



**Esplanade
Presents**

da:ns

AN ESPLANADE COMMISSION

MAI BUCHA: **DANCE OFFERING**

BY KORNKARN
RUNGSAWANG (Thailand)



13 – 15 OCT 2023, FRI – SUN

FRI, 9PM | SAT, 7.30PM | SUN, 3PM

ESPLANADE THEATRE STUDIO

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. 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.

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.

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.

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 2022, and the Charity Transparency Award from 2016 – 2019 and 2022. 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.

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CHOREOGRAPHER'S NOTE

In *Mali Bucha: Dance Offering*, we delve into the spiritual connections formed through the interplay of physical and digital realms. Here, the sacred and the modern intertwine, beckoning us to examine the depth of our belief systems and the avenues through which we seek blessings and connect to higher powers.

Historically, physical shrines stood as landmarks of spiritual grounding, determined and marked by human sensibilities that resonated with a spiritual aura, a sense of magic, or a potent charm innate to a space. These were places for thanksgiving, where individuals expressed their gratitude to higher powers, embarking on journeys of spiritual connection and reflection.

As we stand in the new era, the delineation between the physical and the digital blurs, giving rise to digital shrines—abstract yet immersive universes created through technology, a reflection of the transformation of belief systems adapting to the modern world.

In this reimagined space, we find ourselves as nomads navigating a virtual environment, exploring the boundaries of belief and what it means to hold hope in a digitised world. We are propelled into a narrative where anyone can create an avatar, craft their own systems of thanksgiving, and forge personal pathways to spiritual connection.

“Does this digitised frontier truly resonate with the seeker in you?”

Mali Bucha: Dance Offering explores this frontier, urging us to contemplate the authenticity and efficacy of virtual spirituality. It presents an interface—a mediator that promises to channel your desires, aspirations, and material pursuits to the digital gods.

As we journey through this virtual world, we are urged to ponder upon the deep-rooted human instinct for belief and hope. Does the digital shrine possess the ability to echo the spiritual gravity of physical shrines? Or does the tangible and the physical hold an irreplaceable place in our belief system?

We invite you to delve into this contemplative adventure, where dance becomes a language articulating the evolving dynamics of belief systems in a world balancing between the physical and the digital. Witness a narrative woven with moves that echo the pulsating energies of spiritual sites, both physical and virtual, unravelling a dialogue of tradition and modernity, reality and virtuality, and the tangible and the intangible.

We invite you on this transformative journey, where the “dance offering” becomes a bridge between realms, offering a meditation on belief, spirituality, and the ever-evolving landscape of human connection in a digital age.

KORNKARN RUNGSAWANG

SYNOPSIS

Cross material and virtual worlds with up-and-coming choreographer Kornkarn Rungsawang in this ritual-inspired performance that combines dance, augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR). *Rum Kea Bon* is an ancient ritual performed at shrines and temples in Thailand where dance is used as a tool for negotiation by humans towards higher beings in a bid to make wishes come true. The charming dancer, hired as a messenger to access higher beings, enhances the likelihood of one's wish fulfilment.

Inspired by this ritual, Kornkarn created *Mali Bucha: Dance Offering*, a hybrid constellation of augmented reality, virtual reality and dance. This immersive and participatory iteration of *Rum Kea Bon* crosses between physical and immaterial worlds, with a digital shrine accessible through AR and VR throughout the duration of the performance. Audience members will be able to view, make wishes and offer flowers to the digital shrine.

Kornkarn thus acts as an interface between the material plane (the real-time audience) and the digital realm (the virtual shrine), communicating individual wishes and thanksgiving to higher beings through dance. Flowing as a current throughout *Mali Bucha* is a belief system that concerns itself with duality—economics and ecology, image and sound, old and new, the mundane and the transcendent.

This performance marks the full-length premiere of *Mali Bucha: Dance Offering*, after being workshopped at various leading platforms in Asia and Europe, such as Dance Nucleus in Singapore, Kinosaki International Arts Centre in Japan, and Tanz Kongress in Germany. As a dancer, Kornkarn has spent years performing with the renowned Pichet Klunchun and training in both classical and contemporary dance forms. Now as a dancemaker to watch, she continues to bridge the traditional and contemporary, reflecting modern cultural impulses of this generation.

