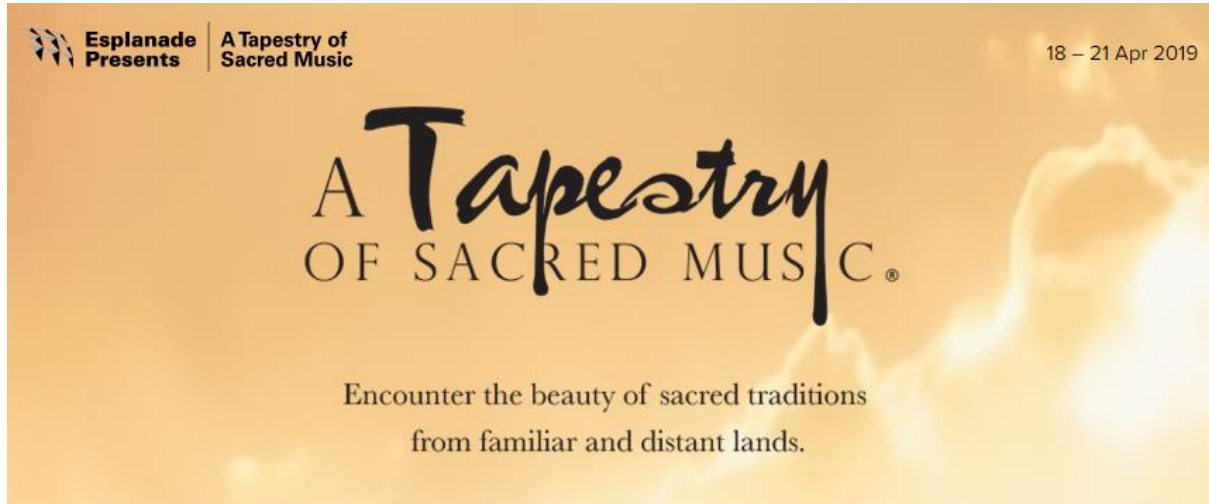


Esplanade Presents

A TAPESTRY OF SACRED MUSIC 2019

18 – 21 April 2019

www.esplanade.com/tapestry



At a time when religious and ideological differences have led to ruptures in society and even the loss of innocent lives, a festival which celebrates the music of different faiths is a precious thing. Sacred music connects with people at a fundamental level of human expression and the 11th edition of *A Tapestry of Sacred Music* not only showcases the artistry of various faith communities, it presents them on a common platform, reflecting the shared humanity underlying our differences.

First launched in 2009, the festival offers the rare opportunity for everyone to encounter the beauty of these varied cultural expressions practised by communities all over the world, in a secular setting. Since 2017, we've gone a step further and made this festival a completely free one for all to enjoy, so that there are no barriers to this aural and visual celebration. The festival is made possible with the generous support from Principal Sponsor Carl Zeiss.

Taking place over four days from 18 – 21 April 2019, this year's *A Tapestry of Sacred Music* looks at the dualities of joy and sorrow, darkness and light, good and evil—ranging from our first-ever performance literally held in darkness in the acoustically resonant Esplanade Concert Hall, to colourful ritual theatre in the outdoors with gods battling multi-headed serpents. We shine the spotlight on communities near and far who have graciously and generously shared the music of their faith with us.

We invite you to revel in the rich diversity of cultural expressions that convey suffering, exultation and hope, as we reach out to something greater than ourselves.

Tan XiangHui

Programmer, The Esplanade Co Ltd

MUSIC

Be mesmerised by the human voice in devotion

Arvo Pärt PASSIO: St John Passion in the Dark
by Soloists from The Choir of St James', Sydney (Australia)

Schola Cantorum Singapore

Michael Leighton Jones, Conductor (Australia)

19 Apr, Fri, 8pm

Esplanade Concert Hall

Registration required. More details on www.esplanade.com/tapestry

(Performed in Latin with English surtitles)

P A S S I O DOMINI NOSTRI JESU CHRISTI SECUNDUM JOANNEM

Arvo Pärt
St John Passion
in the dark

If you were to listen to one of the most profound works of the 20th century in darkness, would you hear it differently?

The story of the Passion of Christ in the bible tells of the last days of Jesus, specifically his arrest, trial and suffering, leading up to his crucifixion. Dating from as early as the fourth century, the Passion was presented in a variety of ways, from unaccompanied plainchant to large, elaborate compositions for soloists, chorus and orchestra.

In Arvo Pärt's *Passio domini nostri Jesu Christi secundum Joannem* (Passion according to St. John), Pärt uses the spare and sublimely interweaving vocal harmonies that he is known for to express the bleakness, sorrow and redemption of the Passion story. To heighten the aural experience, this production will take place in the darkness of the Esplanade Concert Hall. With the text projected onto a screen, it allows the listener to concentrate on the story and its meaning, while being awash in the sounds and experiencing the harmonies and dissonances in a visceral manner.

PASSIO will be conducted by Michael Leighton Jones, and performed by singers from the Choir of St James' Sydney, Schola Cantorum Singapore, as well as Singapore musicians.

Michael Leighton Jones, conductor

The Choir of St James'

Philip Murray, Jesus

Christopher Roache, Pilate

Evangelist Quartet

Brooke Shelley, soprano

Stephanie Dillon, alto

Owen Elsley, tenor

Andrew Fysh, bass

Schola Cantorum Singapore

Albert Tay, chorumaster

Tang Tee Tong, violin

Joost Flach, oboe

Ryan Sim, cello

Yap Zi Qi, bassoon

Evelyn Lim, organ

Qasidah: Poems of Praise
by Al Khidmah Qasidah Ensemble (Singapore)
18 Apr, Thu, 8.15pm, Outdoor Theatre
19 Apr, Fri, 8.30pm, Esplanade Concourse
20 Apr, Sat, 9pm, Esplanade Concourse



Al Khidmah Qasidah Ensemble comprises mainly youths below the age of 25 from various secondary schools and tertiary institutes. Formed from a Dzikir and Selawat Majalis (a weekly congregation which recites remembrances of Allah and praises to Prophet Muhammad), the group members are united in their passion for Islamic music. The ensemble aims to showcase the unique musicality of *qasidahs* from the Southeast Asian region, as well as its relevance to mainstream society today.

