



**Esplanade
Presents**

The Studios

AN ESPLANADE COMMISSION AND PRODUCTION

A GOOD DEATH



DURATION 1hr 30mins, no intermission

In Conjunction with *Feed Your Imagination (F.Y.I)*
Performed with English captions.

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

The common misconception about palliative care is that it is about death. Those in the field of work, however, will tell you that it is really about life; it is about giving patients the best possible quality of life until the end. This is a difficult task and a heavy responsibility to bear. Because what it means to lead a good life and die a good death differs for each of us.

During the year-long process of writing *A Good Death*, I spoke to and observed many palliative care doctors, nurses, social workers and therapists on the job. I remain indebted to them for their kindness and openness in sharing their experiences and innermost thoughts with me.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

A Good Death is quite a personal play for many of us in the team. During a rehearsal, it occurred to me (and I blurted it out because my sense of propriety keeps kicking in belatedly) that none of us there (a subset of the team) still had a father. It felt like a strange kinship. We spoke of parents, grandparents, hospitals, memories of all sorts. Anywhere else, it would probably have made the atmosphere awkward, but here we could use these experiences and observations to give the work muscles and teeth. But maybe it shouldn't have been awkward to talk about dying and the dead anyway. And to acknowledge how silly things or they were sometimes. To quote a song Karen sent to Faith and I one day: "Everyone you know someday will die". Avoiding this in favour of polite conversation isn't going to make it go away. So, I hope that *A Good Death* can be a starting point for us to talk about death and to the people who have been screwed over by it, and perhaps in so doing snatch some power away from it.

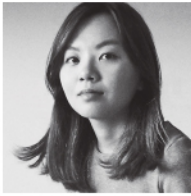
Thank you, Faith, for creating this rich world for us to explore and work in, and for entrusting me with it. Thank you, Karen, for

My thanks to the creative and production team for their tireless efforts and generosity—Evelyn, Anthony, Yu Hsien, Grace, Cristabel, Ryann, Adrian, Joyce, Chin Huat and Sheri. To Yingxuan, thank you for your sensitivity and care in bringing this work to life. To Karen, it has been humbling to witness your strength and vulnerability on the floor. To Claire, Huzir, Jerusha and Alvin, thank you for your insights. To Fezhah and Lynn, thank you for your tremendous support.

Faith Ng

being open and sharp, and embodying the dozen and some characters Faith callously wrote in with so little thought for your well-being. Thank you, Chin Huat, for your dedication in crafting the physicality for each character and finding moments where words can take a break. Thank you, Adrian, Anthony, Eucien and Grace, and Ryann for carefully developing our experience of the play. Thank you, Sheri and Joyce, for being great pillars of support. Thank you, Lynn, Evelyn, and Cristabel, for working with us every step of the way and being professional and kind through it all. Thank you, Esplanade, for taking a chance on a young, unknown director—even if you are regretting the particular young, unknown director you've taken a chance on, you've still done a really cool thing in principle. And thank you, audience, for spending part of your finite time on this show. I hope you're into fiery declarations about death and the meaning of life, and the pyrotechnics that will accompany each patient's demise.

Chen Yingxuan



Playwright
Faith Ng

Faith is a playwright and an Associate Artist with Checkpoint Theatre. Her plays include *Normal* (2017

and 2015), *For Better or for Worse* (2013) and *wo(wen)* (2010). She holds a Master of Arts with Distinction in Creative Writing (Scriptwriting) from the University of East Anglia, under the National Arts Council Postgraduate Scholarship. She also teaches playwriting at the National University of Singapore and was the writer-in-residence for the Singapore Creative Writing Residency 2014.



Director
Chen Yingxuan

Yingxuan is a theatre director. This is her second project with the Esplanade—the first was *The Car*

(2017) for the *Feed Your Imagination (F.Y.I)* series. She often collaborates with Joel Tan, directing *Mosaic* for the Lit Up Festival (2014) and M1 Fringe Festival (2015), and *Cafe* for the Twenty-Something Theatre Festival (2016) which was nominated for Best Script and Best Ensemble, and listed as one of the favourite plays of 2016 by The Business Times. She also works with Checkpoint Theatre—she was an understudy for *CityNight Songs* (2012) and *Atomic Jaya* (2013), and Assistant Director for *Normal* (2015, 2017).



Performer
Karen Tan

Karen dedicates her performance in *A Good Death* to the memory of her father, who taught her the joy, wonder

and intricacies of the English language, and without whom she would never have been an actor.



