

Esplanade Presents

## March On 2023

9 – 19 Mar 2023

[www.esplanade.com/marchon](http://www.esplanade.com/marchon)



Dear friends of the media,

How do children see themselves and the community that supports them? How do they develop the strength to face challenges and difficulties? What is a safe space or environment to a child, and how is the community a part of it?

These are some of the questions we hope to explore during *March On 2023*, Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay's annual arts festival for young audiences and their families. Taking place from 9 – 19 Mar 2023 over the school holidays, this year's festival will feature three commissioned works that take on the theme of identity and how children navigate their environment.

In the Esplanade Theatre, *The Beginning of Everything* follows the story of six-year-old Shan and her explorations of a new world—school. This is the third work in a series of commissions directed by Edith Podesta for *March On* and this year, she is joined by playwright Michelle Tan. The work hopes to be a companion for children to find the courage and empower them with tools to cope with unfamiliar situations and new environments. The play draws from images and drawings shared by children in Singapore through organised workshops, and invites children and adults to have a conversation about their own fears of growing up and navigating identity. *Changeling* by Void Deck Games—an updated version of *Monster Hunt*

presented in 2022—returns to the Esplanade Annexe Studio, this time with a LARP (Live Action Role Playing) experience for those eight and up.

The third commissioned work is ***Come Back Home***, a two-year distance-based collaboration between Australian and Singaporean artists, featuring renowned children's theatre company from Australia, Polyglot Theatre. Directed by Sue Giles, *Come Back Home* is a participatory and immersive experience for children and intergenerational audiences. Inspired by the community usage of HDB void decks in Singapore, this performance will take place at the Singtel Waterfront Theatre at Esplanade where participants will follow the story of a lost child.

We are also excited to welcome and introduce Second Hand Dance Company from UK to Singapore audiences with the presentation of ***We Dance, We Play, We Touch***, an interactive dance experience for young families.

*March On* also continues to strive to create space to support a child's support network, as well as room for ideation and feedback for artistic practices. Throughout the festival, there will be workshops for children, families and caregivers conducted by Somayoke and Artfold. We are continuing our partnership with ASSSITEJ Singapore to put together professional development and industry-based discussions for educators and artists. Children-led activities and programmes under the *Seedlings* initiative as well as well-loved Tak Takut Kids Club, alongside a whole host of free music, dance and story-telling programmes for children are a key part of the festival too. And finally, we would like to thank our Principal Sponsor Naturel for their generous support of *March On 2023*.

While this is the third edition of *March On*, we have only just begun our journey. There is much work to do for our children and we march on with tenacity and hopeful hearts. We hope that schools as well as young audiences and their families will be able to take away a memory, lesson or meaningful conversation from the festival.

Let's march on!

Rachel Lim  
Producer, The Esplanade Co Ltd

## About Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

Esplanade is Singapore's national performing arts centre. It hosts a year-round line-up of about 3,500 live performances and activities presented by Esplanade, its partners and hirers. Esplanade also brings the arts virtually to audiences in Singapore and beyond, through its diverse range of digital programmes on [Esplanade Offstage](#), an all-access backstage pass to the performing arts and guide to Singapore and Asian arts and culture, with videos, podcasts, articles, quizzes and resources.

As an arts centre for everyone, Esplanade also creates opportunities for seniors, youth, children and underserved communities to experience the arts. More than 70% of the shows that take place each year at the centre are free for all to enjoy.

The centre works in close partnership with local, regional and international artists to develop artistic capabilities and content, push artistic boundaries and engage audiences. Esplanade supports the creation of artistic content by commissioning and producing new Singapore and Asian work for the international stage. It also develops technical capabilities for the industry nationally.

Turning 20 in 2022, Esplanade marks the occasion with a year-long celebration themed *20 and Beyond: Keeping the Lights On*. In addition to the presentations of its year-long festivals, programme series, and special initiatives and events, there will also be a season of new works by Singapore and Asian artists specially commissioned for the arts centre's 20th anniversary and official opening of its newest venue, Singtel Waterfront Theatre.

