitting



Cathy-Di rehearsing in costume



Ivan Heng giving notes to Cathy-Di and Austin

"It's been my great privilege and pleasure to work with Richard and Victorian Opera, one of the best, most accomplished opera companies in Australia. We share the same values and philosophy when it comes to creating new work and being really committed to serving our communities – to inspire, to educate, to edify the experience of our audiences."



IVAN HENG



Richard Mills and Ivan in rehearsal

"It's a great pleasure to come and work with Wild Rice – this splendid, iconic theatre company based in Singapore. It truly is a national treasure, and I do hope that it's appreciated by the citizens of this great city for its contribution to the world conversation about theatre. There's nothing whatsoever that is provincial about it."



RICHARD MILLS



Michael Dimovski as Ma Wencai in rehearsal



Cathy-Di and Austin in rehearsal



Richard working with the musicians and chorus



Ivan, Richard and the main cast with Phoebe Briggs, the Head of Music for Victorian Opera

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE SHOW



Ivan and Richard share their inspirations and influences in creating *The Butterfly Lovers*!



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CAST



CATHY-DI ZHANG

Zhu Yingtai

An award-winning Australian soprano, Cathy-Di is an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music, London. In Australia, she has performed with Opera Australia as Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Rosina (*The Barber of Seville*) and Micaëla (*Carmen*). For Pinchgut Opera, she performed the roles of Amour/La Folie in Neil Armfield's acclaimed production of Rameau's *Platée* and *Créuse* in Charpentier's *Médée*. For State Opera South Australia, she sang Mimi (*La bohème*). She has also performed extensively in operas and appeared in concerts all over Europe and China.



AUSTIN HAYNES

Liang Shanbo

Austin is a countertenor from New Zealand and Australia. He is now based in the UK where he is completing a masters degree at Oxford University. Austin has soloed with groups in the UK including Instruments of Time and Truth, the Oxford Bach Soloists, and New Chamber Opera, as well as Australian groups such as the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra. He was the winner of the 2022 Herald Sun Aria and City of Kingston Aria competitions. Austin's vocal studies are supported by a scholarship from the TAIT Foundation.



HAOTIAN QI

Zhu / Master

One of Australia's finest baritones, Haotian graduated with honours with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Nanjing Art University in China and completed his Master Degree in Opera Performance at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Haotian started his operatic career as a Young Artist with Opera Australia in the Moffatt Oxenbould Young Artist Programme. In 2022, he made his professional debut as Marcello in *La bohème* at the Sydney Opera House. Other credits include the title role in *Don Giovanni*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*; Escamillo in *Carmen* and Figaro in *The Barber of Seville*.



MICHAEL DIMOVSKI

Ma Wencai

Michael is an Australian-based tenor who has worked extensively as a soloist in Australia. His recent credits include Sergei in *Melbourne Cheremushki*, Don Ramiro (Cover) in *La Cenerentola*, Ma Wencai in the world premiere of *The Butterfly Lovers* in Melbourne, Lo Spaventapasseri in *Il mago di Oz*, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, Malcolm in *Macbeth* and Jaquino in *Fidelio*. Michael has also toured and performed throughout Australia as a member of the Ten Tenors.

CHORUS



ADRIAN POON
Divinity & Chorus Master

Adrian is one of Singapore's most active recitalists. Together with Shane Thio, he is the co-artistic director of the song collective The Sing Song Club. Known for his innovative programming, Adrian has premiered hundreds of works locally, the most recent being Messiaen's *Harawi*. Adrian is also a great supporter of local composers, and has commissioned and performed the world premieres of works by Zechariah Goh, Kelly Tang, Liong Kit Yeng, Hoh Chung Shih, Juliette Lai and Benjamin Lim. Upcoming performances include Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* and the complete song cycles of Benjamin Britten.



ZACHARY DOMINGUEZ

Divinity

Zachary is a tenor currently under the tutelage of Professor Alan Bennett at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music. Credits include Uriel from Haydn's *Die Schöpfung*, as well as a tenor soloist for Bach's *Johannesspassion* and *Gleichwie der Regen und Schnee (BWV 18)*. Through education and technology, he hopes to bridge the gap between western classical music and the general public, showing that the themes explored are universal and accessible for all.



CINDY HONANTA

Divinity

Cindy is a mezzo-soprano who made her operatic debut at the age of 23 with the role of Bianca in The Opera People's production of Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*. Her performance in Bach's *St. John Passion* was commended in *The Straits Times* - "A particularly moving moment came... with alto Cindy Honanta's sublime aria *Es Ist Vollbracht!*" She graduated with a Bachelor of Music (Highest Distinction) degree in Voice Performance from the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music.



ZOE HONG YEE HUAY

Divinity

Malaysian mezzo-soprano Zoe is currently studying in the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music under the tutelage of Professor Alan Bennett. Born in Selangor, she took lessons with bass-baritone Mr. Mak Chi Hoe and eventually graduated from the Malaysian Institute of Art. She has travelled across Asia for performances, competitions and exchange programmes. Recently, she was a soloist in Mozart's *Coronation Mass* with the NUS Symphony Orchestra and the NUS Choir.



