

An Esplanade Commission

Yusof

Portrait of a President

by Teater Ekamatra



17 – 19, 23 & 24 Oct 2025
Thu & Fri, 8pm | Sat & Sun, 3pm & 8pm
Singtel Waterfront Theatre at Esplanade

About Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

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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.

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Playwright's Message

It has been a true privilege to revisit this play—to look at it with fresh eyes and ask myself how this work should evolve. Since I first wrote *Yusof* over a decade ago, my artistic practice has changed tremendously. I shifted gears to being more of a playwright than a director, I went to grad school and I've spent time building a playwriting career in the US. Yet the focus of this play, our first Yang Di-Pertuan Negara Yusof Ishak and his great impact on our nation, has remained indelible as it has always been. So the real question was: how can the play more expansively portray his journey to becoming our first president, at a deeper level? This great man who pulled our people together at a crucial time, who in those early days knew what we know now—that our true strength as a nation lies in our unity as a diverse people. What was it about his tenacity and resilience that was tested time and again that made him into the man who was to be our unwavering first President? How can I best honour his legacy and celebrate the grace and courage of this man with future generations of Singaporeans?

On this journey I have been really lucky to have the support and trust of longtime friends and collaborators at Esplanade and Teater Ekamatra—Rydwana Anwar, Hanie Nadia, Shaza Ishak, Mohd Fared Jainal and Alfian Sa'at—all of whom are brilliant artists I've now known for more than half my life. Plays, I have

come to realise, are living things that need be tended to with care and courage so that they bloom and flourish as they are meant to.

Thank you Sani, Siti, Dalifah, Farah, Ghafir, Fauzie, Khai, Anais and the rest of the creative and production team for lending your talent, your hard work and your care to this play that is the most personal of all my plays. Thank you to my family for sharing your stories and for trusting me to share the legacy of our much loved arwah Tok Sulong. Thank you to my dear parents, my amazing siblings, my wonderful husband and our beautiful children for always believing in me. And thank you dear audience for sharing your time with us so we can honour one of our nation's greatest sons.

Zizi Azah

This play *Yusof: Portrait of a President* is dedicated in loving memory of Allahyarhamha Noor Aishah Mohammad Salim, Allahyarhamha Mawan Wajid Khan, Allahyarham Kamalruzaman Ramley Jenaton and Allahyarhamha Noraihan Ramley Jenaton. Al-Fatihah.

Synopsis

In 1961, Singapore's first president, Yusof Ishak delivered a watershed speech at the National Day Mass Rally. A man of ideals who dared to dream of a peaceful and successful nation despite 200 years of colonial rule, he spoke of how democracy could transform Singapore into a country of great national unity and solidarity.

Set against the backdrop of a young nation on the cusp of change, *Yusof* brings to life the defining moments that shaped both the man and the country. From his early days at Utusan Melayu, where he championed the power of a free press and the voice of the Malay community, to the complex political transitions of merger, separation, and independence, the play follows Yusof as he navigates questions of race, identity, and national unity.





Yusof traces his humble beginnings as a journalist to becoming Singapore's first head of state and offers a glimpse into the life and times of this extraordinary leader who dedicated his life in service to Singapore. Uncover the internal dilemmas he faced, his personal sacrifices, and the enduring belief that leadership was about service. It is a portrait not only of a president but of a man who embodied the ideals of dignity, justice, and unity during Singapore's most formative years.

First commissioned for *Pesta Raya – Malay Festival of Arts 2015*, this work by acclaimed playwright Zizi Azah is brought to life once again by one of Singapore's leading theatre companies, Teater Ekamatra. This iteration of the play sees veteran actor Sani Hussin in the role of Yusof, alongside an outstanding ensemble cast comprising Siti Khalijah Zainal, Ghafir Akbar, Dalifah Shahril, Farah Ong and Fauzie Laily. They are backed by a powerhouse creative team, namely director and set designer Mohd Fared Jainal, dramaturg Alfian Sa'at, costume designer Sufiyanto of Kebaya Societé, lighting designer Adrian Tan and sound designer Syed Ahmad.

A programme of *60 Connections – At Home and Afar*, a year-long season of Singapore stories and international collaborations in celebration of SG60.

1hr 30mins, no intermission
Performed in Malay, with English surtitles.



Character Descriptions

YUSOF ISHAK JENATON

Eldest son of Ishak and Aishahton, he is a principled and unyielding leader whose charisma commands respect. Founder of Utusan Melayu and later Singapore's first Yang di-Pertuan Negara (Head of State), he champions the dignity and independence of the Malay people with unwavering resolve, often at the cost of personal comfort. A mentor to his siblings and a pillar of moral integrity, he nurtures future leaders while holding himself to the highest standards. Behind his reserved demeanour lies a steadfast warmth, guiding both his marriage to Aishah and his dual role as statesman and family anchor.



NOOR AISHAH OR “CIK PUTEH”

Born in Penang, she enters Yusof’s life and embraces her role with grace and quiet strength. Gentle yet resilient, she supports her husband’s demanding public life while preserving warmth and harmony within the family. A gracious hostess and keeper of tradition, she forges close bonds with her in-laws, blending deference with a spark of humour. Her patience and optimism steadies Yusof through political storms and personal trials, making her not just a partner, but the heart of the Jenaton household.