Mali Bucha: Dance Offering is commissioned by Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay.

This production is presented as part of *da:ns focus – Connect Asia Now (CAN)*, a weekend that spotlights contemporary dance works by Asian artists focusing on distinct voices and creative impulses from the region.

1hr 15mins, no intermission



BIOGRAPHIES



CONCEPT, CHOREOGRAPHY
AND DANCE

KORKARN RUNGSAWANG

Born in Bangkok in 1988, Rungsa Wang represents a new generation of dance artists whose aim is to bridge the traditional and contemporary. Trained in diverse Thai traditions, from royal court to popular folk forms, she applies her wide knowledge of traditional

kinesthetic systems to the contemporary body and urban rhythms to formulate new dance expressions that reflect the current social, cultural and political environment. Since 2007, she has been a full-time artist in Pichet Klunchun Dance Company under the tutelage of renowned choreographer Pichet Klunchun. Her new solo work *Mali Bucha: Dance Offering* has been workshopped in Bangkok (2021, online version), Singapore (2022, Dance Nucleus and Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay), Germany (2022, Tanz Kongress in Mainz) and Indonesia (2022, Indonesian Dance Festival). Kornkarn is also part of the Artist-in-Residence Program 2023/2024 at the Kinosaki International Arts Center (KIAC).



LIGHTING DESIGNER

ASAKO MIURA

Asako Miura is a lighting designer who works with a theatre in Japan called DanceBox as chief lighting director since 2002. DanceBox was established to provide more opportunity to contemporary dancers who perform in Japan. She is a highly sought-after lightning designer among performers due to her deep understanding of contemporary dances. She also works independently for dance and theatre productions, amounting to more than 20 different stages a year.

Asako first met Pichet Klunchun when he was invited by DanceBox for the 4th Asia Contemporary Dance Festival in 2004. In 2007, Asako did the lighting design of his production *Theppanom* in Japan. She worked with him once again in 2010 for *ChuiChai* directed and choreographed by him, at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival and NY Lincoln Center Festival. In 2011, she designed lighting for Pichet Klunchun Dance Company's *Black and White* and in 2016 for *Dancing with Death* which both works were commissioned by Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay.



SOUND DESIGNER

ZAI TANG

Zai Tang is a multidisciplinary artist. His body of work has grown out of his foundation in sound. Drawing influence from acoustic ecology, phenomenology and electronic & experimental music, his practise is built upon a belief that listening is an invaluable means of attuning to and forming deeper relationships with the world(s) we inhabit and the experience of our own being.

In his solo work he responds to the question: What does it mean to listen to (and connect with) the voices of nature in a time of ecological crisis and mass extinction? To this end, he is experimenting with the abstraction and visualisation of the sounds of creatures he has recorded in wildlife-rich habitats under threat in Singapore. Once abstracted from their original state these sonorities are combined with other elements to create immersive and reflexive experiences that explore notions of awareness and connectivity between the human and the nonhuman.

As a collaborator, Zai plays the role of composer, sound designer and experimental musician across different context, having worked with filmmakers, visual artists, choreographers, theatre practitioners, architects and other musicians.



DRAMATURG **TANG FU KUEN**

Tang Fu Kuen is currently Artistic and Managing Director of Bergen International Theatre - Teatergarasjen in Norway. He directed the Taipei Arts Festival from 2018-2022, helmed by Taipei Performing Arts Center (TPAC).

Fu Kuen worked previously in immaterial patrimoine in UNESCO (Paris) and in SEAMEO-SPAFA (Bangkok). He was sole curator of the Singapore pavilion at the 53rd Venice Biennale, which was awarded Special Jury Mention. As an independent curator and producer and dramaturg, he worked across Asia and Europe for platforms including Singapore Arts Festival, Indonesian Dance Festival, In-Transit Festival (Berlin), December Dance (Brugge), Exodus (Ljubljana), Colombo Dance Platform and Bangkok Fringe Festival.



THE VIRTUALIZERS (VR/AR DESIGN) CG SUPERVISOR/VFX DIRECTOR **ASST. PROF. GOMESH KARNCHANAPAYAP (PH.D)**

Assistant Professor Dr. Gomesh possesses expertise in the fields of virtual reality, digital sculpting, and new media technology. Presently, he is a full-time

lecturer at the Ph.D. program in Design, Faculty of Decorative Arts, Silpakorn University. Dr. Gomesh is well-versed in both art and science, having obtained an undergraduate degree in computer science, a master's degree in fine arts, and a doctoral degree in design. His past projects combine creativity and logic, making him a unique creative professional, educator, and researcher.



