

6 - 8 & 10 AUG 2025 WED - FRI, 8PM | SUN, 3PM & 8PM SINGTEL WATERFRONT THEATRE AT ESPLANADE

esplanade

About Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay

Esplanade is Singapore's national performing arts centre. It hosts a year-round line-up of about 4,000 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. TECL received the Charity Governance Award – Special Commendation for Clarity of Strategy in 2016 and 2022, the Charity Transparency Award from 2016 – 2023, and the Charity Transparency Dedication Award in 2024. Esplanade is Singapore's first Dementia-Friendly Arts Venue and a certified Dementia Go-To Point, as well as a guide/assistance 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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13 Biographies



SEASON MESSAGE

For the past two years, Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay's annual theatre season, *The Studios*, has centred on a single evolving theme: *LAND*. It has shaped the curatorial arc over the seasons, offering audiences a moment to sit with the places, communities and personal histories that are often undocumented, ignored or unseen. Each season—*Landings* in 2023 and *Fault Lines* in 2024—opened up conversation on the meaning of *LAND* with its complexities and layers, and proposed ways we could re-discover, re-contextualise, or reclaim our connections to land.

As we arrive at the final chapter in this thematic journey, we look upon *LAND* as providing *Sustenance* for the body, mind and spirit. We start by putting our primordial relationship with land under the microscope, examining our dependence on earth, water, microorganisms and the cycles of nature that sustain life so that we may have food. We zoom out into the literal stratosphere to consider the current state of our climate in the midst of crisis and imagine (very real) speculative futures. We dig deep to understand what it is that makes us feel connected to family, a place, a community, a culture. Where do we 'land' when we are displaced, alienated or at a loss?

From 18 Jul to 14 Sep 2025, the five productions in *The Studios 2025* season reveal a spectrum of possibilities both in terms of theatremaking and in our exploration of Sustenance. We open the season with **David Finnigan**'s *Scenes from the Climate Era*, a series of vignettes about the biggest crisis in human history. Adapted for a Singapore cast and directed by Ellison Tan, the play slips between the absurd and the comic, the domestic and the global, the past, present and possible futures.

In **FOOD**, **Geoff Sobelle** hosts an intimate dinner party of smell, tastes and touch, and with the help of the audience, shapes a conversation about personal memories and our relationship with food. Through illusion and Sobelle's masterful sleight of hand, the evolution of food unfolds before us, from the days of hunter gatherers through to industrialisation and the overconsumption of today. **Pickle Party** by **The Theatre Practice** places the audience at a pickling workshop within a performance. The pickling takes place in real time against the backdrop of Singapore's rapid development from farmland to modern city, as we are asked to consider how humans, microbes and food security are connected.

In *Haribo Kimchi*, **Jaha Koo** invites audiences into his *pojangmacha* or Korean late-night snack bar and takes us on a culinary exploration peppered with text, K-pop inspired music, video and robotics. In this story of cultural assimilation and the *umami* taste of home, food serves as a shelter to the culturally dislocated.

Global events bring about a different kind of dislocation and alienation. **Checkpoint Theatre**'s *Escape to Batam*, is a personal and poignant story of director-playwright Claire Wong's father, who spent his boyhood on the rural island of Batam to escape the Japanese Occupation of Singapore. Intertwined with Claire's own lived experience of family loss and grief, the piece is a meditation on time, memory and resilience, transcending generations.

Alongside these productions, *The Studios* season encompasses workshops, conversations with artists, and a nature walk. These companion programmes provide different ways for audiences to deepen their engagement with the issues and questions arising from the productions, outside of the theatre.

Today, as we continue to be confronted by environmental devastation and geopolitical fractures, we hope that this season will allow us to critically imagine paths for a gentler, more sustainable future beyond ourselves.

Come and imagine with us at *The Studios*.

Shireen Abdullah

Senior Producer, The Esplanade Co Ltd

ABOUT THE STUDIOS

Eclectic, genre-bending and running the gamut from neorealism to experimental, *The Studios* features works that challenge the boundaries in theatre and performance. It is interested in contemporary artists, ideas and expressions, and offers a space for dialogue and reflection on the questions that matter to us today.