RAMLEY ISHAK JENATON

Born 1920, ten years younger than Yusof. Cheerful, loyal, and slightly mischievous, Ramley is a social bridge between siblings. Fond of sports and music, he has an easy-going charm and often lightens tense moments. He dutifully supports family efforts, and although quick with teasing remarks, he still respects his elder brother’s ideals. His presence in the family is a stabilising and affectionate one, keeping bonds alive through shared visits and banter.

AZIZ ISHAK JENATON

Born 1913, younger brother of Yusof. Brilliant, outspoken, and restless, Aziz is a skilled journalist and political operator. The first Malay Head Boy at Raffles, he later becomes a Malaysian minister. His writing at Utusan is incisive, championing Malay rights with vigour. His dynamic mix of charm, sharpness, and volatility makes him a formidable presence in the Jenaton legacy.



ISHAK AHMAD JENATON

Father of Yusof, Aziz, and Ramley. The Director of Fisheries in the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States, he is stern, disciplined, and nationalistic, and instills in his children a duty to uplift the Malay community. Proud of the Jenaton family, he clashes with his son over his choices yet secretly admires his courage. His sacrifices are tempered by financial limits, leading to tension over Yusof's ambitions. Despite rigidity, he wants his children to surpass him in service.

AISHAHTON

Mother of the Jenaton siblings. Compassionate, resilient, and unwavering in her faith, she acts as an emotional glue for the often proud and quarrelsome family. She becomes a quiet ally in sustaining Yusof's vision. Skilled in the art of diplomacy, she shields her children's dignity while preserving household harmony. Her warmth, wisdom, and resolve form the unseen foundation on which the Jenatons endure both personal trials and political storms.

SAMAD ISMAIL

Chief Editor of Utusan Melayu and co-founder of the PAP, Samad is quick-witted and politically daring. Loyal to Yusof despite ideological differences, he understands the power of the press to shape Malay political identity. His humour masks strategic cunning, and though unpredictable, his journalism is unmatched, making him indispensable to Utusan's voice during a critical period in Malayan political awakening.

TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN

President of UMNO and Prime Minister of Malaya, he represents the pinnacle of Malay political leadership in the period. Seen through the lens of Yusof's world, he is a powerful contemporary whose political influence shapes the climate in which Utusan Melayu operates. He embodies aspirations for Malay advancement but also the compromises of statecraft, contrasting with the more uncompromising activism of Yusof and Aziz in journalism and politics.

Biographies



Zizi Azah Abdul Majid

Playwright

Zizi Majid is a playwright whose plays advocate for a shared humanity. Recipient of the 2025 New York State Council for the Arts/New York Foundation for the Arts Artist Fellowship as well as a Playwriting Fellowship with the Dramatists Guild Foundation, her work has been developed at the Lucille Lortel Theatre (NYC), Syracuse Stage (Syracuse) and WP Theatre (NYC). She won the Pacific Rim Prize for Playwriting (Kumu Kahua Theatre/University of Hawaii Manoa); and has been named alternate for the Princeton Arts Fellowship, a finalist for the Blue Ink Playwriting Award; a thrice semi-finalist for the O'Neil National Playwrights Conference and a finalist for the Columbia@ Roundabout New Play Reading Series. Plays include *On the Vessel* (formerly titled *Milk*), *They Came in the Night*, *Return to Fall*, *Yusof* and *How Did the Cat Get So Fat*. Zizi was formerly the artistic director of Teater Ekamatra (Singapore), garnering multiple awards during her tenure. Zizi received her MFA in Playwriting from

Columbia University and lives in Central New York where she teaches at Syracuse University and Hamilton College.



Mohd Fared Jainal

Director and Set Designer

A recipient of the Goh Chok Tong Youth Promise Award, Fared engages in cross disciplinary work that delves into the realms of both visual and performing arts. He graduated with a Master's in Arts (Design) from Open University/ LASALLE College of the Arts.

Fared has collaborated extensively with various theatre and art groups in Singapore as a director, performer, visual artist and set designer. He has won several awards as a director, designer, and actor for The Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards and BOH Cameronian Arts Awards.

Fared is the founding member of Neon Tights, a visual art collective dealing with theatre design. He served as the Artistic Director (2013 – 2023) of Teater Ekamatra and does consultancy work with Malay Heritage Centre (MHC). Fared teaches at School of the Arts (SOTA).



Sani Hussin

Cast

Sani Hussin began his acting career in 1992 with Teater KAMi's first youth production. Since then, he has acted in over 40 English and Malay plays and directed seven. He has worked with The Necessary Stage, Teater KAMi, Teater Ekamatra, Drama Box, Wild Rice, ACT 3, and others. On screen, he has appeared in more than 60 television dramas and films, including *Soldadu 1 & 2*, *Ajna*, *Sayang Semuanya*, *Police & Thief* (Seasons 2–6), and *Bisikan Bayangan*. His directing credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Malay), *Penantian*, and *Sidang Burung*. Sani has been nominated 14 times at the *Pesta Perdana*, winning twice, and also received nominations at the Asian Television Awards and Life Theatre Awards. Sani currently works as a freelance actor, director, and arts educator.



Siti Khalijah

Cast

Siti made her debut as a full-time theatre actress after attending The Necessary Stage's Theatre for Youth Ensemble programme in 2003. She has since worked with a wide range of theatre companies, both locally and internationally. She won the Best Actress Award twice at The Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards for her performances in *Model Citizens* (2010) and *Off Centre* (2015). She was awarded the Young Artist Award by the National Arts Council in 2014, and also won the Best Actor In A Comedy Role Actor Award during *Pesta Perdana* 2023.



