

## Producer's Message

Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay presents *CAN – Connect Asia Now*, a weekend dedicated to contemporary works by Asian dancemakers, from 13 – 15 Oct 2023. *CAN* will take place annually as part of *da:ns focus*, our year-round dance season comprising five themed weekends.

*CAN* is a dedicated platform where we will continue supporting artists from the region and introduce their work to Singapore audiences, carrying on from our efforts over the past 17 years as part of *da:ns festival*. It is a gathering place for artists, practitioners, producers and international presenters to come together, to connect and further develop Asia's contemporary dance scene. The title is also a playful reference to our colloquial way of saying "yes!" in Singapore.

**TAO Dance Theatre** (China) makes a long-awaited return to Singapore with the Southeast Asian premiere of their latest works, *13 & 14*. Known for their distinctive minimalist style and precision in movement, they are one of the most acclaimed Asian contemporary dance companies in the world, having won the Silver Lion Award at La Biennale di Venezia this year.

For the inaugural *CAN*, Esplanade is commissioning new works by two Southeast Asian female choreographers, **Kornkarn Rungsawang** (Thailand) and **Melati Suryodarmo** (Indonesia).

Kornkarn Rungsawang is an exciting up-and-coming artist who has worked with the renowned Pichet Klunchun Dance Company for several years. *Mali Bucha: Dance Offering* marks Kornkarn's debut as a choreographer in her own right and will be her first full-length production. She represents a new generation of Asian dancemakers who continue to bridge traditional and contemporary dance.

The acclaimed Indonesian visual and performance artist Melati Suryodarmo is known for her bold, durational solo performances most often seen in gallery spaces. As part of *CAN*, Melati premieres *Lapse*, a new dance creation performed by dancers from Indonesia and Taiwan, with collaborators from Singapore, including Yuen Chee Wai from The Observatory.

We are excited to bring these very distinct and important Asian voices to our audience, and we look forward to the exchanges and dialogues that will come out of *CAN* as a key platform for dance and performance from Asia.

### **Izumi Asakawa**

Producer

on behalf of da:ns team, Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay