



**Esplanade
Presents**

An Esplanade Commission and Production

RATA

new grounds new sounds

A programme of *In New Light – A Season of Commissions*,
in celebration of Esplanade's 20th anniversary.

29 – 31 Dec 2022

Thu – Sat, 7.30pm

Singtel Waterfront Theatre at Esplanade

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 for more information.

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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 façade 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.

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

Director's Message

RATA—both the *orkestra* and this production—has taken many twists and turns to get to its current state, since the idea started brewing in my head in 2019 after Esplanade posed a challenge to me for a special showcase at the Singtel Waterfront Theatre.

The world is a different place now, and we have become different beings too since.

Most of us are still trying hard to navigate these familiar yet strange mental states in our daily lives. Little did I know that the RATA journey would steer me towards a process of artistic discovery and renewal, in a personal capacity. And all the twists and turns have been necessary.



Photo Credit: A. Syadiq

We started out by plunging into the sonic abyss, in search of some versions of our new musical selves. It's a quest that I hope doesn't end here, because the discoveries made with Andy Chia, Azrin Abdullah, Cheryl Ong, Rizman Putra, and weish often led to many indescribable moments. Whatever we have developed musically the past one and a half years seems like a living and breathing creature, whose introduction to the world will be accompanied by a great guest and wonderful friend, Nova Ruth.

Scoring or soundtracking a film, play, or art installation will always feel like a dream for me, no matter how many times I have done it. But to build a world, a physical realm based on the music I have played a part in, is pure fantasy. This fantasy is getting too real now, thanks to the RATA world builders: Brandon Tay, Akbar Syadiq, Rong Zhao, Adrian Tan and Tristan Lim.

For discoveries and renewals to take place, we needed additional eyes, ears and limbs that we could trust and feel safe with. All these explorations would not have been possible without Cui Yin Mok, Nadia Noordin, Ng Siaw Hui, and AK.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Akilesh and the entire Esplanade team for posing me the challenge two years ago and providing the greatest of support throughout the journey. *In New Light*, we shall welcome everyone to this new world of RATA.

Safuan Johari

About RATA Orkestra



Named for the Malay word 'rata', meaning 'flat', or 'even', RATA Orkestra creates new aural topographies, experimenting with collaborative composition, and breaking old boundaries across the traditional, the experimental, and the popular. The members of RATA Orkestra are Azrin Abdullah, Andy Chia, Cheryl Ong, Safuan Johari, Rizman Putra, and weish.

@rataorkestra

Artists

Safuan Johari

Safuan is a Singaporean sound designer and music producer. In the realm of sound design, he has worked on various multimedia art installations and performance productions. He has also composed and produced music for theatre, dance, and film. Safuan is constantly reimagining the spectres of the cultural past through digital and technological lenses.

Safuan has exhibited and performed in Beijing, Paris, London and New York. In Singapore, he has showcased works for Singapore Night Festival, i-Light Marina Bay, Singapore International Festival of Arts and M1 Singapore Fringe Festival. Safuan is also part of NADA, a visual arts and sound project that summons hauntological soundscapes and seeks lost futures.

@maxlane



Andy Chia

Andy is a producer, director, artist, musician, husband, and father.

He was the first professionally trained Chinese flutist in Singapore and the first non-native Chinese to receive an MA in Dizi performance from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music as a National Arts Council scholar. Andy is also the co-founder, artistic director, producer, and resident artist of SAtheCollective Ltd.

Andy's artistic pursuit is in the exploration of the evolving relationship between humans, nature, and technology. His study uses shamanic and ritualistic teachings alongside interdisciplinary and intercultural manners in search of a harmonious, unified existence between all three entities on the planet we call home. His art has been described as hypermodernism, drawing from ethnic roots while still remaining contemporary.

As an artist and producer, Andy has been commissioned by and/or worked with major festivals and institutions such as Singapore International Festival of Arts, National Gallery Singapore, Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre, as well as OZAsia Festival (Australia), Sydney Festival, and AngelicA Festival Internazionale di Musica (Bologna).