Ghafir Akbar

Cast

Ghafir is a Malaysian actor and director seen in *Accidental Death of an Activist* (Wild Rice, Singapore) and *Disgraced* (Singapore Repertory Theatre). He won Best Actor (The Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards 2024) for his role in SRT's *A Midsummer Night's Dream (Shakespeare in the Park)*.

Selected credits include *HOTEL*, *Merdeka*/獨立/சுதந்திரம் (Wild Rice); *Julius Caesar*, *Guards at the Taj* (SRT); *Three Years in the Life and Death of Land*, *Acting Mad*, *Civilised* (The Necessary Stage); *Kingdoms Apart* (Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay); *Temple*, *Being Haresh Sharma*, *Medea* (Cake Theatrical); and *Gold Rain* and *Hailstones* (Instant Café Theatre).

Ghafir holds an MFA in Acting (Asolo Conservatory/FSU), and a BA in Theatre Performance (Western Michigan University).

Dalifah Shahril

Cast



Dalifah Shahril is a performer and theatre practitioner who is effectively bilingual in English and Malay. She was awarded Best Actress in The Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards in 2018, and has performed in over 100 theatre productions, television productions, and short films over the past 25 years in the arts industry.

Besides loading her resume with acting skills, Dalifah also voices various docu-dramas and corporate videos. She conducts storytelling sessions in schools, museums, festivals, corporate events and many more.

When she is not performing, Dalifah takes the role of theatre production manager and arts educator. Dalifah enjoys working with young children and finds great satisfaction witnessing their confidence grow through her speech and drama classes.



Farah Ong

Cast

Farah Ong is an independent artist – actor, performance artist, voiceover artist, and teaching artist.

Her recent stage credits include *Geng Rebut Cabinet* by Teater Ekamatra and *The Death of Singapore Theatre as Scripted by The Infocomm Media Development Authority of Singapore* by Wild Rice. Recent screen credits are *Chiron* by Papahan Films and *Come Closer* by Akanga Film Asia.

Theatre and performance can mean a lot of things to various individuals. To appease her existential musings, Farah is grateful that she can be the channel to tell stories often left untold and represent voices that have been silenced.



Fauzie Laily

Cast

Fauzie is an actor, singer and host. He made his acting debut in six-part drama, *Teman Anugerahku*, which aired on Mediacorp's Suria channel in 2006. His natural flair for acting earned him the Best Newcomer award at *Pesta Perdana*—a biennial award ceremony honouring excellence in the local Malay television industry—in 2007.

Since then, Fauzie has starred in several dramas on Mediacorp's Suria and Channel 5. Expanding his acting repertoire, he ventured into theatre in 2010, playing Tim Robinson in the stage adaptation of the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

In 2013, he took on the lead role in *Banting*, Singapore's first commercial Malay film since the 1970s. He also played a lead role in *Tanglin*, one of Singapore's longest-running long-form drama, which has since concluded.



Adrian Tan

Lighting Designer

Adrian, a 2006 graduate of LASALLE College of the Arts, is a highly sought after lighting designer in Singapore. His extensive portfolio includes designing shows that span across various disciplines in the performing arts, as well as architectural designs and installations. Notable projects include collaborations with Disney for the Star Wars *May the Fourth Festival* and a partnership with prominent United Kingdom landscape artist Tom Massey for the Singapore Garden Festival 2018, which won the Best Indoor Lighting Award. Adrian's theatre works, including productions like *A Cage Goes In Search of a Bird* by A Group Of People and *Another Country* by Wild Rice, have garnered numerous awards.



Syed Ahmad

Sound Designer and Composer

Syed Ahmad is the sound designer for *Yusof*. With over three decades of music experience, his journey spans from Singapore's indie scene at The Substation in the 1990s to international stages such as WOMAD.

He has led Bloco Singapura for almost two decades, championing Brazilian rhythms and ethnomusicology while building platforms for performance and education.

Beyond the stage, Syed has worked across media and events as a festival director, music director, producer and choreographer, as well as composing for television shows and films. His past theatre collaborations include productions with Esplanade, Cake Theatre, and Teater Ekamatra.

A notable project is his own theatre direction of *Nuri Terbang Malam*, which traced the journey of recorded Malay music from 1903 to today. Drawing from this experience, Syed hopes to bring authenticity and emotional resonance to *Yusof*.



Sufiyanto Sopingi

Costume Designer

Sufiyanto is a fashion researcher, collector, and designer. He is the co-founder of the Instagram page *kebaya.société*, which aims to document, share, and expand the vocabulary and understanding of Nusantara culture and fashion.

Prior to this, Sufi worked in Paris, France, in the atelier of notable haute couture houses such as Elie Saab and Stéphane Rolland.

He was involved in the inscription of the kebaya to UNESCO, created commissioned pieces for National Heritage Board's (NHB) exhibitions, and designed custom pieces for the media.

An avid collector, Sufi specializes in 1950s Western couture and Nusantara fashion, as well as textiles and material culture spanning the early 1900s to the 1980s.

