

Esplanade Presents  
**FLIPSIDE 2019**  
24 May – 2 June 2019  
[www.esplanade.com/flipside](http://www.esplanade.com/flipside)



The arts is an open space where serious questions on life can be examined, but it can also be a place where we take the art of play, imagination and innovation seriously and celebrate the joys and quirks of being human today. Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay's annual *Flipside* festival is your break from the fast-paced pragmatic life of a city, where we 'flip' spaces, expectations and preconceived notions of art. From 24 May to 2 June 2019, we dive into comedy, music, visual art, puppetry, physical theatre and the circus arts, as they intersect in light-hearted and unexpected ways.

Make room for playfulness by setting your inner child free with art installations that provide different visual perspectives to familiar spaces, performances that thrive with audience participation, comedy conveyed with and without words, music encountered in surprising ways, hands-on activities and behind-the-scenes late night tours. Take this opportunity to break free for a moment from the usual rules, routines and expectations we place on ourselves.

This year, the festival has a focus on the circus arts. Circus is much misunderstood and seldom gets the credit it should as an art form and specialised discipline. We know the polished aesthetics of Cirque du Soleil, and the entertaining street buskers with their juggling balls and balancing acts. What is lesser known, are the many hard-to-define contemporary performances that incorporate circus, alongside theatre, dance and cabaret. We know little about Asian circus traditions and how circus has uplifted the lives of many. Rarely do we hear about the sheer will power, discipline, stamina and presence of mind it takes to be a circus performer. At our *Flipside Circus Weekend*, we feature practitioners from Singapore, Cambodia and Finland. While they all come from different social environments and have had different training backgrounds and opportunities, all have found, in the dazzling, gravity-defying art of the circus, a way forward in life and in creativity. As part of *Flipside*, these circus practitioners will be sharing more details of what their lives as artists are like.

We are also introducing a new platform this year – a *Flipside Scratch Night*, for puppetry, visual theatre and comedy and music acts with a twist. We invite aspiring and established artists to scratch that creative itch by sharing new material or ideas with a small friendly audience, open mic style. Over time, we hope to encourage artists to be playful even with ideas-in-progress and to fine-tune this platform with us.

We hope you will join us as we open ourselves to alternative realities and possibilities, while having a laugh and enjoying a song or two! You might just find some new inspiration or at the very least, have fun exploring a facet of life and yourself.

See you on the *Flipside!*

Shireen Abdullah  
Producer, The Esplanade Co Ltd

## About Flipside

Over a 10-day festival, Esplanade is transformed by unconventional performances, large-scale installation art, and participatory experiences. Come and explore music, puppetry, physical theatre, comedy, and visual art as they intersect in surprising ways. Expect loads of hands-on fun for the family, with special programming for young adults looking for a late night arts experience with a twist. With ticketed and free performances by international and local artists, ignite your imagination at *Flipside*.

## Ticketed Programmes

### THE ARTIST

by **Circo Aereo, Finland**

Esplanade Recital Studio

24 – 26 May 2019, Fri – Sun

Fri, 7.30pm

Sat & Sun, 2pm & 5pm



© Antti Saukko

“A rib-tickling delight.” – *The Times, UK*

“The sense of invention and play is captivating for all ages” – *The Stage*

“Thomas Monckton is a master of manipulating his own body, creating strange and hilarious physical works” - *Time Out London*

An artist arrives in his paint-spattered studio ready to create a new work. He waits for inspiration, but his focus strays and the blank canvas taunts him. Suddenly, every task is filled with challenges, until chaos is unavoidable.

Combining hilarious clowning and physical theatre, *The Artist* is created by award-winning Thom Monckton and Circo Aereo, and directed by Sanna Silvennoinen. Since its premiere in 2017, the production has garnered praise at festivals including the Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2018 and the London International Mime Festival 2019.

### About Circo Aereo & Thom Monckton

Circo Aereo is an international contemporary circus group from Finland. Founded in 1996, the company has created 30+ contemporary circus performances and toured in over 40 countries. Company holds base in Finland and France and collaborates frequently with musicians, dancers, visual artists and other circus companies. Sanna Silvennoinen is one of the three artistic leaders of the company, together with Maksim Komaro and Jani Nuutinen.

Thom Monckton is a performer, director, and teacher of physical based performance originally from a tiny town in the north island of New Zealand, now based in Helsinki. His previous collaboration with Circo Aereo, entitled *The Pianist*, has played to rave reviews at festivals across the world.

