



Esplanade
Presents

Raga



THE BILINGUAL MONOLOGUE
SHOWCASE (SEASON TWO)

10 Feb 2023, Fri, 8pm
11 Feb 2023, Sat, 3pm & 8pm
12 Feb 2023, Sun, 3pm
Esplanade Theatre Studio

About Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

Esplanade is Singapore's national performing arts centre and one of the busiest arts centres in the world. Since its opening in 2002, the centre has presented more than 53,000 performances and activities, drawing an audience of 34 million patrons and 116 million visitors. This architectural icon, with its distinctive twin shells, houses world-class performance spaces complemented by a comprehensive range of professional support services.

Esplanade's vision is to be a performing arts centre for everyone and its programming is guided by its social mission—to entertain, engage, educate and inspire. It seeks to enrich everyone's lives, including seniors, youth, children and underserved communities, through the arts. The centre's year-long calendar of about 3,500 arts performances and activities span different cultures, languages and genres including dance, music, theatre, and more. Of these, more than 70% are presented free for all to enjoy. Esplanade's visual arts programmes at its public spaces also allow visitors to view and explore art works for free.

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.

Esplanade regularly presents world-renowned companies and artists that attract international attention and add to Singapore's cultural vibrancy. The centre is also a popular performance home for arts groups and commercial presenters who hire its venues to stage a wide range of programmes. These carefully curated presentations complement Esplanade's own diverse offerings for audiences.

Esplanade works in close partnership with local, regional and international artists to develop artistic capabilities, push artistic boundaries and engage audiences. The centre supports the creation of artistic content by commissioning and producing new Singapore and Asian work for the international stage. As an Approved Training Organisation (ATO) of the SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG), Esplanade conducts a range of courses that 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.

Visit Esplanade.com for more information.

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ONE BIG CELEBRATION



SALEEM HADI

PRODUCER - ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



SOLO/ORAY AAL returns this year as a second instalment to unpack six personal stories with the theme of celebration. We are running and running all the time, mostly to fulfil the goals and dreams of others. But have you ever stopped to enjoy the moments you rightfully deserve to be happy about? Some celebrations need no confetti, champagne or parties at expensive restaurants for they are deep, personal, soulful, silent and even life changing.

No matter how hard life might hit us, one should always find some ways to celebrate something. In this second instalment of **SOLO/ORAY AAL**, we invite you to witness six monologues that will unpack **stories of celebration**.

SOLO, which is also known as **ORAY AAL** in Tamil, is a bilingual (English and Tamil) monologue showcase. Following the success of **SOLO/ORAY AAL** in 2021, S.I.T.F.E is very honoured and thankful to have gotten the support of veterans in the arts industry and newer collaborators. Alvin Tan, T. Sasitharan, Yeo Hon Beng & Karen Tan are truly iconic theatre makers in Singapore. S.I.T.F.E is truly pleased to have them come onboard our second instalment of **SOLO/ORAY AAL** along with the younger theatre makers and enthusiasts. We are also excited to welcome Esplanade on board as a co-producer. Being a young arts organisation, such support from a national institution such as Esplanade and other theatre practitioners are a testament to S.I.T.F.E's direction. Last year's theme was **FIGHT**. With positive changes globally, and to show appreciation for life, S.I.T.F.E has decided to set **CELEBRATION** as the theme for this year's **SOLO/ORAY AAL**.

In this production, with the intention to bring both theatre veterans and new theatre practitioners together, we have put together different writers, actors and directors. In 2021's **SOLO/ORAY AAL**, we featured four actors and two actresses. This year, we will be featuring two actors and four actresses. This, again, is another reason for us to celebrate the active participation of female talents coming to the spot light. **THANK YOU** for making this production possible and for supporting the arts.