People of Yusof

CREATIVE & PRODUCTION TEAM

Cast

Sani Hussin

Siti Khalijah

Ghafir Akbar

Dalifah Shahril

Farah Ong

Fauzie Laily

Zizi Azah Abdul Majid

Playwright

Mohd Fared Jainal

Director & Set Designer

Alfian Sa'at

Dramaturg

Adrian Tan

Lighting Designer

Syed Ahmad

Sound Designer

& Composer

Audrey Tengkey

Piano

Ulfah Irwan

Cello

Haikal Samat

Saxophone

Farhan Raimee

Trumpet

Matin Fellani

Studio Engineer

Izzey Rahman

Sound Operator

Sufiyanto Sopingi

Costume Designer

Jane Shah
Make Up Artist

Putri Prizai
Production Assistant

Aliff Khan
Make Up Artist

Sharmin Norman
Surtitlist

Shaza Ishak
Producer

Rafil Bin Kamaruddin
Wardrobe Master

Khairina Khalid
Production Stage Manager

Syaza Kamarudin
Dresser

Anais Adjani
Assistant Production Manager

Shah Reens
Dresser

A Kumarran
Technical Manager

Akbar Syadiq
Key Visual Designer

Natalie Titus
Assistant Stage Manager

Mysara Aljaru
Marketing

Ali Mazrin
Assistant Stage Manager

Special thanks to:
Teater KAMi

About Teater Ekamatra

Teater Ekamatra is an established and exciting Singaporean arts company that spotlights artists of diverse ethnicities. We are living out our vision of being at the heart of theatre, by staging daring works that address socio-political issues.

Teater Ekamatra has been commissioned by notable international arts festivals and has also won numerous accolades, especially at Singapore's highest platform for excellence in theatre, The Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards, where our trophies have included Best Director, Best Actor, Best Costume and Best Original Script several times.

Guided by our values of diversity, inclusivity, integrity, accountability, and people-centredness, Teater Ekamatra is committed to our mission of creating engaging art that inspires, as well as incubating emerging talents, expanding diversity within the industry.

Mesej Penulis Drama

Ia merupakan satu keistimewaan bagi saya untuk kembali menghidupkan pementasan ini — untuk melihatnya melalui pandangan yang lebih segar dan menanya diri sendiri bagaimana karya ini sepatutnya berkembang. Sejak pertama kali saya menulis Yusof melebihi sedekad lalu, amalan kesenian saya telah banyak berubah. Saya mengalih peranan untuk menjadi seorang penulis drama daripada seorang pengarah, di mana saya pergi ke sekolah pengajian tinggi dan meluangkan masa untuk membina kerjaya penulisan drama di Amerika Syarikat (US). Namun, tumpuan utama pementasan ini, tentang Yang Di-Pertuan Negara pertama, Yusof Ishak, kekal sediakala. Maka, soalan utamanya adalah: bagaimanakah pementasan ini boleh menggambarkan perjalanannya dengan lebih meluas dan mendalam untuk menjadi presiden pertama kami? Lelaki hebat ini yang telah menyatukan rakyat kita pada masa genting, yang pada zaman itu tahu apa yang kita tahu kini — bahawa kekuatan sebenar kita sebagai sebuah negara terletak pada perpaduan kita sebagai rakyat yang pelbagai. Lihat bagaimana kecekalan dan daya ketahanannya diuji berulang kali dan menjadikan beliau Presiden pertama kami. Bagaimanakah cara terbaik bagi saya menghormati legasinya dan meraikan budi dan keberanian lelaki ini bersama generasi masa depan Singapura?

Dalam perjalanan ini, saya bertuah mendapat sokongan dan kepercayaan rakan-rakan dan kolaborator lama di Esplanade dan Teater Ekamatra — Rydwan Anwar, Hanie Nadia, Shaza Ishak, Mohd Fared Jainal dan Alfian Sa'at — semua merupakan seniman cemerlang yang saya sudah kenali melebihi separuh hayat saya. Saya sedar bahawa pementasan drama adalah benda hidup yang perlu dijaga dengan berhati-hati dan berani supaya mereka dapat berkembang dan mekar sepatutnya.

Terima kasih Sani, Siti, Dalifah, Farah, Ghafir, Fauzie, Khai, Anais dan pasukan kreatif dan penerbitan yang lain kerana meminjamkan bakat anda, kerja keras dan keprihatinan anda terhadap pementasan drama ini merupakan yang paling peribadi di kalangan semua drama saya. Terima kasih kepada keluarga saya kerana berkongsi cerita anda dan memberi kepercayaan kepada saya untuk berkongsi legasi arwah Tok Sulong kami yang amat disayangi. Terima kasih kepada ibu bapa, adik-beradik luar biasa saya, suami hebat dan anak-anak saya kerana sentiasa mempercayai saya. Dan terima kasih kepada para hadirin kerana berkongsi masa anda bersama kami supaya kami dapat memberi penghormatan kepada salah seorang anak terhebat negara ini.

Zizi Azah

Pementasan ini, *Yusof: Portrait of a President*, didedikasikan sebagai tanda ingatan dan kasih sayang kepada Allahyarhamah Noor Aishah Mohammad Salim, Allahyarhamah Mawan Wajid Khan, Allahyarham Kamalruzaman Ramley Jenaton, dan Allahyarhamah Noraihan Ramley Jenaton. Al-Fatihah.

Sinopsis

Pada 1961, Presiden pertama Singapura, Yusof Ishak menyampaikan ucapan di Rapat Umum Hari Kebangsaan. Seorang yang bercita-cita tinggi yang berani mengimpikan sebuah negara yang aman dan berjaya walaupun sudah mengalami 200 tahun pemerintahan penjajah, beliau berucap tentang bagaimana demokrasi boleh mengubah Singapura kepada sebuah negara yang mempunyai perpaduan.