Esplanade –Theatres on the Bay is operated by The Esplanade Co Ltd (TECL), which is a not-for-profit organisation, a registered Charity and an Institution of a Public Character. The Charity Council awarded TECL the Charity Governance Award – Special Commendation for Clarity of Strategy in 2016 and 2022, and the Charity Transparency Award from 2016 – 2019 and 2022. Esplanade is Singapore's first Dementia-Friendly Arts Venue and a certified Dementia Go-To Point, as well as a Guide-dog Friendly centre.

TECL receives funding support from Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and its Community Programmes are supported by Tote Board Family, comprising Tote Board, Singapore Pools and Singapore Turf Club.

Visit [Esplanade.com](https://www.esplanade.com) for more information.

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Issued by *The Esplanade Co Ltd*.

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## Annexe

Esplanade Presents

### **March On 2023**

9 – 19 Mar 2023

[www.esplanade.com/marchon](http://www.esplanade.com/marchon)

*March On* is Esplanade's new annual children's festival that explores relevant issues for the young through multi-disciplinary programmes and participatory arts experiences.

### **TICKETED PROGRAMMES**

Tickets on sale from 17 Jan 2023, Tue, 9am onwards.

#### **An Esplanade Production The Beginning of Anything**

Written by Michelle Tan

Directed by Edith Podesta

#### **9 – 12 Mar 2023, Thu - Sun**

9 Mar, Thu, 10.30am (For schools only)

10 & 12 Mar, Fri & Sun, 3pm

11 Mar, Sat, 3pm & 7.30pm

Esplanade Theatre

(1hr 15mins, no intermission)

Performed in English

Admission Age: 4 & up

Recommended age: 6 & up



Six-year-old Shan has always wanted to be an explorer. In the comfort of her home surrounded by books, paper and pencils, she creates worlds filled with her favourite things and animals that dream. Soon, she is about to discover a new world that she has never encountered before—school. But she is an explorer, and an explorer with the right tools has no reason to be scared! So armed with her handy torchlight and a head full of stories, Shan discovers that all she needs to find her new place in the world is a little love and light.

Through music, animation and storytelling, *The Beginning of Anything* guides children through the fears of change, leaving the comforts of home for the first time, but ultimately finding love and support in the familiar and unfamiliar.

The play draws from images and drawings shared by children in Singapore through organised workshops and invites children and adults to have a conversation about their own fears of growing up and navigating their own identities.

Director: Edith Podesta  
Playwright: Michelle Tan  
Composer & Sound Designer: Jing Ng  
Associate Composer: Emily Wong  
Lighting Designer: Steve Kwek  
Animation and Graphic Designer: Speak Cryptic  
Animator: Gavin Lee  
Multimedia Engineer: Ark-AV  
Props Designer & Set Coordinator: Syadiq Akbar  
Costume Designer: Max Tan

Ticket Price: \$45, \$35

**^Esplanade&Me Early Bird Specials**

Available 17 – 19 Jan 2023.

PIP's Club Early Bird: 20% savings (min. 2 tickets)

**^Esplanade&Me Specials**

Available from 20 Jan, 9am

PIP's Club: 10% savings (min. 2 tickets)

PIP's Club Package of 4: 15% savings (across all shows with package specials)

School Specials available. For enquiries and booking, contact Box Office at [boxoffice@esplanade.com](mailto:boxoffice@esplanade.com) or 6838 8389.

**Tote Board Arts Grant**

All Primary, Secondary Schools, Junior Colleges/ Centralised Institute & ITEs may use the Tote Board Arts Grant to subsidise up to 50% of the programme cost.

For more details, please contact Esplanade Box Office at 6828 8389 or email [boxoffice@esplanade.com](mailto:boxoffice@esplanade.com).