Lighting Designer
Adrian Tan

Since graduating from LASALLE College of The Arts in 2006, Adrian has been designing shows for the local

and international arts scene. His work spans a wide spectrum of the performing arts and outdoor light installations.

He has worked with most major theatre and dance companies in Singapore, creating designs and spaces for operas, dance, and experimental works produced by companies like Singapore Lyric Opera, Singapore Dance Theatre, T.H.E Dance Company, W!ld Rice, The Necessary Stage and Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay. Several of his works have received theatre awards, including shows like *Monkey Goes West* and *Another Country* by W!ld Rice, *A Cage Goes In Search Of a Bird* by A Group Of People, *BITCH* for M1 Fringe Festival, and *Dark Room*, which was commissioned by Esplanade as part of *The Studios*.



Sound Designer
Ryann Othniel Seng

Ryann is currently freelancing as a music recording and mixing engineer as well as a theatrical sound

designer, producing for an art form he strongly believes in.

Initially forgoing a classical education, he dived straight into the theatre industry, working on multiple productions. Some of his more notable works to date are *Cloud* (Festival Tokyo, Japan), *Café* by Joel Tan (The Twenty-Something Theatre Festival) and, *You Are Here (Kalaa Utsavam – Indian Festival of Arts)*.

Ryann firmly believes that the art of theatrical sound design stems from a strong technical foundation. From this premise, he focuses on creating beautiful technical pieces that integrate fully with other theatrical elements

to create immersive experiences for audiences. He strives to create and support works that have individuals questioning their own lives and the world around them a little more.

Although Ryann is married to his craft, he also has dalliances with collecting music and guitar paraphernalia.

Set Designer

Eucien Chia

Eucien is an architect and set designer who enjoys designing for big developments and small intimate productions alike. He is glad to be working with Faith Ng in a black box setting again, having previously designed the set for her play *Normal* (Checkpoint Theatre).

Selected plays: *The Father, Pillowman, Chinglish, Fat Pig* (Pangdemonium); *Boeing Boeing* (Wild Rice); *Take Me Out* (Tim Garner Productions)

Selected musicals: *La Cage Aux Folles, Emperor's New Clothes* (Wild Rice); *RENT, Little Voice, Spring Awakening* (Pangdemonium); *Superhero Diaries, Shanghai Blues* (Toy Factory); *H is for Hantu* (STAGES); *Sing To The Dawn* (I Theatre).

Selected events: NDP 2007 set and floats at Marina Bay; *Dis-space-ments installation* (Singapore Art Festival 2008)

Awards: ST Life! Theatre Awards Best Set Design for *Company* (Dream Academy), *December Rains* (Toy Factory), and *Dealer's Choice* (Pangdemonium)

Eucien thanks God for his fun, loving and supportive family.

Set Designer Assistant

Grace Lin

Grace is a multi-disciplinary designer, and her interests include graphics, typography and urban design. She studied architecture and communication design at the National University of Singapore and the Royal

Melbourne Institute of Technology respectively.

This is her fourth show assisting Eucien Chia, and she is grateful for the opportunities. Her past theatre set design credits include *The Odyssey* (UWCSEA), *Purgatory* (La'Arietta), *Mixed* (Theatreworks), *Two Weeks with the Queen* (UWCSEA) and *Caucasian Chalk Circle* (The Young Company). She regularly designs and builds sets and props with Players' Theatre, and recent shows include *Hansel and Gretel, The Witches, Elephant & Piggie's We Are In A Play, George's Marvellous Medicine* and *The BFG*.



Costume Stylist

Anthony Tan

Anthony has firmly established himself as a fashion and costume designer in Singapore, often

through his works with various arts companies and through collaborations that span commercial works, theatre, musical and dance. Anthony started designing costume since 1993; he has accumulated a long list of collaborative projects including wardrobe management with Cirque Du Soleil.

Anthony is also a design educator with a leading arts Institution in Singapore. He graduated from London College of Fashion (UK) with a BA(Hons) in Design Technology for the Fashion Industry (1999) and an MA in Costume Design for Performance (2010). Some of Anthony's significant costume designing works include *The Crab Flower Club* 《咏蟹花》 by Toy Factory Productions for Singapore Arts Festival 2009, *Twelve Angry Men* (Huayi – Chinese Festival of Arts) and *Art Studio* (SIFA 2017) by Nine Years Theatre.