ALICE CAHYA PUTRI

Divinity

Alice is an Indonesian soprano based in Singapore. She was the first runner-up in the 2021 International Singing Competition Lav Mirski in Croatia and a semi-finalist in the 2022 International Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition in Latvia. Recently, she performed as Dido with The Opera People and, last year, she debuted as Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* in Hungary under the direction of Balázs Kocsár, conductor of the Hungarian State Opera.



DAVID TAO CHEN MING

Divinity / Fortune Teller

David is an actor, singer, musician and educator who graduated from Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts with a Diploma in Vocal Performance and has since performed in various opera, musical and theatre productions. Prior to his career switch in 2010, he worked professionally as a chef before joining the Singapore Armed Forces Central Band as a military musician. When not performing, David enjoys teaching flute and voice both privately and in music schools.



JONATHAN CHARLES TAY

Divinity / Messenger

Lyric tenor Jonathan is one of the leading opera singers in Singapore today. His opera roles include Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus* and Don José in *Carmen* with Singapore Lyric Opera, Parpignol in *La bohème* with Singapore Symphony Orchestra and Bertrando in Rossini's *L'inganno felice* with Lirica Arts, as well as the title roles in Zemlinsky's *Der Zwerg* and Mozart's *Idomeneo*, Jaquino in Beethoven's *Fidelio* and Oronte in Handel's *Alcina* with The Opera People.

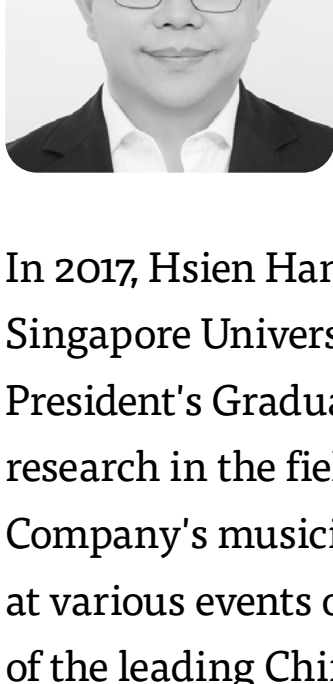


TENG XIANG TING

Divinity

Soprano Xiang Ting is a lawyer-turned-opera-singer who is a highly sought-after collaborator with an impressive repertoire for both operas and concerts. Since making her operatic debut as Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*) at the age of 23, she has performed numerous principal roles locally and abroad to critical acclaim. Notable roles include Norina, Mimi, Alcina, Pamina and Governess. In 2019, she made her professional debut in Switzerland as Belinda/First Witch (*Dido and Aeneas*) and was highly reviewed in *Das Opernmagazin*.

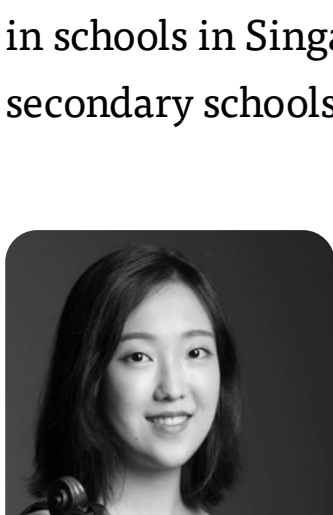
MUSICIANS



NG HSIEN HAN

Dizi

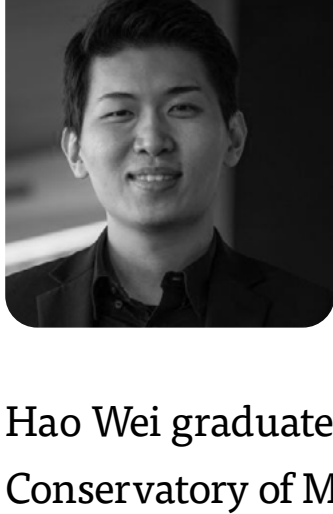
In 2017, Hsien Han was awarded the prestigious Singapore University of Technology and Design President's Graduate Fellowship to carry out research in the field of *dizi*. As one of Ding Yi Music Company's musicians, he has represented Singapore at various events overseas and has now become one of the leading Chinese chamber *dizi* musicians in Singapore.



YAN YU

Pipa

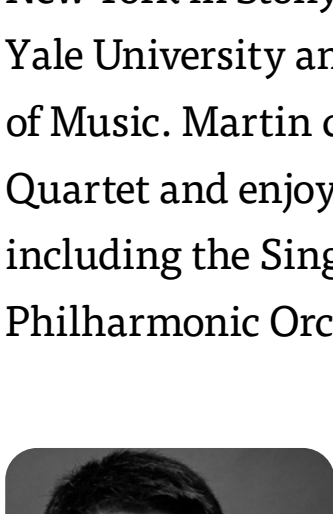
Yan Yu graduated from the Central Conservatory of Music in China with a bachelor's degree of music, majoring in *pipa* with minors in *zhongruan* and *liuqin*. She is an adjunct lecturer at Nanyang Academy of Arts and an examiner for the Confucius Institute at Nanyang Technological University as well as The TENG Company's Chinese Instrumental Music Grading Examinations. She also teaches in schools in Singapore at all levels (primary and secondary schools, junior colleges and polytechnics).