THE BILINGUAL MONOLOGUE
SHOWCASE (SEASON TWO)

THROUGH THE
FIRE



SYNOPSIS

Kannagi, a legendary Tamil woman, tells her story of how she lost her husband, whom a king alleged stole his queen's anklet. Without being tried, her husband was beheaded. Does she seek justice in the form of epic vengeance that kills the lives of innocent people? Exhausted by what to do, Kannagi falls asleep. In her dream, she time-travels. She meets two important personalities in the future – a rape victim and a mother whose son was murdered. Kannagi then returns to her time period and deeply contemplates her two encounters. Waking up, she is ready to make her decision. ***THROUGH THE FIRE***, inspired by Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, employs its time-travel device, enabling Kannagi to confront possibilities to re-imagine her fate.



ALVIN TAN

WRITER - DIRECTOR



Alvin is the Founder and the Artistic Director of The Necessary Stage. He is also the current Artistic Director of the M1 Singapore Fringe Festival. Alvin has been awarded a Fulbright Scholarship, the Young Artist Award (1998) and the Cultural Medallion (2014). In 2010, he was conferred the Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres by the French Ministry of Culture.

INDUMATHI TAMILSELVAN

CO-WRITER - ACTRESS



Armed with a BA in Acting from LASALLE, and a Diploma in Applied Drama and Psychology from Singapore Polytechnic, Indumathi Tamilselvan is an all-rounded Theatre Practitioner, Founder and Director of Tongue in Cheek Productions, and a fervent believer in the use of theatre to reach out and shape the world we live in. She is currently pursuing her MA in Arts Pedagogy and Practice at LASALLE College of the Arts. Indu has adopted a range of roles throughout her career, and is continuing to hone her skills: actor, director, drama educator, applied drama practitioner and entrepreneur. Her works on stage, as an actress, include *Between 5 Cows and the Deep Blue Sea* (Esplanade's Kalaa Utsavam 2022).





THE BILINGUAL MONOLOGUE
SHOWCASE (SEASON TWO)

கழிமுகம்

MOUTH OF
RIVER



SYNOPSIS

Just like a river delta where sand deposits slow down the flow of the river, **MOUTH OF RIVER**, Ananya is not fully able to pee due to a condition called cystocele. This story shares the journey, ,trials and tribulations of Ananya, as she shares how this condition has affected her smooth life.

This monologue celebrates the willpower of women and how we appreciate the simplest things in life.



SYED ASHRATULLAH

WRITER



Syed is a writer, actor, voice artist and educator with 10 years of experience in the media and theatre industry. He has written stories, scripts, and screenplay for television programmes and drama series, mainly aired on Mediacorp Vasantham. Syed's theatre journey began in 2013 during his university days. He was part of the 2013 and 2015 scriptwriter team for NUS Tamil Language Society's Sangae Muzhangu. Syed has also acted in theatre plays, including NUS TLS's Sangae Muzhangu and SITFE's Thuyil (Sleep). In recognition of his contribution to the Tamil arts and media scene, Syed was awarded the 2021 Kaviyarasu Kannadasan Award by the Association of Singapore Tamil Writers.

PONKUMARAN SELVAM

DIRECTOR



Ponkumaran is a theatre enthusiast whose journey started during University days through NUSTLS's Sangae Muzhangu, where he acted in 2011 & 2013, was one of the producers in 2013 and directed the 2015 edition. Over the years, he has acted with different tamil theatre groups in a variety of plays. Some of his recent works as an actor includes SITFE's THUYIL and Agam Theatre Lab's *Animal Farm*.

INDU ELANGOVAN

ACTRESS



All through her schooling days, Indu got a chance to immerse herself in theatre, dance and film. She enjoys being onstage where she can put her thoughts, ideas, emotions, actions, and imagination in the spotlight. She got a chance to explore the Tamil theatre scene in 2017 and she loved how the language and cultural elements were highlights in many of the Tamil plays. She has performed in NUS's *Sangae Muzhangu*. Other Tamil stage plays that she has appeared in include *Parasu*, *Chandramughi*, *Petha Manam Kallu*, *Abimanyu*, *Animal Farm*, *Merchant of Venice* and *Sivagami*. Indu is currently working as a Training and Quality Assurance Specialist at TikTok.



