



**Esplanade
Presents**

AN ESPLANADE
COMMISSION AND
PRODUCTION

WRITTEN AND
DIRECTED BY
CHONG TZE CHIEN



23
– 27
NOV 2022
wed - sun
7.30pm

SINGTEL WATERFRONT
THEATRE at Esplanade

HOUSE PROGRAMME

Photo credit: Crispian Chan

About Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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1 Esplanade Drive, Singapore 038981 Tel: 6828 8222 Fax: 6337 3633
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CEO MESSAGE

Humans are creatures of habit. We fear changes that disturb our sense of self and our sense of belonging to a home or community. Yet we constantly crave the new. New tastes, sights, and experiences that excite and inspire us. These two contradictory impulses also underlie *In New Light - A Season of Commissions* as Esplanade Theatres on the Bay marks its 20-year journey as an arts centre for everyone.

Presented from 12 Oct to 31 Dec 2022, *In New Light's* commissions celebrate 20 years of artistry and collaborations that have made Esplanade a home for the arts, and the arts an integral part of Singapore's cultural identity and diverse communities. *In New Light* also presents new works and a new venue. In a world still experiencing the aftershocks of the pandemic and existential crises on ecological, technological and other fronts, these commissions hope to provide new lenses through which we can better question, heal, and ultimately, create our future.

Since we opened in October 2002, Esplanade's iconic domes have glowed like lanterns in the Marina Bay. In October 2022, we open a new Waterfront Theatre with a facade that reflects daylight and glows at night. Both then and now, the steadfast support of artists, crew, staff, audiences, as well as our partners, sponsors, donors and funders has helped us to not only keep the lights on, but to entertain, move, inspire and transform lives through the arts. On behalf of the Esplanade team, I thank you. And as we look beyond to the future, we welcome everyone to experience *In New Light*.

Yvonne Tham
CEO
The Esplanade Co Ltd

PRINCIPAL SPONSOR'S WELCOME MESSAGE



Lam Soon Singapore has continuously supported the arts and culture scene through our various outreach and CSR efforts. This time round, one of our brands, Homesoy is proud to be a Principal Sponsor of *In New Light's* commissions to celebrate the 20 years of artistry and collaborations that have made Esplanade a home for the arts, and arts an integral part of Singapore's cultural identity and diverse communities.

Through *In New Light's* commissions, we hope everyone can come together to celebrate Singapore's arts and culture history across generations, galvanise the nation and spur our way forward.

We hope you will enjoy *In New Light's* commissions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Wang Shang Ying'.

Mr. Whang Shang Ying
Executive Chairman
Lam Soon Singapore Pte Ltd.

PLAYWRIGHT AND DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

"Whatever is here, may be
found elsewhere; what is
not, cannot be found
anywhere else."

- *The Mahabharata*

Kingdoms Apart is a modern retelling of the world's longest epic poem, the *Mahabharata*. In the story, cousins vying for the throne of a prized kingdom culminates in a great war between the two opposing families – the Pandavas and the Kauravas. Because discord and chaos dominate its narrative, it is said, no household in India would keep the *Mahabharata* at home for fear of a spill-over effect on domestic life and family relations.

Kingdoms Apart, like the *Mahabharata*, is an unconventional story about good versus evil; the story neither condemns nor champions either family on the battlefield; it presents their follies as much as their virtues in equal measure. All shades of humanity are explored and depicted in a non-judgmental way. That's perhaps the complexity and humanity in both *Mahabharata* and *Kingdoms Apart*.

The *Mahabharata* resonates till this day even before my attempt to modernise it. The situations and conflicts in the story already lend itself to a contemporary reading and treatment, echoing the modern world today.

It is a story about us, the world in the past and today; its characters are still alive, tortured by the same reality and caught in the same dilemmas as us even though the specifics might not be the same.

The choice to cast regionally and have actors speak in various languages is a response to the running theme of differences and discord, where one's colour and creed could not only be weaponised and victimised accordingly, but also be negated and compounded at the same time in light of a deeper chasm. The notion of blue blood and succession, which is the underlying agenda driving the characters' actions, goes beyond racial and cultural politics. Informed by the history of rivalry between the two families, the characters' animosity towards one another is deeply entrenched in their psyche, one where hatred towards the other doesn't need justification or reason. Their politics of discord goes beyond skin deep, setting the necessary condition for anarchy and mayhem. This dissolution of order gives birth to either a despot or the hero. Anyone can justify his right to rule without any good reason in this day and age. The despot of this new age need not only resort to force to seize power. Manipulation of facts and perception to seduce, misguide and fool is the new and preferred weapon of choice. The hero only has his integrity.

What good is hope when it is superseded by toxicity, destruction and anarchy in such a setup? This question occupied my mind for three years as I was making the work, transposing the world of *Mahabharata* to a more recent and familiar time frame of the 1980s, when the age of optimism and liberalism is slowly being eroded and challenged by the advent of fundamentalism.

In the time of creation, I watched the world trying to contain and eliminate a virus, unleashing bouts of anxiety and uncertainty in the process. Lines and borders were drawn, civil unrests broke out in countries and natural disasters wreaked havoc; the universe has been undergoing a period of upheaval in and outside fiction-making in the past three years. It seems we are fighting a war with ourselves as much as we are fighting against foes and fate.

Informed by the events of today, I watch my interpretation play out in my head, replete with contemporary references such as television sets and the proliferation of mass media triggering the explosion of the Information Age, parliamentary assemblies with the monarchy still at the heart of its political system, '80s fashion with bows and arrows as accessories, archaic customs and rituals observed in and outside battlefields amidst modern warfare, while kings and princes battle it out on chariots that are given a steampunk treatment. The discord between cousins from the two fabled families vying for the same throne is further exacerbated by their different ethnicities and mother tongues set in a fictional Asian kingdom in a parallel universe.

On the battlefield that is the metaphor for the characters' lives, the world burns, and man suffers, in both victory and defeat. But for better or for worse, the peace is disturbed so that in man's anguish and torment, the eternal truth and virtue may shine above chaos, lies and deception.

"War is never right, until it is."
Kingdoms Apart

A contemporary reimagining of the Indian epic tale the *Mahabharata* that resonates with the current day.

The Pandavas and the Kauravas – two groups of cousins – struggle for political power and the claim to the dynastic succession to the throne of the Hastinapura, an Indian kingdom. The confrontation climaxes with an 18-day Kurukshetra War in which even the gods are involved. Unimaginable death and destruction ensue, and all on the battlefield are forced to face up to their *dharma* – their duty and purpose in the universe.

With the audience seated amongst the performance space, the Pandavas and Kauravas families from the *Mahabharata* are transported from epic mythology into the 21st century through a gripping narrative odyssey of war, politics and family feuds. Portrayed by a multicultural ensemble cast from Singapore, Malaysia and Japan, they perform in front of and around the audience and bring the story to life in riveting fashion.

The *Mahabharata* ranks amongst the seminal works of world literature and is of great importance to many Asian cultures, representing a rich tradition that allows for multiple narratives and interpretations. *Kingdoms Apart* is written and directed by critically acclaimed award-winning Singapore playwright and director Chong Tze Chien, who most recently received the Best Director award at The Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards in 2022. This visually rich production is also conjured by an award-winning creative team, and features puppetry, multimedia, live camera feeds and an original evocative score that will be performed live.

SYNOPSIS

Advisory 16: Some sexual content and coarse language
Performed in English, with some Japanese, Tamil and Malay, and with English surtitles

3hr 20mins including a 20 min intermission

STORIES AND STORYTELLING

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION
TO THE *MAHABHARATA*
BY AKANKSHA RAJA

If the original *Mahabharata* were to be published today, it would likely be described as "genre-defying". All at once, it is an epic lyrical poem, a family drama, a treatise on justice and righteous war, a collection of parables, and a guide to Hindu philosophy and cosmology. It is an all-encompassing narrative that instructs as much as it entertains, evoking pathos as much as reverence. Alongside the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* is one of the seminal texts in the development of Hinduism, its influence percolating through generations and across geographical borders. It draws numerous comparisons of form and theme not only to works of the classical canon such as Homer's *Iliad*, but also to pop cultural touchstones such as the *Song of Ice and Fire* series of fantasy novels by George R.R. Martin and the Marvel Cinematic Universe. Its appeal is both high-brow and populist. It is as much surrounded by academic scholarship as it is by comic book adaptations and cartoon series, and inspires philosophy and intellect as much as it does movement and action.