\$35 (Concessions for students, NSFs and senior citizens: \$28)

Approximately 1hr, no intermission

Admission ages 6 & above

No admission once performance has commenced.

## **THE SOCIAL SORTING EXPERIMENT** by **Smartphone Orchestra, The Netherlands**

Esplanade Annexe Studio

24 – 26 May 2019, Fri – Sun

Fri, 8pm

Sat, 5pm & 8pm

Sun, 2pm & 5pm



© Nichon Glerum

Did you know that 70 likes is all it takes to know more about how you behave than your friends do? And 300 likes to know you better than your own partner does? With every action you make on social media, you leave a digital data trail behind. When this digital trail is combined with psychological insights, a very accurate digital caricature is created. So what can you do? Quit all online activity? Or perhaps you should get to know yourself so well that you can no longer be manipulated...

The latter option, friend and follower, is the service that *The Social Sorting Experiment* provides. Find out what your digital caricature says about you, how you rank on the index of attractive ears, and more in this absurdist and serious, yet fun and interactive performance, where you and your smartphone are the main stars of the show. Come learn the mysterious algorithmic rituals under the hood of social media and you might just make a couple of good ol' analogue friends by the end of it all!

### What to Expect

1. Guided social interaction 😊  
(Be prepared to make a new friend or two!)
2. Use of smartphones  
(Unlike typical theatre performances, you *will* be using your phone throughout. Do come with it fully charged.)
3. Free standing event  
(You will be on your feet and asked to move around during the performance.)

### About Smartphone Orchestra

The Smartphone Orchestra is an orchestra created by the audience's smartphones. Imagine a world of shimmering musical sound fields in a concert hall, mass choreographies at festivals, unprecedented audience participation in theatre shows and spontaneous flash mobs at parties or demonstrations. The Smartphone Orchestra opens up a plethora of possibilities to engage mass audiences. The audience takes centre stage in this multimedia production created by an award-winning team of creatives, developers and sound engineers.

\$20 (Concessions for students, NSFs and senior citizens: \$15)

Approximately 45 mins, no intermission

Admission ages 12 & above

No admission once performance has commenced.

### **GIANT'S TABLE**

by **CCOTBBAT, Korea**

Esplanade Annexe Studio

31 May – 2 Jun 2019, Fri – Sun

Fri, 5pm

Sat, 2pm & 5pm

Sun, 11am & 2pm



Imagination comes alive on a magical table!

Objects and real-time drawings come to life through the interaction of actor and live video projection. Expect a multi-sensory experience where imagination becomes reality.

*Giant's Table* mixes live animation with an interactive performance, transforming a small and normal table into a huge giant's table through digital imaging with a live video backdrop.

The first part of the show comprises three different pieces, with two smaller scenes (affectionately dubbed *Snack Time*) set in between. The second part of the show sees the audience jumping into the *Giant's Table* for themselves, where they can interact with projected images drawn live by hand.

A whimsical performance that encourages participation and puts the audience at the heart of the action.

## Awards

- Best Production, Best Performer, and Best Audience Award at the 21st Seoul Children's Theatre Awards (2012)
- Excellent Visual Effects at the 21st UNIMA Congress & World Puppetry (2012)
- Best Actor at Gimcheon National Theater Festival for Family (2010)

## About CCOTBBAT

CCOTBBAT is a visual theatre company that integrates fine arts and theatre for children and adults. The company focuses on performances where audience participation is a key facet to the overall experience. CCOTBBAT has been invited to stage shows at international festivals across Europe, Asia and South America.

\$25 (Concessions for students, NSFs and senior citizens: \$23)

Approximately 1hr, no intermission

Admission ages 4 & above

## **THE PIGEONING**

**by Robin Frohardt, US**

Esplanade Annexe Studio

30 May – 2 Jun 2019, Thu – Sun

Thu – Sat, 8pm

Sun, 5pm



© Richard Termine

“...a tender, fantastical symphony of the imagination” – *The New York Times*

“...something extraordinarily integrated, burnished to a high gloss” – *Time Out New York*

Frank, who is obsessed with cleanliness and order, is convinced that pigeons are plotting against him.

*The Pigeoning* is a darkly comedic yet heartfelt story that spins Bunraku-style puppetry and lo-fi special effects into an epic tale about the illusion of safety and control in the context of the end of the world.