Berlatarbelakangkan sebuah negara muda di ambang perubahan, Yusof menghidupkan detik-detik penting yang membentuk dirinya dan juga negara. Daripada hari-hari awalnya di Utusan Melayu, di mana beliau memperjuangkan kebebasan bersuara dan menjadi suara kepada masyarakat Melayu, sehingga peralihan politik yang rumit yang merangkumi gabungan, perpisahan dan kemerdekaan, pementasan ini mengikuti Yusof kian beliau mengemudi persoalan-persoalan tentang bangsa, identiti dan perpaduan negara.

Yusof menjejaki permulaan awalnya sebagai seorang wartawan sehingga beliau menjadi Presiden pertama Singapura dan menawarkan gambaran tentang kehidupannya dan detik-detik penting sebagai seorang pemimpin luar biasa yang

mendedikasikan dirinya untuk berkhidmat kepada negara. Singkap dilema dalaman yang beliau hadapi, pengorbanan peribadinya dan kepercayaannya bahawa kepimpinan ada berkenaan dengan perkhidmatan. Ia satu portret, bukan sahaja tentang seorang presiden tetapi juga tentang seseorang yang mempunyai cita-cita terhadap maruah, keadilan dan perpaduan semasa tahun-tahun pembentukan Singapura.

Pertama kali dikomisyen untuk *Pesta Raya – Festival Seni Melayu 2015*, karya oleh penulis pementasan, Zizi Azah, dihidupkan semula oleh salah satu syarikat teater terunggul Singapura, Teater Ekamatra. Lelaran pementasan ini menyaksikan pelakon veteran, Sani Hussin membawa peranan Yusof, di sisi barisan pelakon hebat, Siti Khalijah Zainal, Ghafir Akbar, Dalifah Shahril, Farah Ong dan Fauzie Laily. Mereka disokong oleh pasukan kreatif yang hebat yang terdiri daripada pengarah dan pereka set, Mohd Fared Jainal; dramaturg, Alfian Sa'at; pereka kostum, Sufiyanto dari Kebaya Societé; pereka pencahayaan, Adrian Tan; dan pereka bunyi, Syed Ahmad.

Satu program *60 Connections - At Home and Afar*, musim sepanjang tahun yang memaparkan kisah-kisah Singapura dan gabungan antarabangsa sempena sambutan SG60.

1jam 30min, tanpa waktu rehat

Dipersembahkan dalam Bahasa Melayu, dengan sarikata Bahasa Inggeris.

Penerangan Watak

YUSOF ISHAK JENATON

Anak sulung Ishak dan Aishahton, beliau merupakan pemimpin berprinsip dan tegas dengan karisma yang membuat orang menghormatinya. Pengasas Utusan Melayu dan kemudian Yang di-Pertuan Negara pertama Singapura, beliau memperjuangkan maruah dan kemerdekaan Melayu dengan keazaman yang tidak berbelah-bagi, mengorbankan keselesaan peribadi. Seorang pembimbing kepada adik-beradiknyanya dan tunggak integriti moral, beliau memupuk pemimpin masa depan dan sentiasa berusaha untuk mencapai kecemerlangan dalam tingkah laku profesional dan peribadinya. Di sebalik sikap pendiamnya, terdapat kemesraan yang teguh, baik untuk perkahwinannya bersama Aishah dan peranan gandanya sebagai negarawan dan pemimpin keluarga.



NOOR AISHAH ATAU “CIK PUTEH”

Dilahirkan di Penang, beliau menemui Yusof dan menerima peranannya dengan rela dan kekuatan yang tenang. Lembut tetapi berdaya tahan, beliau menyokong kehidupan awam suaminya yang mempunyai penuh tuntutan sementara memelihara kemesraan dan keharmonian keluarganya. Melayan orang dengan baik sambil mengekalkan tradisi, beliau menjalin hubungan rapat dengan mentuanya, menggabungkan sifat hormat dengan lawak jenaka. Kesabaran dan sifat positifnya membuat Yusof kekal mantap melalui pelbagai pancaroba politik dan ujian peribadi, menjadikannya, bukan sahaja seorang pasangan hidup tetapi orang utama dalam isi rumah Jenaton.

RAMLEY ISHAK JENATON

Dilahirkan pada 1920, 10 tahun lebih muda daripada Yusof. Ceria, setia dan agak nakal. Ramley adalah ikatan sosial antara adik-beradiknya. Menggemari sukan dan muzik, beliau mempunyai daya tarikan mesra dan selalu menceriakan saat-saat tegang. Beliau menyokong usaha keluarganya dan walaupun cepat menyusik, beliau masih menghormati cita-cita abang sulungnya. Kehadirannya dalam keluarga adalah seorang yang menstabilkan dan penuh kasih sayang, mengekalkan ikatan hidup melalui lawatan dan gurauan bersama.

AZIZ ISHAK JENATON

Dilahirkan pada 1913, adik lelaki Yusof. Bijak, lantang dan gelisah, Aziz adalah seorang wartawan mahir dan pengedali politik. Ketua Melayu pertama di Raffles, beliau kemudian menjadi seorang menteri Malaysia. Penulisannya di Utusan tajam, memperjuangkan hak Melayu dengan penuh semangat. Campuran dinamik daya tarikan, ketajaman dan ketidakpastian menjadikan beliau kehadiran yang menggerunkan dalam legasi Jenaton.