SOLO

ஒரே
புறம்

THE BILINGUAL MONOLOGUE
SHOWCASE (SEASON TWO)

TOUCH
ME NOT



SYNOPSIS

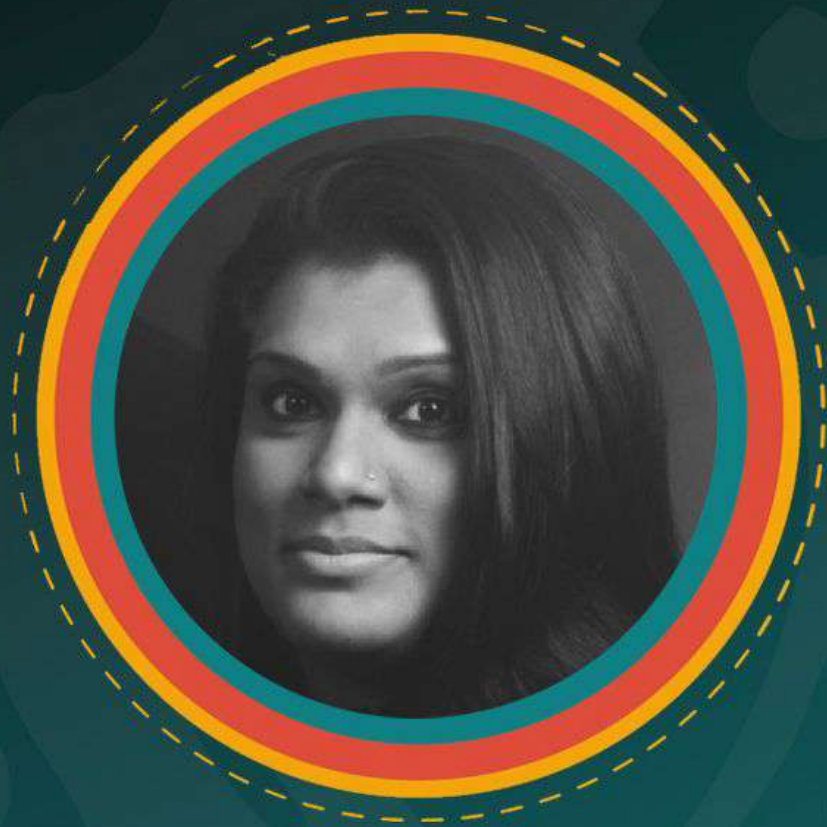
Almost always, sexual victimisation is characterised as a "women's issue". As such, many men with traumatic experiences suffer in silence throughout their lives. Social attitudes and stereotypes about men and masculinity make it even harder. Where do men go for help when they need it? How do they overcome the stigma and shame? And most importantly, what do they do to keep going on with life?

In ***TOUCH ME NOT***, Manvir, a 28-year-old Sikh, battles with a traumatic past. In his quest to overcome stigma and shame, Manvir learns to celebrate life's simplest joys and smallest wins in his journey of healing and living.



AISHWARIYAH SHANMUGANATHAN

WRITER



A recent recipient of the National Arts Council's Arts Scholarship postgraduate award, Aishwariyah is a Drama educator and practitioner who is also pursuing a Doctorate with Nanyang Technological University-National Institute of Education's Visual and Performing Arts department. With more than 15 years of experience in the Arts Education sector and a Masters in Drama Education, Aishwariyah has successfully brought Drama based education to learners of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. Aishwariyah is also an active advocate who is currently serving as the President of the Singapore Drama Educators Association (SDEA).

LEWIN BERNARD

DIRECTOR



Singapore-based theatre director, scriptwriter, and educator, Lewin Bernard sets to reimagine the art of storytelling by stretching the conventions of theatre, visuals, and different performative genres through his art direction, embracing and collaborating with different cultures, communities, and disciplines. Since 2007, Lewin has directed over 40 productions, from musicals to original works.