**We Touch, We Play, We Dance**  
Second Hand Dance (UK)

**16 – 19 Mar 2023, Thu – Sun**

16 Mar, Thu, 4.30pm

17 – 19 Mar, Fri – Sun, 10.30am & 4.30pm

Esplanade Theatre Studio

(50 minutes, no intermission)

Admission Age: 0

Recommended Age: 0-3 years old



Photo credit: Zoe Manders

The four dancers in *We Touch, We Play, We Dance* weave around the space, inviting babies and children to join them in a warm-hearted and playful performance.

With music mixed live by a DJ, the dancers respond to the children, guiding them through a series of exchanges and encounters, with high fives, hugs and dancing.

Created by Second Hand Dance, *We Touch, We Play, We Dance* is a mesmerising, engaging and fun performance for children under 3.

It's a show filled with surprises and joys where you and your child can listen and watch or let loose and join in. Either way, you'll have a wonderful time.

Production credits

Rosie Heafford - Concept & Artistic Direction

Keir Patrick - Deputy Director

Mariana Camilotti - Dancer

Marc Stevenson - Dancer

Paolo Pisarra - Dancer

Froud - Sound Designer and Technical Manager  
Helen Mugridge - Technical Manager  
Ben Pacey - Costume, Set & Lighting Designer  
Katherine Morley - Dramaturg  
Claire Summerfield - Executive Producer  
Emily Jameson - Producer  
Claire Cunningham & Olive Kane - Assistant Producers

Thanks to Takeshi Matsumoto, Amarnah Amulundun & Michael Sherin who devised and performed the show in 2019, and to Helena Webb who was part of the Research & Development.

*We Touch, We Play, We Dance* was commissioned by The Place, Pavilion Dance South West and supported by The Egg, Gulbenkian, Bath Spa University and using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England.

Research and development of *Touch* was supported by Polka Theatre, developed through the Hopper Early Years scheme with the support of Take Art, Surrey Arts, China Plate, Arts Partnership Surrey, and Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

“I loved being able to watch a piece of dance, enjoy it and see my children learn to love it too. I hope this is the start of us being able to enjoy dance together more often. I have said in my blogs in the past that I have found it hard to engage with arts activities like I used to but after this performance I feel like I have found something that has been missing from my life for a while and it is lovely to have it back.” – *Greatest Showmum*

“Engaging and incredibly valuable children’s dance performance. It was such a beautiful way for the youngest ones to experience art, diversity of humans and communication.” – *Audience Member*

### **About Second Hand Dance**

Second Hand Dance produces joyful, inspirational performances and digital dance films for children and adults. We collaborate with dancers, film makers, animators, musicians, and our audiences in a co-creation process that places the audience experience at its centre.

Based in England, our work has a growing international profile as well as local and regional impact. We have toured the globe from the UK to Europe, China, Canada, the USA and Japan. Last year our double bill *Grass Films* were seen by nearly 6500 people, and so far in 2022 we have performed *We Touch, We Play, We Dance* over 60 times at 18 venues across the world.

Established in 2013, we are a disabled-led dance company driven with care by Artistic Director Rosie Heafford and Executive Producer Claire Summerfield.

Twitter | @2\_ndhanddance  
Facebook | @secondhanddance  
Instagram | @2\_ndhanddance

Ticket Price: \$25

### **^Esplanade&Me Early Bird Specials**

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PIP’s Club Early Bird: 20% savings (min. 2 tickets)

### **^Esplanade&Me Specials**

Available from 20 Jan, 9am

PIP's Club: 10% savings (min. 2 tickets)

PIP's Club Package of 4: 15% savings (across all shows with package specials)

**Special Instructions:**

10.30am: For infants up to 18 months old and those who prefer a gentler show.

4.30pm: For children 1 – 3 years old.

- Morning performances are gentler and for babies or children who might prefer that.
- Afternoon performances are for those who might want to join in more energetically.
- Both morning and afternoon performances are safe and equally engaging.
- Audiences will be seated on floor cushions or benches.
- All children must be accompanied by an adult. Tickets are required for each attendee, including infants-in-arm.
- There is strictly no admission for latecomers as the performance requires an intimate setting to be maintained throughout.



