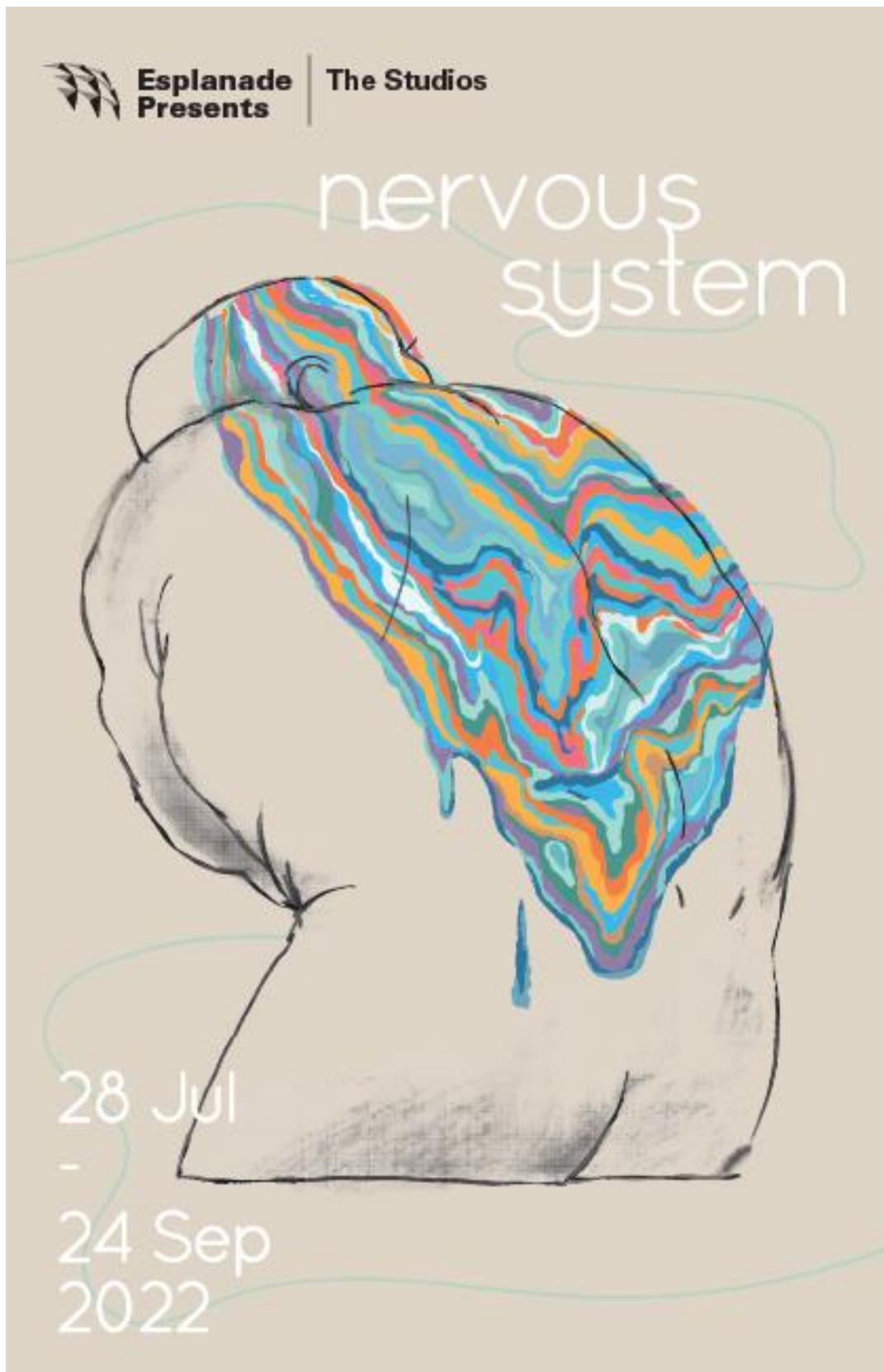


Esplanade Presents
THE STUDIOS 2022
28 Jul – 24 Sep 2022
www.esplanade.com/thestudios



Over the last 19 years, Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay's *The Studios* has been a space for inspiration, innovation and imagination. We have presented an eclectic collection of more than 160 productions that have asked artists and audiences to reconsider possibilities in contemporary theatre and performance.