To trace the history of the *Mahabharata* is to tap into the kaleidoscopic and interpretive nature of storytelling itself. Scholars pin the *Mahabharata*'s oral-tradition origins to circa 400 BCE, when versions of its constituent stories were retold by priests and ascetics and reinterpreted by travelling dance troupes. During the cultural golden age of the Gupta Empire circa 400 CE, the stories were unified in a single text written in Sanskrit verse, comprising approximately 100,000 stanzas across 18 chapters. The *Mahabharata* was disseminated across the Indian subcontinent, while also continuing to be reinterpreted through a variety of performance forms across the region. Centuries later, translations of the text appeared in a multitude of South and Southeast Asian languages as recorded literatures started to develop and stories cross-pollinated across the region, traversing borders of cultural and linguistic difference.

The practice of reinterpretation runs deep in the heart of the *Mahabharata*. The preface of the Sanskrit *Mahabharata* tells the story of its own creation – its "origin story", to borrow a term popularised by Marvel – where Vyasa, the revered author of the text, dictates the stories of the *Mahabharata* to his dedicated scribe, the elephant-headed god Ganesha, who shoulders the added challenge of interpreting Vyasa's many meta-commentaries on the main narrative. The *Mahabharata* is defined by such frame tales, or stories-within-stories.

The nucleus of these tales is the story of a war for the throne between two groups of cousins: the five Pandavas and the 100 Kauravas. The eldest Pandava, Yudhishthira, loses his kingdom and wealth in a rigged game of dice against the Kauravas, after which the Pandavas are forced into exile. Eventually, the families prepare for battle. The Pandava warrior Arjuna calls on his charioteer Krishna for counsel, upon which Krishna shares philosophies of duty, justice and spiritual living that form the key Hindu scripture *Bhagavad Gita*. The Pandavas defeat all the Kauravas, but not without suffering devastating losses of their own. The aftermath of the war leads the Pandavas to reflect on the meaning of war, the destructive force of vengeance and the possibility of atonement.

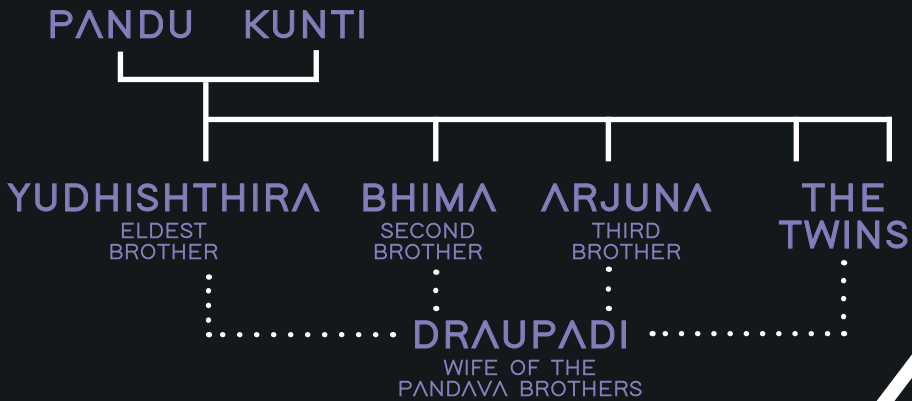
One of the earliest cross-cultural influences of the *Mahabharata* was on 11th century Javanese performance. The old Javanese translation of the epic, titled *Kakawin Bhāratayuddha*, became a wellspring of inspiration for *wayang wong* (dance drama) and *wayang kulit* (shadow puppetry), which catalysed the spread of Hinduism and Indian philosophies around the region. The 12th century Cambodian temple Angkor Wat features bas-relief friezes of scenes from the *Mahabharata*. In the 20th century, Peter Brook's famously ambitious nine-hour theatrical adaptation *The Mahabharata* (1985) drew criticism for its orientalist direction. More recent interpretations of the text present a distinctly feminist approach to the text, focusing on the underrepresented agency of the *Mahabharata*'s female characters, as in Akram Khan's *Until the Lions* (2016), or a postcolonial approach, such as Why Not Theatre's upcoming 2023 adaptation, featuring performers of South Asian descent, and a Sanskrit opera adaptation of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

What is it about stories about deities and mythological beings that enrapture us century after century, inspiring ever more adaptations across mediums and languages? Are they merely entertaining flights of escapism, with fantastical idols that model universal ideals that we mortals can only aspire to?

Perhaps the reason for its endurance is that it confronts us with our inherent humanity. As much as we aspire to the might and wisdom depicted in the *Mahabharata's* tales, we see ourselves more in its heroes' fallibilities: in Yudhishthira's loss we recognise our own vulnerability, in Arjuna's hesitation before the war we glimpse our incessant self-doubt and search for purpose. The recognition of these crucial moments of human struggle gives us assurance and hope that we too may triumph despite our imperfections. This recognition may well explain the lasting impact of the *Mahabharata*. Just as the *Mahabharata* is a nesting-doll of manifold stories and meanings, so too is its ever-unfolding legacy.

Akanksha Raja is an arts writer who was formerly Assistant Editor at ArtsEquator.

THE MAHABHARATA: FAMILY TREE



PANDAVAS

BHISHMA

FIRST PRINCE OF HASTINAPUR/GREAT GRAND
UNCLE OF THE PANDAVAS AND KAURAVAS

KARNA

DURYODHANA'S ALLY

KRISHNA

SUPREME DIVINITY

DRONA

GENERAL TO BOTH THE
PANDAVAS AND THE KAURAVAS

KAURAVAS

DHRITARASHTRA

KING

GANDHARI

QUEEN

DURYODHANA

CROWN PRINCE

ACT 1 (PROLOGUE)

This is Hastinapur

ACT 1 (SCENE 1)

The Nightmare

ACT 1 (SCENE 2)

The Trial

ACT 1 (SCENE 3)

The Kingmaker

ACT 1 (SCENE 4)

The Invitation

ACT 1 (SCENE 5)

The Game of Dice

SCENE TITLES

INTERMISSION

ACT 2 (SCENE 1)

The 13th year

ACT 2 (SCENE 2)

The Peace Treaty

ACT 3 (SCENE 1)

The War

ACT 3 (SCENE 2)

The Flood

ACT 3 (SCENE 3)

The Battle

ACT 3 (SCENE 4)

The Confession

ACT 3 (SCENE 5)

The beginning of the end

BIOGRAPHIES



PLAYWRIGHT & DIRECTOR CHONG TZE CHIEN

Tze Chien is a core member of The Finger Players. His plays have been staged in the UK, Hungary, Japan and Taiwan. For his contributions to Singapore theatre, he was awarded the Young Artist Award by Singapore's National Arts Council in 2006.

He was a Singapore Youth Festival (SYF) Arts Presentation (Drama) Adjudicator for six years, and the Creative Director of SYF Concert 2019. He is currently the Chairperson of the Curriculum Development Advisory Committee (Theatre Programme) at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Artist-in-residence at Katong Covent Secondary, adjunct lecturer at NIE/NTU, and the current Artistic Director of NUS Stage.

Some of his notable plays include *PIE* (Singapore Dramatist Award 1998), *Charged* (Best Script, Life! Theatre Awards 2011, Top 10 plays of all time – The Business Times), *Turn By Turn We Turn* (Best Production of the Year, Best Director, Life! Theatre Awards 2012), *Oiwa – The ghost of Yotsuya* (Best Production of the Year, Best Director, Life! Theatre Awards 2021/2022), *Furthest North, Deepest South* (Best Production of the Year, Life! Theatre Awards 2005), *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea* (Best Director, Life! Theatre Awards 2006), *The Book of Living and Dying* and *Poop!*.