Sikh Kirtan: In Harmony with the Divine
by Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Sikh Centre (Singapore)
19 Apr, Fri, 7.15pm, Esplanade Concourse
21 Apr, Sun, 7.55pm, Esplanade Outdoor Theatre



Regarded by the Sikhs as one of the highest forms of devotional music, the *kirtan* (meaning “glorification” or “praise of the divine”) is a meditative call-and-response form of chanting that originated in the 15th century and is performed at every important occasion in all Sikh households.

Replete with devotional lyrics and gentle rhythms that clear one’s mind, *kirtans* establish a connection with the Supreme Being and are normally performed within the *gurdwara* (Sikh place of worship). The compositions are *raags* from the Sikh holy scripture, the *Guru Granth Sahib*. When sung, they convey the mood and nuances of the *shabads* (verses).

This presentation by students of Gurmat Sangeet Academy at the Sikh Centre features North Indian instruments such as the *rebab*, *taus*, *dilruba* and *israaj*, that are not often seen in public.

Get to know the musical tradition of the Sikhs. [Read now](#)

The Song of Life

by The Bunun Mountain Traditional Music Chorus and cellist Annie Chang (Taiwan)

20 Apr, Sat, 6.45pm, Esplanade Concourse

21 Apr, Sun, 9.20pm, Esplanade Outdoor Theatre



Singing is a central aspect of the Bunun tribe culture in which daily activities of hunting, drinking and praying are captured in song. From chanting from the mountain afar to bringing news of a successful hunt to gathering to pray for an abundant harvest, singing for the Bunun is a form of communication as well as a means of expression among one another. The songs in this programme capture the Bunun's rituals, prayers, and depictions of life experiences and events. The singing of the Bunun is an oral tradition and they hope to further preserve their history.

About The Bunun Mountain Traditional Music Chorus

The Bunun Mountain Traditional Music Chorus was formally formed in 1986 and is known for preserving the original Bunun voice and songs from their ancestors. Their Founder and first General Director of the Chorus, Da hu-nahaisulan spent countless hours researching the Bunun history and studying their mother tongue. His devotion and effort have made the chorus its name and encouraged many young people to join the chorus.

Kompang Jidor: Drumbeat of Devotion
by Persatuan Kompang Kg. Parit Madirono and PUSAKA (Malaysia)
18 & 19 Apr, Thu & Fri
7.45pm & 9pm
Esplanade Courtyard



Catch this rare performance of *kompang jidor*, performed by a group of *kompang* (Malay frame drum) players and a single player who strikes the *jidor* (large double-headed barrel drum) at the Esplanade Courtyard.

Kompang jidor traditionally encompasses 12 interlocking *kompang* rhythms accompanied with *selawat*-based on the *Kitab Barzanji*, a book of praises to the Prophet Muhammad composed in the 18th century. The *selawat*, sung in Arabic, is structured into verses (*rawi*) and refrains (*jawapan*). The 12 rhythms of the *kompang jidor* are: *jidor*, *babon*, *banggen*, *nelon*, *ngelimo*, *ngorapati*, *anak babon*, *paron*, *ngapati*, *ngentong*, *nyalahi*, *nyelangji*.

Kompang jidor is performed by a group of *kompang* (Malay frame drum) players and a single player who strikes the *jidor* (large double-headed barrel drum). Once a tradition that flourished throughout Johor, this older form of *kompang* is becoming increasingly rare. Because of its complex rhythms, the art of the 12-beat *kompang jidor* takes more time to learn and master than the more common *kompang Melayu*, comprised of four interlocking beats that create composite rhythms.

About Persatuan Kompang Kg. Parit Madirono and PUSAKA

Persatuan Kompang Kg. Parit Madirono from Pontian, Johor, is a community of *kompang jidor* performers founded by the late Selamat bin Ahmad, whose lineage can be traced back five generations. It is the only remaining *kompang* group in Johor actively performing and training the traditional 12-rhythm *kompang jidor*. Now led by En. Mahni bin Jais, Persatuan Kompang Kg. Parit Madirono regularly trains the younger generation of performers in their community and occasionally hold workshops for *kompang* groups from other parts of Johor. The group has also participated and won prizes at various district and state-level *kompang* competitions.

Polyphony for Lent and Easter
by Soloists from The Choir Of St James' (Australia)
18 Apr, Thu, 7.15pm
Esplanade Concourse

Soloists from The Choir of St James' take you on a 16th-century musical journey of Lent and Easter.

The Catholic Church underwent great development in the 16th century. It was then that Michelangelo painted the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican City, the Council of Trent took place, and the St. Peter's Basilica was constructed. In the Christian calendar, Lent is a six-week period leading up to Easter where Christians prepare themselves with fasting, prayer and contemplation to remember Jesus' life, death and body resurrection. The emotion and activity culminates in the final week of Lent, also known as Holy Week.

On the eve of Good Friday, Jesus takes the last supper with his disciples; is betrayed and disappointed by his closest followers, and then crucified the next day. A key reading for this period was from the *Book of Lamentations*, a collection of poetic laments by the prophet Jeremiah. Numerous composers from the 16th century had set these texts to music for the services of Holy Week, among them Robert White (c. 1538–1574) and William Byrd (c. 1539–1623), whose works feature in this programme. In celebration of Easter Sunday, the joyful proclamation "Christ is risen!" is made with Jean Richafort's (c. 1480–1550) *Christus Resurgens*.

Soloists from The Choir of St James'

The Choir of St James', directed by Warren Trevelyan-Jones, enjoys the reputation of being one of the finest choirs in Australia. It is one of the oldest musical establishments in Australia and is linked to the earliest days of the colony of New South Wales; some of its early members were convicts. The Choir maintains a schedule of regular weekly choral services, Sunday Cantata Services, Orchestral Masses, and its own Subscription Concert Series. It has a large and varied repertoire encompassing music from the Middle Ages to the contemporary, and it is committed to supporting new Australian works, including compositions written by past and present members of the Choir. Past collaborations include working with Paul McCreesh and the Gabrieli Consort & Players, The Tallis Scholars, The King's Singers, Opera Australia, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Australian Baroque Brass, The Australian Haydn Ensemble, and soloists Yvonne Kenny, Greta Bradman and Teddy Tahu Rhodes.