SYNOPSIS

Do we need what we eat? Do we eat what we need? What does it really cost? Chew on these questions in this theatrical gastronomy experience unlike any other.

At the centre of the performance space lies a comically large banquet table, encircled by audience members. The host of the evening, Geoff Sobelle, conducts this multisensory experience with deft hands, animated expressions and impressive physicality. Activating the senses through a myriad of sounds, scents, sights and textures, this acclaimed theatremaker stitches together a conversation about personal memories, consumption and the evolution of food production over generations. You are invited to be a guest at the dinner party—whether around the table or from the surrounding seats.





Concocted and performed by American actor, producer and innovator Geoff Sobelle, *FOOD* features his signature flavour of theatricality, combining rigorous design, onstage magic and subtle humour to create a participatory experience. Connecting the universal to the personal and distilling the absurd from the seemingly mundane, *FOOD* invites the audience to explore their place within this exploration of food and consumption.

FOOD is the third part of a performance trilogy that explores the abnormal corners of ordinary topics. Each installment—*The Object Lesson* (2013), *HOME* (2017), and FOOD (2022)—encourages the audience to ponder their personal connections with objects, spaces, and food.

Following its acclaimed selection as an invited work for the prestigious Edinburgh International Festival, *FOOD* sold out performances in 2023 and went on to tour in countries like Australia, Korea and now, Singapore.

It will be a dinner party to remember: gather round and feast on questions and contemplations surrounding society's relationship with food and sustenance.

(1hr 30mins, no intermission) Performed in English.

Note: Food will not be served at this performance.

There will be Singapore Sign Language Interpretation for the performances on 7 Aug, 8pm and 10 Aug, 3pm.

There will be a post-show dialogue after the performances on 7 & 8 Aug, 8pm.





A NOTE FROM GEOFF SOBELLE

A quick caveat to the show's crediting...

While the following people absolutely did the following jobs, each and every one of them did much much more—and in a manner that is difficult to describe exactly. All of these humans, including most of the people in the "special thanks," contributed not just their skills, but their ideas. Their opinions, taste, personal experiences and generosity of spirit created a culture for *FOOD* that has been specific, vibrant and vital. Their collective imagination (as well as their labour) has fueled the integrity and delirium of this show.

- Geoff Sobelle

CREDITS

Creator, Performers & Co-Director **Geoff Sobelle**

Co-Creator/Magician
Steve Cuiffo

Co-Director

Lee Sunday Evans

Sound Design

Tei Blow

Lighting Design

Devin Cameron

Original Lighting Design

Isabella Byrd

Associate Sound Design

Ryan Gamblin

Chandelier Creation

Steven Dufala

Props Creation

Jessie Baldinger
Julian Crouch
Steve Cuiffo
Red Guhde
Nathan (Pierre) Lemoine
Raphael Mishler
Connor O'Leary
Geoff Sobelle
Matthew Soltesz

Christopher Swetcky

Production Stage Manager

Lisa McGinn

Assistant Stage Manager

Kelsey Vivan

Production Manager/ Technical Director

Chris Swetcky

Creative Producer

Jecca Barry

FOOD is commissioned by Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), Arizona State University – Gammage, FringeArts Philadelphia, Allen & Meghan Thorpe, and Garth Patil. Additional support provided by the Wyncote Foundation. Developmental support provided by Mercury Store.

Special Thanks
Adam Blumenthal, Sophie
Bortolussi, Ryan Bourke, Violaine
de Carné, Ernesto Collado, Joey
Cosio-Mercado, John Del Gaudio,
Jim Findlay, Will Frear, Red Guhde,
Tyler Gunther, Kevin Hanley,
Hermitage Artists Retreat, Nate
Lemoine, Jeremy Lydic, Dick & Liz
Sobelle, Matthew Soltesz, Tannen's
Magic, UCDavis— and all of the cast
and crew of the first FOOD show.