THE VIRTUALIZERS (VR/AR DESIGN)
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR/
LEAD PROGRAMMER

SIWAT SUKSRI

Mr. Siwat Suksri is a full-time lecturer in the Department of Media Technology at the Faculty of Architecture and Design, King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi. He also serves as the CEO of the company IamInnoTech. He holds a bachelor's degree in Electrical Mechanical Manufacturing Engineering and a master's degree in Electrical Engineering. Currently, he is pursuing a doctoral degree in Technology Management and Innovation. His expertise encompasses various areas, including augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), extended reality (XR), game interactive, digital twin, metaverse, and AI.



THE VIRTUALIZERS (VR/AR DESIGN)
3D SCANNING/3D ANIMATOR/
RIGGING

PIYANON SOMBOON

Mr. Piyanon Somboon is a full-time instructor within the faculty of digital arts at Rangsit University. He possesses a Bachelor's degree in Computer Arts from Rangsit University and a Master's degree in Communication Arts with a specialisation in Film - Digital Media from Kasem Bundit University.



THE VIRTUALIZERS (VR/AR DESIGN)
**ASSISTANT TECHNICAL
DIRECTOR**

WIJITTRA PRASATKAEW

Ms. Wijittra Prasatkaew completed her bachelor's degree in physical therapy in 2003 at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University and her master's degree in anatomy in 2014 at Mahidol University before joining the research team at King

Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi in Thailand. She is currently a lecturer at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. A bulk of her current research is concerned with the use and applications of mixed, augmented and virtual realities in the medical field.

PRODUCTION CREDITS

CONCEPT, CHOREOGRAPHY AND DANCE

Kornkarn Rungsawang

SOUND DESIGN

Zai Tang

VR/AR DESIGN

The Virtualizers

CG SUPERVISOR/
VFX DIRECTOR

Asst. Prof. Gomesh
Karnchanapayap (Ph.D)

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR/
LEAD PROGRAMMER

Siwat Suksri

3D SCANNING/
3DANIMATOR/RIGGING

Piyanon Somboon

ASSISTANT TECHNICAL
DIRECTOR

Wijittra Prasatkaew

LIGHTING DESIGN

ASAKO MIURA

DRAMATURG

Tang Fu Kuen

COSTUME DESIGN

Manit Theppatimaporn
Knapoot Viruttanachai

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

Yap Seok Hui

TECHNICAL DIRECTION

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ASSISTANT TECHNICAL MANAGER

Padung Jumpan

PRODUCER

Sojirat Singholka

REHEARSAL ASSISTANT

Julaluck Eakwattanapun

ADDITIONAL FOOTAGE

Piyaporn Bhongse-tong

Residency supported by Kinosaki International Arts Center (Toyooka City)

Mali Bucha: Dance Offering is commissioned by Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay

BEHIND THE SCENES



Photo Credit: bozzo Courtesy of Kinosaki International Arts Center (Toyooka City)



Residency at Kinosaki
International Arts Center



Five Southeast Asian Women Choreographers To Watch

Female bodies have always been subject to scrutiny—more so than ever in dance. In Southeast Asia, female dance creators draw inspiration from their socio-political landscapes, using dance to challenge perceptions about identity, sexuality, gender, and labor. Read about the five remarkable female choreographers whose nimble footsteps are leaving an indelible mark along the shores of Southeast Asia on *Esplanade Offstage*.

[Read More](#)



Propositions for Different (Better) Worlds

Melati Suryodarmo's *Lapse* and Kornkarn Rungsawang's *Mali Bucha: Dance Offering* vastly differ in choreographic expressions, but they intersect in concerns for their immediate communities and burning issues about the world we live in. Find out more as they invite us to reimagine more ideal situations, environments and communities in an interview with dramaturg Lim How Ngean on *Esplanade Offstage*.

[Read More](#)

About da:ns focus

After 17 years of da:ns festival, Esplanade's beloved dance platform transforms into an exciting year-round season of five themed weekends. Experience interconnected programmes that offer their own counterpoints, dialogues and encounters in a focused exploration.