**An Esplanade Commission**  
**Changeling**  
Void Deck Games

**10 – 19 Mar 2023, Fri - Sun**

10 – 12 Mar, Fri – Sun & 15 – 19 Mar, Wed – Sun

11am & 3pm

Esplanade Annexe Studio

(1hr 30mins, no intermission)

Admission Age: 8 & up

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years old



*Changeling* is a theatrical roleplaying game where children embark on an adventure searching for Nadim, a runaway boy who mysteriously disappeared 20 years ago.

Players must walk between worlds, crossing into the fantastical domain of the Bunian fairies, a dark mirror of ancient Singapura ruled by Sultan Maharaja Mambang, the monstrous monarch of the Misty Straits.

Be prepared to solve puzzle quests, roleplay with colourful characters, and take up arms against a living nightmare.

Help Nadim conquer a child's greatest fear and free him from the trauma that keeps him trapped in the past.

**About Void Deck Games**

Void Deck Games is an immersive theatre company that explores audience agency in narratives through gamified story structures and casting audiences as characters.

Our focus is on people, and we design experiential stories that beckon participants to play an active role in co-creation and see imaginary worlds through the eyes of a character. The audience is a co-conspirator, never a passive observer. Through drama and negotiation, they collectively decide the story outcomes and make meaning from their artistic experience.

We seek to inspire empathy, communication, and positive change in Singaporean culture by reconnecting communities and people through collaborative play experiences.

[www.voiddeckgames.com](http://www.voiddeckgames.com)

[www.instagram.com/voiddeckgames](https://www.instagram.com/voiddeckgames)

[www.facebook.com/voiddeckgames](http://www.facebook.com/voiddeckgames)  
[www.youtube.com/voiddeckgames769](http://www.youtube.com/voiddeckgames769)

Ticket Price: \$30

**Players:** For children aged 8 to 12 years old

**Supporters:** For accompanying adults

\*Please select ticket category correctly when purchasing. No exchange or refund will be allowed once tickets are booked. Please note that there must be at least one accompanying adult (Supporter) for each participating child (Player).

All children (Players) must be accompanied by an adult (Supporter). Tickets are required for each attendee. There must be a Player in the game, and the player has to be a child.

### **^Esplanade&Me Early Bird Specials**

Available 17 – 19 Jan 2023.

PIP's Club Early Bird: 20% savings (min. 2 tickets)

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PIP's Club Package of 4: 15% savings (across all shows with package specials)

School Specials available. For enquiries and booking, contact Box Office at [boxoffice@esplanade.com](mailto:boxoffice@esplanade.com) or 6838 8389.

### **Tote Board Arts Grant**

All Primary, Secondary Schools, Junior Colleges/ Centralised Institute & ITEs may use the Tote Board Arts Grant to subsidise up to 50% of the programme cost.

For more details, please contact Esplanade Box Office at 6828 8389 or email [boxoffice@esplanade.com](mailto:boxoffice@esplanade.com).

There is strictly no admission for latecomers as there is a briefing before the performance and Players/Supporters are required to follow the sequential steps during the performance.

**An Esplanade Commission**  
**Come Back Home**  
Polyglot Theatre (Australia)

**10 – 19 Mar 2023, Fri – Sun**

10 Mar: 4.30pm & 7.30pm

11 Mar: 11am, 4.30pm & 7.30pm

12 Mar: 10.30am, 2pm, 4.30pm

15 & 16 Mar: 10.30am, 2pm

17 & 18 Mar: 11am, 4.30pm

19 Mar: 11am, 2pm

Singtel Waterfront Theatre

(1hr, no intermission)

Performed in English

Admission Age: 5 & up

Recommended Age: 5 – 12 years old



Photo credit: Sarah Walkers

A call from above: *come back home!*

The cats know. The crow knows. The Karung Guni knows...  
There's someone missing.