GHAFIR AKBAR

Ghafir is a Malaysian actor, who was last seen in *Acting Mad* (The Necessary Stage for Esplanade's *The Studios* 2022) and was the co-author/director of a US-Malaysia virtual collaboration: *How To Be Alone*, staged in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Selected acting credits include *Who's There?* (The Transit Ensemble/New Ohio Theater, NY). *Civilised*, *Those Who Can't, Teach* (TNS); *HOTEL*, *Merdeka*, *Another Country* (Wild Rice); *Being Haresh Sharma*, *Temple*, *Medea* (Cake Theatrical); *Julius Caesar*, *Guards at the Taj* (Singapore Repertory Theatre); *Gold Rain and Hailstones* (Instant Café Theatre).

Directing credits include *Armour & Skin 2019* (Hands Percussion/Gamelan Yuganada); *The Language Archive* (PH7 Productions); *Ombak!* and *Bites of Delights* (Rhythm in Bronze); *Cinta Sang Arnab* (Kakiseni Arts Festival). Ghafir was also Associate Director for *OlaBola The Musical* at Istana Budaya.

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



BRENDON FERNANDEZ

Brendon's recent theatre credits include *Tartuffe*, *Session Zero*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *MERDEKA / 獨立 / சூதந்திரம்*, *Displaced Persons' Welcome Dinner*, and *Hotel*.

While theatres were closed in 2020, he was also part of two audio plays: *A Bird Calls You To Moscow*, and *The Book of Mothers*.

Brendon is an accomplished voiceover artist, and can be heard on numerous commercials, documentary television programs, and audiobooks. www.brendonfernandez.com

BIOGRAPHIES

PERFORMER



MATT GREY

Matt began acting in British television over forty years ago. He trained at the Guildford School of Acting and has acted in the UK, Australia and Singapore.

Notable roles include Terry in YTV's *One Summer*, Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*, Franz Kafka in Alan Bennett's *Kafka's Dick* and Nice in *Nice and Pleasant*, an avant-garde comedy double act. More recently for Centre Stage Productions, Dame Margery Norbutter in *A Right Rubbish Christmas*, Egeus and Starveling in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Singapore Repertory Theatre, Toddy in the musical *Victor/Victoria* with Laura Fygi at the Esplanade Theatre, Sigmund Freud in *Freud's Last Session* for Blank Space Theatre Company as part of Esplanade's *The Studios*, Larry in *Company* for Dream Academy Productions and Danforth in Toy Factory's *The Crucible*, Salarino in *The Merchant of Venice* and Antonio in *The Tempest* for Singapore Repertory Theatre, Royce in *Two Houses* by Lim Yu-Beng for The Sin-Peng Colony, Peter Timms in *Chinglish*, Clive Cunningham in *Dragonflies* and Tony in *Muswell Hill* for Pangdemonium Theatre Company, Farmer Jones in *Animal Farm* for Wild Rice and recently Lieutenant Holmes in *This Land is Mine* for Weiyou Films.

Matt received a Best Actor award at the Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards 2012 for his portrayal as Freud.

He specialises in voice training for actors and is the Programme Leader of the Diploma in Performance at LASALLE College of the Arts.



NEEWIN HERSHALL

A distinguished alumnus of Kalakshetra, Neewin Hershall is an acclaimed Bharatanatyam soloist. He graduated with a diploma in Bharatanatyam and a post diploma with Nattuvangam as the mainstay at the RLV College of Fine Arts, Kerala. He has also received the Indian Government Scholarship (Junior) training under Shr V.P. Dhananjavan. He joined Bhaskar's Arts Academy in Singapore in 2008 and is now its resident choreographer, Bharatanatyam teacher and yoga instructor. He has collaborated with Padmashri, Leela Samson, Padmabhushan awardees—The Dhananjayans, Nirmala Seshadri, Anita Ratnam and Meenakshy Bhaskar. Notable productions are *Rudram* (A commission for Esplanade's *Kalaa Utsavam 2017*); *I carry your heart* (a site-specific work with Nirmala Seshadri, 2015) and *Façade* (premiered in Chennai in February 2017 and then in Singapore).



ANNE JAMES

Anne is a Malaysian actress with over 40 years of experience, who has performed both in Singapore and Malaysia across various genres of theatre. She most recently played the role of Goneril and the Earl of Gloucester in *King Lear*. In a tribute to Malaysian playwright K.S. Maniam, she performed a reading alongside Jo Kukathas of *The Sandpit – A Monologue* for the George Town Literary Festival 2020: *Through the Looking Glass* series. She has had the privilege of working with directors such as Krishen Jit, Ong Keng Sen, Kee Thuan Chye, Natalie Hennedige, among many others. Selected acting credits include Five Arts Centre's production of *Baling*, which toured around eight cities from 2015 – 2018; Pentas Project Theatre Production's Tragicomedy of Errors, an adaptation of Taiwanese play *Secret Love in Peach Blossom*.

Anne was also a dancer in Malaysia's leading contemporary dance company, Marion D'Cruz and Dancers, for almost two decades. On screen, she has appeared in *One Two Jaga* (2018), *Redha* (2015), *Pineapple Town* and *7 Letters* (2015).

In 2013, she was awarded Best Supporting Actress (Female) for her performance in *KIL* by Anugerah Majlis Pengkritik Filem Kuala Lumpur. In theatre, she won Best Solo Performer for *Dinner for Two* at the Boh Cameronian Arts Awards in 2003.

Anne is part of the collective Five Arts Centre in Malaysia. When she is not acting, she teaches voice and acting.



LOONG SENG ONN

Having recently retired, Seng Onn anxiously spends his days waiting by his phone, hoping for acting gigs to come his way.

He has been dabbling in theatre since the eighties when he first discovered that it was possible to trade-in his boring existence for that of some infinitely more colourful character on stage. Ever since then, he has been persuading his assorted bosses that his involvement in theatre was important, relevant, useful and has added value to his day job. His favourite productions include *A Language of Their Own*, *Three Children*, *Lao Jiu* and *Beauty World*.



FUTOSHI MORIYAMA

Futoshi appeared on stage more than 1,000 times between 1996 and 2000 throughout Japan. He then performed in productions for wedding receptions in Tokyo Disney Sea's Hotel MiraCosta for eight years after its opening in 2001. Recently, he appeared in Chong Tze Chien's critical acclaimed *OIWA – The Ghost of Yotsuya* in Singapore (SIFA 2021).

His many appearances in a wide variety of production and show genres include Ichikawa Ennosuke's stage productions of Super Kabuki *OGURI*; musicals *The Soldier's Tale*, *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, the plays *Demon Lake* and *The Lust of the White Serpent of the Tale of Ugetsu*; the operas *The Magic Flute* and *The Bat*, Seiji Ozawa Music Academy's opera *Carmen* and many others.

BIOGRAPHIES

PERFORMER



FAREZ NAJID

Farez Najid works as a performer, his credits includes the National Day Parade 2022, *Tanah Air* (Drama Box 2019), *The Rubbish Prince* (Three Pumpkins, 2018 and 2019) and *Tiger of Malaya* (Teater Ekamatra 2018). Farez Najid is also a facilitator at Tak Takut Kids Club, and spends his free time befriending the children. He recently dove into the world of Dungeons and Dragons as a professional Dungeon Master at TableMinis, runs Epic Kids Adventure for the kids and hosts a podcast called *Alamak! You D&D?!*.

PERFORMER



JEAN NG

Jean Ng graduated from the Jacques Lecoq School of Theatre in Paris, France. She is an actor and performance maker based in Singapore.



EDITH PODESTA

Edith Podesta is an actor, theatre maker and choreographer based in Singapore. She studied Acting and Movement Studies at the National Institute of Dramatic Art's (NIDA), and holds a Master of Arts Fine Arts from LASALLE College of the Arts. In 2016, she performed in Chong Tze Chien's *Starring Hitler As Jekyll And Hyde*, and is grateful to be given the chance to work with him again in *Kingdoms Apart*.