His latest works include *SIFA X: Oneirism* (SIFA 2022), and interdisciplinary exhibition *Poetic Pandemic*.
@andy.cql

Photo Credit: A. Syadiq



Azrin Abdullah

“The *oud* should not only be looked upon as just a musical instrument. It is an instrument of expression with the capability to convey your inner emotions.”

– Azrin Abdullah

Azrin started learning the acoustic guitar at the age of six, gave his first musical performance by the time he was nine, and hasn't looked back since.

His love affair with the *oud* began in 1999, when he was tasked to learn it as part of an endeavour to master traditional Malay music. Although he has faced considerable challenges and difficulties in learning to play this instrument, Azrin continues to believe in sharing his knowledge so that the *oud* can be made accessible to all.

In 2014, Azrin was sponsored by the National Arts Council to pursue an advanced course at the National Conservatory of Arts in Kuala Lumpur to further his knowledge of the *oud*. In 2016, he produced the first Singapore Gambus Conference in conjunction with the Malay Culture Festival at the Malay Heritage Centre, gathering local and international speakers and *gambus* enthusiasts to share their knowledge of the instrument.

Azrin was instrumental in forming Singapore Oudists (SGOudists), an online *oud* community that provides local players from all walks of life with a platform to get together and share techniques and playing styles.

He is currently an adjunct teacher with School of The Arts (SOTA) and also President of the Oudists Association of Singapore.

@azrin_abdullah



Brandon Tay

Brandon Tay is a Singapore-based artist who works in the fields of mediated sculpture and the moving image. His work explores emergent complexities in digital materials, complicates distinctions between the tangible and incorporeal, both in composition as well as subject matter. As a collaborator and individually, his work has been shown at Kyoto Dance Experiment, the Singapore International Festival of Arts, M1 Singapore Fringe Festival, Singapore Night Festival, among others.

@brozm



Cheryl Ong

Cheryl Ong is a percussionist who is active in music performance and education and regularly performs with avant rock group, The Observatory. Though classically trained, Cheryl consistently struggles with the fact that classical music can be divisive and limited to its roles. Tired of being a mere technician, Cheryl has gone on to explore improvisational and experimental practices in recent years, hunting down new ideas and sounds.

Recent performances include All Ears Festival (2020, Norway) with the Guro (Dyna)Moe Revolution Sextet; AngelicA Festival (2019, Bologna) in a duo with Vivian Wang; Kombo, CTM Festival (2019, Berlin); Nusasonic HCMC with the Common Tonalities Ensemble (2022, Ho Chi Minh City). Her solo composition Hejira was used in the closing credits of Singaporean filmmaker Yeo Siew Hua's award-winning film, *A Land Imagined*.

@cheryleatschips



Rizman Putra

Rizman Putra has been actively juggling performance, visual arts, and music for the past twenty years after graduating with an MA (Fine Arts) from LASALLE College of the Arts in 2007.

In 2005, Rizman was one of the four artists selected for the President's Young Talents Exhibition and was part of the Fukuoka Triennale. In the same year, the now-dissolved arts collective he co-founded, Kill Your Television (KYTV), was awarded the Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (JCCI) Singapore Foundation Arts Award. Rizman has performed locally and internationally and at the inaugural Singapore Biennale in 2006.

Rizman is one half of the retro-futurist electronic duo NADA and is currently an Associate Artist with CakeTheatrical Productions.
@manicjango



weish

weish is a composer, vocalist, writer, performer, and artist whose work spans diverse genres and disciplines. She is part of electronic duo .gif, prog group sub:shaman, and audiovisual collective and label Syndicate.

As a musician, weish has performed on stages including the F1 Grand Prix, as opening act for Canadian duo Tegan and Sara at the Esplanade Concert Hall, St Jerome's Laneway Festival, Java Soundsfair Jakarta, BIGSOUND Australia, Neon Lights, and the Golden Melody Awards Taipei. In 2018, she performed at the Sundance Film Festival and Sheffield Doc/Fest, having written the theme song and part of the soundtrack of Sundance award-winning film, *Shirkers* by Sandi Tan.