ISHAK AHMAD JENATON

Bapa kepada Yusof, Aziz, dan Ramley. Pengarah Perikanan di Negeri-Negeri Selat dan Negeri-Negeri Melayu Bersekutu, beliau tegas, berdisiplin, dan nasionalistik, dan menerapkan tanggung jawab untuk memartabatkan masyarakat Melayu kepada anak-anaknya. Bangga dengan keluarga Jenaton, beliau bertelagah dengan Yusof tentang pilihannya tetapi secara senyap, mengagumi keberaniannya. Pengorbanannya dihadkan akibat kekangan kewangan, menimbulkkan ketegangan terhadap cita-cita Yusof. Walaupun tegar, beliau mahu anak-anaknya mengatasinya dalam perkhidmatan.

AISHAHTON

Ibu kepada adik-beradik Jenaton. Penyayang, berdaya tahan dan teguh dalam imannya, beliau bertindak sebaga pengikat emosi bagi keluarnya yang selalu bertelagah. Beliau menjadi penyokong senyap untuk mengekalkan visi Yusof. Mahir dalam diplomasi, beliau melindungi maruah anak-anaknya sambil memelihara keharmonian isi rumah. Kemesraan, kebijaksanaan dan keazamannya membentuk asas, di mana keluarga Jenaton mengharungi ujian peribadi dan pencaroba politik.



SAMAD ISMAIL

Ketua Editor Utusan Melayu dan pengasas sama PAP, Samad pintar dan berani secara politik. Setia kepada Yusof walaupun mempunyai perbezaan ideologi, beliau memahami kuasa akhbar untuk membentuk identiti politik Melayu. Kelucuannya menutupi kelicikan strategik, dan walaupun tidak dapat diramalkan, kewartawanannya tidak dapat ditandingi, menjadikan beliau suara Utusan semasa tempoh kritikal dalam kebangkitan politik Malaya.

TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN

Presiden UMNO dan Perdana Menteri Malaya, beliau mewakili kemuncak kepimpinan politik Melayu pada zaman itu. Dilihat melalui kaca mata dunia Yusof, beliau seorang kontemporari berkuasa, di mana pengaruh politiknya membentuk sekitaran, di mana Utusan Melayu beroperasi. Beliau mempunyai aspirasi bagi kemajuan Melayu, tetapi juga kompromi ketatanegaraan, berbeza dengan aktivisme Yusof dan Aziz dalam kewartawanan dan politik.

Biografi



Zizi Azah Abdul Majid
Penulis drama

Zizi Majid merupakan seorang penulis drama, di mana karyanya menyokong kemanusiaan bersama. Penerima Majlis Negeri New York 2025 bagi Yayasan Seniman/New York bagi Persekutuan Seniman Seni serta Persekutuan Penulisan Drama bersama Yayasan Dramatis Guild, karyanya telah dibangunkan di Teater Lucille Lortel (NYC), Pentas Syracuse (Syracuse) dan Teater WP (NYC). Beliau memenangi Hadiah Pacific Rim bagi Penulisan Drama (Teater Kumu Kahua/Universiti Hawaii Manoa); dan telah dinobatkan sebagai penerima Persekutuan Seni Princeton Arts, seorang finalis bagi Anugerah Penulisan Drama Dakwat Biru; pemenang separuh akhir sebanyak tiga kali bagi Persidangan Penulis Drama Kebangsaan O'Neil dan finalis bagi Siri Bacaan Pementasan Drama Baru Columbia@ Roundabout. Antara karya drama beliau termasuk *On the Vessel* (dahulunya berjudul *Milk*), *hey Came in the Night*, *Return to Fall*, *Yusof* and *How Did the Cat Get So Fat*. Zizi pernah menjadi pengarah artistik Teater

Ekamatra (Singapura) dan meraih pelbagai anugerah sepanjang perkhidmatannya. Zizi menerima Sarjana dalam Pengajian Seni Halus (MFA) dalam Penulisan Drama dari Universiti Columbia dan tinggal di Pusat New York, di mana beliau mengajar di Universiti Syracuse dan Hamilton College.



Mohd Fared Jainal

Pengarah dan Pereka Set

Penerima Anugerah Belia Harapan Goh Chok Tong, Fared melibatkan diri dalam kerja rentas disiplin yang mendalami kededua bidang seni visual dan persembahan. Beliau berkelulusan Sarjana Muda dalam Seni (Rekaan) dari Open Universiti/Maktab Seni LASALLE.

Fared telah bergabung secara meluas bersama pelbagai kumpulan seni dan teater di Singapura sebagai seorang pengarah, pelakon, seniman visual dan pereka set. Beliau telah memenangi pelbagai anugerah sebagai pengarah, pereka dan pelakon bagi Anugerah Teater Life! Straits Times dan Anugerah Seni Cameronian BOH.

Fared merupakan anggota pengasas Neon Tights, satu kolektif seni visual yang mengendalikan rekaan teater. Beliau berkhidmat sebagai

Pengarah Artistik Teater Ekamatra (2013 – 2023) dan melakukan kerja rundingan bersama Taman Warisan Melayu (MHC). Fared mengajar di Sekolah Seni (SOTA).



Sani Hussin

Pelakon

Sani Hussin memulakan kerjaya lakonannya pada 1992 bersama penerbitan beliau pertama Teater KAMi. Sejak itu, beliau telah berlakon dalam melebihi 40 pementasan bahasa Inggeris dan Melayu dan mengarah tujuh pementasan. Beliau telah bekerjasama dengan The Necessary Stage, Teater KAMi, Teater Ekamatra, Drama Box, Wild Rice, ACT 3, dan banyak lagi. Di layar perak, beliau telah muncul dalam melebihi 60 filem dan drama televisyen, termasuk *Soldadu 1 & 2*, *Ajna*, *Sayang Semuanya*, *Police & Thief* (Seasons 2–6), dan *Bisikan Bayangan*. Beliau pernah mengarah antaranya pementasan *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Melayu), *Penantian*, dan *Sidang Burung*. Sani telah dicalonkan sebanyak 14 kali di Anugerah Pesta Perdana, memenangi dua, dan juga menerima pelbagai pencalonan Anugerah Televisyen Asian dan Anugerah Teater Life. Sani kini bekerja sebagai pelakon sambilan, pengarah dan pendidik seni.