EveryBody

14 – 16 Apr 2023

Focusing on dance with inclusivity, diversity and participation, *EveryBody* encourages “everybody” and “every body” to experience dance.

Body Language

5 – 7 May 2023

Body Language focuses on the interplay between dance and text and examines the dynamics when these forms meet.

CAN – Connect Asia Now

13 – 15 Oct 2023

A spotlight on contemporary dance works by Asian artists, this gathering focuses on distinct voices and creative impulses from the region.

FL/OW – The FULL OUT Weekend

1 – 3 Dec 2023

Go FULL OUT with diverse facets of street dance through performances, battles and workshops. Expand your idea of what street dance can be beyond the conventional.

Ballet by the Bay

22 – 24 Mar 2024

A ballet lovers' weekend of classics and neo-classical works. Be inspired by world-class productions and be introduced to new perspectives on this celebrated art form.

MORE PROGRAMMES AT DA:NS FOCUS - CONNECT ASIA NOW (CAN)



13 – 15 Oct, Fri – Sun
Fri & Sat, 7.30pm | Sun, 3pm
Singtel Waterfront Theatre at Esplanade

Known for their distinctive minimalist style and precision in movement, TAO Dance Theater makes their long-awaited return to Singapore with the Southeast Asian premiere of *13* and *14*.

Tickets from \$35.



TAO Dance Theater Circular Movement Workshop

14 Oct, Sat, 2pm
Esplanade Rehearsal Studio

Gain insights into the Circular Movement System, the signature movement vocabulary of the acclaimed TAO Dance Theater.

\$30 (Pre-registration is required)



An Esplanade Commission

LAPSE

by — **Melati Suryodarmo**
(Indonesia)

13 – 15 Oct, Fri – Sun
Fri, 7.30pm | Sat & Sun, 5pm
Esplanade Annexe Studio

One of the most prominent artists from Southeast Asia, Melati Suryodarmo premieres a new dance creation that explores systemic breakdown in societies. Featuring dancers from Indonesia and Taiwan with sound design and live music by Yuen Chee Wai from The Observatory, Lapse traverses the unpredictable space between reality and a vision of collective change.

Tickets from \$20.



Fracture

by **Melati Suryodarmo** (Indonesia)

29 Sep 2023 - 7 Jan 2024

Jendela (Visual Arts Space)

Presented as part of Visual Arts at Esplanade, Fracture explores how enduring human behaviours resonate with present-day lived realities.

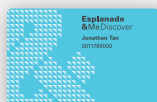


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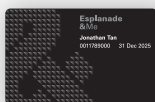
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17 to 26 years



Free for ages
55 & above



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- Valid receipt must be presented to qualify for redemption.
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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!**



4,562

activities took place at Esplanade.



3,354

 Free

1,057

 Paid

3,260,515

People attended our activities at the centre.



Free

1,487,680

Paid

287,931



602

 Activities

12,059

 Participants

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.

*Figures for Esplanade's activities from Apr 2022 to Mar 2023.



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.

We thank everyone who has helped us bring joy, inspiration and positive impact to Singaporeans from all walks of life by supporting the arts and Esplanade.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes especially to our Donors and Sponsors, for their steadfast belief in our mission and for their generous support.

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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.



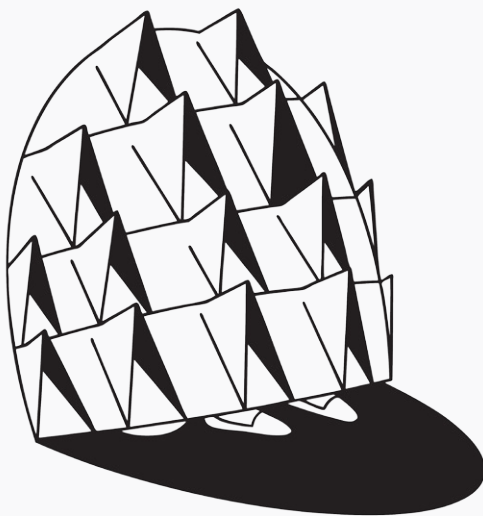
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”

Totally Anonymous Person
(who is not related to www.esplanade.com/offstage)



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Photo Credit: Bernie Ng



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