A funny, dialogue-less performance that will enthrall school-age children and speak to adults, whether they are seasoned theatre-goers or newcomers.

Each performance is followed by a post-show dialogue with the artists, where audiences will also get to see the set and puppets, up close.



### About Robin Frohardt

Known for her rich aesthetic and highly detailed constructions, Robin Frohardt is an award-winning artist, puppet designer and director. Frohardt has a knack for taking a simple premise to an elaborate realisation. Her vivid imagination, unique sense of humour and stunning technical craft come together to create work that defy the conventions of traditional storytelling.

Tickets from \$35 (Concessions for students, NSFs and senior citizens: \$28)

Approximately 1hr, no intermission

Admission ages 6 and above. Recommended for 8 and above

No admission once performance has commenced.

### **Late Night Backstage Tour: The Spaces in Between**

Tour Meeting Point: Esplanade Box Office & Info Counter

24 & 25 May, Fri & Sat

30 & 31 May, 1 Jun, Thu – Sat

11pm



The late-night backstage tour continues following its success in 2018. In this special Flipside edition, go beyond the stage doors, the dressing rooms and the busy everyday life of an arts centre, as it settles for the night.

Go deep into a hidden Esplanade. Step into the shoes of technicians; traverse a dizzying catwalk among the theatre spotlights; discover what lies beneath the stage; and hear mind-boggling facts about the Durian and stories of those working behind-the-scenes. Delve into the spaces in between—stage and backstage, stage lights and shadows, reality and myth.

#### Advisory

- Tour Meeting Point: Esplanade Box Office & Info Counter
- Please dress comfortably and wear covered shoes, no slippers or sandals.
- Please note that the tour will bring you to high floors with a view of the ground below.
- To participate, you need to have a general level of health and fitness, and the ability to climb stairs independently.

\$50 (Concessions for students, NSFs and senior citizens: \$40)

1hr 30mins, no intermission

Admission for ages 12 & above

No admission will be allowed once the tour has commenced.

## **Free Programme Highlights**

### **Flipside Circus Weekend: Bornfire Circus, Singapore**

#### **24 – 26 May (Fri – Sun)**

5 – 6.30pm: Bornfire – Juggling, balancing free play and jam (Esplanade Courtyard Green)

6.30 – 7pm: Bornfire – Circus games (Esplanade Courtyard Green)

7.15 – 7.30pm, 9.45 – 10pm: Bornfire aerial (Esplanade Courtyard Green)

8.30 – 9.15pm: Bornfire (Esplanade Outdoor Theatre)

#### **27 – 29 May (Mon – Wed)**

7.15 – 7.30pm, 9 – 9.15pm: Bornfire aerial (Esplanade Courtyard Green)

#### **30 May – 2 Jun (Thu – Sun)**

5 – 6.30pm, 8.15 – 8.45pm, 9.30 – 10pm: Bornfire – Juggling, balancing free play and jam (Esplanade Courtyard Green)

6.30 – 7.15pm: Bornfire – Circus games (Esplanade Courtyard Green)

8.15 – 8.30pm, 9.30 – 9.45pm: Bornfire aerial (Esplanade Courtyard Green)

Bornfire Circus will be presenting a brand new performance at the Outdoor Theatre, aerial acts at the Courtyard Green, as well as a work-in-progress as part of *Flipside Scratch Night*. Head on down to the Courtyard Green if you would like to have a chat with Singapore circus practitioners and maybe you'll get to pick up a few basic tricks.

#### **About Bornfire Circus**

Bornfire is a Singapore circus arts community that believes in bridging differences through the beauty of circus arts. Since 2011, Bornfire has acted as a catalyst for circus practitioners of all skill levels to practice together and exchange ideas in weekly training sessions, while also engaging the public through circus sharing and ad hoc outreach events.

**Flipside Circus Weekend: Phare, The Cambodian Circus, Cambodia**  
**24 – 26 May (Fri – Sun)**  
7.30 – 8pm  
Esplanade Outdoor Theatre



More than just a circus, Phare performers use a combination of theatre, music, dance and modern circus arts to tell uniquely Cambodian stories, delighting audiences with their energy, emotion, enthusiasm and talent. All performers are graduates of the Ponleu Selpak's vocational training centre in Battambang. The association was formed in 1994 by nine young men who returned home from a refugee camp after the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime, and aims to provide young people from underprivileged communities in Cambodia with training in different art forms and employment opportunities.