In Singapore, she has appeared on stage in *Liv* directed by Nelson Chia, *A Note Went Off In My Head* directed by Oliver Chong, *Untitled Women Number One* and *Civilized* directed by Alvin Tan, Brian Gothong Tan's *Tropical Traumas*, and *Illogic, Versus, Electra* and *Temple* directed by Natalie Hennedige. Edith is currently Associate Artistic Director of young & WILD, a division of Wild Rice.

BIOGRAPHIES

PERFORMER



VADI PVSS

Vadi PVSS performs, writes, directs and produces for theatre and television.

He started in radio as a child artist and today has a body of performative work that spans nearly 30 years for both fields. Known for his work in television, Vadi acts in both English and Tamil language television series and telemovies, including a recent guest role in *Mr Midnite*, a Netflix series, as well as T T Dhavamanni's telemovie *Theekutchi*. Vadi is a popular host for live events and for programmes in Mediacorp's *Vasantham*.

He was awarded the Achievement Award for contribution to Indian culture, Play and Drama by IndiansDB.com in 2015 and the Lifetime Achievement award for Performing Arts at the Malaysian Southern Indian Films Festival in 2022. Vadi has been involved in theatre as an actor, writer and director since the 1990s. Besides productions in Ravindran Drama Group and Mirror Theatre where he was the co-founder, Vadi has performed in Agnikuthu's *Marabu* (1998), Zebra Crossing's *What the Butler Saw* (2009), aKt theatre's *Parai* (2019) and Avant Theatre's *4G* (2022).



TAN GUO LIAN SUTTON

Tan Guo Lian Sutton is a graduate of the BA (Hons) Acting program at LASALLE College of the Arts. He was a recipient of the Best Supporting Actor award for his role in *Electra* at the 2017 Life! Theatre Awards. In 2019, Lian completed his Masters in Arts in Pedagogy and Practice, where he researched the pre-performance rituals of professional actors in Singapore. Lian is currently a core member of theatre collective Dark Matter Theatrics and founder of Nusantara Theatrical Combat, a stage combat ensemble that tell stories inspired by Southeast Asian martial arts and its aesthetics. As a lineage holder of various traditional Southeast Asian martial arts, Lian constantly seeks to merge his talents to tell stories in varied and engaging ways. Selected theatre credits include *Temple* and *Electra* directed by Natalie Hennedige, *2 Houses* by Lim Yu Beng, and *Acting Mad* directed by Haresh Sharma.



JO KWEK

Jo graduated with a Diploma in Performing Arts (Drama) from LASALLE (SIA) College of the Arts. Since then, she has been actively participating in numerous theatre productions and television dramas locally and internationally. She is also an arts educator in Singapore and China.

Her stage credits include *Journey West: White Bone Fiend*, *The Rattle King*, *The Puppeteer Prepares*, *Murder at Mandai Camp*, *Peepbird*, *Body X – The Culprit*, *Citizen Dog*, *Itsy – The Musical*, *Inheritance*, *The Spirits Play*, *Mama Looking For Her Cat*, *Turn by Turn*, *Cats Lost and Found* (nominated for Best Ensemble Acting award at the 10th Life! Theatre Awards), *The Moonstory* (nominated for Best Actress for 9th Life! Theatre Awards 2009), *Drift* (nominated for Best Ensemble Acting award at the 9th Life! Theatre Awards and Best Actress for Shanghai Magnolia Stage Awards), *0501* (nominated for Best Ensemble Acting award at the 8th Life! Theatre Awards and President's Design Award 2007 collective winner), *I'm Just A Piano Teacher* (Best Ensemble Acting award at the 7th Life! Theatre Awards), and many more.

Her on-screen credits include *Andrew*, *From Victoria Street To Ang Mo Kio*, *The Veiled Willow*, *Filial Party*, *Ilo Ilo*, *YOG-A Girl's Hope*, *Letters To Heaven – Love never ends*, *The Funeral*, *Beautiful Connection* and *Katong Ms Oh*.



VANESSA TOH

Vanessa Toh is an actor, educator and theatre maker. She graduated from LASALLE College of the Arts with a first-class BA (Hons) Acting degree (Goldsmiths, University of London) in 2015.

Her artistic work spans across theatre, puppetry, movement and dance. Some of her credits include *No Disaster on This Land* and *Peepbird* (The Finger Players), *When We Are Small, These Brief Encounters* (Chowk) and *Landscaping A Personal Myth*, presented at TRANSIT 8 Festival: Beauty as a weapon – Theatre, Women, Conflict, at Odin Teatret (Denmark).

Trained in a variety of physical and traditional forms such as Kalaripayattu, puppetry and Odissi, Vanessa is interested to explore the immediacy and intimacy of the human body through these forms and bring these qualities to the stage and into the work she creates independently.

Vanessa is currently an associate artist with Chowk Productions.



K. RAJAGOPAL

Rajagopal has been involved in theatre as a performer since 1985. He has worked with London's Julia Bradsley (Guildhall School of Music and Drama) Indonesia's late Ariffin Noer, Malaysia's late Krishen Jit, Nonon Padilla (National Theatre of the Philippines) and Singapore's Ong Keng Sen, Kuo Pao Kun and William Teo.

He received rave reviews for excellent performances as lead actor in *Mimi Fan*, *Ozone*, *Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder* and *Six of the Best*. Other stage works include *Medea*, *Mother Courage*, *Hayavadana*, *Caucasian Chalk Circle*, Michael Chiang's *Beauty World*, *Private Parts* and *Army Daze*, *The King Lear Project* and *Dream Home* (Singapore Arts Festival, 2008 and 2009 respectively).

As a filmmaker, Rajagopal has won the Singapore International Film Festival's Special Jury Prize for 3 consecutive years. *I Can't Sleep Tonight* (1995), *The Glare* (1996) and *Absence* (1997) have been featured at international festivals around the world. His feature film *A Yellow Bird* premiered at the Cannes Film Festival in 2016. He had a retrospective of his short films at the National Museum in 2010. Raja also writes and directs for television and commercials.

BIOGRAPHIES

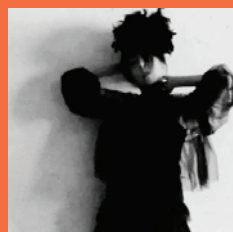
MUSICIAN



DARREN NG

Darren does sound and music.

MUSICIAN



YUYA ANTICAL

Yuya Antical is a singer who started her career with jazz music. She now sings original decadent songs while playing the concertina in galleries and on stages around the world. In 2009, she contributed songs for as an Artist-in-residence of L'Institut français du Japon – Kansai. In 2014, she performed in Paris, and also in Taipei in 2016. In 2018, she joined the project *kimono tales* by angelo cricchi, at Lost and Found Studio in Rome, Italy.

BIOGRAPHIES

DESIGN TEAM

EUCIEN CHIA SET DESIGNER

Eucien is an architect and scenographer who has designed productions ranging from minimalist blackbox plays to the inaugural National Day Parade at the Float@Marina Bay.

Awards include ST Life! Theatre Awards Best Set Design winner for *Company* (Dream Academy); *December Rains* (Toy Factory); and *Dealer's Choice* (Pangdemonium).

Selected plays include *The Commission* (SIFA); *Muswell Hill*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *This is What Happens To Pretty Girls*, *The Pillowman*, *The Mother*, *The Father*, *Fat Pig* (Pangdemonium); *Boeing Boeing* (Wild Rice); *Normal* (Checkpoint Theatre).