Through stories and play, soon everyone will know who is hiding, who is lost and who is found.

*Come Back Home* is a tale that winds through the past and the present to seek out a child who went missing a long time ago. Immersive and theatrical, it draws on the experience of children and adult memories of being a child, to celebrate possibility, place and imagination.

Audiences will be invited to participate in the action as the story unfolds, taking their place in the activity of a vibrant community. When booking, families can choose to be in the seated auditorium (Observer) or on stage (Participant) amidst the adventure.

*Come Back Home* by Polyglot Theatre is an Esplanade Commission, co-produced by Polyglot Theatre (Australia) and Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay (Singapore) in collaboration with artists in both countries.

*Come Back Home* was developed through a collaborative process of creation at a distance. Beginning in 2021, artists from Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay and Polyglot Theatre worked together to make a new, participatory experience for and with children.

In this creative experiment, the artists collaborated via remote digital connection and play: sharing skills, stimulating ideas and becoming a creative team. Collaboration with children took place in each country throughout the process.

### **About Polyglot Theatre**

Polyglot Theatre is a world-renowned contemporary theatre company based in Melbourne, Australia, making exceptional arts experiences for children and families. Their unique brand of theatre encompasses a wide variety of forms, and is shared with audiences everywhere, from the world's most prestigious theatres to the football grounds of regional Australia. Polyglot's artistic and philosophical approach of child-centred practice has earned their strong reputation internationally as a leader in the theatre for young audiences (TYA) sector, celebrated for creating distinctive, participatory works that are playful and conceptually rigorous. Access is central to Polyglot's work, driven by the right of all children to experience growth and resilience through creative play.

Polyglot Theatre's involvement in *Come Back Home* is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body.

Website: <https://polyglot.org.au/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PolyglotTheatre>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/PolyglotTheatre>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/polyglottheatre/>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/polyglot-theatre>

### **Creative Team**

Director	Sue Giles
Designer	Katrina Gaskell
Sound Designer/Composer	Glen Walton and Natalie Tse
Lighting Designer	Emanorwatty Saleh
Assistant Director	Sylvie Meltzer
Performers	Grace Kalai, Rizman Putra, Briony Farrell
Stage Manager	Kaite Head
Producer	Julie Wright (Polyglot Theatre) Rachel Lim (Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay)

Ticket Price: \$30 (Participants), \$20 (Observers)

\*Please select ticket category correctly when purchasing. No exchange or refund will be allowed once tickets are booked. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Tickets are required for each attendee, including infants in arm. Families can book to experience *Come Back Home* in two ways:

**Participants** (On stage): Ticket holders participate actively in bringing the story to life, moving around the space, and joining the story as guided by performers. Recommended for children 5 to 12 years old. Children must be accompanied by at least one adult participant.

**Observers** (Seated): Ticket holders participate in key moments to bring the story to life from their seats. Recommended for caregivers with infants and audiences who prefer to enjoy the experience as a piece of theatre.

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## **TICKETED WORKSHOPS**

### **Weave**

#### **A Children's Workshop on Hopes, Dreams and Fears**

SOMAYOKE

**11 & 12 Mar, Sat, 10am**

Esplanade Rehearsal Studio

(2hrs, no intermission)

Conducted in English

Recommended Age: 7 – 12 years old



WEAVE is a multi-modal children's workshop that invites them to explore the interconnecting threads of dreams and fears in their life. Our dreams and fears are often intertwined with significant events and changes that happen in our lives. Scary, uninvited, and uncomfortable as they may sometimes be, our fears tell a deeper story of what is truly important to us when we allow them a space to be. Through games, therapeutic art activities, and somatic movements, this workshop supports children in a safe space as they explore the stories behind their fears and weave these fears with connecting threads of their hopes and dreams. They will get to co-create ways to empower themselves in rewriting their stories around their fears and breathe new life and hope into their dreams.