KIM KYU RI

Violin

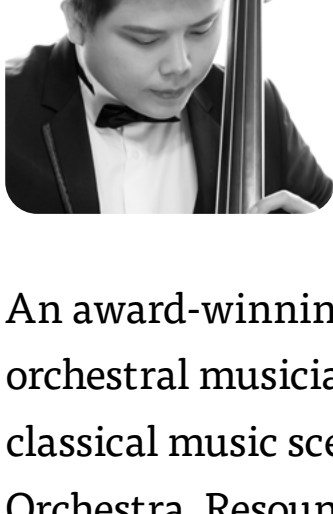
Kyu Ri is currently second violinist in Concordia Quartet, which was featured in *BBC Music Magazine* for its innovative concert that was livestreamed at the height of the pandemic in June 2020. In June 2022, the Concordia Quartet was the string quartet in residence at the PRISMA Festival in Canada. Kyu Ri also freelances with re:Sound Chamber Orchestra. She received her Bachelor of Music (Honours) from the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, where she studied with Igor Yuzefovich, Singapore Symphony Orchestra's former concertmaster, and received her Master of Music degree at Mannes School of Music under the tutelage of renowned pedagogue Lucie Robert.



LIM HAO WEI

Violin

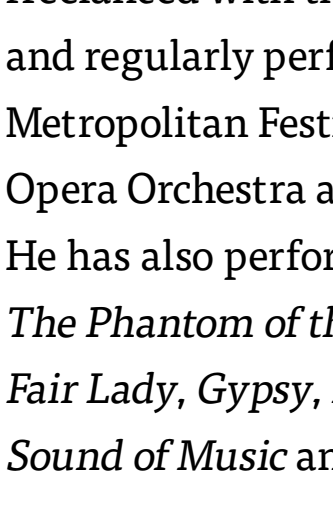
Hao Wei graduated from the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, where he was awarded a full scholarship to study with its Head of Violin Studies, Zuo Jun. As an avid orchestral musician, Hao Wei actively performs with orchestras such as Resound Collective, Metropolitan Festival Orchestra, Asian Cultural Symphony Orchestra and Musicians Initiative. In his free time, Hao Wei teaches the violin and plays the viola.



MARTIN PEH

Viola

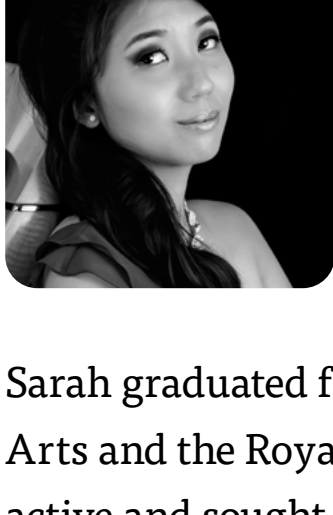
Martin is based in Singapore and performs regularly on the viola. He received the Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in Performance from the State University of New York in Stony Brook, and holds degrees from Yale University and the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music. Martin commits full time at Concordia Quartet and enjoys playing in various orchestras, including the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, The Philharmonic Orchestra and Resound Collective.



LIN JUAN

Cello

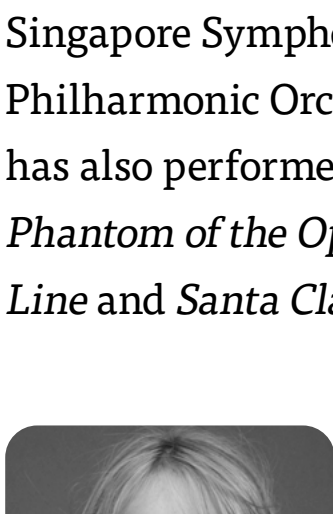
Juan has been the cellist of the Concordia Quartet since 2022. He also performs regularly with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, re:Sound Chamber Orchestra, and other ensembles. Currently a lecturer at Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Juan is also active as a conductor. He is Resident Conductor of The Philharmonic Orchestra, and was the first Associate Conductor of the Singapore National Youth Orchestra.



JULIAN LI

Bassist

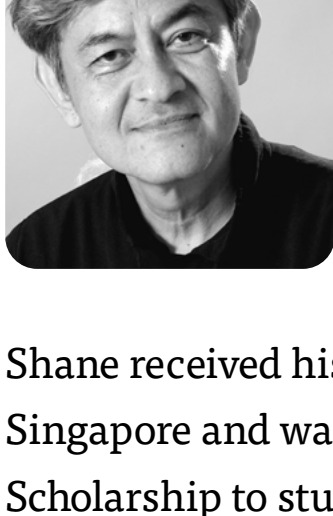
An award-winning Singaporean bassist, Julian is an orchestral musician and soloist active in Singapore's classical music scene (Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Resound Collective, Red Dot Baroque, Orchestra of the Music Makers and others). He was Principal Bassist for the Hangzhou Philharmonic Orchestra and Guiyang Symphony Orchestra in China, and completed his Masters (Distinction) at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz in Austria. Julian also teaches at various schools in Singapore.