Selected musicals include *RENT*, *Urinetown*, *Spring Awakening*, *Little Voice* (Pangdemonium); *La Cage Aux Folles '17*, *A \$ingapore Carol*, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *Snow White* (Wild Rice); *Shanghai Blues* (Toy Factory); *Sing To The Dawn* (I-Theatre); *Monster Rock* (Universal Studios Singapore)

GRACE LIN ASSOCIATE SET DESIGNER

Grace Lin is a designer of sets/environments for plays, musicals and film. Coming from a background in architecture and graphic communication, she has over 10 years of experience working in commercial editorial design and graphic illustration as well as environmental design, and has been working as a full-time theatre freelancer since 2015. Her recent credits with set designer Eucien Chia include *End of the Rainbow*, *Muswell Hill* and *The Glass Menagerie* (Pangdemonium). Other recent productions include *Nightwatchers* (Juo Studios) and *Little Mournings* (The Finger Players). Grace holds a Bachelor of Arts in Architecture from the National University of Singapore and a Masters in Design Communication from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. You can find her portfolio at doublewood.mypportfolio.com or on Instagram as @graceeliin.

DARREN NG

MUSIC COMPOSER, MUSIC DIRECTOR
AND SOUND DESIGNER

Darren does sound and music.

JAMES TAN

LIGHTING DESIGNER

James Tan was conferred The Young Artist Award and awarded Arts Professional Scholarship by The National Arts Council of Singapore. He holds a Master of Fine Arts in Lighting Design from University of California, San Diego. He has worked on multiple festivals and series with Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay, including *da:ns festival*, *Kalaa Utsavam*, *Pesta Raya*, *Huayi*, *Moonfest* and *Feed Your Imagination*. James recognises the significance of mentorship for young aspiring lighting professionals, and as such, he works with Pangdemonium, to run a season-long Lighting Design Apprenticeship for early-career professionals. He is also a returning mentor with The International Fred Foster Student Mentorship Program (Electronic Theatre Consoles Inc.), assisting lighting design and technology students to make the transition into professional working environments.

Selected theatre lighting design credits include *Dragonflies*, *Peter & The Starcatcher* and *Next to Normal* (Pangdemonium), *Animal Farm*, *Merdeka* and *Public Enemy* (Wild Rice), *Disgraced* and *Hello Goodbye* (Singapore Repertory Theatre), *Red* (Blank Space Theatre in collaboration with Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay) and *Lord of the Flies* (Blank Space Theatre with Sightline Productions). Selected events lighting design include National Day Parade 2022, *From Singapore to Singaporean: The Bicentennial Experience* (Singapore Bicentennial Office), OCBC Garden Rhapsody: Rainforest Orchestra – Asia & Australia Edition (Gardens By The Bay) and *The Art of the Brick®* Exhibition by Nathan Sawaya (MBS ArtScience Museum).

KOO CHIA MENG

(FICTION SHORE)

MULTIMEDIA DESIGNER

Trained as a filmmaker, Chia Meng has been actively involved in various aspects of film production since 2009. In 2020, he directed a series of show films for National Day Parade, interwoven throughout the evening show. His short films *Andrew* and *After Noon* were official selections at regional film festivals including Bangkok ASEAN Film Festival, Singapore International Film Festival and Minikino Film Week. Chia Meng was also Casting Director for Singaporean feature films such as Boo Junfeng's *Apprentice* (2016), Anthony Chen's *Ilo Ilo* (2013) and *Wet Season* (2019).

As a multimedia designer, Chia Meng's credits include productions by Wild Rice, The Finger Players, Drama Box, Toy Factory, The TENG Company, Warner Music Singapore and Singapore Repertory Theatre. Chia Meng has also ventured into large-scale shows like *Ah Boys To Men: The Musical*, *Michael Learns To Rock 25: Live in Singapore* as well as National Day Parade 2017, 2018, 2020 and 2021. At the Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards 2019, Chia Meng and co-designer Andrew Robert Ng were awarded Best Multimedia for their work on Wild Rice's *Supervision*.

Chia Meng completed his Master of Fine Arts in Film Directing at the Taipei National University of the Arts. He continues to develop video content as Fiction Shore's Creative Director, for both the film and theatre industries, along with other collaborators and artists.

MAXIMILIAN LIANG

(FICTION SHORE)

ASSISTANT MULTIMEDIA DESIGNER

Maximilian's mother gave him an English name she could not pronounce. In primary school, his first project was done on a flip phone - editing a classmate's Valentine's confession, scored to illegally downloaded Jay Chou songs. Despite the 'client not meeting KPIs', earning 5 dollars somehow sparked an interest in visual storytelling. He later discovered that moving images could make sense and draw inspiration from estranged concepts, eliciting feelings from foggy memories and a childhood spent earning recess allowance.

'Maxi', as his parents call him, is an IMDA Scholar with a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree in Film from LASALLE College of the Arts. A newcomer in Multimedia Design, his credits include productions by Wild Rice, How Drama, Dream Academy and The TENG Company. He has also worked on the NDP show in Multimedia for the last three years.

MYRA LOKE

(THE FINGER PLAYERS)
PUPPETRY & PROPS DESIGNER
AND PUPPETRY TRAINING CONSULTANT

Myra Loke is a puppeteer, actor, educator, designer and theatre-maker.

She started her journey in Singapore's theatre 13 years ago when she co-created and participated in ARTivate in its pioneer batch, a youth wing of Drama Box Ltd. Myra is currently the Co-Artistic Director and a member of the core team of The Finger Players. She has since directed and led productions such as *Peepbird* (2020) and *Little Mournings* (2021, as part of The Maker's Project). She has recently contributed as a performer and Puppet & Mask Designer for The Finger Players' *OIWA – The Ghost of Yotsuya*, as part of Singapore International Festival of Arts 2021. As an associate artist previously, she has performed and assisted in the design and making of puppets in *Framed*, *By Adolf*, *The Spirits Play*, *ITSY – The Musical*, *The Flying Dutchman*, *Turn by Turn We Turn* and several others.

In 2017, Myra co-created *You Can Reach The Sky*, Singapore's first immersive theatrical experience for babies. In 2018, Myra co-founded an arts collective, The Wanderlings, where she continues her work in engaging young people and people with special needs.

YUAN ZHIYING & JACQUELINE TEO COSTUME DESIGNERS

Zhiying and Jacqueline have been designing clothes since 2012, starting as assistant designers for Singapore womenswear label MAX.TAN, as well as being co-designers of ready-to-wear label YOUYOU. On top of designing costumes for television shows and public events, they ventured into costume design for stage productions in 2015. Theatre companies they have worked with include The Finger Players, Toy Factory Productions, The Necessary Stage and Drama Box. Their biggest production to date was designing costumes for the National Day parade in 2017. They have also won Best Costume for the 2017 M1-The Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards for their work on *Manifesto* (2016; Drama Box and The Necessary Stage).

ASHLEY LIM HAIR, HEADGEARS AND WIGS DESIGNER

Ashley started his hairstyling career in 1986 and set up Ashley Salon in 1999 to further pursue his dedication towards the art of hairdressing, especially for the theatre. Since 1987, he has worked on over 300 productions locally and abroad. He is privileged to be widely recognised by the local theatre community as a veteran in his artistry. Some of Ashley's most memorable creations include his headpieces for *Forbidden City* and *Monkey Goes West*. Recent credits include *Bangsawan Gemala Malam* and *Project Salome* (SIFA 2022), SRT's *LKY The Musical* (2022) and *Forbidden City*, Michael Chiang's *Army Daze 2*, Wild Rice's *Boeing Boeing*, *La Cage Aux Folles* and *Hotel*, The Theatre Practice's *Liao Zhai Rocks!*, Dream Academy's *Broadway Beng: The Great Wall*, *10th Anniversary Concert* and *Kumar50*. He recently took home the Lifetime Achievement Award for Theatre, presented by Mediacorp.

BIOGRAPHIES

DESIGN TEAM

BOBBIE NG

MAKEUP DESIGNER

Bobbie Ng has been passionately involved in makeup for more than 20 years. She co-founded The Make Up Room, which was started with this belief in creating a space that appreciates and respects one's beauty. She first started working at MAC Cosmetics, where she was introduced to doing makeup for the fashion shows of international brands as well as Singapore theatre productions. To date, The Make Up Room has been involved in more than 200 local theatre productions and their recent involvement in 2022 includes various shows at *Huayi 2022* (Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay), SIFA 2022 as well as works for Wild Rice, Dream Academy, The Theatre Practice, and many more.