This is the final year of *The Studios* in the format we are familiar with. The opening of Esplanade's new Singtel Waterfront Theatre later this year has given this platform the opportunity and space to evolve from 2023 onwards, and we look forward to sharing more about a new iteration of *The Studios* in time. What will continue is our commitment to enabling and collaborating with performance and theatre-makers to create new work and revisit past creations for today.

In this final season of this iteration, *The Studios* is very much influenced by the circumstances of the recent past. What have we learnt in the last two years operating under pandemic conditions? How have we paused to take stock of our modus operandi? And what is our place in this strange "new" world that feels so familiar?

In mulling over these questions, we found our biological nervous system to be a fitting metaphor for society. Much like the way our nervous systems make sense of environmental externalities and transmit information back and forth, enabling each organ to perform their physical, mental and emotional functions, society is a network of inextricably linked individuals and groups who must work together to respond to the norms and pressures that govern our lives. These attempts to make connections and commune with one another determine our individual and collective successes. Inevitably, however, system overloads occur. We then find ourselves reaching for temporary coping mechanisms instead of solutions that require constant, concerted effort: care for oneself and more importantly, care for each other.

This concept of *collective care* proposes that the well-being of an individual or community is the shared responsibility of all who belong to it. Theatre can be construed as an act of collective care as we come together and share a couple of hours, or even a moment of epiphany. It certainly is an entry point for conversations surrounding themes such as family, love, mental health, grief, ageing, self- and collective care; even healing. The commissioned productions and supporting programmes of this season all illustrate this in their own unique ways. For this, *The Studios* team is ever grateful to have collaborators and compatriots in Edith Podesta and her team, The Necessary Stage, Teater Ekamatra and Checkpoint Theatre, as well as Alecia Neo and Natalia Tan.

Some of you may already unconsciously practise collective care, but in this season, we invite everyone to be intentional in this exploration of ways in which we may better care for ourselves and others. It is our hope that these programmes help you perceive refreshing new ways of living and relating.

Take care, and thank you for being with us.

Vanessa Loh

Programmer, The Esplanade Co Ltd

Last updated: 14 June 2022

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. 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.

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.

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.

Turning 20 in 2022, Esplanade marks the occasion with a year-long celebration themed *20 and Beyond: Keeping the Lights On*. In addition to the presentations of its year-long festivals, programme series, and special initiatives and events, there will also be a season of new works by Singapore and Asian artists specially commissioned for the arts centre's 20th anniversary and official opening of its newest venue, Singtel Waterfront Theatre.

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 four consecutive years since 2016. 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](https://www.esplanade.com) for more information.

~ End ~

Issued by *The Esplanade Co Ltd*.

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Inconsequential Goddess

An Esplanade Commission
by Edith Podesta

28 – 31 Jul 2022, Thu – Sun

Thu & Fri: 8pm

Sat: 3pm & 8pm

Sun: 3pm

Esplanade Theatre Studio



In a city not unlike ours, where the rules that govern the bodies of women are not unlike ours, an unnamed woman wants to be a goddess of no consequence. Daughter of the mythical Arachne, she chooses anonymity so that neither her actions nor her power will bring harm to the world around her.

But even as shame forces her to shrink into her own oblivion, she discovers that everything in this world, including her own body, is a shrine and sacred, despite the inconsequentiality that her society imposes on it.

Mapping the myths of Greek goddesses onto the bodies of women we encounter every day, Edith Podesta's *Inconsequential Goddess*, is a performance poem that explores the cyclical nature of trauma and the ways these cycles are both broken and perpetuated over multiple generations and worlds.

Writer/Director: Edith Podesta

Performed by: Edith Podesta, Ian Tan & Koh Wan Ching

Costume Designer: Max.Tan

Lighting Designer: Stev.e Kwek

Composer/Sound Designer: Chong Li-Chuan
Hair Design: Ashley Lim
Video Designer: Brian Gothong Tan
Sound Engineer: Joel Fernandez
Production Stage Manager: Mirabel Neo
Producer: Shridar Mani (The Public Space)

The text for *Inconsequential Goddess* was first commissioned as a radio play for Singapore Writers Festival 2020.

There will be a post-show dialogue on 29 Jul 2022, Fri.

The show on 29 Jul 2022, Fri will be sign-interpreted.

Advisory 16: Mature Themes.

Please note that this production contains references to sexual assault.

Admission age: 13 and above.