A regular collaborator and associate artist with Checkpoint Theatre, weish was musical director for the theatre company's *Displaced Persons' Welcome Dinner* (SIFA 2019), and wrote and performed original script and music in *Be Here, With Me* as part of their digital festival, *Two Songs and a Story* (2020). weish also wrote and performed *Besides Ourselves* presented by .gif (M1 Singapore Fringe Festival 2020), and *Did You Want More Sleep?* (SIFA 2020–2021).

weish has also transformed plants into instruments for Vogue Singapore and Playtronica, composed for a dance film by T.H.E Dance Company, and created *A Taxi Uncle Symphony*, a sound-art film commissioned by and exhibited at National Gallery Singapore.

@wweishh

Nova Ruth

Nova Ruth Setyaningtyas is a Java neo-soul musician and an activist. As co-founder and emcee of the female duo Twinsista, she has explored genres ranging from jazz, R&B, noise and post-folk for over ten years before finally meeting Filastine, her longest music partner.

She co-created Arka Kinari—a sailing vessel and floating arts platform sounding the alarm on climate change, while carrying culture as its cargo. Combining method and message, the ship voyages through Indonesian waters to raise awareness among remote coastal communities about climate change through a floating audio-visual performance powered by renewable energy.

Reviving the involvement of female sailors in Indonesia, Nova has brought on women art workers to join a residency programme onboard Arka Kinari in collaboration with Peretas. Her focus on ocean subjects got her invited to become one of the founders of The Women Of The Seven Seas. From starting out as a naive artist who had a fear of the ocean, after clocking thousands nautical miles and three years as a liveaboard, she might now be able to call herself a sailor.

Nova has brought the waves of Java onto international world stages such as the Incubate Festival (Netherlands), Downtown Cairo Arts (Egypt), Indonesian Dance Festival (Indonesia), Les Vieilles Charrues (France), and Mona Foma (Australia). She was co-composer for *xhe*, a durational dance piece directed by Daniel Kok and Miho Shimizu presented by Esplanade's *da:ns festival* and at Liveworks in Sydney (2018); *Postcolonial Spirits* by Choy Ka Fai for Indonesia Bertutur (2022); *Liminality*, a full dome performance produced by 4PI for SAT Montreal (2019); and the Arka Kinari Live Documentary for CULTVR Cardiff and Full Dome UK in Plymouth (2022).

@novaruth



Credits

RATA Orkestra @rataorkestra

Azrin Abdullah
Andy Chia
Cheryl Ong
Rizman Putra
Safuan Johari
weish

oud
dizi, vocals, electronics
percussion, electronics
vocals
electronics
vocals

feat.

Nova Ruth

vocals

Visuals

Brandon Tay

Directed/conceived by
Creative Producer
Lighting Designer
Set Designer
Sound Designer

Safuan Johari
Cui Yin Mok
Adrian Tan
Akbar Syadiq
Yong Rong Zhao

Production Manager
Technical Manager
Stage Manager
Multimedia Operator

Ng Siaw Hui
AK
Nadia Noordin
Tristan Lim

#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 different communities, including the underserved.

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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

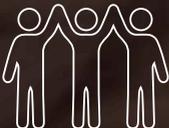
*Figures for Esplanade's activities from Apr 2021 to Mar 2022.

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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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.



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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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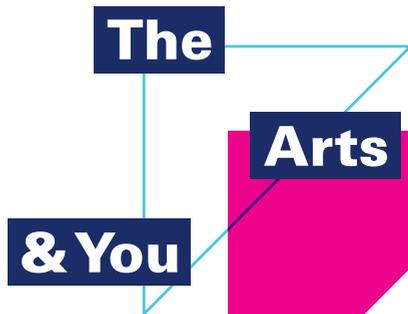
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