The Choir also undertakes a comprehensive programme of recording, broadcasting and touring, interstate and overseas. In 2018, it returned to Gallipoli and sang at the ANZAC Day Dawn Service, as well as performing to critical acclaim at the Coriole Music Festival in Adelaide, and in Hobart at Festival of Voices.

The Choir has performed at Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay's *A Tapestry of Sacred Music* twice before, and this time it welcomes guest conductor, Michael Leighton Jones (former Director of Music at Trinity College, University of Melbourne), as the Head of Music, Warren Trevelyan-Jones, has Holy Week commitments at St James' Church.

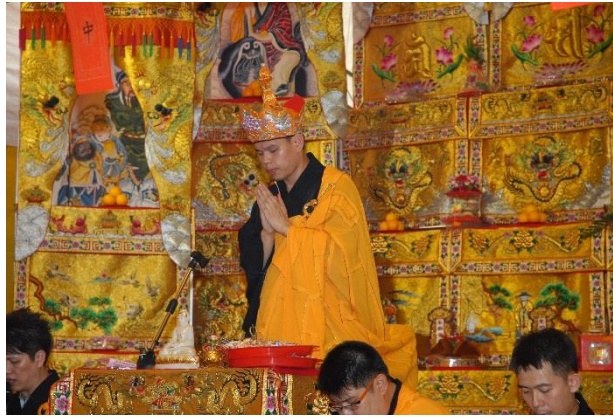
Tevaram: Devotional Songs of Shiva
By S. Vaithyanathan, Viknash Balakrishnan (Singapore)
20 Apr, Sat, 8pm
21 Apr, Sun, 7pm
Esplanade Concourse



In the early seventh and eighth centuries, the Pallava and Chola kingdoms of Southern India were at the height of their power and influence. A movement that cut across the prevalent trends of established Hindu practices emerged, developed by the Tamil-literate poets of the South. This movement, which eventually entered the literature of other languages of the region and the languages of non-literate people, was called *bhakti* (devotion). It stemmed from Tamil saint-poets' rejection of hegemonic ritualistic worship, and was developed to provide a more personal encounter with the divine, one that focused on the physical, visual, and thereby visceral presence of a deity.

It was also during this time that the *Nyanmars*, a group of wandering saint-poets devoted to Shiva, wrote the *Tevaram*, a collection of poetry that exalted Shiva as the supreme god. The language of these poems departed from the more classical style of earlier Tamil poetry and were meant to be performed orally. They have been performed in temples and homes ever since.

Liturgical Buddhist Music
By Shan Guang Buddhist Vihara (Singapore)
18 Apr, Thu, 8.15pm
19 Apr, Fri, 4.45pm
21 Apr, Sun, 5.45pm
Esplanade Concourse



Han Buddhism was introduced from India to the Han Dynasty through the western region some 2,000 years ago. As it spread and developed through the northern and southern dynasties, many Buddhist emperors had a large number of scriptures translated, giving rise to its study and scholarly activity.

Shan Guang Buddhist Vihara presents a programme of chants used in rituals for blessings and funerals. They will be accompanied on instruments such as bells, chimes, the Chinese trumpet, *dizi*, Chinese dulcimer, drums, gongs and cymbals.

About Shan Guang Buddhist Vihara

Shan Guang Buddhist Vihara is founded by Rev. Hsiongcai, a priest ordained under the Kempon Hokke Buddhist Order who preaches a compromising message from the *Lotus Sutra*. Prior to his ordination, he was trained in traditional Chinese Patha Buddhist music.

The group formed by him consists of many young, enthusiastic and passionate people who altogether have more than 10 years of experience. They perform Buddhist Patha chants and are known for bringing the form to greater heights.

Shan Guang's resident music arranger and musician Spencer Tan has won three National Chinese Music competitions organised by the National Arts Council. He studied the Chinese dulcimer at Central Conservatory of Music.

Tenebrae – Shadows and Darkness
By Schola Cantorum Sancti Gregorii Magni (Singapore)
19 Apr, Fri, 9.45pm
Esplanade Concourse



Coming from the Latin word for darkness *tenebris*, the Tenebrae is a unique liturgy in the calendar of the Roman Catholic Church that dates back to the fifth century. The custom of extinguishing candles one by one symbolises the diminishing faith and eventual abandonment of Jesus' disciples during the final days of his earthly life.

About Gregorian chant

The Gregorian chant, a form of plainchant that originated in Rome in the seventh century, marginalised the other indigenous plainchant traditions of the Christian West in the eighth and ninth centuries to become the official music of the Roman Catholic liturgy. It is considered one of the oldest manifestations of Western music, and the first of its kind to evolve musical notation into what we have today.

This Good Friday evening, join Singapore's only Gregorian chant group Schola Cantorum Sancti Gregorii Magni in observing an abridged version of Tenebrae, one of the most moving rituals of the Catholic church.

Hebrew Biblical Songs
by Yamma Ensemble (Israel)
20 Apr, Sat 10.15pm
21 Apr, Sun, 4.15pm
Esplanade Concourse

From early songs inspired by ancient Jewish devotional poetry; to the songs of the Yemenites, Babylons, Hasiduts and Sephardi; and to original and contemporary numbers that speak of the Jewish diaspora, the music performed by the Yamma Ensemble is rare, esoteric and niche.

They revel and sing in Hebrew and Aramaic while playing age-old instruments with such delicateness and immediacy, whisking listeners back to the ancient times with a strong sense of spiritualism, heritage and tradition.

To watch the ensemble at work is to experience the mysteries of Israel. Even though the ensemble has gained an international audience, it has managed to remain authentic, local and loyal to the region in which it developed and was born.

Talya G.A Solan (voice)

Talya G.A Solan is an independent Israeli singer, songwriter and producer. She graduated magna cum laude from the faculty of arts in Tel Aviv University. Talya founded Yamma Ensemble and The Israeli Ethnic Ensemble, with whom she released three albums and performs worldwide. She is a member of Kedem Ensemble (Swiss-Iranian-Israeli-Italian group). She is inspired by music of the ancient times, tribal singing, sacred and secular Jewish chants, and music with exotic Middle Eastern flavours.