(1hr 20 mins, no intermission)

\$38

Limited Concessions for NSFs, Students, Senior Citizens and PWDs: \$30

Esplanade&Me Discounts available:

E&Me Black: 15% savings

E&Me White: 10% savings

E&Me Discover (Package of 4): 10% savings (Limited)

Acting Mad

An Esplanade Commission
by The Necessary Stage

25 – 28 Aug 2022, Thu – Sun

Thu & Fri: 8pm

Sat & Sun: 3pm & 8pm

Esplanade Theatre Studio



“... what *Acting Mad* does is shine a spotlight on the presence of such issues and the difficult task of understanding or dealing with them, regardless of being in the theatre industry or not”.
—Bakchormeeboy.com

Mental illness does not discriminate. Although there is more access to information, many still suffer silently or face stigma when they come out with their illness. What is this experience like for actors in Singapore? Are they expected to just deal with their mental health issues because they are seen as “tortured artists” and “so full of drama”?

As part of The Necessary Stage’s exploratory platform, The Orange Production in 2019, the company first presented the work-in-progress showing of *Acting Mad*, a verbatim play based on interviews with 20 actors who have experienced or are going through mental health issues. This iteration, commissioned by Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay for *The Studios 2022*, incorporates new interview texts and testimonies, as well actors’ responses to the pandemic and its impact on them.

Can sharing our stories and creating theatre be a form of solace and support?

Writer/Director: Haresh Sharma

Performers: Ghafir Akbar, Karen Tan, Masturah Oli and Tan Guo Lian Sutton
Choreographer: Edith Podesta
Assistant Director: Deonn Yang
Set Designer: Vincent Lim
Lighting Designer: Yo Shao Ann
Sound Designer: Te Hao Boon
Support Facilitator: Rosemary McGowan

About the Artists

The Necessary Stage

Established in 1987, The Necessary Stage (TNS) is a non-profit theatre company with charity status. Our mission is to create challenging, indigenous and innovative theatre that touches the heart and mind. TNS has the honour of being the only arts company in Singapore helmed by two Cultural Medallion recipients: Artistic Director and Founder Alvin Tan and Resident Playwright Haresh Sharma. The company is also the organiser and curator of the annual M1 Singapore Fringe Festival.

TNS is supported by the National Arts Council under the Major Company Scheme for the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2023.

necessary.org
tnsarchives.com.

Facebook: facebook.com/thenecessarystage
Twitter: twitter.com/tns_sg
Instagram: instagram.com/thenecessarystage
LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/the-necessary-stage

Haresh Sharma

Haresh has been the Resident Playwright of The Necessary Stage since 1990. He was awarded the Cultural Medallion in 2015. To date, he has written more than 120 plays which have been staged in over 20 cities. His play, *Off Centre*, was selected by the Ministry of Education as a Literature text for GCE N- and O-Levels.

Haresh has 13 publications of his plays, including *Trilogy*, *Shorts 1*, *Shorts 2*, *Don't Forget to Remember Me* and *Abuse Suxxx!!! and Other Plays*. His works have been translated into Malay, Mandarin, Greek and Italian. He was awarded Best Original Script for *Fundamentally Happy*, *Good People* and *Gemuk Girls* at the 2007, 2008 and 2009 The Straits Times Life Theatre Awards respectively. Most recently in 2021, Haresh published *Reading the Room: A Playwright's Devising Journey*, which details his devising process developed over his career at TNS. Haresh also had the honour of having a selection of his works featured at Esplanade's first playwright-centred season at The Studios in 2017.

He has participated in several writers' festivals including the inaugural Singapore Literature Festival in New York (2014), New Delhi World Book Fair (2015), Ubud Writers and Readers Festival (2015), Hong Kong Literary Festival (2015) and Neilson Hays Bangkok Literature Festival (2019).

Haresh is the first non-American to be awarded the prestigious Goldberg Master Playwright by New York University's Tisch School of the Arts in 2011. In 2014, he was conferred the Southeast Asian Writers (or S.E.A. Write) Award (Singapore), which recognises and honours literary excellence in the ASEAN region.

There will be a post-show dialogue after each performance.

Acting Mad is performed with open captions in English.

(1hr 30mins, no intermission)

Admission Age: 13 years and above

Advisory 16: Mature themes and coarse language. Recommended for 16 years and above.

Content Warning:

This production includes content about sexual abuse, suicide and self-harm and certain scenes in the performance may be distressing for some individuals. If you would like to find out more before purchasing your tickets, please contact us at corporate@esplanade.com. All correspondence will be kept confidential. Thank you.

