

ESPLANADE PRESENTS

A GREAT PLACE
TO WORK

HUMAN
RESOURCES
PEOPLE-FOCUSED

DEVELOPING OUR
TALENT

INSPIRING
THE NEXT
GENERATION


esplanade
Theatres on the Bay

Another Esplanade Presents Programme

ESPLANADE PRESENTS

at the
Concourse
Now 7 days a week

With free performances now happening all round at the Esplanade Concourse, come us at our intimate space for an evening of enjoyable music – every day!

at the concourse was established in 2001 to present up-and-coming local artists and a variety of music forms, ranging from ethnic melodies to acoustic pop-rock tunes.

SHOWTIMES

Mon – Fri: 7.15 & 8.15pm

Sat & Sun: 5.15, 6.15 & 7.15pm

LOOK OUT for these themes in the upcoming shows:

April: STRINGS IN HARMONY, featuring stringed instruments used in Western and Indian classical, Malay, Japanese and Chinese music.

May: LOCAL MOTION, featuring Singaporean singer-songwriters and their unique compositions

June: REEL TUNES, featuring soundtracks and scores from movie blockbusters, foreign films and animation

For performance opportunities and enquiries, please contact: info@esplanade.com
Visit www.esplanade.com for updates on our programmes.


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Singapore

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Human Resources

What an organisation achieves is only possible through the commitment of each individual whose efforts help it succeed. At Esplanade, everyone plays an instrumental role in making the centre run smoothly, efficiently and with a personal touch. We have always recognised that people are our prized asset and remain gratified that up to 30 percent of our staff have remained with us since Esplanade first opened its doors in 2002. As we move on to become an industry developer, to nurture more talent for the sector, we know we cannot do without these same highly motivated and committed individuals.

The last financial year proved to be a very challenging one, as human resource departments in organisations across industries faced the unenviable task of reducing headcount in the wake of the financial crisis. That was however, not an option for us. Despite the economic slump, our arts programme numbers have not fallen and will likely increase in the new financial year. As people look for sources of comfort in difficult times, the arts remains a means of touching lives and lifting spirits, it is especially in these times that we must do more. Stiff competition in the arts industry for skilled technical expertise and experienced arts programmers and managers means that talented people in these fields are highly sought after both locally and overseas. With the advent of the two Integrated Resorts, which are scheduled for completion shortly, the number of options available to this group of professionals is set to widen. Retaining talent who possess strategic foresight, who can create and run quality programmes and remain committed to our vision of making Esplanade a place for everyone, remains high on our agenda.

INVESTING IN OUR TALENTS

Having operated on a lean and efficient team all these years, we focused on managing our non-wage costs when the financial crisis hit home. We remained a value-added employer by continuously strengthening our staff capabilities through training and keeping staff morale up by providing a conducive work environment for our team.



A CONDUCTIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Much effort was devoted to developing good safety and health practices at our place of work to ensure staff stay safe at the workplace. The health and safety committee members attended a three-day Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Committee Training course conducted by officers from the Singapore Institute of Safety. Several attended a risk management course to acquire knowledge and skills to conduct risk assessment and develop appropriate control initiatives for better workplace safety and health. In compliance with the Workplace Safety and Health Act, 25 staff from the Staging, Engineering Services and Building Management Services teams, whose daily work involve construction or maintenance at great heights, completed a metal scaffolding erection course. A thorough review of relevant work practices and health safety policies and procedures is also being carried out so that more effective policies that protect staff can be established. This review is expected to be fully completed by next year.

As a family friendly employer, last year was a bumper one for the centre! Eight of our staff were on maternity leave, that is four percent of our headcount. The mothers were given a choice of whether to take their 16 weeks of maternity leave en bloc or break it up into smaller blocks of time. All supervisors are encouraged to work out a flexible work schedule to provide their staff with a supportive work environment that is pro-family in nature. A room has also been informally set aside for breastfeeding mothers. We continue to give all parents seven days of child care leave for children below 12 years old. This has been in place since 2002 and surpasses the current legislated six days required.



HUMAN RESOURCES

Full-Time Permanent Staff	189
Contract Staff	25
Trainees (42 Locals and 2 Foreigners)	44
Avg. no. of Training Hours per Full-Time Staff	41

Overall, the entire experience has been most enriching and eye-opening. It was wonderful to have been directly involved in the Moonfest workshops and activities, with everyone on the programming team giving me insightful glimpses of what they do. I especially love and am very touched by the fact that the staff refer to me as a "friend" or "colleague" and not just an intern! I am extremely grateful for this opportunity to see and experience such a friendly and energising environment, and I have been deeply moved by the efforts to "entertain, engage, educate and inspire". Thank you so much for having me on board.

Jasmine Chin, Intern (Oxford University - Music)
with Programming Department
from August 2008 - September 2008

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

We have been fortunate to have received a consistent flow of unsolicited applications for available positions in Esplanade, whether for full-time or casual positions such as front-of-house ushers or freelance technical positions, since we first began operations. The desire to learn about working in the arts through arts internships has also remained strong with many requests for internship placements coming in throughout the year. Many of these requests come about by word-of-mouth as previous interns share with others about their time here and candidates desiring a professional career in the arts are drawn to our organisation's clear commitment to our vision and mission. The candidates for many of our specialised positions in Programming and Production Services come from this unsolicited pool of applicants. In fact, the centre rarely advertises to fill its positions. All resumes we receive are carefully scrutinised to ensure that the best candidate with the right skill sets and fit for the job is found. Resumes that are deemed to have potential are filed for future reference should a hiring opportunity arise later.