BIOGRAPHIES



Geoff Sobelle (Creator/Performer/Co-Director) is a US-based actor and creator devoted to making original actor-driven performance works. His shows include: HOME, The Object Lesson, The Elephant Room, all wear bowlers and machines machines machines machines machines machines (among others). He has received commissions from BAM. Lincoln Center, Arizona State University, Center Theatre Group, Edinburgh International Festival and The New Zealand Festival. His shows have been recognized by a Bessie Award, an Obie Award in design, two Edinburgh Fringe First Awards, the Best of Edinburgh Award, a Total Theatre Award and an Innovative Theatre Award. He is a Pew Fellow and a Creative Capital Grantee. Geoff was a company member of Philadelphia's Pig Iron Theatre Company from 2001-2012. He trained in physical theatre at the Lecog school in Paris and is a graduate of Stanford University.

www.geoffsobelle.com



Steve Cuiffo (Co-Creator/Magician) is a magician and theatremaker who creates solo performance, as well as collaborative works with other artists, filmmakers and theatre companies. His work incorporates aspects of sleight of hand, misdirection, imitation and reenactment to create unique performance, art, theatre and magic. Most recently he was the illusion & lip sync consultant for Lucas Hnath's Dana H. on Broadway, created sleight of hand for the upcoming feature film of White Noise directed by Noah Baumbach, was the magic consultant for the new season of The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel. Other work include: Illusion design for Geoff Sobelle's Home and The Object Lesson; magic for Thaddeus Phillips' Zoo Motel, magic director for David Blaine: Live; an associate with the Wooster Group theatre company; and co-founder of Secret Arts.



Lee Sunday Evans (Co-Director) is a two-time Obie Award-winning director and choreographer, and the Artistic Director of Waterwell. Recent credits include Oratorio for Living Things by Heather Christian, Dance Nation by Clare Barron, Home by Geoff Sobelle, In the Green by Grace McLean, Detroit Red by Will Power and The Courtroom, a reenactment of one woman's deportation hearings with transcripts arranged by Arian Moayed, now a feature film (www.thecourtroomfilm. com). Her work has been seen at The Public Theater, Lincoln Center, BAM. Playwrights Horizons, Steppenwolf, The Atlantic, WP Theater, The Play Company, The Bushwick Starr. ArtsEmerson. Edinburgh International Festival, among others. She is also a co-creator of The Flores Exhibits (www.flores-exhibits.org)



Isabella Byrd (Lighting Design) is a Brooklyn-based artist. New York credits include Sanctuary City and Light Shining in Buckinghamshire both at New York Theatre Workshop. Heroes of the Fourth Turning, Corsicana, and Thanksgiving Play at Playwrights Horizons. Epiphany (Lincoln Center.) PLANO (Clubbed Thumb). "DADDY" A Melodrama (Vineyard/New Group), and Continuity (MTC.) Regionally, she has worked with ACT San Francisco. Actors Theatre Louisville, Alley Theatre, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Hartford Stage, Old Globe, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Westport, and Williamstown.

International credits include *Cabaret* (West End, Olivier nomination), *Endgame* (Gate Theatre, Dublin), "DADDY" A Melodrama (Almeida, London.) Isabella's work has been reconised at the Lucille Lortel Awards, Henry Hewes Design Awards and the Obie Awards, and is a member of USA829.

www.isabellabyrd.design



Devin Cameron (Lighting Design) For over two decades. Devin Cameron has illuminated the worlds of theatre, dance, music, and immersive experiences. From New York City's premier stages to acclaimed global venues, the New York Times has recognised his work as "brilliantly designed" and "extraordinary." Notable design credits include the Drama Desk Award-winning The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart with the National Theatre of Scotland, Toshi Reagon's Parable of the Sower at Lincoln Center, Carmen with Opera Naples, and myriad productions for Norwegian Cruise Line. In addition, Devin holds longstanding positions with two esteemed institutions: resident lighting designer for Punchdrunk's groundbreaking Sleep No More, and theatrical lighting designer for Apple's Steve Jobs Theatre, where he has had the privilege of collaborating with the likes of Malala Yousafzai and Michaela Jaé Rodriguez.