Jonathan (Yonnie) Dror (wind instruments)

Yonnie Dror plays Eastern and Western wind instruments. He was born and raised in Jerusalem. He attended the Tel Aviv Music Academy and the Jerusalem eastern music center, and specialises in playing diverse wind instruments including the *duduk*, *nay*, *shofar*, clarinet, saxophone, flute etc. He performs and records with numerous popular Israeli bands including Rita, Idan Raichel, Shiri Maimon and Evyatar Banai. In recent years, he has also been taking part in theatre productions.

Aviv Bahar (strings, Composer, arranger)

Born and raised in Kibbutz Afek and Kibbutz Yodfat, Aviv Bahar is an autodidact who specialises in string and folk instruments from the East such as the *kopuz*, *oud* and sitar. He has been composing and arranging since childhood. Influenced by Persian, Kurdish and Turkish music, he has collaborated with masters of Middle Eastern music in Israel including Diwan Saz, Mark Eliyahu and Amir Shahasar. In addition to his Middle Eastern music work, Aviv Bahar has released two original Hebrew pop albums with his musical partner, cellist Hadas Kleinman.

Nur Bar Goren (percussion)

Nur Bar Goren plays Middle Eastern percussion such as the *darbuka*, *riq*, cajon and frame drums. Nur was born and raised in Rosh Pina. He is heavily influenced by Turkish and Persian music. Nur conducts percussion workshops for all ages and performs worldwide with various music groups. He studied under private teachers and at the Safed Jewish and Ethnic Music Academy. In addition to music, Nur enjoys nature, agriculture and the martial arts.

This programme is supported by the Embassy of Israel in Singapore and Turkish Airlines.

Auspicious Sounds: Mangala Vaadhyam
19 – 21 Apr, Fri – Sun, 5.30pm
Esplanade Forecourt



In Tamil culture, *mangala vaadhyam* is music that accompanies auspicious occasions such as weddings, child-naming and house warming ceremonies. Dating back to 1500BCE, it was first a nomadic bard's tradition that became defunct after Indian temples became patrons of music and dance.

The instruments that are play such music are *nadaswaram*, a loud, double-reeded wind instrument meant to be played in an open space, and the *thavil*, a pair of barrel-shaped drums.

The *mangala vaadhyam* is traditionally performed at temples or in temple-oriented functions, and precedes the idols in temple processions.

Practitioners follow a strict decorum, and are expected to purify themselves before, during and after playing. The music is believed to sanctify the ceremonies which follow, and bring auspiciousness and heavenly blessings to the listeners.

**Jubilate! Pipe Organ Recital
by Jennifer Chou (Australia)
21 Apr, Sun, 3pm
Esplanade Concert Hall**

Registration required. More details on www.esplanade.com/tapestry



This Easter, join organist Jennifer Chou in a celebratory and colourful programme of solo works for the pipe organ.

Jennifer Chou is Organist and Director of Music at Toorak Uniting Church in Melbourne, Australia. Since residing in Melbourne in 2004, she has firmly established herself as a recitalist within Australia and afar.

Since her debut in 2005 at the Melbourne Town Hall as soloist with the Orchestra Victoria, she has been actively performing as a soloist across the country in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Newcastle, and Sydney. In 2008, she was invited by Recitals Australia to perform the complete *Livre du Saint Sacrement* by Olivier Messiaen in Adelaide as part of the centennial celebration of the composer. It was the second Australian performance of the work in entirety. In 2009, she gave the world premiere of *The end of the illusion: an epitaph to Jean Baudrillard*, a commissioned organ work by the City of Melbourne, written by Australian composer David Chisholm. In 2010, her recital on the *Clavieruebung Part III* by J.S. Bach at the Elder Conservatorium in Adelaide received critical acclaims. Her recital at the University of Tasmania in 2013 was recorded and broadcasted by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). In 2018, she was invited by the Melbourne Town Hall to give an all-Messiaen organ recital projected onto two large screens and combined with special light effects to an audience of all walks of life. She also has recorded for ABC Classics.

Overseas, Jennifer has appeared as solo recitalist in Europe including venues such as the Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris and the Westminster Abbey in London. Elsewhere such as the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, cathedrals in New Zealand; and in festivals including the Hong Kong Arts Festival, and more recently as the guest recitalist at the 41st International Bamboo Organ Festival in Las Piñas in the Philippines.

Jennifer is a sought-after organ teacher; she had taught the organ for the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne. She became the organ instructor for the Melbourne High School in 2015 where she teaches the organ to both beginners who have neither musical nor religious backgrounds but just a desire to learn to play the organ, as well as advance pianists who want to master the art of organ playing.

Born in Hong Kong, Jennifer was awarded a scholarship upon her graduation from The Chinese University of Hong Kong in organ performance for post-graduate studies at Northwestern University (USA) where she studied the organ with Wolfgang RübSam. There, she obtained a Master of Music degree and the prestigious Certificate of Performance with Honour. She furthered her studies at the Conservatoire National de Région de Rueil-Malmaison in Paris in the organ class of Susan Landale and obtained the *Prix de Virtuosité à l'unanimité avec les félicitations du jury*. Following that, she specialised in French Classical and North German repertoire with Michel Bouvard and Jan Willem Jansen at the Centre d'Etudes Supérieures de Musique et Danse in Toulouse in Cycle de Perfectionnement, the highest programme in the French system. Her graduation concert awarded her the *Premier Prix d'Orgue à l'unanimité* in the frame of the Toulouse les Orgues International Festival in 2001. In 2003 she won Mention Speciale in the Biarritz.

Post-Concert Pipe Organ Tours

21 Apr, Sun

4.30pm, 5.30pm & 6.30pm

Esplanade Concert Hall

Registration required. More details on www.esplanade.com/tapestry

Join us on an exclusive backstage tour to view Singapore's largest pipe organ. See the pipes and mechanisms up close, and find out how the instrument makes a range of sounds, from a tiny whistle to a monstrous growl.

As there are limited vacancies for the tour, register early to avoid disappointment.

Terms and conditions

- Each registration admits one
- This tour is open to those 6 years and above.
- Priority will be given to pre-registered participants.
- Please present the confirmation email at the door for verification
- Please be at the door 15 mins before the event to confirm your attendance. In case of high demand, unconfirmed spots may be released to walk-in participants on a first-come first-served basis.

