



**Esplanade  
Presents**

**The Studios**

An Esplanade Commission

# Mosaic

Written by Joel Tan • Directed by Tan Shou Chen



**18 – 20 Aug 2023, Fri – Sun**  
Fri, 8pm • Sat, 3pm & 8pm • Sun, 3pm

**Singtel Waterfront Theatre at Esplanade**

# About Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

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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. 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. 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](http://Esplanade.com) for more information.

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## Season Message

### ***The Studios turns 20 this year.***

Over the last two decades, 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 has asked artists and audiences to reconsider possibilities in contemporary theatre and performance. We have heard stories that invite us to reflect on the human condition and what it means to live. We have had the privilege of meeting so many artists and audience members who have grown along with the season, many of whom have become firm collaborators and colleagues.

What next then? After 20 years, what role does *The Studios* play in the Singapore theatre scene? In what ways can the season evolve and respond to a wildly different world? What do we want to talk about and how do we want to talk about it? How does our physical infrastructure at Esplanade shift the programming of the season? It has been an exciting few years of research, reflection, brainstorming and prioritisation as we think about the possibilities ahead. What firmly remains, however, is our commitment to enable and collaborate with performance and theatre-makers to create work that challenges our notions of what art can be and do.

From 2023, *The Studios* will be expanding.

At the most fundamental level, the season is moving beyond its intimate home in the Esplanade Theatre Studio to include presentations in the recently opened Singtel Waterfront Theatre at Esplanade, opening up the possibilities for art-making and performance. This shift is mirrored in the expansion of the geography of the programming, inviting both Singapore-based and international artists to congregate in these spaces and exchange ideas, perspectives and stories—an ever more essential dialogue in an increasingly insular and polarised world.

Once started, this exchange and dialogue has the potential and momentum to continue beyond the venue's physical confines. The suite of companion programmes that are presented alongside the performances are an invitation to deepen our engagement with the artistic work and the issues raised. They are designed to engage not just the intellect, but our senses and emotions, taking advantage of the myriad ways that people process and access information. Through these interactions, we hope that *The Studios* can become a space where we are provoked to think, make sense of and hopefully, make good of our collective human experience at this time.

## 2023 – 2025: Land

Our overarching theme for the next three years of *The Studios* is **Land** and it emerged in the simplest of ways. As the Singtel Waterfront Theatre was being built, we found photos of the Marina Bay area that showed how dramatically the landscape here had changed over the last 20 years. Between this visual reminder and the current local and global discourse, it felt urgent and fitting to look at land as our thematic focus for the next three editions.

Land is immediate and tactile. It is simultaneously our physical landscape and a symbol of our sense of identity and belonging. It encompasses a vast number of today's pertinent issues, including global development, climate change, land rights, displacement and migration, duty of care and responsibility to our environment and the people around us. Yet, it is deeply intimate and personal, drawing our attention to our roots and history while inviting us to think about the future and what we have to do.

For 2023, we turn our lens inwards and examine our relationship with land under the specific theme of **Landings**. How much do we know about the land on which we reside—its history, its natural character? What does it mean to us, and to what extent do we understand what we are trying to protect or preserve, particularly in Singapore where urban re-development is analogous to progress? What is the cost of this progress and what do we give up or have we given up, in order to move ahead?



Taking place from 28 Jul to 3 Sep 2023, the six productions and the accompanying companion programmes in our 2023 season are a starting point to examine some of these complex questions. For this, we are ever privileged and grateful to build this conversation with **Silke Huysmans and Hannes Dereere, The Necessary Stage, Joel Tan, Tan Shou Chen, Robert Zhao**, as well as **Dr Natalie Pang, Yong Ding Li, Esmonde Luo, Rachel Chin**, and **Danial Matin**.

And to everyone who has joined us over the last two decades, thank you for your support and trust. It means the world to us and we are incredibly excited to start this new chapter with you.

**Lynn Yang**

Producer

The Esplanade Co Ltd

## Director's Message

### *"Nostalgia is a seductive liar."*

Full disclosure, I ChatGPT-ed that quote, looking for one that could top Joel's epigraph for this play (he quoted Arthur Yap). Thing is, the source and context didn't match when I Googled for source and context. Who should I believe, ChatGPT or Google?

Truth is a snake. It slithers and slips, its iridescent sheen different coloured depending from where you look at it.

Like Schrödinger's Cat.

Memory (oh boy) is the quantum of our personal truth. You know, the days before paper or thumb drives, you were really the primary way to store memory? The Greeks (or was it the Romans?) developed a precise method to aid that: the Method of Loci. It is a mnemonic memory exercise where a list of items are associated with specific but imagined physical locations. Say you want to remember a birthday day, a lover's perhaps. You begin by imagining the site where you had your first kiss. Perhaps an old mosaic-tiled playground shaped like a benevolent dragon, where under the slide, you see the digits of their birthdate written in the sand.



No matter how hard we try though, memory decays. Some evolutionary reason has made forgetting part of being human. In an effort to not forget, I record bits and bobs of my life in various digital and physical spaces, relying on a cloud search to dig up old truths. Somehow, I seem to forget faster because I do—I don't trust my memory. Do you trust your memory?