devincameron.com



Tei Blow (Sound Design) is a media designer and performance maker. Tei's work combines original compositions with found sound and images, and re-produces them with obsolete technology and live bodies. He has performed and designed with Mikhail Baryshnikov, Big David Theater. Neumann/Advanced Beginner Group, and The Future of Death. Tei's work has been featured at Hartford Stage, Dance Theater Workshop, PS122, Lincoln Center, The Kitchen, BAM. The Public Theater, The Broad Stage, MCA Chicago. MFA Boston. Kate Werble Gallery, Baryshnikov Arts Center, The Roundabout, The Wadsworth Atheneum, and at theaters around the world. He is the recipient of a 2019 Baryshnikov Arts Center Cage/Cunningham Fellowship, A 2016 NYSCA Composer's Grant, and a 2015 "Bessie" Award for Outstanding Sound Design for David Neumann/Advanced Beginner Group's I Understand Everything Better. Tei is 1/2 of Royal Osiris Karaoke Ensemble, whose ongoing multipart series The Art of Luv received the Creative Capital Award.



Ryan Gamblin (Sound Associate) is a sound designer, composer, and performance-maker based in Brooklyn, NY. Their work centers around found media, original composition, system manipulation, and post-drama. Recent designs include Weathering (Faye Driscoll), Liveness: A Performance Made from the WNYC Archives (The Civilians), Joan of Arc in a Supermarket in California (The Tank), and Mary Jane (Third Rail Rep). Ryan is a member of TSDCA.

RyanGamblin.com | @sound.by.ryan



Lisa McGinn (Production Stage Manager)

McGinn is a Production Manager whose recent credits include Geoff Sobelle's Home and The Object Lesson; Elephant Room: Dust from the Stars (Center Theatre Group); Underground Railroad Game (Jennifer Kidwell, Scott R. Sheppard, Ars Nova, tour); A Hard Time (Pig Iron Theatre Co), Ocean Filibuster and How to Build a Forest (PearlDamour/ART); Detroit Red (ArtsEmerson); Sleep (Ripe Time Theatre): Chimera and The Wholehearted (Stein | Holum Projects); This is Reading (Lynn Nottage, Kate Whoriskey); LA Dance Project (European tour); Jacuzzi (The Debate Society/Ars Nova); The Light Years (The Debate Society/NYSAF); Revolt. She said. Revolt Again and Winners and Losers (Soho Rep); Rememberer and Open House (Steven Reker); Eager to Lose (Ars Nova): Forbidden Creature Virgin Whore; From the Spot Where We/You/I Stand (Stood) (Miller Rothlein Dance); You, My Mother (Theatre of a Two-Headed Calf): Card and Gift and Baby Screams Miracle (Clubbed Thumb): The Seagull and Ivanov (Chekhov at Lake Lucille); The Room Sings, The Peripherals; Hot Lunch Apostles (Talking Band).



Kelsey Vivian (Assistant Stage Manager)

is thrilled to be part of FOOD. Off-Broadway credits include: Wet Brain (Playwrights Horizons & MCC), The Appointment (Lightning Rod Special), Montag (Soho Repertory Theater), Oratorio for Living Things (Ars Nova), The Mother (Atlantic Theater Company); Twelfth Night, We Rise: A Celebration of Resistance (The Public Theater). NYC: MEAT (The Tank), Hamlet Rehearsed, Lear's Shadow (Smith Street Stage); The Mile-Long Opera (The High Line); 36 Juniper, Really Really (Wrong House); Larvae (The Alchemical). Regional credits include Long Wharf Theatre, Vermont Shakespeare Festival, Vermont Stage Company and Saint Michael's Playhouse.



Swetcky (Technical Director/ Chris Production Manager) has held positions as the head of Technical Direction for the School of Theatre at Penn State University. and Technical Director for CalArts. In addition to his work in academics, Chris has worked at numerous venues across the country including most recently Production Manager for Classical Theatre of Harlem's First Noel at the Apollo Theatre in Harlem. He was also Technical Director for the Ouroboro's Trilogy, a compilation of three operas, Naga, Gilgamesh and Madame White Snake, performed at the Majestic Theatre in Boston. Chris previously worked for American Repertory Theater in Cambridge, Massachusetts as Associate Technical Director. While at A.R.T. Chris worked on numerous productions including a few Broadway hits, such as Porgy and Bess, Pippin, All the Way and most recently Finding Neverland.