DESMOND CHOW

Clarinet

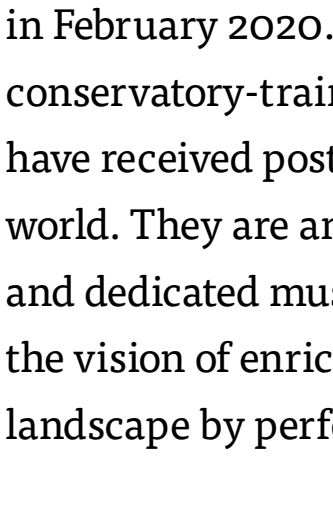
Desmond currently plays with the re:Sound Chamber Orchestra, The Philharmonic Winds, Clarinet Concord and CLARQuinet. He has freelanced with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra and regularly performs in concerts with the Metropolitan Festival Orchestra, Singapore Lyric Opera Orchestra and Orchestra of the Music Makers. He has also performed in musicals such as *Cabaret*, *The Phantom of the Opera* (2007, 2013, 2019), *My Fair Lady*, *Gypsy*, *Pursuant*, *The Pajama Game*, *The Sound of Music* and *The LKY Musical* (2016).



RALPH LIM

Clarinet

An award-winning soloist and Buffet Crampon Clarinet Artist, Ralph is the Principal Clarinetist of Singapore's Resound Collective, and founder of the award-winning clarinet ensemble, CLARQuinet. Ralph appears frequently as a soloist with Resound Collective, Philharmonic Winds Group, and the Asian Cultural Symphony Orchestra, with which he commissioned and performed a clarinet concerto in 2022 to rave reviews.



SARAH WONG

Harp

Sarah graduated from Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and the Royal College of Music, London. An active and sought-after orchestral and chamber musician, she has performed with Resound Collective, Singapore Chinese Orchestra and Ding Yi Music Company, amongst others. She has also appeared as the harp soloist, alongside acclaimed flautist William Bennett, to perform Mozart's *Flute and Harp Concerto* with the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts Orchestra.

MICHAEL TAN

Percussion

Michael is a freelance percussionist with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra and Resound Collective. He has also performed in musicals like *Aladdin*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *The Sound of Music*, *A Chorus Line* and *Santa Claus: The Musical*.

PHOEBE BRIGGS

Keyboard / Celeste & Répétiteur

Phoebe is the Head of Music for Victorian Opera (2012-present). As a répétiteur, she has worked for companies including Opera Australia (2002-2012), IFAC (Japan), Opera Holland Park (UK), Chamber Made Opera, OzOpera, Melbourne Theatre Company and Malthouse. For Victorian Opera, Phoebe has conducted *Sunday in the Park with George*, *Sweeney Todd*, *A Little Night Music*, *Play of Herod*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Black Rider: Casting of the Magic Bullets*, *Cendrillon*, *Alice in Operaland*, *Lorelei*, *Happy End*, *A Christmas Carol* and *Four Saints in Three Acts*.

SHANE THIO

Piano / Celeste & Répétiteur

Shane received his early music education in Singapore and was awarded an Associated Board Scholarship to study at the Royal Academy of Music in London. He is an inaugural recipient of the National Arts Council's Young Artist Award in 1992, which enabled him to pursue further studies at the Royal College of Music. Shane is featured regularly with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, and has worked with many music, theatre and dance groups in Singapore.

CREATIVE TEAM



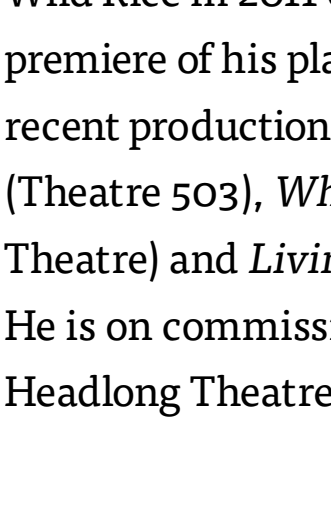
IVAN HENG
Director & Set Designer

Ivan is one of Singapore's most prominent and dynamic creative personalities. In a pioneering career spanning three decades, Ivan has directed, acted in and designed many landmark Singapore theatre productions. Ivan founded Wild Rice in 2000. Under his leadership, the company has reached an audience of over a million people, and is today at the vanguard of creating theatre with a distinctive Singaporean voice. Wild Rice's groundbreaking theatre complex opened in September 2019 with a mission to create and present the best of Singapore theatre, nurture young artists and audiences, and leave a legacy of artistic excellence for generations to come. In 2013, Ivan was awarded the Cultural Medallion, Singapore's highest cultural honour.