\$38

Limited Concessions for NSFs, Students, Senior Citizens and PWDs: \$30

Esplanade&Me Discounts available:

E&Me Black: 15% savings

E&Me White: 10% savings

E&Me Discover (Package of 4): 10% savings (Limited)

Berak

An Esplanade Commission

by Teater Ekamatra

1 – 4 Sep 2022, Thu – Sun

Thu & Fri: 8pm

Sat & Sun: 3pm & 8pm

Esplanade Theatre Studio



“Heartfelt, beguiling, and magical.” – The Straits Times

“An incredibly moving reflection and depiction of death and bereavement.” – The Flying Inkpot

When a father takes his life, his wife grieves, his daughter wonders, and his mother laughs. *Berak* looks at the whimsical journey of a family dealing with mortality. Adapted from Chong Tze Chien’s award-winning *Poop!*, *Berak* stars the stellar cast of Siti Khalijah Zainal, Fir Rahman, Siti Hajar Abdul Gani, and Aidli ‘Alin’ Mosbit.

With its humorous musings on family, love, and grief, *Berak* promises to speak to your heart in unexpected ways, filling it with magic, laughter, and hope.

Director: Mohd Fared Jainal

Playwright (Malay adaptation): Zulfadli Rashid

Cast: Alin Mosbit, Fir Rahman, Siti Hajar, Siti K

Lighting Designer: Lim Woan Wen

Sound Designer: Safuan Johari

Set Designer: TBC

Visual Media Designer: Eric Lee
Production and Technical Team
Producer: Shaza Ishak
Production Stage Manager: Kharina Khalid
Assistant Stage Manager: Anum Zainal
Surtitle Operator: TBC

There will be a post-show dialogue on 2 Sep 2022, Fri.
The performance on 2 Sep 2022, Fri, 8pm will be sign language-interpreted.

(1hr 30mins, no intermission)
Language: Malay with English Surtitles

Advisory 16: Contains references to suicide
Recommended for 16 years and above.
Admission age: 13 years and above.

\$38

Limited Concessions for NSFs, Students, Senior Citizens and PWDs: \$30

Esplanade&Me Discounts available:

E&Me Black: 15% savings

E&Me White: 10% savings

E&Me Discover (Package of 4): 10% savings (Limited)

Recalling Mother: Her Lines, My Lines

An Esplanade Commission
by Checkpoint Theatre

15 – 18 Sep 2022, Thu – Sun

Thu & Fri: 8pm

Sat & Sun: 3pm & 8pm

Esplanade Theatre Studio



“Her hands, at 8, are washing grains of rice running the grains through her tiny fingers. My hands, at 8, are grasping a pencil pressing the nib against the pages of my primary school exercise book.”

“Her hands, at 35, cook and clean, cook and clean, cook and clean. My hands, at 35, type and text, type and text, type and text.”

Mother-daughter relationships are always complex. Their echoes spread across generations. How does time bring a new perspective to the way we relate to our parents? A vivid, affecting portrait of the ties between mothers and daughters, *Recalling Mother: Her Lines, My Lines* invites you to re-examine this special connection with tenderness, compassion, and empathy.

Immensely moving and funny, Checkpoint Theatre's *Recalling Mother: Her Lines, My Lines* celebrates the joys, trials and intricacies of mother-daughter relationships. A living work that has seen many successive versions, the piece has resonated deeply with global audiences in Singapore, New York, Brisbane and Adelaide since it began its journey in 2006.

Now, in 2022, the conversations evolve further, with changing times, bodies, and relationships creating new bonds and stories. Dynamics shift, love and care become inextricable. Daughters find themselves renegotiating their roles as they grow up and grow old with their parents.

Shared with verve, generosity and wit, acclaimed theatremakers and friends Claire Wong and Noorlinah Mohamed open an intimate, safe space for all to listen to their stories and recall mother in their own way.

Writers, Directors, Performers: Claire Wong and Noorlinah Mohamed
Set Designer: Johanna Pan
Lighting & Multimedia Designer: Elizabeth Mak
Sound Designer: Shah Tahir

There will be a post-show dialogue after each performance.
The performance on 17 Sep 2022, Sat, 3pm will be audio-described.