Jecca Barry (Creative Producer) is an independent theatre, opera, film, and music producer. She is the founder and creative producer of Fin Productions, and a co-founder of the Up Until Now Collective. Jecca's practice focuses on developing work with artists that are challenging the conventions of the performing arts industry. From 2012 - 2022, she served as Executive Director of the acclaimed production company Beth Morrison Projects (BMP) and was a Co-Director of New York's annual PROTOTYPE Festival from 2017 - 2022. Jecca has overseen the commissioning, development, production and touring of over 30 new theatre, music-theatre, and opera works, and has toured those works to over 40 national and 20 international venues. Jecca holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in avant-garde flute performance from the Royal Northern College of Music and New York University.





Nature Walk & Ink-Making Workshop by Wild Dot SG

Explore colours and textures at this mindful walk to notice, harvest, make and celebrate natural inks.

30 & 31 Aug 2025, Sat & Sun, 9am Pasir Ris Beach \$50

For ages 10 and above.



Pickle Party: Building the "Set" by The Theatre Practice

Discover alternative approaches to various aspects of theatremaking in this hands-on workshop.

6 Sep 2025, Sat, 11am & 3pm
Practice Tuckshop, 58 Waterloo Street
\$25

For ages 13 and above.



Salon: Art and Dialogue, Art is Dialogue - A Look Back on The Studios 2023-2025

Join us for a conversation with the artists and producers of *The Studios*, past and present, moderated by Charlene Rajendran.

13 Sep 2025, Sat 4pm Esplanade Black Room Free, by registration.

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Drawing from her own family history, theatrical powerhouse Claire Wong weaves together a tapestry of stories in this brand-new original script, exploring conflict, grief and loss.

1hr 30mins, no intermission. | Performed in English, with open captionin There will be Singapore Sign Language Interpretation for the performance and post-show dialogue on 22 Aug, Fri, 8pr

This production is presented as part of *The Studios 2025 - Sustenance*, critically imagining paths for a gentler, more sustainable & emotionally resonant future.

\$45°, \$60*^

*Limited concessions available

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An Esplanade Co-Production

By The Theatre Practice Co-directed by Ang Xiao Ting & Kuo Jian Hong 11 - 14 Sep 2025 Thu & Fri, 8pm

Sat, 3pm & 8pm Sun, 3pm

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Doyeon Jeon 전도 연

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Follow a Chaebol heiress on the brink of bankruptcy as she struggles to adapt to a South Korea that has moved on. Boasting 30 sold-out performances at its Seoul premiere, don't miss Stone's mesmerising adaptation of Chekhov's tragicomedy, live in Singapore.

2hr 25mins, with 20min intermission | Performed live in Korean with English surtitles Admission age: 16 and above | Advisory 16: Contains mature themes, including some sexual content and coarse language

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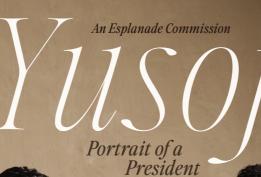
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2hrs, no intermission. | Performed in Malay, with English surtitles.

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17 - 19 Oct 2025 Fri, 8pm | Sat & Sun, 3pm & 8pm Singtel Waterfront Theatre at Esplanade



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(2hrs 45mins, including 15 mins intermission) Please refer to advisories online.

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737 Paid

3,809,486

People attended our activities at the centre.



Free

3,367,291



141,565

*Figures for Esplanade's activities from Apr 2023 to Mar 2024.



636
Activities

17,949Participants

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With Gratitude

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We seek to entertain, engage, educate and inspire through the arts. We thank everyone who has helped us bring positive impact to Singaporeans 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 contributions.

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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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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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We look forward to creating more wonderful memories with you soon.

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