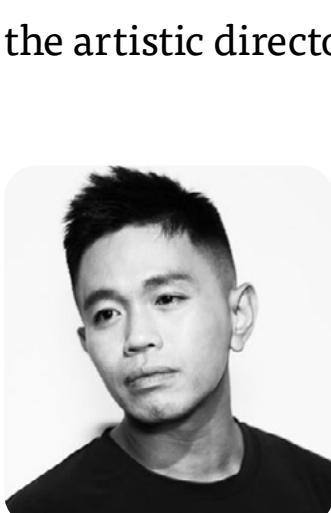
RICHARD MILLS, AM
Conductor & Composer

Richard is an internationally recognised composer who also pursues a diverse career as a conductor and artistic director. He has an extensive discography of orchestral works, including his own compositions. Currently the Artistic Director of Victorian Opera and Senior Fellow in the Faculty of Music, University of Melbourne, Richard has served as the Artistic Director of both the Adelaide Chamber Orchestra and West Australian Opera, as well as Director of the Australian Music Project for Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra. He was named Musica Viva's Composer of the Year in 2008. Recent highlights include the world premiere of his Christmas oratorio, *Nativity*, with Adelaide Symphony Orchestra; *The Pearlfishers*, *Parsifal*, *Salome*, *Elektra* and *La Cenerentola* for Victorian Opera; the ASO at Adelaide Festival and *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* and *Voss* for State Opera South Australia.



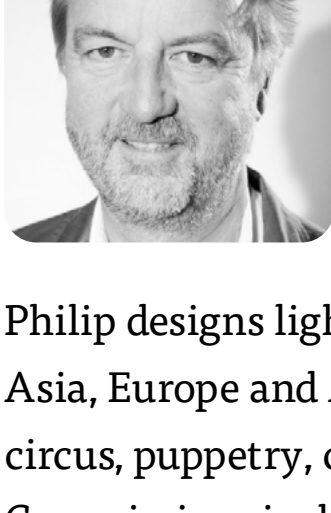
JOEL TAN
Librettist

Joel's recent work in Singapore includes *Tartuffe: The Imposter* (Wild Rice), *Tango* (Pangdemonium), *Mosaic* (M1 Fringe Festival) and *Café* (Twenty Something Theatre Festival). He first worked with Wild Rice in 2011 on the Singapore Theatre Festival premiere of his play, *Family Outing*. In the UK, recent productions include *No Particular Order* (Theatre 503), *When the Daffodils* (Orange Tree Theatre) and *Living Newspaper* (The Royal Court). He is on commission with Royal Court Theatre, Headlong Theatre and Almeida Theatre.



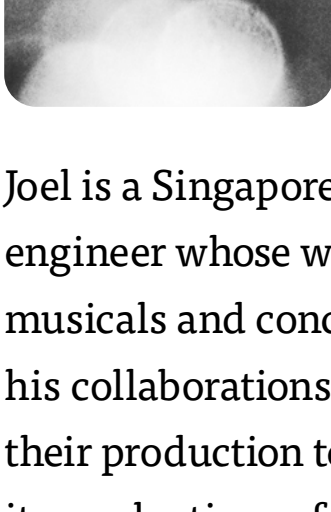
BRIAN GOTHONG TAN
Multimedia & Set Designer

Brian is best known for his cutting-edge and highly engaging works in theatre, film and installation art. He graduated from California Institute of the Arts in 2005 under the Shell-NAC Scholarship. His works have been featured in numerous productions that have toured successfully in many countries like Italy, the USA, Korea and the United Kingdom. He was conferred the Young Artist Award in 2012 and the Singapore Youth Award in 2015. He is currently the artistic director for T:>Atelier under T:>Works.



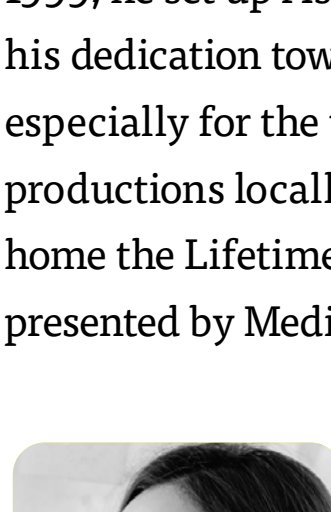
MAX TAN
Costume Designer

Max started his eponymous label, MAX.TAN, after making a splash at the Singapore Fashion Designers Contest in 2007. Over the past decade, Max has been recognised world-wide for his innovative designs that challenge fashion trends while incorporating his Asian roots. Apart from designing for his label, Max also lectures at Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and enjoys partnering with different theatre groups in Singapore to design costumes for their main-stage productions.



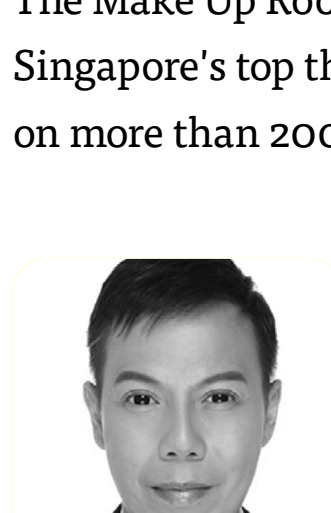
PHILIP LETHLEAN
Lighting Designer

Philip designs lighting projects across Australia, Asia, Europe and America for theatre, opera, dance, circus, puppetry, ceremonies and architecture. Commissions include: the Opening Ceremony of the Pacific Games in PNG, *Clusters of Light* in Sharjah UAE and *How to Train Your Dragon* for Dreamworks/Global Creatures USA. In the theatre, he has worked with the English National Ballet, The Australian Opera, MTC and Circus Oz. Credits include *Into the Woods* and *Sweeney Todd* for Victorian Opera.