MICHELE LIM

PRODUCER

Michele is an independent producer, arts educator and arts management consultant from Singapore. Producing credits for shows at Esplanade include *Between 5 Cows and the Deep Blue Sea...* written by A Yagnya (*Kalaa Utsavam* 2022); *Alice's Topsy Turvy Tea Party* by Melissa Quek and the Kueh Tutus (March On 2021); 《六根不宁》 *I Came At Last to the Seas* conceived by Kuo Jian Hong (*Huayi* 2018); *garden·uprooted* by The Philharmonic Orchestra and Arts Fission in collaboration with Esplanade (2018); *Dark Room* by Edith Podesta (*The Studios*, 2016); 《望远行》 *Moving Horizon : A Nanyin Journey* by Siong Leng Musical Association (*Huayi* 2014); *Perfection of 10* conceived by Sean Tobin (*The Studios*, 2012). Festival productions include: *Returning* 《回归》 conceived by Mdm Goh Lay Kuan (commissioned by Singapore International Festival of Arts 2015); *Dream Country, A Lost Monologue* conceived by Marion D'Cruz (commissioned by Singapore Festival of Arts 2012).

KENNY WONG TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Kenny Wong was Esplanade's first Production Manager. He returned to the Esplanade in 2021 as the centre's Head of Technical Production.

Kenny was responsible for the development of Singapore's first-degree programme in Technical Theatre at LASALLE College of the Arts and has also taught at NUS, Republic Polytechnic, Ngee Ann Polytechnic and the Inter-Cultural Theatre Institute (ITI).

He has worked on many productions by leading companies like TheatreWorks, Toy Factory, Wild Rice, Singapore Lyric Opera, Michael Chiang's *Playthings* and Metropolitan Festival Orchestra. Most recently, he was the Technical Director for the well-received Bicentennial Experience at Fort Canning in 2019. He was the Technical Director for NDP 2011, the SEA Games Opening & Closing Ceremonies 2015 and National Day Parade (NDP) 2016, which marks the return of NDP to the National Stadium. He was also Production Manager for Resorts World Sentosa's inaugural resident show, *Voyage de la Vie*, Singapore's first long-running circus theatrical spectacular.

Kenny also served as consultant and advisor in the creation and operations of theatre spaces like SOTA, TheatreWorks' 72-13, the re-development of Victoria Theatre and Victoria Concert Hall and the Wild Rice Theatre at Funan. He is also consulting on the NS Square project.

LAM DAN FONG (THE BACKSTAGE AFFAIR) PRODUCTION MANAGER

Dan Fong is the co-founder of The Backstage Affair, a backstage management company that believes in shaping the future of backstage practitioners through bridging education and vocation.

She started in the arts scene as part of ARTivate, the youth wing of Drama Box Ltd, alternating between school and volunteering at theatre productions. She was also an auditor, full-time production manager and a freelancer who has worked with many local theatre companies.

CAROLINE RUTH LIEW (THE BACKSTAGE AFFAIR) STAGE MANAGER

Caroline is part of The Backstage Affair, a backstage management company that believes in shaping the future of backstage practitioners and aims to bridge the gap between education and vocation in this realm of the arts and entertainment industry.

Selected stage management credits include The Welsh National Opera, National Theatre of Wales, Pandemonium! Theatre Company Ltd, Singapore Repertory Theatre, The Theatre Practice, NADI Singapura Ltd, Singapore International Festival of Arts, Drama Box Ltd, Metropolitan Festival Orchestra and the Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay.

She holds a BA(Hons) in Stage Management from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and was appointed an Honorary Associate of the college in July 2020. She is a recipient of the National Arts Council Overseas Scholarship and the Lee Foundation Bursary.

FAE TAN

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

A graduate from Ngee Ann Polytechnic's Diploma in Arts Business Management, Fae began her journey in the arts industry in 2017. Her interest in stage management began in school when she was asked to be a stage manager for a school festival. During her internship with Singapore Dance Theatre, she had the opportunity to work with the production team as an assistant stage manager. Since then, her passion and interest in backstage work has led her to continue pursuing a career in the arts as a freelancer.

Fae's specialities lie in stage management, and she has recently expanded into the costume department. Over the years, Fae has worked on productions with Gateway Entertainment, Singapore Ballet (formerly Singapore Dance Theatre), Singapore Repertory Theatre, Singapore International Festival of Arts, Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay, The Finger Players, Toy Factory Productions and Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts.

DEANNA DZUKIFLI

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Deanna Dzukifli is a producer and production manager with experience in dance, theatre, performance art, film, and live music. She obtained her bachelor's degree in Arts Management from Goldsmiths, University of London (2020), graduating with Honours. Her skills range from project management, relationship management, PR and marketing as well as budget management.

MARC ANDRE THERRIEN SET SUPERVISOR

Marc has been a set builder in Singapore for more than 18 years, having worked on almost all the shows for SRT's *Shakespeare in the Park* and numerous sets for Singapore's most famous theatre companies. He moved from Canada to Singapore to work as Cirque du Soleil's director of technical services 22 years ago and stayed in Singapore with his wife.

He was the set coordinator for NDP 2015, SEA Games 2016 and *The Bicentennial Experience* at Fort Canning. He was also the art installation technical advisor and supervisor for Gillman Barracks *Lock Route* and *Disini* exhibitions, among many other projects.

LEE YEW JIN AUDIO PRODUCTION ENGINEER

Yew Jin is a sound designer and engineer who specializes in live theatre mixing and production engineering. He has been working closely with Ctrl Fre@k since 2015 on a variety of projects.

Selected live music mixing include *LKY Musical* (Aiwei/SRT, 2022 & 2015), *Urinetown* (Pangdemonium, 2019) and *Rent* (Pangdemonium, 2016). As a sound designer, he has worked on *Constellations* (SRT, 2017), *Hang To God* (SRT, 2017) and *Chinatown Crossings* (Drama Box, 2018 & 2019)

He has also worked with local live acts such as The Observatory, M1LDLIFE, Steve McQueens and Inch Chua.

LOW WEE CHENG

(CTRL FRE@K)

VIDEO SYSTEMS DESIGNER

Wee started out as a lighting technician before venturing into lighting and multimedia programming and design, eventually co-starting Ctrl Fre@k in 2010.

Selected multimedia programming credits include *Share the Hope*, a façade projection mapping show for National Gallery Singapore, *LKY Musical* (Metropolitan Productions) and *Julius Caesar* (Singapore Repertory Theatre).

Selected multimedia design credits include *Soul Journey – Ten Years* (Siong Leng Musical Association), *Flash: Back/Forward* (Esplanade's 10th year anniversary), *Farewell – The Body In 16 Chapters* (Drama Box) and *Rising Son* (Singapore Repertory Theatre).

Others credits include NDP 2014 as its Multimedia Technical Manager as well as Show Control, Lighting and Multimedia system design for the *Singapore Bicentennial Experience*.

THERESA CHAN

WARDROBE MISTRESS

Theresa Chan graduated from LASALLE College of the Arts. Over the past 18 years, Chan has helmed the wardrobe departments of countless theatre shows in Singapore and has expanded into costume departments of film, television productions and events, such as *Asia's Got Talent*, Cathay Organisation's *Our Sister Mambo*, SEA Games 2015 and more. She runs her own wardrobe management company and a costume rental store, The Costume Pte Ltd. Chan dreams of the day where she is able to create a costume management legacy to pass on her knowledge to the younger generations in the years to come.

XU XIN'EN (FICTION SHORE) MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

Xin'en believes in doing whatever it takes to create magic in the theatre. Motivated by her passion for the arts, she has taken on a myriad of roles within the entertainment industry.

As a theatre producer, Xin'en has worked with Dream Academy and Double Confirm Productions on popular and critically acclaimed shows such as *KUMAR: What Makes A Man A Man?*, *Company*, *Crazy Christmas*, *The Hossan Leong Show* and the *Hossan-AH!* Series.

She was the production manager at Wild Rice in 2016, managing the Singapore Theatre Festival and its annual pantomime.