In order to provide our patrons with the best Esplanade experience possible, customer service has always been of high priority. Last year, 300 ushers attended two new modules in their annual refresher programme. The first was a course on service values at work that reinforced the need to continuously provide good service in challenging situations. The second was a basic first-aid awareness course to equip our ushers with the confidence and techniques to administer first-aid during emergencies involving patrons.



In the area of management, we continued to bring on board management trainees for the Programming and Production Services departments. Our aim is for these staff members to pick up their specialised skills on the job so that they may be proficient programmers and production co-ordinators within the two-year management training programme.

The highly unique aspect of the arts industry, with its niche skill sets, means that talent cannot be hired overnight. We have to grow and develop our own talent pool, especially in the area of trained technical expertise, as they are not always readily available when required. As we do that, we move beyond being just a value-added employer to nurturing the next generation of production, technical and programming talent not just for Esplanade, but the industry.

TECHNICAL TRAINING FOR THE INDUSTRY

Last year, we focused on further developing our technical theatre training curriculum. We engaged consultants from the United Kingdom and Australia who worked closely with our production services team to assist them in setting up the framework, creating the curriculum and laying the ground work for a range of training programmes in areas such as working at height, elevated work platform construction, and manual handling. They also conducted training sessions for our full-time staff so that they, in turn, can train future students. This framework culminated in the Technical Theatre Training Programme (TTTP), a 12-month sponsored training programme that provides entry-level training in Technical Theatre which rolled out in May 2009.



This programme allows new entrants to the arts industry to acquire the relevant competencies for technical theatre. Trainees will learn and go through assessment on the various technical aspects of theatrical production, including scenery constructing and rigging, lighting hanging and focusing, sound recording and mixing, and production organising or coordinating. Trainees are given a monthly allowance and are awarded a Level 2 Certificate in Technical Theatre upon successful completion of the training and assessment. They are also required to serve a bond with Esplanade upon completion of the training.

In addition to creating new curriculum, we were also appointed by Singapore's Workforce Development Agency (WDA) as a Continuing Education Training (CET) Provider for technical theatre training under the Creative Industries Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) framework. The TTTP has been approved by WDA under this framework.

We continued our Technical Theatre Foundation Courses for our staff and industry members which are aimed at equipping individuals with a comprehensive understanding and practical knowledge of what goes on backstage in theatre productions. This programme covers different aspects of technical theatre through the following modules: introduction to technical theatre, fundamentals of stage management, fundamentals of performance sound and fundamentals of stage lighting. A total of 72 participants went through these modules last year, which were made more affordable with funding obtained under WDA's Skills Programme for Upgrading and Resilience (SPUR).

The Esplanade Board also approved the expansion of our technical theatre management team to include three assistant technical managers, each specialising in staging, lighting and sound, respectively. These managers assist our existing team in overseeing the 2,500 performances staged at Esplanade each year. This allows the current team to focus on building the technical training curriculum, which focuses heavily on developing competencies and practical experience through training. A resource unit, headed by a senior human resource manager, was also set up within the Human Resources department to assist the Production Services team in managing training in this area. With a continuous training system in place, not only are we confident of having the necessary skilled technical expertise to run quality performances, we can also hire out our technical services to external arts groups using our venues for their performances.

To strengthen the technical theatre team, we implemented a multi-tiered structure to differentiate the levels of responsibilities and types of skills among the team members. This structure ensured that the remuneration is commensurate with the competencies and responsibilities of our full-time technical crew, who are also held more accountable to their area of speciality

The most heartwarming experience during my stay here would be seeing how everyone is working towards the goal of being the arts centre for the people together. Through this, I was able to see that the Esplanade staff share a common vision and that drives and motivates the programming team and everyone else. The openness and enthusiasm of the programming team to teach and share their insights with me has enabled me to learn a lot during this two-and-a-half month internship.

*Jonathan Wong, Student intern
(Cecille - BA (Hons), Arts Management)
with the Programming Department
from November 2008 - February 2009*

and scope of responsibility. The team will go through various Train-The-Trainer programmes, after which they will start training subsequent batches of trainees.

INSPIRING STUDENTS

Working with schools also helped us spot talent early. Last year, we embarked on a programme with Ngee Ann Polytechnic's Diploma in Audio Visual Technology course students, hosting two batches of freshmen on a one-month familiarisation programme at Esplanade. In the later half of 2009, we will have the first batch of their third-year students doing a six-month industrial attachment with us. This will be an annual programme whose objective is to interest the students in the technical theatre profession while making them aware of the availability of such jobs in the industry.

We also continued accepting student interns who are passionate about wanting to learn more about the arts. We hosted over 40 interns last year, a 26 percent increase from the year before. Besides students, we also hosted two working professionals on internships. One was a senior academic staff from the School of Technology for the Arts at Republic Polytechnic who was attached to the Operations team for about a month. The attachment allowed him to share real life industry situations with his students in the various operational areas. The other was a teacher who is head of the music, arts and craft department at Chongzhen Primary School. She spent about two months in Programming which enabled her to witness the arts in practice and allowed her to take these experiences back to share with her students, making the arts real in their lives.

With these plans in place to develop talent not just for the centre but the industry, we look forward to being better able to play our role as an enabler for technical skills and competency building even as we continue to ensure that we bring the arts to everyone and allow for the best Esplanade experience possible.