Siti Khalijah

Pelakon

Siti muncul sebagai pelakon teater sepenuh masa selepas menyertai program Teater bagi Kumpulan Belia The Necessary Stage pada 2003. Sejak itu, beliau telah bekerjasama dengan pelbagai syarikat teater tempatan dan antarabangsa. Beliau telah memenangi Anugerah Pelakon Wanita Terbaik sebanyak dua kali di Anugerah Teater Life! The Straits Times Life! bagi persembahannya dalam *Model Citizens* (2010) dan *Off Centre* (2015). Beliau telah diberikan Anugerah Seniman Muda oleh Majlis Seni Kebangsaan pada 2014, dan juga memenangi Pelakon Komedi Terbaik di *Pesta Perdana* 2023.



Ghafir Akbar

Pelakon

Ghafir adalah seorang pelakon dan pengarah dari Malaysia yang telah tampil dalam *Accidental Death of an Activist* (Wild Rice, Singapura) dan *Disgraced* (Singapore Repertory Theater). Beliau memenangi Pelakon Terbaik (Anugerah Teater Life! Straits Times Life! 2024) bagi peranannya dalam pementasan, *A Midsummer Night's Dream (Shakespeare in the Park)*, anjuran SRT.

Beliau juga pernah berlakon dalam pementasan *HOTEL, Merdeka/獨立/சுதந்திரம்* (Wild Rice); *Julius Caesar, Guards at the Taj* (SRT); *Three Years in the Life and Death of Land, Acting Mad, Civilised* (The Necessary Stage); *Kingdoms Apart* (Esplanade – Teater di Persisiran); *Temple, Being Haresh Sharma, Medea* (Cake Theatrical); dan *Gold Rain and Hailstones* (Teater Instant Café).

Ghafir berkelulusan sarjana seni halus dalam lakonan (Asolo Conservatory/FSU), dan sarjana muda dalam persembahan teater (Universiti Western Michigan).



Dalifah Shahril *Pelakon*

Dalifah Shahril adalah seorang pengamal teater dan pelakon yang fasih bertutur dalam bahasa Inggeris dan Melayu. Beliau telah dinobatkan Pelakon Wanita Terbaik bagu Anugerah Teater Life! Straits Times pada 2018, dan telah tampil dalam melebihi 100 penerbitan teatre, penerbitan televisyen, dan filem pendek sejak berkecimpung dalam industri seni selama melebihi 25 tahun.

Selain resumenya padat dengan kemahiran lakonan, Dalifah juga telah menyuarakan pelbagai drama dokumentari dan video korporat. Beliau mengendalikan sesi bercerita di sekolah, muzium, festival, acara korporat dan banyak lagi.

Apabila tidak berlakon, Dalifah mengambil peranan sebagai pengurus penerbitan teater dan pendidik seni. Dalifah gemar bekerjasama dengan kanak-kanak dan berasa puas dapat menyaksikan daya konfiden mereka meningkat menerusi kelas drama dan pertuturannya.



Farah Ong

Pelakon

Farah Ong adalah seorang seniman berdikari - pelakon, seniman persembahan, seniman suara latar dan seniman pendidik.

Kredit pementasan terbarunya termasuk *Geng Rebut Cabinet* oleh Teater Ekamatra dan *The Death of Singapore Theatre as Scripted* oleh *Penguasa Pembangunan Infokom Media* oleh Wild Rice. Kredit layar peraknya baru-baru ini termasuk *Chiron* oleh Papahan Films dan *Come Closer* oleh Akanga Film Asia.

Teater dan persembahan membawa pelbagai maksud kepada aneka individu. Theatre and performance can mean a lot of things to various individuals. Untuk merealisasikan perkara tertentu di fikirannya, Farah bersyukur bahawa beliau berpeluang untuk menyampaikan cerita-cerita yang sering kali tidak diberitahu dan mewakili suara-suara yang telah disenyapkan.



Fauzie Laily

Pelakon

Fauzie adalah seorang pelakon, penyanyi dan pengacara. Beliau mula berlakon dalam drama enam episod, *Teman Anugerahku*, yang ditayangkan di saluran Mediacorp Suria pada 2006. Bakat semula jadinya telah meraih beliau Anugerah Pelakon Baru Terbaik di *Pesta Perdana*— satu upacara anugerah dwitahunan yang menghargai kecemerlangan dalam industri Melayu tempatan.

Sejak itu, Fauzie telah tampil dalam pelbagai drama di saluran Mediacorp Suria dan Channel 5. Memperkembangkan karya lakonannya, beliau menceburi bidang teater pada 2010, memainkan Tim Robinson dalam pementasan adaptasi novel yang telah memenangi Hadiah Pulitzer, *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Pada 2013, beliau memegang peranan utama dalam *Banting*, filem Melayu komersil pertama Singapura sejak 1970-an. Beliau juga berlakon dalam *Tanglin*, salah satu drama siri panjang, yang telah tamat.