**From Darkness to Light: Intimate Sacred Music of Baroque Europe
By Red Dot Baroque (Singapore)**

20 Apr, Sat, 5pm

21 Apr, Sun, 1pm

Esplanade Recital Studio

Registration required. More details on www.esplanade.com/tapestry



The origins of Western music as we know today trace its genesis to the medieval Church. It was inadequate to praise God merely by reading and reciting verses from the Bible; one had to sing. Churches, wealthy nobles and monarchs all had a music director or an organist to produce and perform music for religious services every Sunday and on feast days.

Critically-acclaimed local period ensemble Red Dot Baroque explores the intimate side of 17th and 18th-century Western sacred music over this Easter weekend. Many of these works would have been performed in smaller venues, such as private chapels or the homes of rich patrons. Don't miss the rare opportunity to watch and hear Biber's *Resurrection Violin Sonata*, in which the strings of the violin are deliberately crossed to symbolise the crucifix!

As part of Red Dot Baroque's outreach efforts, audience members are invited after the concert to come up close and check out the baroque instruments, many of which are curious instruments you might not have seen or heard before!

About Red Dot Baroque

In a short span of time since its formation in August 2018, Red Dot Baroque has given two sold-out concerts to critical acclaim. Founded and led by baroque violinist Alan Choo, Red Dot Baroque comprises members dedicated to using their expertise in historically informed performance practice to stage performances that truly bring out the essence and spirit of baroque music on period-authentic instruments.

Red Dot Baroque believes that the immediate appeal of baroque music done with the right spirit, and combined with out-of-the-box programming and community engagement activities, could also serve as a gateway for new audiences into the world of music, culture and art.

Upcoming concerts in 2019 include Esplanade's *A Tapestry of Sacred Music* in April, an English baroque concert presented by Sing'Baroque in June, and a Christmas concert as part of The Arts House's *By Candlelight* series in December.

More details about the ensemble can be found on their website www.reddotbaroque.com and Facebook and Instagram channels **@reddotbaroque**.

There will be a post-show dialogue session where audiences can interact with the artists as well see their instruments up close on stage.

20 Apr, Sat: 6pm

21 Apr, Sun: 2pm

Duration: 20mins

Ritual Theatre

Marvel at the colour and spectacle of ritual theatre

Gamelan Pinda Sari (Indonesia) with Eka Suwara Santhi (Singapore)

Entrance of the Barong and Rangda (Festival Opening)

18 Apr, Thu, 7.15pm, Esplanade Outdoor Theatre

The Sacred Drama of Kunti Sraya

19 Apr, Fri, 6.45pm

20 Apr, Sat, 7.55pm

Esplanade Outdoor Theatre

Tari Topeng: Mask Dance of Bali

18 Apr, Thu, 9.30pm

20 Apr, Sat, 4.45pm

21 Apr, Sun, 8pm

Esplanade Concourse



The village of Pinda has a long history of Balinese gamelan *gong kebyar* music. Known for its exuberant style of playing and bursts of sound, *gong kebyar* has become the orchestra of choice for many Balinese theatrical forms. Efforts to increase the awareness of the musicianship of Pinda began in the 1930s when the King of Saba, I Gusti Ngurah Djelantik decreed that the villagers of Pinda had to attend compulsory music programmes. Pinda became so well known for its gamelan that it attracted the attention of many well-known ethnomusicologists, such as Michael Tenzer (University of British Columbia, Canada) and Peter Mark (Leubeck University of Music, Germany) who came to study the signature music style of Pinda's gamelan.

Gamelan Pinda Sari, which means the 'essence of Pinda', was set up by artistic director I Nyoman Kariasa in early 2000. To this day the group takes pride in upholding the long-standing music tradition of Pinda. The group gets invited regularly for tourist performances as well as temple festivals all over Bali.

Hamada Iwami Kagura Association (Japan)
Iwami Kagura: Heroes and Demons
19 Apr, Fri, 9.30pm
20 Apr, Sat, 6.30pm

Iwami Kagura: Slaying of the Eight-Headed Serpent
20 Apr, Sat, 9.30pm
21 Apr, Sun, 6.30pm
Esplanade Outdoor Theatre



The coastal region of Shimane is a land steeped in Shinto mythology and significance, said to be the place where all the gods and deities gathered once a year in conference. It is also the birthplace of one of the most dynamic and vibrant forms of Japanese ritual theatre—*Iwami Kagura*.

Masked dancers in colourful costumes take on the role of Shinto gods, battling eight-headed demon snakes and other monsters in Japanese mythology, accompanied by drum beats, clanging cymbals and soaring bamboo flutes. For generation upon generation, this folk art is practiced by ordinary townspeople and villagers in the autumn, to give thanks for a bountiful harvest. Infused with riveting drama and rich cultural history, *Iwami Kagura* takes audiences to a world of legend where gods and monsters walked the earth.

Kunitha: Ritual Dances of Karnataka
by Karnataka Folk Ensemble (India)
18 Apr, Thu, 9.30pm
19 Apr, Fri, 8.15pm
Esplanade Outdoor Theatre



Nammoora Jaatré (our village fair) is a showcase that brings together four different sacred music and ritual theatre traditions from the state of Karnataka in Southern India. Traditionally, all the sacred arts traditions—be it dance or music or ritual theatre—are performed at local Jaatré (village fair). Village fairs are grand annual religious celebrations hosted as an invocation to the village deities or the presiding temple gods. Typically, these celebrations mark auspicious occasions including harvest, monsoons and other important days for the community. Depending on their worship practices, the fairs are often a showcase of music and ritual theatre forms typical of the community performed as an offering to the lord and of course a vibrant way to bring people together.

This performance presents four incredible traditions—*dollu kunita*, *pooje kunita*, *somana kunita* and *kamsale*—all of which are sacred performative practices by different communities of Karnataka. *Dollu kunita* and *kamsale* are percussion-based dance and music traditions that are performed exclusively by the various sects of the Shaivite community in Karnataka as an invocation of Lord Shiva. *Pooje* and *somana kunita* are ritualistic folk dances performed as dedications to the village deities.

The performance is presented by the Karnataka Folk Ensemble, a collective of folk artists from across Karnataka led by its director Dilip. The collective brings together performing artists from across communities with a view to investigate, understand, nurture and reimagine the folk narratives of the region.