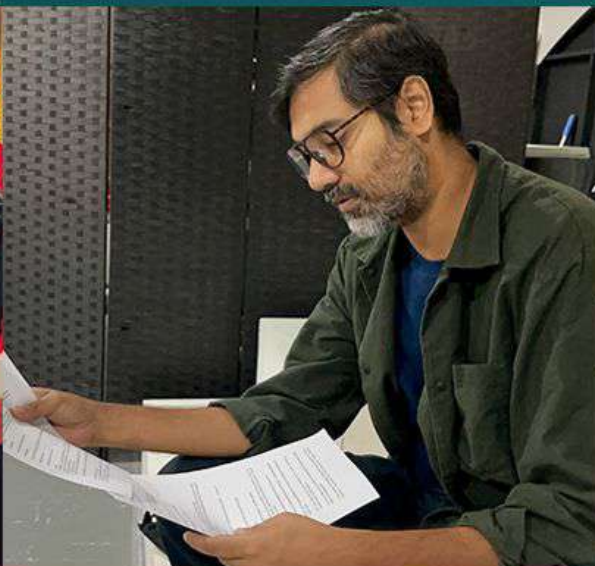
Lewin has collaborated and studied under various performing and visual artists from the UK, Argentina, Italy, Japan, and Singapore which has shaped his authentic style of storytelling and process.

VIGNESH KUMAR SINGH

ACTOR



A Singaporean actor - trainer and theatremaker. A recipient of the Trailblazer General Fund, Vignesh graduated from the esteemed Intercultural Theatre Institute in Singapore. He is also a graduate of the BYT Program, SRT's Young Company and iTheatre's Creative Edge. His affair with the stage began in 2008 and has since co-created and performed with theatre groups such as the Singapore Repertory Theatre, Toy Factory Productions, Teater Ekamatra , Buds Theatre, Dark Matter Theatrics, Our Company, Ground Z0 , Grain Performance Lab, Sourcing Within, Pink Gajah, Five Stones Theatre, Dramabox, The Necessary Stage, Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay and Pitapat Theatre (Malaysia).





THE BILINGUAL MONOLOGUE
SHOWCASE (SEASON TWO)

நான் வயசுக்கு
வந்துடேன்

I'VE COME OF
AGE



SYNOPSIS

In ***I'VE COME OF AGE***, Ajay, a 14-year-old student, is ready but at the same time, not ready to move onto the next stage in life. We celebrate with him while trying to understand the changes he has to face.

Eight years of wearing shorts became a comfort and now he faces the thought of having to wear long pants. With this, meeting the expectations of people around him, fills his mind to the brim. What options does he have?

What can he do about the situation he is in?

SANTHIA UTHEKUMARAN

WRITER



Passionate about Tamil Language, Santhia Uthekumaran started her journey at Ngee Ann Polytechnic pursuing Tamil Studies with Early Education, which allowed her to explore poetry writing and acting through school productions. Dedicated to Tamil arts and language, she has always decided to try new things and give her best whilst learning along the way. With Santhia's support and encouragement from her family, she has stepped foot as a playwright.

UMAYAL THIRUSELVAM

WRITER



Dr Umayal Thiruselvam is a Tamil teacher and an active theatre practitioner who ventured into Tamil theatre since she was 18. She started acting in Tamil stage plays in 1997 while she was a youth volunteer for the Singapore Tamil Youths' Club. Umayal's journey for scriptwriting commenced through her maiden stage play, *Naalai Kathai Unmai Ilai* while she constantly wrote plays for school competitions. Her scripts and transcreations include notable stage productions: *Twelve Angry Men*, *Num Kaatiniley* and *Venice Vanigan*. She was bestowed with Avant Theatre Award - Creative Theatre Contribution for Playwrighting in 2021 – an esteemed recognition for her constant contribution in scripting work.