(1hr 10mins, no intermission)
Language: English with some Cantonese & Malay

\$38

Limited Concessions for NSFs, Students, Senior Citizens and PWDs: \$30

Esplanade&Me Discounts available:

E&Me Black: 15% savings

E&Me White: 10% savings

E&Me Discover (Package of 4): 10% savings (Limited)

Weaving Stories, Storied Weavings

by Natalia Tan and Edith Podesta

24 Jul 2022, Sun, 3pm

Esplanade Rehearsal Studio



Weaving is a central motif in Edith Podesta's *Inconsequential Goddess*. Just as the Greek mortal-turned-goddess Arachne weaves the web of lives of mortals, in ancient Greece, women would use the loom and weaving as a vessel for telling stories and passing secret messages. Drawing on this, textile artist Natalia Tan and theatre practitioner Edith Podesta invite participants to partake in this age-old practice and to share their stories through the art of weaving.

Participants are encouraged to prepare a personal story that they would like to share during this weaving experience, and to bring a related small item of clothing (which may be cut up) or an object (no larger than 20cm x 20cm x 5cm) that they are willing to let go of. Items brought by participants may be used as weaving material, along with other provided yarns. Completed weavings and stories will be exhibited as an art installation accompanying the run of *Inconsequential Goddess* from 28 – 31 Jul 2022.

Materials will be provided.

About the Artists

Natalia Tan

Natalia Tan is a textile artist and art facilitator based in Singapore. She began her art practice in 2019, after a series of weaving journeys from 2014 to 2019 culminating in a 30-day weaving residency in Japan. An advocate of creative reuse and repurposing, Natalia co-creates with audiences using salvaged materials. Her art-making is centred around play, discovery, and empathy.

Edith Podesta

Edith Podesta is a writer, theatre maker and choreographer. She studied Acting and Movement Studies at the National Institute of Dramatic Art's (NIDA) and holds a Master of Arts Fine Arts from LASALLE College of the Arts. In 2017, she was awarded Best Original Script and Production of the Year for her production *BITCH: The Origin of the Female Species*, commissioned by the M1 Singapore Fringe Festival. Recently, her production of *Leda and The Rage*, commissioned and produced by Esplanade, was awarded Production of the Year at the 2019 Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards. Edith is currently Associate Artistic Director of young & W!LD, a division of W!LD RICE.

(2hrs)

Recommended for 13 years and above.

Admission age: 13 years and above

\$35

Limited Concessions for NSFs, Students, Senior Citizens and PWDs: \$25

Esplanade&Me Discounts Available:

E&Me Black & White: 15% savings

E&Me Discover: 10% savings (Limited)

Recipes for Wayfinding (Care Index) Workshop

by Alecia Neo (Singapore)

4 Sep 2022, Sun, 3pm

Esplanade Rehearsal Studio



Wayfinding has historically been rooted in physical places, mapping how we orient ourselves, read signposts and navigate routes to reach a destination. In today's context, how might the process of wayfinding offer new tools for **reorientating** and **reencountering** ourselves and others in new and shifting territories?

Recipes for Wayfinding Workshop is a complement to the site-specific installation at the rooftop terrace. The workshop offers a series of creative activities that have emerged from a process of collective experimenting with body movements, sound and the sharing of stories.

Beginning with our feet, participants and facilitators will try out a series of creative exercises that invite different modes of listening and orienting via our body and different materials.

The workshop has been fueled by the practices and stories of project collaborators Alecia Neo, Sharda Harrison, Lim Tingli and Celine Tan. Their work emerges against the current backdrop of the prolonged Covid-19 pandemic, its unfolding effects and the intensifying wars and conflicts globally, and the ongoing climate crisis that demands our immediate collective action.

About the Artist

Alecia Neo

Alecia Neo's art practice unfolds primarily through visual and participatory projects that address modes of radical hospitality, care and wellbeing. Her recent projects include *ramah-tamah* (2020), a dance film commissioned by the Asian Civilisations Museum, and *Power to*

the People (2019), a site-specific art installation commissioned by Goethe Institut Singapur. She is currently working on *Care Index*, a long-term artistic research that unfolds via collaborations with different practitioners and platforms. *Care Index* was recently presented at The Listening Biennial, *Assembly for Permacircular Museums* (ZKM, Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe), *New Season of Care* (Asia-Art-Activism) and *Presence of Mind* (Gallery Lane Cove, NSW, Australia).

IG: alecianeo

<https://www.facebook.com/alecianeoart/>

careindex.net

alecianeo.com

(2hrs)

Recommended for 17 years and above.