Movement Coach
Lim Chin Huat

Lim Chin Huat is a cross-disciplinary artist who has over two decades of experience as a visual artist,

performer, dancer, choreographer, costume designer and educator. In particular, Chin Huat is known for his stunning visual creative works that are cross-disciplinary, site-specific, outreach and non-conventional in nature. Prior to being an independent arts practitioner, Chin Huat worked with Toy Factory Theatre Ensemble (1990–1996), and later, as co-founder and artistic director of ECNAD (1996–2013). Some of his signature and collaborative works were seen and presented locally and overseas at arts festivals, with arts companies and at special events. A recipient of Young Artist Award (2000), Professional Artist Grant (1999) and a nominee for the Spirit of Enterprise Award (2004), Chin Huat also holds double diplomas in dance and fine arts from the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts. He has been an academic staff member of the Faculty of Movement at Intercultural Theatre Institute since 2015.

PRODUCTION TEAM

Production Manager

Evelyn Chia
Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

In search of new challenges in life, Evelyn threw herself into theatre in 2003. She learns new things every day by working in different roles within various arts companies. She has worked extensively throughout Europe and Asia and has production experience, ranging from stage managing *La Galigo* and *Rumi In The Blink of an Eye* under the leadership of acclaimed director Robert Wilson; to production managing Singapore International Festival of Arts 2016 and 2017; *The King and I* (Asia tour) with Broadway Asia Entertainment; *West Side Story* (Asia tour) with BB Productions and various productions with Drama Box and WILD Rice. Evelyn is also instrumental in the creation and operations of SOTA's performance spaces.

Assistant Production Manager

Cristabel Ng
Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

Cristabel graduated from LASALLE College of the Arts with a BA(Hons) in Arts Management. She got her start in the arts as a festival assistant at Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay, before moving to the Technical Production department to learn the nuts and bolts of making art happen as a production coordinator. Her highlights to date have been her involvement in Marina Bay Singapore Countdown for three years (2014–2016) and *Les Miserables* (2016). She is thankful for all the opportunities given to her so far, and is excited for what is to come.

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Stage Manager

Sheri Hogan

An alumna of Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and University of Huddersfield, Sheri Hogan graduated in 2010 with a BA (Hons) in Arts Management. Her theatre credits include stage managing *Red, Freud's Last Session*, (Blank Space Theatre), and *In the Next Room* (LASALLE College of the Arts). Though theatre remains her first love, Sheri's versatility has resulted in regular work in major Singapore events, in various capacities such as: entertainment coordinator (F1 Singapore Grand Prix), festival coordinator (Play It Back! Festival), artist liaison officer (F1 Singapore Grand Prix; Timbre Rock & Roots Festival), and transport coordinator (F1 Singapore Grand Prix; St Jerome's Laneway Festival).

Amidst these various projects, Sheri also juggles between being a chef, chauffeur, and fixer-of-toys, in her day job as a full-time mum to two boisterous little boys.

Assistant Stage Manager

Joyce Gan

Joyce is a theatre juggler, experienced as an assistant stage manager, props master and sound designer. Recent highlights include *I Came at Last to the Seas* (TTP), *Mama White Snake* (Wild Rice), *Reduced Womanhood* (Chapter Arts Cardiff) and *Rent* (Pandemonium). She is glad to be working again with Sheri and Karen, and everyone on the team of *A Good Death*.

Playwright / Faith Ng

Director / Chen Yingxuan

Producer / Lynn Yang,
Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay

Performer / Karen Tan

Lighting Designer / Adrian Tan

Sound Designer / Ryann Othniel Seng

Set Designer / Eucien Chia

Set Designer Assistant / Grace Lin

Costume Stylist / Anthony Tan

Movement Coach / Lim Chin Huat

Production Manager / Evelyn Chia,

Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

Assistant Production Manager / Cristabel

Ng, Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

Stage Manager / Sheri Hogan

Assistant Stage Manager / Joyce Gan

Captions / Chong Gua Khee

Surtitles / Chua Ying Ni

We would like to thank the following for their help:

- Alvin Tan
- Aw Chia Hui
- Ben Ong
- Candice Tan
- Checkpoint Theatre
- Corrie Tan
- Dan Koh
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- Eileen Sung
- Jamie Zhou
- Koh Hwee Ling
- Kok Heng Leun
- Laremy Lee
- Lucas Ho
- Priscilla Gan
- Siti Aisyah
- Yee Cher Tan

And all who have so generously given of their time to attend the work-in-progress runs and provide thoughtful feedback.