ROHSHINI THIAGARAJAN

DIRECTOR



Rohshini grew up with her mother's and grandmother's stories which led to her fascination with storytelling and the performing arts. She explored various art forms such as Bharathanatyam, Carnatic Vocal and Rap music during her school days. She completed a Diploma in Performance at LASALLE College of the Arts in 2019 and has acted in Singapore Indian Theatre & Film Explorer's (SITFE) bilingual theatre production *Thuyil (Sleep)*. In 2021, she came in as the first runner up of Mediacorp Vasantham's Thedal competition. Passionate about preserving cultural heritage, she aspires to promote the Tamil language towards the future generations.

KISHORE KUMAR

ACTOR



A student at LASALLE College of the Arts, Kishore is currently in Year 2 of the Diploma in Performance course. His first interaction with the stage was when he did a school assembly play. After which he joined a mime troupe and went to a few Mime festivals in and around Chennai. It was during his national service that he decided acting was what he wanted to do. He wanted to keep expanding his knowledge in this field and try various forms of theatre. Recently, he got to play Mpu Bhradha in the Bali Fest LASALLE organized. It was the Balinese Topeng Mask theatre form.





THE BILINGUAL MONOLOGUE
SHOWCASE (SEASON TWO)

HOME



SYNOPSIS

Originally written as *VEEDU*, **HOME** is about old lady who was born in Malaysia, recollects her fond memories of her life as she had to travel from one space to another, taking on different roles at different phases of her lifetime.

Upon marriage, she comes to Singapore and moves into a HDB flat. Each corner and space within the house never fails to bring smiles to her wrinkled face as intimate memories engulf her in a way she can't understand. She embraces the sweet feeling. Just as she thought the house with fond memories of her children and deceased husband is going to be her final place of rest, something unexpected happens, making it very hard for the old lady to grapple with the painful truth about the space she had been regarding as her dear home.



KANAGALATHA

WRITER



Kanagalatha (Latha) has published three collections of poetry in Tamil: *Theeveli* (Firespace) (2003), *Paampuk Kaattil Oru Thaazhai* (A Screw pine in Snakeforest) (2004) and *Yaarukkum Illaatha Paalai* (No man's desert) 2016. She has also published two short story collections *Nan kolai Seyium penkkal* (Women I Murder) in 2007, which won the biennial Singapore Literature Prize in 2008 and *Chinalatchumi* in 2022. Her works have been translated into English, French and German. Kanagalatha is one of the founding director for Poetry Festival Singapore. She is currently the Associate editor of Tamil Murasu, Singapore's Tamil daily newspaper.

YEO HON BENG

DIRECTOR



Yeo Hon Beng has extensive experience in the arts and entertainment and has worked with various theatre/arts companies and production companies in diverse capacities such as director, lighting designer, set designer and technical/production/stage manager since 1997. He has directed productions for groups/organisations such as Ageless Theatre, Singapore Art Museum and Little Red Shop. In addition, Hon Beng has steadily nurtured the passion of students in theatre through his role as drama educator/instructor in educational institutions. Hon Beng holds a Bachelor of Arts with majors in Sociology and Theatre Studies from National University of Singapore and has been a theatre/arts practitioner since he graduated in 1997.

KAREN TAN

ACTRESS



Karen has lived and worked in the UK, Kuala Lumpur, New Zealand, Cairo, and Vienna. However, she is happiest in Singapore, where she is a working mum, with possibly the best job in the world.





THE BILINGUAL MONOLOGUE
SHOWCASE (SEASON TWO)

யார் பலியாவது ?

WHO'S TO BE
SACRIFICED?



SYNOPSIS

Not everyone is behind bars. This is a story about how people (especially depending on their gender) are sacrificed for the country, for other humans or for other genders. And the struggle between life and death during those sacrifices.