Ritual Dances of Karnataka: Dollu & Somana Kunitha
by Karnataka Folk Ensemble (India)
20 Apr, Sat, 7.15pm
21 Apr, Sun, 8.40pm

Ritual Dances of Karnataka: Kamsale & Puja Kunitha
by Karnataka Folk Ensemble (India)
20 Apr, Sat, 8.55pm
21 Apr, Sun, 7.15pm
Esplanade Courtyard

The Karnataka Folk Ensemble is a collective of folk artists from across Karnataka, led by its director Dilip. The group aims to investigate, understand, nurture and reimagine folk narratives of the region.



POOJE KUNITA

Pooje kunita is a popular ritualistic folk dance of Karnataka performed around the Bengaluru and Mandya districts in particular, in worship of the goddess Shakti. Despite the distinct religious overtones, the dance enjoys wide appreciation because of its gracefulness and colours. It is distinctive in its use of bamboo poles which are decorated with colourful fabric in different hues and swayed in sync with the music. Elaborate wooden structures are placed on the heads of the dancers which carry the deities to whom the dances are dedicated. The dance is performed in religious processions, fairs and festivals.



SOMANA KUNITA

Somana kunita is a mask dance and a celebratory form of spirit worship common in the southern parts of Karnataka. It is performed before monsoon season at village shrines dedicated to the *grama devatey* (village deity). The art is mostly practised by the Gangemata community and is characterised by the dancers wearing elaborate masks painted in different colours. Each colour is indicative of the nature of the deity. A benevolent deity is represented by a red mask while a yellow or black mask suggests the opposite.



DOLLU KUNITA

Dollu kunita is a major popular drum dance performed as an invocation ritual by the Kuruba Gowda community, a Shaivite sect of devotees who worship Lord Beeralingeshwara (an avatar of Shiva). It demands strength, agility and endurance, and is typically performed by male members of the community, with the occasional accompaniment of music and other ritual theatre forms. *Dollu kunitha* is mostly found in the Shivamogga, Ramanagara and Melkote regions of Karnataka.

KAMSALE

Kamsale is a sacred ritual dance performed by the devotees of Lord Mahadeshwara. Its name is derived from an 11th century percussion instrument that comprises a cymbal and a bronze disc that when struck together, produces a clang. The dance is performed to rhythmic and melodious music that is sung in praise of Lord Male Mahadeshwara (an avatar of Shiva) and is traditionally practised by the Haalu Kuruba community of southern Karnataka. *Kamsale* performances are often accompanied by recitations of the legends of Lord Mahadeshwara, Basava Purana and Raja Vikrama, among others. The songs are sung in the Kannada language.



Traditionally, *kamsale* was played by the devotees to keep wild animals away as they trekked the hills on their pilgrimages. The Kuruba community considers this performance as their offering to the Lord.

Morning Programmes

Awaken your soul with morning chants and meditation

Morning Ragas: Hymns to the Beloved by The Sathya Sai Centres (Singapore)

19 Apr, Fri, 9am

Esplanade Concourse



Bhajan is a Sanskrit word meaning “singing to glorify God.” The term covers a wide range of devotional music, from a simple mantra to more complex compositions. They are lyrical and express love for the Divine as well as an intense yearning for oneness with the self.

It is the belief that when participants sing in unison, the *bhajan* acquires a divine power which produces sacred vibrations that benefit the world, guiding every *bhajan* session, whether it is held at the family altar or at a place of worship.

Traditional *bhajans* are accompanied by instruments such as the harmonium and *tabla*. In keeping with the non-denominational nature of the organisation, *bhajans* can be sung in different languages and in the musical traditions of the various faiths.

This presentation by devotees from Sathya Sai Centres features compositions that are traditional and inter-religious. The audience is encouraged to join in the chorus.

“Let your whole life be a spiritual song. Believe that God (the Divine) is everywhere at all times, and derive strength, comfort, and joy by singing His glory in His presence.”

Sathya Sai Baba

About Sathya Sai centres

Sathya Sai centres are part of Sathya Sai International Organization Singapore (SSIOS), a non-denominational voluntary organisation. Its members have different faiths and share a common goal: to reach the ultimate goal of realising their innate divinity through practising the teachings of love and service taught by their spiritual teacher, Sathya Sai Baba.

Beginner's Guided Meditation
By Yvette Tee (Singapore)
19 & 20 Apr, Fri & Sat, 10am
Esplanade Concourse

Awaken to mindfulness with this meditation session, guided by Yvette Tee. This workshop is suitable for all who seek a simple and practical approach towards meditation and is especially useful to those who wish to kickstart their own practice or increase their level of self-awareness. This non-religious meditation session is suitable for all levels.

About Yvette Tee

Yvette is a professional, independent and inspiring yoga and meditation teacher with 18 years of experience. Her teaching style combines a practical approach to yoga with doses of spiritual wisdom and a strong emphasis on mindfulness and self-awareness.

Since 2004, Yvette has taught more than 11,000 yoga classes to local and international practitioners, and has hosted numerous meditation sessions and workshops. Her yoga repertoire ranges from gentle hatha yoga classes for beginners, to more challenging and creative vinyasa flows for advance practitioners.

As a teacher, Yvette is warm, dedicated and inspiring. Her yoga and meditation classes are fun, engaging and effective, with a strong focus on promoting self-awareness and raising human consciousness.

Morning Chants: The Lotus Sutra
by Shan Guang Buddhist Vihara (Singapore)
20 Apr, Sat, 9am
Esplanade Concourse

The recitations of sutras and mantras are part of the daily practice of ordained Buddhists. At Shan Guang Buddhist Vihara, the morning begins with a series of melodious chants called *patha* in Sanskrit, from the *Lotus Sutra*, one of the most important texts that expounds on the teachings of the Buddha.

Shan Guang Buddhist Vihara is founded by Rev. Hsiongcai, a priest ordained under the Kempon Hokke Buddhist Order. Prior to his ordination, he was trained in traditional *patha* music.

The group formed by him consists of many young, enthusiastic and passionate people who altogether have more than 10 years of experience. They perform *patha* and are known for bringing the form to greater heights.

Shan Guang's resident music arranger and musician Spencer Tan has won three National Chinese Music competitions organised by the National Arts Council. He studied the Chinese dulcimer at Central Conservatory of Music.