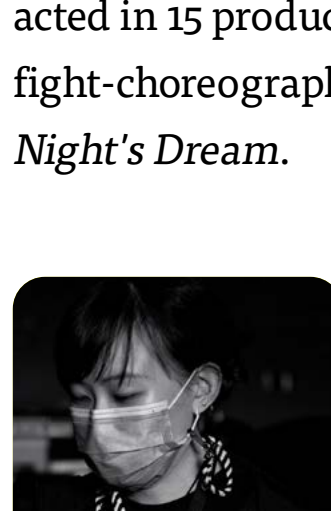
JOEL MANUEL FERNANDEZ
Sound Designer

Joel is a Singapore-based sound designer and engineer whose work can be heard in drama, dance, musicals and concerts. He is highly regarded for his collaborations with theatre companies and their production teams, including Wild Rice on its productions of *La Cage Aux Folles* and *Boeing Boeing*. Joel has extensive experience and a creative approach to sound design, bringing a director's vision to life with rich and dynamic soundscapes.



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.



BOBBIE NG
Make-Up Designer

Bobbie is the co-founder of The Make Up Room, and has been passionately involved in designing make-up for the theatre for the past 20 years. She enjoys the challenge of crafting looks that serve the story, ranging from nude and realistic to colourful and avant-garde. Bobbie first collaborated with Wild Rice on *Blithe Spirit* in 2001. Since then, Bobbie and The Make Up Room have worked with several of Singapore's top theatre companies and arts festivals on more than 200 local theatre productions.



GORDON CHOY
Movement Coach

Gordon is an actor/choreographer and fight director renowned in Singapore's theatre industry for his skills in *wushu*, pugilistic acrobatic stunts and Chinese opera. Formerly a member of Singapore's Wushu National Team and artiste/choreographer with the SAF Music & Drama Company, Gordon is currently the artistic creative director of Martial House, a renowned *wushu* academy that has performed in the National Day and Chingay Parades since 2008. Gordon has fight-choreographed and acted in 15 productions with Wild Rice and is also fight-choreographing for SRT's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

JEANNETTE CHONG
Stage Manager

Jeannette is a meticulous freelance theatre production and stage manager. Making processes enjoyable and excitable through paperwork is her obsession. She is very grateful to Wild Rice for this opportunity to call a show from a challenging score. Jeannette is affiliated with Five Stones Theatre, SAtheCollective and the Asian TYA Network.

CREDITS

CAST

Cathy-Di Zhang
Austin Haynes
Haotian Qi
Michael Dimovski

CHORUS

Adrian Poon
Zachary Dominguez
Cindy Honanta
Zoe Hong Yee Huay
Alice Cahya Putri
David Tao Chen Ming
Jonathan Charles Tay
Teng Xiang Ting

MUSICIANS

Dizi
Pipa
Violin

Viola
Cello
Bass
Clarinet

Harp
Percussion
Keyboard / Celeste
Piano / Celeste

Ng Hsien Han
Yan Yu
Kim Kyu Ri
Lim Hao Wei
Martin Peh
Lin Juan
Julian Li
Desmond Chow
Ralph Lim
Sarah Wong
Michael Tan
Phoebe Briggs
Shane Thio

CREATIVE TEAM

Director & Set Designer
Composer & Conductor
Librettist
Multimedia & Set Designer
Costume Designer
Assistant Costume Designer
Lighting Designer
Chorus Master
Sound Designer
Hair Designer
Make-Up Designer
Movement Coach
Répétiteurs

Ivan Heng
Richard Mills
Joel Tan
Brian Gothong Tan
Max Tan
Wong Wai Toh
Philip Lethlean
Adrian Poon
Joel Manuel Fernandez
Ashley Lim
Bobbie Ng
Gordon Choy
Phoebe Briggs
Shane Thio

PRODUCTION TEAM

Head, Production
Production Manager
Technical Manager
Production Co-ordinator
Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Managers

Stage Assistants

Technicians

Hair Assistant
Make-Up Artists

Wardrobe Manager
Dressers

Multimedia Operator
Surtitle Operator
Mic Operator

Melissa Teoh
Xu Xin'en
David Sagaya
Angela Ee
Jeannette Chong
Anne Lee
Nurarina Nasir
Shamirul Aizan
Cindy Sng
Muhammad Azhar Bin Azman
Jayant Daniel Singh
Michelle Wai
Esther Goh
Lau Cheng Lang
Low Jyue Huey
Theresa Chan
Ayuni
Noor'Ain Afiqah
Nur Fa'iqah
Nur Fatin Nabilah
Emily Francesca Soegijanto
Maximilian Liang
Steffie Tan
Rachel Ong Qiu Yun

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Ruey Loon

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Wild Rice Angels

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:

- + **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 our shows internationally to raise the profile of Singapore theatre, to create an international awareness of our unique productions, and to engage our artists and collaborators in creative dialogues with the international arts community. Our 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 our new home in the heart of Singapore's civic and cultural district, featuring the country's only dedicated thrust stage within The Ngee Ann Kongsi Theatre. Our groundbreaking performing arts complex promises to be an iconic destination theatre for Singapore - one committed to leaving a legacy of artistic excellence for future generations by creating and presenting the best of Singapore theatre, as well as nurturing the artists and audiences of tomorrow.