WHO'S TO BE SACRIFICED ? looks at three characters: a contemporary reimagining of the male character Aravan from the Indian epic tale the Mahabharata; a transperson whose job is to sing laments (oppari) during death ceremonies in the villages; a devadasi who was a female artist dedicated to the worship and service of a deity or a temple for the rest of her life.

Some contemporary questions and concepts are explored using these three characters. Who can plan or impose these to another human? And how aware of these characters about what they are going to involve? What is self-sacrifice?

Why aren't others resisting this discrimination?



ABINAYA JOTHI

ACTRESS - WRITER



Abinaya is a theatre practitioner and dancer from Tamil Nadu, India. It was at her college in 2013 that her passion for performance started manifesting. Since then, she pursued many acting opportunities through her local drama club, performing in orphanages, special schools, old age homes, literary associations and inter/intra cultural competitions across India. These productions explored social, political and environmental issues. Abinaya worked with a variety of theatre groups in Tamil Nadu before she began her Professional Diploma in acting at the Intercultural Theatre Institute based in Singapore. She is currently training herself to make original, impactful contemporary theatre.

T.SASITHARAN

DIRECTOR



T. Sasitharan (Sasi), is Co-Founder and Director of the Intercultural Theatre Institute, in Singapore. ITI is a practice-based, full-time contemporary actor training conservatory, and one of the most reputable and innovative theatre schools in the world. Together with the late Kuo Pao Kun, Sasi conceived and established ITI in 2000. He was Artistic Director of Substation (1995-2000). Over the last 45 years he has been a theatre practitioner, working as an actor, performer, director, producer and teacher. In 2021 Sasi was the recipient of the Cultural Medallion, Singapore's highest award for artists, and in Mar 2022 he was made Third Harvard Fellow of the Harvard Club of Singapore.



PRODUCTION CREW

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| Production & Stage Manager | Tan Ching Ting |
| Lighting & Set Designer | Yeo Hon Beng |
| Assistant Stage Managers | Charlotte Foong Carmen Foong |
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| Front of House | Lavanya Gurunathan Singh Shweta Dhanraj |



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SOLO
ஒரே ஆள்

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MONOLOGUE
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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!^



1,276

activities took place at Esplanade.

Ticketed



412

Non-Ticketed



864

223,399



People attended our activities at the centre.

Ticketed

18,081

Non-Ticketed

205,318

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.



185
Activities

4,357
Participants

*Figures for Esplanade's activities from Apr 2020 to Mar 2021.



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.

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

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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.

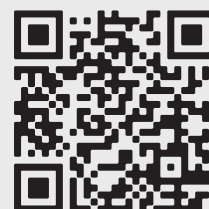
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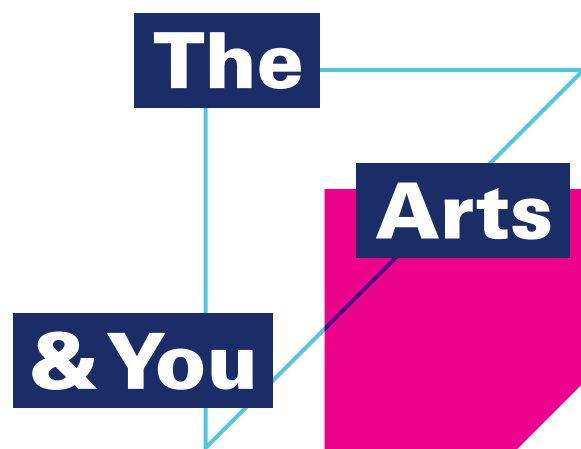
We believe that an experience with the arts is special and that with your generous support, more people will get a chance to enjoy the arts. Join us in sharing the joy of the arts and help us reach more communities in need.



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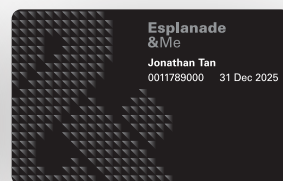
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Free upgrade when
you spend \$1000



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www.esplanade.com

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