### **About SOMAYOKE**

Yoke Wen has journeyed with vulnerable children, adults, and families over the past decade as a trauma-informed facilitator, trainer, and writer. She founded SOMAYOKE in 2019 to facilitate safe spaces for trauma healing for children, teens, adults, and communities. SOMAYOKE offers therapeutic services, trauma training, and consultation using body-based perspectives and tools to explore safety and healing in mind, body, and breath. Connecting

with children has always brought tremendous joy and she enjoys doing this using their language—fun and play!

### **About ARTFOLD**

Ivy is a co-founder of ARTFOLD, a safe creative space that offers art therapy, therapeutic art activities and workshops for individuals, corporate and social service organisations. As an accredited psychotherapist and social worker, she has journeyed with children and families processing complex traumatic events and making sense of their world through the awe-inspiring healing powers of art-making.

[www.somayoke.com](http://www.somayoke.com)

[www.artfold.sg](http://www.artfold.sg)

Ticket Price: \$25

### **^Esplanade&Me Specials**

Available from 20 Jan, 9am

PIP's Club: 10% savings (min. 2 tickets)

## **Intertwined**

### **A Parent - Child Workshop on Hopes, Dreams and Fears**

SOMAYOKE

**11 Mar 2023, Sat, 2pm**

Esplanade Rehearsal Studio

(2hrs, no intermission)

Conducted in English

Admission Age: 6 years old

Recommended age: 6 – 12 years old



INTERTWINED is a family workshop that invites all families aboard a journey to uncover shared family stories—stories that run through generations, and expressed through the dreams and fears that all of us experience. The workshop offers a beautiful bonding opportunity for parents and caregivers to connect with their children. It creates a safe space for everyone’s dreams and fears to emerge, which may often be hidden away. As families learn to listen deeply and be with each other’s fears and dreams through light-hearted games, therapeutic art activities and somatic movements, we find moments of repair and healing for the frustrations that fill our familial relationship in our everyday lives.

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[www.somayoke.com](http://www.somayoke.com)

[www.artfold.sg](http://www.artfold.sg)

Ticket Price: \$18

### **^Esplanade&Me Specials**

Available from 20 Jan, 9am

PIP's Club: 10% savings (min. 2 tickets)

Child must be accompanied by at least 1 adult. Please purchase 2 tickets (1 adult + 1 child), or 3 tickets (1 adult + 2 children or 2 adults + 1 child).

## **FREE PROGRAMMES HIGHLIGHTS**

### **Kiap Kiap Revolution: Re-Imagine, Re-Order, Re-Connect**

By 3Pumpkins and Jimmy Ong

**9 – 12 Mar & 17 – 19 Mar 2023**

Various Timings (To be confirmed)

Esplanade Courtyard Green



*“Kiap” (Hokkien): act of squeezing or gripping an object; colloquial reference to the giant tongs in claw machines; a connection between people.*

Tak Takut Kids Club (TTKC), a child-centric community arts centre, is often inundated with well-meaning donations of toys and dolls that the children don't actually *need*. Visual artist, Jimmy Ong, responded by spending time with the children during his residency at TTKC to manually deconstruct and re-construct the toys and dolls; rediscovering, in the process, matters like charitable giving, social dynamics and the environment. This participatory art showcase invites children and adults to spend time together to re-imagine, re-order and re-connect as a larger community.

This project is co-created by visual artist Jimmy Ong and the community at Tak Takut Kids Club (TTKC), a children's and youth centre in Boon Lay Drive initiated by 3Pumpkins, a socially engaged arts organisation. Through innovative outreach and development programmes that use collaborative and participatory approaches, TTKC aims to build and provide a happier and safer environment for young persons in vulnerable circumstances to develop and grow. 3Pumpkins is a key partner of Comlink @Jurong West in the exploration of upstream interventions in integrated social support.

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/3pumpkins\\_sg/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/3pumpkins_sg/?hl=en)

Website: <https://www.3pumpkins.co/>

***More free programmes details to be announced in February 2023.***