Catch the group perform traditional *patha* music used in blessings and funerals, to get a deeper understanding of the significance of procession. They will be accompanied on instruments such as bells, chimes, the Chinese trumper, *dizi*, Chinese dulcimer, drums, gongs and cymbals.

Morning Raags: Loving Supplication to the Divine
by Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Youth Jatha, Sikh Centre (Singapore)
21 Apr, Sun, 9am
Esplanade Concourse

The Sikh's *kirtan*, or praise of the divine, can be heard in every *gurdwara* and on every occasion. Devotional words fill the *shabads* (verses) set to *raags* from their holy scripture. Each *raag* may evoke a feeling such as joy or melancholy, relate to the time of day or season, call up a geographical area or a folk tune, or the melody of a bird's song.

Raag Aasa, a five-century-old morning *raag* specific to *gurmat sangeet* (Sikh music), evokes inspiration and the determination to achieve one's desires. A *shabad* from the *Guru Granth Sahib* written by the revered Bhagat Kabir will be sung by the Youth Jatha of Gurmat Sangeet Academy.

Rejoicing with Singing Bowls: A Meditative Experience
by Shima Healing Institute (Singapore)
21 Apr, Sun, 10am
Esplanade Concourse

A singing bowl is a type of bowl-shaped bell that rings with a warm and resonant tone when struck. The instrument has a long history in ceremonial music and meditation in different traditions across Asia, from Tibet to Japan. In more recent times, the singing bowl has become popular as an instrument of sound healing.

Get a 45-min meditative experience with ancient singing bowls as you listen and learn to relax to the sound and silence between each vibration. Conducted by the members of Shima Healing Institute, the session encourages a state of joyful peace and centeredness.

Shima Healing Institute

Shima means "island" in Japanese, "love" in Sanskrit and "mother" in Navajo, Native American. The healing institute is a training centre for the traditional healing arts, located on the beautiful and enchanting island of Koh Yao Noi, Thailand. They impart unadulterated ancient practices and empower students to cultivate and embody the true essence of healing. The institute has taken part in many festivals and performed in the region, in Bangkok, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, and at Universe of Sound Festival 2018 and Esplanade's *A Tapestry of Sacred Music* 2017. Also, as a gesture of giving back to society, Shima Healing hosts regular charity events in singing bowl meditation for charitable causes globally.

Workshops & Talks

Gain insights into sacred practices

Workshop: A Blessed Beverage: Coffee in Yemeni Culture by Members of the Singapore Arab Community

19 Apr, Fri, 10am & 3.30pm

20 & 21 Apr, Sat & Sun, 11am & 2.30pm

Jendela

Registration required. More details on www.esplanade.com/tapestry

It has been called many things before—the driving force of history; a drink of the gods—but many are not aware that this bitter black brew that very quickly become one of the world's most sought-after commodities and the primary source of caffeine has its origins in 15th-century Yemen.

This beverage is none other than coffee (or “Qahwa” in Arabic), known to be consumed originally by the Sufi brotherhoods as an aid to concentration and even spiritual intoxication when they chanted the name of God in their Dhikr ceremonies.

The use of coffee became widespread in Mecca and subsequently Egypt, Aleppo, and Istanbul in the 1500s. Because of coffee's ability to increase alertness and stimulate the central nervous system, some scholars compared it to wine, calling for the beverage to be banned. However, all attempts at banning coffee failed, and religious scholars eventually came to a sensible consensus that coffee was permissible.

This workshop provides a brief history and background of coffee in Sufism, as well as demonstrates the ceremonial preparation, presentation and etiquette in traditional Yemeni Arabic coffee.

Kamsale Workshop: Sacred Cymbal Dance by Karnataka Folk Ensemble (India)

19 Apr, Fri, 3.30pm

Rehearsal Studio

Registration required. More details on www.esplanade.com/tapestry

Kamsale, a cymbal-like instrument, is played by dancers as an offering to Lord Mahadeshwara. The workshop will introduce participants to the history and narrative of the tradition through discussions, demonstration and hands-on learning.

ABOUT KAMSALE

Kamsale is a sacred ritual dance performed by the devotees of God Mahadeshwara. The form gets its name from *kamsale*, an 11th century percussion instrument that comprises a cymbal in one hand and a bronze disc in the other and is used to produce a rhythmic clang. The dance is performed to rhythmic and melodious music that is sung in praise of Lord Male Mahadeshwara (Shiva) and is traditionally practiced by the Haalu Kuruba community of southern Karnataka. *Kamsale* performances are often accompanied by recitations of the legends of Lord Mahadeshwara, Basava Purana and Raja Vikrama, among others. The songs sung are in Kannada.

Traditionally, *kamsale* was performed by the devotees to keep wild animals away as they trekked the hills on their pilgrimages. The Kuruba community considers this form as their offering to the Lord.

Participants are encouraged to wear loose and comfortable clothing as the performance requires rigorous movements. This is an introductory workshop and does not require any prior experience or practice.

It is designed exclusively for the festival by the Karnataka Folk Ensemble.

Rikkoku Workshop: The Perception of Incense

by Chia Wei Sheng (Singapore)

20 Apr, Sat, 10am & 11.30am

Rehearsal Studio

Registration required. More details on www.esplanade.com/tapestry

Kodo, meaning “way of fragrance”, refers to the classical refined art of incense burning, which has been known to have the power to heal and relax. The fragrances of *kodo* can be classified into the *rikkoku gomi* system. Literally meaning six countries and five tastes, this system classifies the fragrances according to the source of the wood and the five scents of sourness, bitterness, sweetness, spiciness and saltiness. Being able to break down the fragrances based on these elements allows the senses to be sharpened, the mind and body to be purified, and it also creates a feeling of harmony under stress.

In this workshop, participants will learn how to prepare a *kodo* cup, the proper way to hold it, and how to appreciate the scent.

About Chia Wei Sheng

Chia is the president of the Incense Culture Association of Singapore and author of incense knowledge website kyarazen.com, where he shares his knowledge of incense and teaches readers how to appreciate it.

Incense-Making Workshop

by Chia Wei Sheng (Singapore)

21 Apr, Sun, 10am

Rehearsal Studio

Registration required. More details on www.esplanade.com/tapestry

Incense is the liberation of scent and perfume by use of fire. Historically, apart from being used as offerings in religious settings, it was also used by people to scent themselves and their environments.