Admission age: 17 years and above

Meeting Point: Theatre Studio Entrance, Level 4, 15 mins before start time. Dress comfortably. Participants may be asked to remove their footwear during the workshop. This workshop will involve some movement and dialogue. Participants are also required to bring your own smartphones and earpieces.

\$20

Limited Concessions for NSFs, Students, Senior Citizens and PWDs: \$15

Esplanade&Me Discounts Available:

E&Me Black & White: 15% savings

E&Me Discover: 10% savings (Limited)

Recipes for Wayfinding (Care Index) Installation

by Alecia Neo (Singapore)

28 Jul – 24 Sep

Esplanade Roof Terrace



Wayfinding has historically been rooted in physical places, mapping how we orient ourselves, read signposts and navigate routes to reach a destination. In today's context, how might the process of wayfinding offer new tools for **reorientating** ourselves in new and shifting territories? How can we create avenues for **reencountering** each other and discover doors to imaginative travel while making space for understanding oneself?

Recipes for Wayfinding is a site-specific installation, offering a series of creative activities that have emerged from a process of collective experimenting with body movements, sound and the sharing of stories. You may interpret these activities with freedom, bringing your own creative flair to the mix.

Project Collaborators: Alecia Neo, Sharda Harrison, Lim Tingli, Celine Tan and Hironori Kawaguchi

Read more: <https://www.careindex.net/scores>

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IG: aleciane0

<https://www.facebook.com/aleciane0art/>

careindex.net

aleciane0.com

Participants are required to bring your own smartphones.

Free

Performing Grief

by Mohd Fared Jainal, Chong Tze Chien, Jolene Chiang and moderated by Nabilah Said (Singapore)

10 Sep 2022, Sat, 3pm
library@esplanade



The three female characters in *The Studios 2022: Berak* express their individual forms of grief in immensely different yet familiar ways. Moderated by playwright and arts activist, Nabilah Said, this panel discussion probes at the topic of grief with the artists of *Berak* and *Poop!* alongside a healthcare professional. The discussion dives into how the expressions of grief are performed and represented on stage, and the considerations necessary in its artistic treatment to reveal parallels, similarities and divergences in fiction and reality.

(1hr, no intermission)

Free

In Conversation: And So The Conversations Continue...

by Checkpoint Theatre (Singapore)

24 Sep 2022, Sat, 3pm

library@esplanade



Photography by Joel Lim @ Calibre Pictures, courtesy of Checkpoint Theatre.

In a world where everything is functional and fulfils a purpose, can we have conversations without pre-existing agendas? What does it mean to simply let the barriers between performer and audience fall, and allow ourselves to communicate as individuals? Given time and space, in what ways will we discover that we're not really strangers at all?

Join us for an honest, open, and insightful conversation between the writer-performers of *Recalling Mother: Her Lines, My Lines*, Claire Wong and Noorlinah Mohamed, and you, the audience, as we simply hold space to voice our thoughts and listen to each other.

(1hr 30mins, no intermission)

Free

In Their Own Words: Writing Verbatim Plays

by Haresh Sharma (Singapore)

27 Aug 2022, Sat, 12pm

library@esplanade



Photo credit: The Pond Photography

Why should you write a verbatim play instead of a conventional one? How do you choose your topic? What is the writing process like? Join playwright Haresh Sharma as he shares his approaches to working on a verbatim play, including his latest production *Acting Mad*, presented as part of *The Studios* series this year.

About the Artist

Haresh Sharma

Haresh has been the Resident Playwright of The Necessary Stage since 1990. He was awarded the Cultural Medallion in 2015. To date, he has written more than 120 plays which have been staged in over 20 cities. His play, *Off Centre*, was selected by the Ministry of Education as a Literature text for GCE N- and O-Levels.

Haresh has 13 publications of his plays, including *Trilogy*, *Shorts 1*, *Shorts 2*, *Don't Forget to Remember Me* and *Abuse Suxxx!!! and Other Plays*. His works have been translated into Malay, Mandarin, Greek and Italian. He was awarded Best Original Script for *Fundamentally Happy*, *Good People* and *Gemuk Girls* at the 2007, 2008 and 2009 The Straits Times Life Theatre Awards respectively. Most recently in 2021, Haresh published *Reading the Room: A Playwright's Devising Journey*, which details his devising process developed over his career at TNS. Haresh also had the honour of having a selection of his works featured at Esplanade's first playwright-centred season at *The Studios* in 2017.

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(1hr, no intermission)

Free