## **Flipside Circus Weekend: Trashpeze, Wise Fools, Finland**

**24 – 26 May, (Fri – Sun), 8 – 8.30pm, 9.15 – 9.45pm**

**27 – 29 May, (Mon – Wed), 7.30 – 8pm, 9.15 – 9.45pm**



We are constantly told to want more. Everything should be bigger, better and newer. In *Trashpeze*, three characters find themselves stranded in a land of trash. They are thrown out, abandoned and lost—much like everything we no longer want. Through strange and humorous absurdity, *Trashpeze* introduces explosive and unique circus techniques on triple trapeze, cloud swing and dance trapeze.

### About Wise Fools

Wise Fools is a circus trio comprising Valpuri Kaarninen, Maria Peltola and Jaimee Allen. The trio specialise in triple trapeze and skipping ropes. Its members first kicked off their circus careers as a hobby in Finnish youth circus Sorin Sirkus. They quickly moved on to pursue professional training at École Supérieure des Arts du Cirque (ESAC) in Belgium. In 2015, they won the Silver Medal at the prestigious Festival Mondial du Cirque de Demain in Paris. They have since worked with the world-famous Cirque du Soleil and GOP Variété-Theater, while also performing internationally at various street art festivals in Korea, Spain, Belgium and Israel.

### **Flipside Scratch Night**

**24 & 31 May 2019, Fri**

**9.45 – 11pm**

Esplanade Annexe Studio

For the first time at *Flipside*, practising and aspiring artists are invited to present short performances of 5 – 15 minutes in a light-hearted night of exploration and discovery. The scratch night will have a special focus on physical comedy and visual theatre, including puppetry, contemporary circus, music+ (meaning music with an additional element like comedy or sound art), and storytelling+ (an immersive or participatory way to tell a story). This new festival platform is an opportunity for artists to test new material and ideas on a small, friendly audience, promising to be a fun night out for those who enjoy surprises and the good ol' open mic format.

## **MIX by Spasmo Teatro, Spain**

31 May – 2 Jun 2019

Various timings

Esplanade Outdoor Theatre



Seriously silly and big on personality, *MIX* comprises a collection of sketches that transport the audience from scene to scene. These include original skits that have been broadcasted on television and performed internationally. Here in Asia for the first time, Spasmo will be performing an updated version of *MIX*, with a repertoire that has been specially tailored for their Singapore debut.

### About Spasmo Teatro

Spasmo Teatro is a theatre company from Spain that was founded in 2002. After 17 years of close collaboration, its four members have developed an identity built around gesture and humour. Their main sources of inspiration include Buster Keaton, Charlie Chaplin and Marcel Marceau. By weaving together striking scripts, optical illusions, and a dash of surreal humour, Spasmo Teatro aims to create fun and memorable experiences for its audiences.

## **#Goals**

**by Dwayne Lau, Singapore**

31 May (Fri), 10pm

1 Jun (Sat), 8.30pm & 10pm

Esplanade Concourse



Join theatre actor-director Dwayne Lau on a 40-minute late-night "workout" session, in honour of the 24-hour fitness gyms sprouting up all over Singapore. Combining comedy and re-contextualised pop songs, Dwayne will present a series of vignettes starring a motley crew of characters, from a makcik to a Zumba instructor. Kicking off with #fitgoals, and expanding into #famgoals and #moneygoals, Dwayne's "workout" mirrors his own personal pursuit of health and happiness.

Accompanied by Julian Wong.

## **About Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay**

Esplanade is Singapore's national performing arts centre. It has a year-round line-up of about 3,500 performances 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 non-ticketed. 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.

To bring even more of the arts to a wider audience, and provide more platforms to support Singapore's next generation of artists, Esplanade is building a new theatre with at least 550 seats along its busy waterfront, opening in 2021.

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 the Charity Transparency Award for three consecutive years since 2016.

TECL is funded by 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 [www.esplanade.com](http://www.esplanade.com) for more information.

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Issued by *The Esplanade Co Ltd*.

For more information, please contact:

Gina Koh  
Communications Specialist  
The Esplanade Co Ltd  
Tel: 6828 8332  
Email: [kgina@esplanade.com](mailto:kgina@esplanade.com)

Cynthia Tan  
Arts Marketing Strategist  
The Esplanade Co Ltd  
Tel: 6828 8316  
Email: [tcynthia@esplanade.com](mailto:tcynthia@esplanade.com)