WILD RICE TEAM

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Mary Ann Tsao – *Co-Chair*
Choo Chek Siew – *Treasurer*
Bill Ang
Deborah Barker
Randy Chan

Glen Goei
Ivan Heng
Anthonia Hui
Tan Siok Sun
Tony Trickett

IVAN HENG
Founding Artistic Director

TONY TRICKETT
Executive Director

ARTISTIC

GLEN GOEI
Co-Artistic Director

ALFIAN SA'AT
Resident Playwright

JOEL TAN
Artist-in-Residence

YOUTH & EDUCATION

THOMAS LIM
Associate Artistic Director,
Youth & Education

EDITH PODESTA
Associate Artistic Director,
Young & Wild

EZZAT ALKAFF
Head, Youth & Education

SHALYN YONG
Manager, Children & Young Audiences

NELLIE QISTINA
Youth & Education Executive

BENJAMIN LYE
Administrator, Young & Wild

ZAILINA ZAINAL ABIDIN
Project Co-ordinator

SOO HUI LIN
Youth & Education Intern

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Marketing Manager

SHAWNE WANG
Editorial Consultant

CHOO YING TONG
Marketing Executive

RACHEL NG
Social Media Executive

ELLIOT TEO
Marketing Intern

PRODUCTION

KOH BEE BEE
Producer

MELISSA TEOH
Head, Production

JOYCE TAY
Production Manager

ANGELA EE
Production Co-ordinator

DEVELOPMENT

ANDREA EE
Development Executive

DEBBIE NG
Development Executive

NURASHIKIN BTE OSMAN
Development Assistant

ADMINISTRATION

KATHERINE KHOO
Head, Administration

JASMINE LIM
Accounts Manager

ROSS TOH
Administrative Executive

IVY HENG
Administrative Executive

VENUE

KOH WEE GIAP
Venue Manager

MUHAMMAD FADLY BIN NANYAN
Assistant Venue Manager

DAVID SAGAYA
Technical Manager

MUHAMMAD AZHAR BIN AZMAN
Technician

JAYANT DANIEL SINGH
Technician



ABOUT VICTORIAN OPERA

REIMAGINING THE POTENTIAL OF OPERA AND MUSICAL THEATRE, FOR EVERYONE.

Victorian Opera is the state opera company of Victoria. We make creative, accessible and affordable work for everyone while adventurously evolving our art form.

Since the company was founded in October 2005, Victorian Opera has entertained hundreds of thousands of people with our imaginative approach to opera and musical theatre. Each year we premiere at least one new Australian opera, and have commissioned 38 new works since our formation.

We employ hundreds of people across the creative industries, recruit some of the finest local singers, and collaborate with Australia's leading companies, venues and learning institutions.

The next generation of talent is developed from the ground up through the Victorian Opera Youth Chorus Ensemble (VOYCE) and our innovative Access All Areas: Livestream Program.

We also stage opera in Tasmania biennially to share the joy of our art form even further.

Recognised for our unique contribution to the country's operatic landscape, Victorian Opera proudly became an Australian Major Performing Arts company in 2019. In 2021 we transitioned to the newly formed National Performing Arts Partnership Framework (NPAPF).

As the world went into lockdown, we got to work, sharing our passion far and wide with a range of web series and online performances. Returning home to the stage, we embrace the new normal and will continue to perform in Victoria's finest theatres and concert halls to give our audiences the best possible and safest experience.

Be it live or online, Victorian Opera is here to inspire you.



@VictorianOpera #VictorianOpera

HELP US SECURE THE FUTURE OF SINGAPORE THEATRE

Here at Wild Rice, we believe that theatre is a vital communal experience that can open hearts and change lives. Over the years, we have blazed a trail in creating and presenting the very best of Singapore theatre, while continuously striving to make our shows and our venue more inclusive and accessible for all. Our comprehensive education programmes nurture and inspire young theatre-makers from the ages of 5 to 35. At the same time, we provide gainful employment to hundreds of artists and theatre professionals every year as one of the largest employers in Singapore's arts industry.

To sustain a performing arts complex on this scale, we need your help.

While many people know of Wild Rice and the important work we do, not many know that we are also a registered charity. As we continue to weather the devastating aftershocks of the COVID-19 crisis, our ability to survive as an arts organisation depends critically upon the generosity of our donors and supporters.

If you enjoyed *The Butterfly Lovers*, if you share our passion for brave and brilliant productions that tell uniquely Singaporean stories, if you believe in the power of theatre as a force for good and for change, please consider making a donation today.