Adrian Tan

Pereka Pencahayaan

Adrian, lulusan Maktab Seni LASALLE pada 2006, merupakan pereka pencahayaan yang dicari-cari di Singapura. Portfolio meluasnya termasuk mereka persembahan melampaui pelbagai disiplin dalam seni persembahan, serta rekaan seni bina dan pemasangan. Projek utama beliau termasuk kerjasama dengan Disney untuk *Star Wars Festival May the Fourth* dan kerjasama bersama seniman lanskap terunggul dari United Kingdom, Tom Massey bagi Festival Taman Singapura 2018, yang memenangi Anugerah Pencahayaan Dalaman Terbaik. Karya teater Adrian, termasuk penerbitan seperti *A Cage Goes In Search of a Bird* oleh A Group Of People dan *Another Country* oleh Wild Rice, telah memenangi pelbagai anugerah.



Syed Ahmad

Pereka Bunyi dan Komposer

Syed Ahmad adalah pereka bunyi untuk *Yusof*. Dengan melebihi tiga dekad dalam pengalaman muzik, perjalanannya menjangkau dari suasana indie Singapura di The Substation pada 1990-an ke pentas antarabangsa seperti WOMAD.

Beliau telah memimpin Bloco Singapura selama hampir dua dekad, memperjuangkan ritma Brazilian dan etnomusikologi sambil membina platform untuk persembahan dan pendidikan.

Melampaui pentas, Syed telah bekerja merentasi media dan acara sebagai seorang pengarah festival, pengarah muzik, penerbit dan koreografer, serta menggubah lagu untuk rancangan filem dan televisyen. Beliau pernah terlibat dalam teater termasuk penerbitan seperti Esplanade, Cake Theatre dan Teater Ekamatra.

Satu projek kebanggaannya adalah arahan teaternya sendiri bagi pementasan *Nuri Terbang Malam*, yang mengesan perjalanan muzik rakaman Melayu dari 1903 hingga hari ini. Berbekalkan pengalamannya, Syed berharap dapat menyampaikan keaslian dan resonans emosi kepada *Yusof*.



Sufiyanto Sopingi

Pereka kostum

Sufiyanto adalah seorang penyelidik, pengumpul dan pereka fesyen. Beliau merupakan pengasas sama laman Instagram, *kebaya.société*, yang bertujuan mendokumentasi, berkongsi dan mengembangkan kosa kata dan pemahaman budaya dan fesyen Nusantara.

Sebelum ini, Sufi telah bekerja di Paris, Perancis, di atelier rumah haute couture terkenal seperti Elie Saab dan Stéphane Rolland.

Beliau terlibat dalam inskripsi kebaya kepada UNESCO, mencipta busana yang dikomisen untuk pameran Lembaga Warisan Negara (NHB) dan mereka busana bagi media.

Seorang pengumpul yang tekun, Sufi mengkhususkan diri dalam rekaan fesyen Nusantara dan *couture* Barat tahun 1950-an, serta budaya bahan dan tekstil dari awal tahun 1900-an hingga 1980-an.

Yang terlibat dalam Yusof

PASUKAN KREATIF & PENERBITAN

Pelakon

Sani Hussin

Siti Khalijah

Ghafir Akbar

Dalifah Shahril

Farah Ong

Fauzie Laily

Zizi Azah Abdul Majid

Penulis

Mohd Fared Jainal

Pengarah & Pereka Set

Alfian Sa'at

Dramaturg

Adrian Tan

Pereka Pencahayaan

Syed Ahmad

Pereka Bunyi & Komposer

Audrey Tengkey

Piano

Ulfah Irwan

Cello

Haikal Samat

Saxophone

Farhan Raimee

Trumpet

Matin Fellani

Jurutera Studio

Izzey Rahman

Pengendali Bunyi

Sufiyanto Sopingi

Pereka Kostum

Jane Shah
Artis Mekap

Aliff Khan
Artis Mekap

Shaza Ishak
Penerbit

Khairina Khalid
Pengurus Pentas Penerbitan

Anais Adjani
Penolong Pengurus Penerbitan

A Kumarran
Pengurus Teknikal

Natalie Titus
Penolong Pengurus Pentas

Ali Mazrin
Penolong Pengurus Pentas

Putri Prizai
Penolong Penerbitan

Sharmin Norman
Surtilis

Rafil Bin Kamaruddin
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Penghias

Akbar Syadiq
Pereka Visual Utama

Mysara Aljaru
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Teater Ekamatra telah dikomisyen oleh pelbagai festival seni antarabangsa terkenal dan juga telah memenangi pelbagai anugerah, terutama di wadah tertinggi bagi kecemerlangan dalam teater, Anugerah Teater Life! The Straits Times, di mana kami telah beberapa kali meraih pencapaian termasuk bagi Pengarah Terbaik, Pelakon Terbaik, Kostum Terbaik dan Skrip Asli Terbaik.

Berpandukan nilai kepelbagaian, integriti, akauntabiliti dan berpaksikan rakyat, Teater Ekamatra komited kepada misi kami untuk mencipta seni menarik yang memberi inspirasi serta memupuk bakat-bakat baru, meluaskan kepelbagaian dalam industri.

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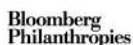


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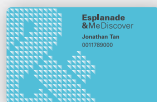


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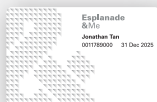
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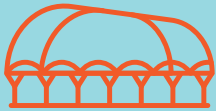
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*Figures for Esplanade's activities from Apr 2023 to Mar 2024.



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