Xin'en was also the multimedia producer for NDP 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2022.

Xin'en has a Masters in Cultural and Creative Industries from the Taipei National University of the Arts. Xin'en has produced a number of commercials and short films, such as *Plague*, directed by Boo Junfeng for the National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre. She has also produced music videos for local artistes like Ugly In The Morning and The TENG Ensemble.

To bring art into homes, Xin'en has moved to producing for a hybrid of live performance and filming, and part of her repertoire include various digital performances, including *Open Call (da:ns festival 2020)* and productions by Frontier Danceland.

A YAGNYA

SCRIPT TRANSLATOR (ENGLISH-JAPANESE)

A Yagnya is a collaborative theatre maker and Japanese translator.

Yagnya's playwrighting credits include *Between 5 Cows and the Deep Blue Sea...* (Esplanade's *Kalaa Utsavam* 2022), *subTITLED 1.0* (Bridging the Gap Collective, 2021), *Hi, Can You Hear Me?* (Playwrights' Cove 2020), and *The Oven Story* அவன் கதலை (3Pumpkins, 2020). She has also co-written for GroundZ_0's *Prism of Truth* (Huayi 2020), interpreted for ITI's Noh Theatre Module, acted in *Goddesses of Words: Angry Indian Women* (Textures 2020), and dramaturged for *(un)becoming* (Festival of Women N.O.W. 2021). She was also a participant in a Devising for Actors and Playwrights 2021 programme by The Necessary Stage (TNS) and was engaged in a Lab with TNS on using AI in performance making.

Yagnya was previously an Assistant Language Teacher in Toyama, Japan for three years on the JET Programme and now works a HR job at a Japanese company when she isn't doing theatre stuff.
@iggyeggieggyagnya

ZULFADLI RASHID

SCRIPT TRANSLATOR (ENGLISH-MALAY)

Zulfadli Rashid is a multi-hyphenated playwright proficient in both English and Malay language. He is currently an Associate Artist with Teater Ekamatra. His notable plays include the award-nominated musical *Alkesah*, as well as several critically acclaimed adaptations and transcreations of works into the Malay language. Zulfadli collaborates with artistes across disciplines, and cultures, creating art that will entertain, enlighten, and inspire.

VADI PVSS

SCRIPT TRANSLATOR (ENGLISH-TAMIL)

Vadi PVSS as he is popularly known in the media circles is a lawyer by profession and holds a Masters in Creative Industries (Drama Teaching) from QUT, Australia. He is a National Arts Council Theatre Bursary Award recipient. Considered by 'Tabla!' as 'one of the more prolific bilingual writer directors in local Tamil theatre' Vadi has written and directed critically acclaimed local plays such as 'Shanmugan - The Kalinga Trilogy' in English and Puyalgal (புயல்கள்) in Tamil.

Vadi writes, directs and acts for television. He recently co-created and wrote for his own hit TV series "Vadi Ready Vedi Season 2 with Kumar" for MediaCorp Vasantham. Vadi has garnered several awards for his work in television, and continues to ply his trade both for the stage and TV.

TT DHAVAMANNI SCRIPT ADVISOR

T T Dhavamanni is a writer, director, producer, and founder of Blue River Pictures. He has created diverse content for the Singapore media industry over the last 20 years. He has contributed immensely to the Tamil television scene and is much sought-after for his stellar work.

His credentials include Tamil television series *Guru Paarvai*, with the last season winning accolades in the USA, *Subra and Friends*, *Padigal*, *Tamil.com* (2014), *Romeo and Juliet* (2020) the English television feature *Common Space* (2014), among many others. His telemovie, *The Learning Curve* (2015) was highly commended in during the 20th Asian Television Awards 2015 and was also a finalist in the New York Festivals (Best Drama Special) in the same year. Dhavamanni was selected for the New Feature Film Fund in 2009 by the Singapore Film Commission. He went on to co-write, direct and produce the film titled *Gurushetram – 24 Hours of Anger*, which opened in 2010 to rave reviews, and went on to be screened in India and Malaysia.

Dhavamanni is also an acclaimed theatre practitioner, and has written the play *What is the Price of Love?*, published in the collection *Light Over Waters*. It is currently a text in the Singapore-Cambridge GCE Advanced Level for Tamil literature students. Dhavamanni has been serving as a Juror for the International Emmy Awards Competition since 2020.

MIO NAKANO

ENGLISH-JAPANESE INTERPRETER

Mio is an interpreter based in Singapore, who focuses mainly on subjects related to art and culture. Mio loves her work as an interpreter, which allows her to enter different fields, to listen to people and to gain new perspectives. Her domain varies from performing arts, fine arts, crafts, photography, content production to education, among others. She is immersed in a stream of constant absorption of knowledge, understanding and practice along with new topics which she encounters on a daily basis. As an interpreter on the site of creation, she not only conveys information but also cherishes mutual understanding in the team through small conversations.

Mio is very excited to be a part of *Kingdoms Apart* at Esplanade. It gave her a great opportunity to explore the epic world of the *Mahabharata* whose philosophy is still relevant in modern society, Indian traditional arts, social systems, and humanity.

She is a graduate from Waseda University in Sociology in Tokyo, and holds a Master in Arts and Cultural Management from International University of Catalonia, Barcelona.

CAST LIST

CHARACTERS / PERFORMERS

THE KAURAVAS

Duryodhana Son
Queen Gandhari Mother
King Dhritarashtra Father

Tan Guo Lian Sutton
Anne James
Loong Seng Onn

THE PANDAVAS

Yudhishtira Eldest Brother
Bhima 2nd Brother
Arjuna 3rd Brother
Kunti Mother
Draupadi Wife to all brothers
The Twins

Futoshi Moriyama
Farez Najid
Brendon Fernandez
Jean Ng
Edith Podesta
Jo Kwek & Vanessa Toh

Karna
Mother Karna's mother
Father Karna's father

Ghafir Akbar
Anne James
Loong Seng Onn

Krishna Supreme Divinity
Voice of Krishna

Neewin Hershall
K Rajagopal

Bhishma Great Granduncle
to the Pandavas
and Kauravas

Vadi PVSS*

*Due to unforeseen injury, Vadi PVSS will be performing in a wheelchair for this show.

Drona Royal Trainer
and Guru/General
Puppeteers

Matt Grey
Jo Kwek
Vanessa Toh

Musicians

Darren Ng
Yuya Antical

CREATIVE AND PRODUCTION TEAM

Director/Playwright Chong Tze Chien

Set Designer Eucien Chia

Associate Set Designer Grace Lin

Multimedia Designer Koo Chia Meng (Fiction Shore)

Assistant Multimedia Designer Maximilian Liang (Fiction Shore)

Lighting Designer James Tan

Music Composer, Music Director
and Sound Designer Darren Ng

Puppetry & Props Designer and
Puppetry Training Consultant Myra Loke
(The Finger Players)

Costume Designers Yuan Zhiying & Jacqueline Teo

Hair, Headgears and Wigs
Designer Ashley Lim

Makeup Designer Bobbie Ng
(The Make Up Room)

Script Advisor TT Dhavamanni

Producer Michele Lim

Technical Director Kenny Wong

Production Manager Lam Dan Fong
(The Backstage Affair)

Stage Manager Carolene Ruth Liew
(The Backstage Affair)

Assistant Stage Managers Fae Tan
Deanna Dzulkifli

Crew Paul Lim
M. Nurfadhli Jasni

CREATIVE AND PRODUCTION TEAM

Set Supervisor	Marc Andre Therrien
Audio Production Engineer	Lee Yew Jin (Ctrl Fre@k)
Video Systems Designer	Low Wee Cheng (Ctrl Fre@k)
Multimedia Producer	Xu Xin'En (Fiction Shore)
Live Camera Operators	Mindy Chin (Fiction Shore)
	Steffie Tan (Fiction Shore)

LED Screen Technician	Woo Hoo Tong (Electronics & Engineering)
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Surtitle Operator	Rochelle Edelweiss Boon
Wardrobe Mistress	Theresa Chan
Assistant Wardrobe Mistress	Nurarina Nasir
Dressers	Mas Nurshaqinah Binte Mohamed Haleemy Nur Fatin Nabilah Bte Mohd Rafie