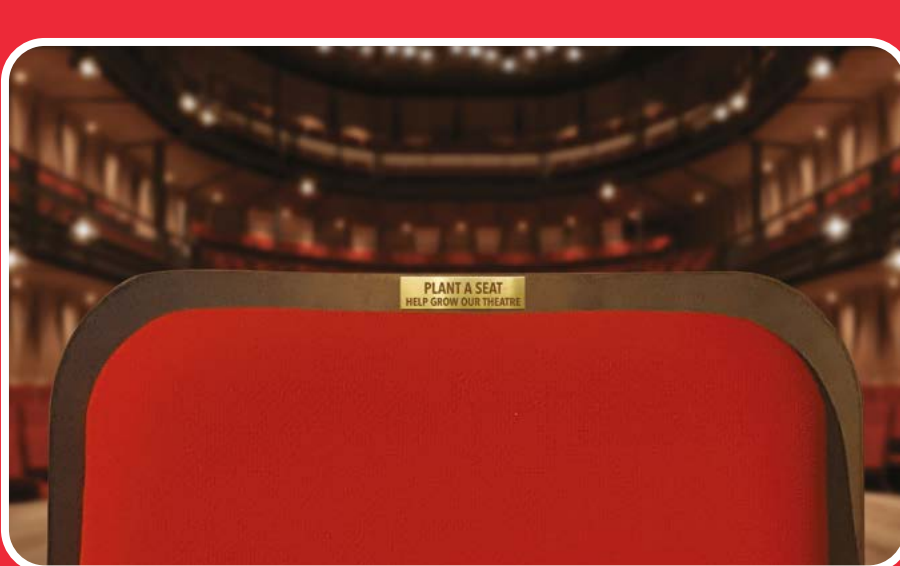
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We also welcome any donations in support of Wild Rice. Every contribution, large or small, will make a dramatic difference.

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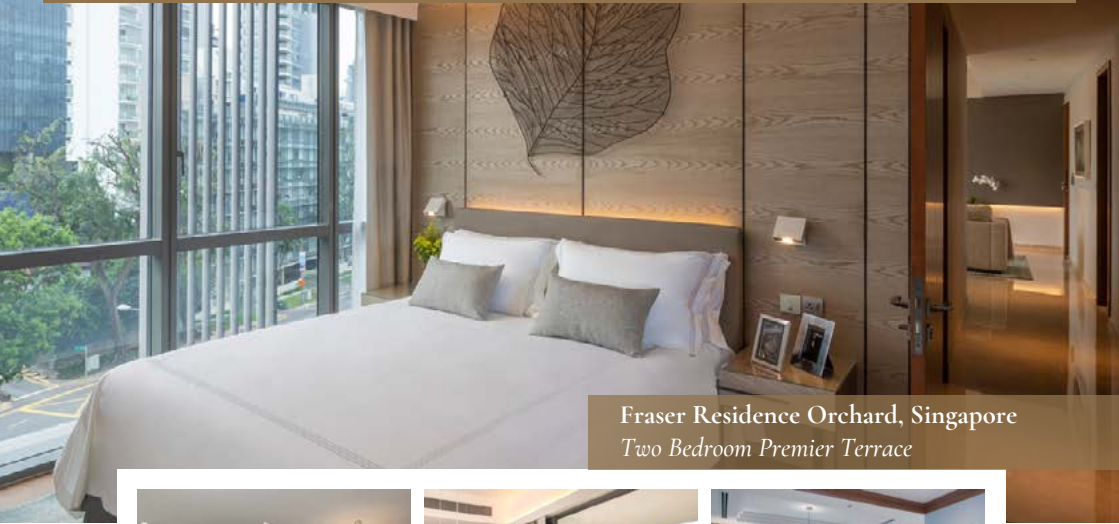


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WILD RICE ACADEMY

WEEKLY DRAMA CLASSES FOR KIDS AGED 5 TO 12



LEARNING COMES ALIVE THROUGH DRAMA AND STORYTELLING!

At the Wild Rice Academy, we believe that the theatre is a wonderful place where children can play, grow and learn more about themselves and the world around them. Our mission is to help empower children for the next stages in their lives by developing their confidence, creativity and social-emotional intelligence.

WHAT WE OFFER

In our highly experiential classes, children can partake in a host of fun, stimulating and engaging activities – from drama games and role-playing to performance opportunities.

By sharing the transformative magic of theatre and the arts with participants, we encourage them to experiment and make creative decisions in the ways they express themselves and tell stories. Our programmes are also designed to help children pick up foundational language and literacy skills.

We have programmes running throughout the year – from 10-week terms to end-of-year school holiday workshops. Classes are split by age groups (5-8 years and 9-12 years) to cater to children at different stages of their lives.

[FIND OUT MORE HERE](#)



“Through the Wild Rice Academy, I learnt to express my feelings. The class made me become a better actor, and be more hilarious!”

Haley (age 8)



"It's a great programme that enriches our creative world and imaginations, and a great place for us to have a dramatic outlet!"

Lauren (age 11)



“Thank you for making this possible and such an amazing experience! All the kids did really well. So glad to see Anna’s enthusiasm at her classes and to see her play her role with such delight!”

Jez, mother of Annamaria (age 5)



SURVEY

Thank you for attending today's performance of *The Butterfly Lovers*!

We would love to find out more about what you think about the show. Your feedback will help us create a better theatre experience for everyone.

This questionnaire will take you no more than 2 minutes to complete. Thank you for attending today's performance.

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK! 

WILD
Rice



wildrice.com.sg