At this workshop, learn to make your own natural incense sticks or cones while you find out some of the ways that incense can be used to perfume our surroundings and reduce stress.

About Chia Wei Sheng

Chia is the president of the Incense Culture Association of Singapore and author of incense knowledge website kyarazen.com, where he shares his knowledge of incense and teaches readers how to appreciate it.

Kompang Jidor Workshop
by Persatuan Kompang Kg. Parit Madirono and PUSAKA (Malaysia)
20 Apr, Sat, 2pm
Esplanade Rehearsal Studio
Registration required. More details on www.esplanade.com/tapestry

The complex rhythms of the *kompang* (which loosely translates to “hit” or “beat”) are often heard in Malaysia and Singapore at occasions, social events and festivities. First introduced by early Arab traders and missionaries in the 13th century, the traditional frame drum is performed in groups in interlocking movements that produce composite rhythms.

Kompang as a music genre is influenced by many cultures including that of the Middle East and India. In Batu Pahat, Muar and Johor Bahru, *kompang* groups play it together with the *jidor*, a traditional Javanese drum.

As a musical tradition, *kompang jidor* traditionally encompasses 12 interlocking *kompang* rhythms accompanied with *selawat*-based on the *Kitab Barzanji*, a book of praises to the Prophet Muhammad composed in the 18th century. The *selawat*, sung in Arabic, is structured into verses (*rawi*) and refrains (*jawapan*).

Join Persatuan Kompang Kg. Parit Madirono and PUSAKA in this workshop and learn to play the basic rhythms as well as how they are overlaid on each other in this rare heritage percussion art form.

Living in Balance with Nature: The Ayurvedic Way! (Talk)
By Shailu Suresh (Singapore)
19 Apr, Fri, 1.30pm
Bay Room

Have you ever looked into what your diet and lifestyle? Join us at this talk on *ayurveda* to understand our relationship with nature, the good practices in our day-to-day life and how to stay in balance and be healthy at all times. This will be a completely interactive workshop with great tips that can be implemented immediately.

Religion and Dance in Bali (Talk)
By Irving Chan Johnson
19 Apr, Fri, 4pm
Bay Room

In Bali, dance, music and drama go beyond the entertainment value of performance; their main purpose is to please the deities and ancestral spirits. Dance, therefore, is not just a part of ritual, but rather a ritual in and of itself. A professor of Southeast Asian studies at NUS, Irving Johnson discusses the ritual significance of dance in Bali, as well as the various dance forms that are performed at temple ceremonies.

About Dr Irving Chan Johnson

Dr Irving Johnson is a social anthropologist who completed his PhD at Harvard University in 2004. His research focuses on, amongst other things, the anthropological concerns with borders, and encountering multiple histories in the forging of Thai ethnicity in Malaysia. He is also trained in and performs Balinese masked dance.

Plucking the Heart Strings: Sikh Music Workshop
by Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Sikh Centre (Singapore)
21 Apr, Sun, 5.30pm
Rehearsal Studio

Registration required. More details on www.esplanade.com/tapestry

Join the Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Sikh Centre, as they share more about the instruments of Sikh music. Participants can look forward to trying out the:

1. Rebab, called the “king of instruments”, a 15th century instrument commonly played in the Afghanistan, Pakistan and Punjab regions;
2. Taus, a Persian word for “peacock”, a 17th century instrument; and
3. Tabla, a percussion instrument that originated in the Indian sub-continent.

Gurmukhi Calligraphy Workshop
by Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Sikh Centre (Singapore)
20 Apr, Sat, 10am
Bay Room

Registration required. More details on www.esplanade.com/tapestry

Gurmukhi, which means “holy utterance”, is a Sikh religious script that evolved in the 16th century. In this hands-on workshop, get introduced to its beauty as you learn to harmonise with its curls and twirls.

Talk: Holy Carpets of Central Asia
by Imran Abid Mir (Singapore)
20 Apr, Sat, 3.30pm
library@esplanade

Imran Abid Mir of Lotto Carpets takes us through a showcase of woven artworks from the 18th and 19th century, created in dedication to the divine.

The Central Asian region of Turkmenistan and the Caucasus is known for carpets and rugs that are highly prized by collectors. While some of these were made simply as floor and wall coverings, others were created with spiritual significance; with divinity in mind and for the glorification of God. They were used as offerings or for religious purposes, such as in the case of prayer rugs.

About Imran Abid Mir

Imran Abid Mir of Lotto Carpets Gallery has been in the carpet industry since he was seven. He has a keen interest in the know-how and artistry of carpet-weaving and, together with his brother Noman, makes up the sixth generation of the Lotto Carpets family. When asked what about the carpet business is so appealing to him, he admits that he was inspired and awestruck by the history, heritage and beauty of each carpet. Imran’s zeal for carpet-weaving extends to educating the public about the devotion and expertise that goes into each creation.

Talk: An Introduction to Jewish Music
by Yamma Ensemble
21 Apr, Sun, 1.30pm
library@esplanade

Jewish music stems from ancient prayer chants of the Levant some 3,000 years ago. The musical notation that developed and that we find in the Bible today is one of the most ancient forms of notated music, and yet it is still practised all over the world today. Jewish music has been constantly adapting to new conditions and yet retaining its identity in many widely differing ethnic, social and religious environments.

Through its daughter religions, the music of Judaism is one of the fundamental elements in the understanding of the sacred and secular traditions of Europe and the Near East, first having influenced, and then having been influenced by, the music of Christian and Islamic cultures. Jewish music today encompasses a wide diversity of musical traditions and Jewish songs are sung in many different languages.

Through demonstrations and explanations, the Yamma ensemble will walk us through the characteristics of the ancient music system of Israel.

Supported by the Embassy of Israel in Singapore and Turkish Airlines.

Last updated: 2 April 2019

About Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

Esplanade is Singapore's national performing arts centre. It has a year-round line-up of about 3,500 performances presented by Esplanade, its partners and hirers. 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 non-ticketed. 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.

To bring even more of the arts to a wider audience, and provide more platforms to support Singapore's next generation of artists, Esplanade is building a new theatre with at least 550 seats along its busy waterfront, opening in 2021.

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 the Charity Transparency Award for three consecutive years since 2016.

TECL is funded by 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 www.esplanade.com for more information.

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Issued by *The Esplanade Co Ltd*.

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