Make up Assistants	Kelly Lau (The Makeup Room) Esther Goh (The Make Up Room)
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Puppet and Props Makers	Chan Silei Daniel Sim Loo An Ni Bernice Ong
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Script Translator (English-Japanese)	A Yagnya
Script Translator (English-Malay)	Zulfadli Rashid
Script Translator (English-Tamil)	Vadi PVSS
English-Japanese Interpreter	Mio Nakano
Combat Coordinator	Chai Jean Yinn
Movement Training Artist	Pallavi Sharma

SPECIAL THANKS

Rustom Bharucha

Hanne de Bruin

P Rajagopal

(Kattaikkuttu Gurukulam)

Sadanand Menon (SPACES)

Mundoli Narayanan

Margi Madhu

Harindranath Avaroth

Artistes from Kerala Kalamandalam

Kunnamkulam Kathakali Club

Nell Hawley and Sohini Pillai

(co-editors of the book, *Many Mahabharatas*)

Richard Emmert

The late Mrs Santha Bhaskar

Bhaskar's Arts Academy

Julius Foo

Lim Yu-Beng

Chandrashekara K

T Sasitharan

Remesh Panicker

Lim Kay Siu

Ramesh Meyyappan

Lim Woan Wen

Loo Zihan

Brian Gothong Tan

Marilyn Ang

Kiera Lee

Lakshmana K P

Saravanan Tasiveran

Venkata Rathnaiah

Manoj Kumar

Nara SNV

Ng Hui Lin

The Finger Players Ltd

Wild Rice

The Costume Pte Ltd

Germanica Fashion

SCM Production Pte Ltd

Toy Factory Productions Ltd

Broadcast Communications
International

Juliana Lim

Suon Kuok

Esplanade would like to convey our deepest thanks to everyone, especially the artists and production team of *Kingdoms Apart*, who have journeyed with us for this production, from its inception to the performance you see onstage today.

SPECIAL THANKS

Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay Staff Members

Producers: Joyce Yao & Delvin Lee

Production Coordinators: Brian Leong & Cristabel Ng

Technical Director: Kenny Wong

Technical Team: Mohd Kamal Bin Masuni, Syed Abdullah Bin Syed Salleh, Heryadi Mohd Yusof, Ismahadie Putra Ishak, Simon Ng, Reuben Raquiza, Edward Ferguson, Corrie Vennard, Ashraff Bin AB Samad, Li Huimin, Moerdani Bin Osman, Bernie Hoi, Pelangi Iman Bin Sabri & Nur Ridwan Bin Sumani

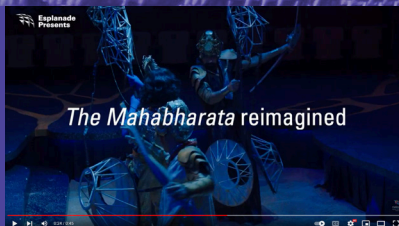


Photos credit: Crispian Chan



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KINGDOMS APART IN 60 SECONDS



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KINGDOMS APART - MEET THE CAST



<https://youtu.be/pTWAHrM97CM>

KINGDOMS APART - SHOUT OUT TRAILER



<https://youtu.be/aCCsZwasGMU>

#soywhat you want?



It's m*lk, planted not raised.

Plant-based Protein
Added Calcium

Eat all foods in moderation.

grow

#mydurian

Help bear more fruit in the arts

**Join us in bearing more "fruits" in the arts
and help us grow #mydurian so that we can:**

- Continue to keep over 70% of our programmes free.
- Bring the arts to people of different backgrounds and different abilities.

Adopt one of the 7,139 sunshades, claddings or "spikes" that have earned us our "durian" nickname! A donation of \$98 allows you to virtually personalise one of these "spikes" or gather your friends and family to collectively personalise a cluster of "spikes".

These "spikes" protect us from the heat and harsh glare, while letting the beautiful glow of sunlight into our building. Like these "spikes", your donation helps us continue being an arts centre for everyone while supporting our efforts to grow new fruits in the arts for our future!

Find out more about
what your donation
helps us do here.




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Esplanade is a charity and not-for-profit organisation.
Help us bring the joy and inspiration of the arts to
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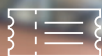
Esplanade gives our heartfelt thanks
to our Esplanade partner, arts benefactor, donors and sponsors for believing in our vision to be a performing arts centre for everyone. They made all these possible!^



2,976

activities took place at Esplanade.

Ticketed



821

Non-Ticketed



1,891

2,062,549



People attended our activities at the centre.

Ticketed

72,756

Non-Ticketed

379,989

We believe that everyone should be able to experience the joy of the arts, including children, youth, seniors, migrant workers and individuals with special needs. Our community engagement activities bring the arts to those in need.



465

Activities

7,522

Participants

*Figures for Esplanade's activities from Apr 2021 to Mar 2022.



Your contribution* will make a difference.

On behalf of the communities we serve, thank you!
Find out how you too can make a difference through the arts at Esplanade.

Donate at www.esplanade.com/donate

To find out more, email us at donations@esplanade.com or speak with us at 6828 8321.

Esplanade is a charity and an Institution of a Public Character. Your donation to us is matched dollar-for-dollar by the Cultural Matching Fund. Please note that the prevailing tax exemption scheme for donors and sponsors of Arts-Related Businesses will depend on the qualifying criteria imposed by IRAS.

With Gratitude

Esplanade–Theatres on the Bay is a charity, a not-for-profit organisation and Singapore's national performing arts centre. We seek to entertain, engage, educate and inspire through the arts.

In 2022, we mark our 20th anniversary of being an arts centre for everyone. We thank everyone who has been a part of our journey. You have helped us bring joy, inspiration and positive impact to Singaporeans from all walks of life.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes especially to our Donors and Sponsors, for their steadfast belief in our mission and for generously supporting us.

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The above are donors and sponsors who contributed \$1000 and above from April 2021–March 2022.

Join us in sharing the joy of the arts and help us reach more communities in need.

We believe that an experience with the arts is special and that with your generous support, more people will get a chance to enjoy the arts. Join us in sharing the joy of the arts and help us reach more communities in need.



The Esplanade Co Ltd is funded by Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and our Community Programmes are supported by Tote Board Family, comprising Tote Board, Singapore Pools and Singapore Turf Club.

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Reading Offstage is one of the best things ever!
I devote all my free time to the videos, articles
and podcasts about music, dance, theatre, visual
arts... it is absolutely life-changing. Five stars.

”

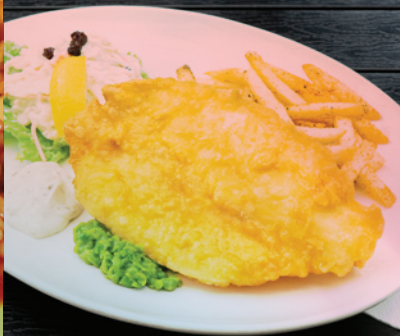
Totally Anonymous Person

(who is not related to Offstage)



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*Non-members get \$10 off with a min. of \$40 spent.



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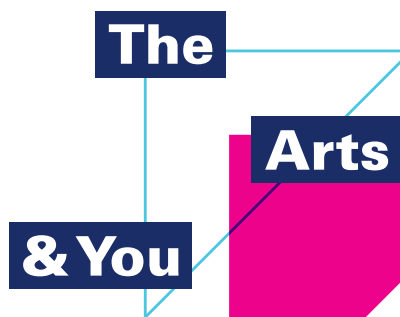
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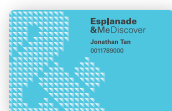
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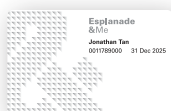
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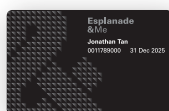
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Free upgrade when
you spend \$500



Free upgrade when
you spend \$1000



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12 years & under



Free for ages
17 to 26 years



Free for ages
55 & above

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