*"Nostalgia is a seductive liar."*

– George Ball

## **Tan Shou Chen**

## Synopsis

An old playground in Ang Mo Kio is slated to be bulldozed. Three 20-something friends and a stranger gather to protest its demolition. What starts as a well-meaning but ill-conceived protest escalates quickly to a night of reckoning. Relationships are tested, convictions challenged and identities scrapped. Much like the playground itself, the lives of these four characters are sucked into an endless cycle of forgetting, destruction, loss and letting go.

An ode to the hang-ups and dramas of a generation coming of age, Joel Tan's *Mosaic* is a funny and witty look at the rose-tint of nostalgia and the uncertainty of change.

*Mosaic* was first produced and presented in 2013, and subsequently restaged in 2015 with a revised script. The Straits Times called it "joyful and heart-warming," while TODAY Online praised it as "vivid" and "beautifully rendered." This fresh staging is directed by Tan Shou Chen, with a brand new cast comprising bright talents from Singapore's next generation of actors.

(1hr 30mins, no intermission)

Performed in English, no surtitles.

Singapore Sign Language available on 19 Aug, 3pm.

Advisory 16: Some mature content and coarse language.



## Bios

### Playwright Joel Tan

Joel Tan is a Singaporean playwright based in London and Singapore.

Recent work in the UK includes *No Particular Order* at Theatre503; *When The Daffodils* at the Orange Tree Theatre; *Living Archive* at the Royal Court and *Ghosts in the Blood* for Audible UK. He is under commission with the Royal Court, Headlong Theatre, and the Almeida Theatre.

Recent work in Singapore includes *The Butterfly Lovers* (Opera) by Wild Rice and *No Particular Order* by Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay. His plays have been produced by leading theatre companies like Checkpoint Theatre, Wild Rice, and Pangdemonium, and several are available in a collection, *Joel Tan Plays Volume 1*, published by Checkpoint Theatre. He is a Creative Associate with Centre 42's New Writing Development Programme, and runs its Professional Development Residency for playwrights.

His play *Love in the Time of the Ancients* was a finalist for the 2019 Papatango Prize, and *No Particular Order* was shortlisted for Theatre 503's 2018 Playwriting Award. Joel was one of the 503 Five in residence at Theatre 503, and was part of the 2020-2021 Royal Court Writers Group. He was an Associate Artist with London's Chinese Arts Now and Singapore's Checkpoint Theatre.

Joel also works inter-disciplinarily, and has collaborated with visual artists, poets, musicians and dancers as a writer, director and dramaturg.

## Director Tan Shou Chen

Tan Shou Chen is a recognised theatremaker from Singapore with credits spanning acting and directing.

Directorial works: Tony Perez's *On North Diversion Road* (SMU Arts Festival, 2021); Joel Tan's *A Bird Calls You to Moscow* (2020), an original audio play with the music of Rachmaninov; *The Box* (Seven Eight Musical Collective 2020) a Zoom-musical choose-your-own adventure experience with a hybrid 'live' element; *13.13.13*, (Theatreworks SG, part of the international company's 2018 season); *Open Waters* (Bangkok Theatre Festival 2017, NAC Creation Grant) *MEDEA*, an intercultural piece melding modern narratives and Bharatanatyam (The Substation's *Director's Lab*, 2014); the award-winning play *Now Then Again* by Penny Penniston (NUS Arts Festival 2016); the festival opener *Words and Music* featuring Jeremy Monteiro (NUS Arts Festival 2015); *Mixed* (Theatrework's Community Tour, 2017); *Makan Memories* (National Gallery opening festival, 2015).

Opera credits include Henry Purcell's *Dido* (The Opera People, 2023); George Friederich Handel's *Alcina* (The Opera People, 2021) and *Orestes by Ifigenia* (Singapore International Festival of the Arts, 2019).

[www.shouchen.net](http://www.shouchen.net)

## Actor

### **Coco Wang Ling** **as Sharon**

Coco Wang Ling (she/her) is a multidisciplinary theatre maker, actor and collaborator. She recently graduated from the Victoria College of the Arts (VCA) with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Theatre) degree. Her creative practice is led by her passion for play and world-building, and places audience connection at the forefront of her practice. She works to challenge theatrical conventions by creating performances in non-traditional theatre spaces. Coco is passionate about theatre education for young children and, through this, she wishes to create a more empathetic world through empowerment. She believes in making the arts more accessible by practicing brave spaces in the rehearsal room.

**Actor**  
**Irsyad Dawood**  
**as Hanis**

Irsyad Dawood, a theatrical dream,  
From acting to puppetry, his talents gleam.  
*Potong, Rattle King, Pandancemic* too,  
His credits aplenty, making all hearts woo.

*Does This Work For You?*, a Fringe delight,  
*Kids' Gifts, COEs, and Roast Duck* take flight.  
A part of NAYA, a collective so cool,  
Bringing art to children, breaking every rule.

As an actor, director, and writer, with grace,  
A generalist of theatre, he claims his space.  
From designing sets to teaching with zest,  
His skills and passion are truly the best.

But amidst the applause, his work's embrace,  
He dedicates to a love, a special place.  
To his mother and late father, sincere and true,  
Each creation a tribute, their love shining through.

**[tinyurl.com/irsyaddawood](https://tinyurl.com/irsyaddawood)**

Actor

**Andre Chong**  
**as Rong Cheng**

A recipient of the David Marshall Young Artist Scholarship, Andre graduated from the School Of the Arts' International Baccalaureate Career Program (IBCP) in 2017. In his graduating year, he was an Assistant Director to Checkpoint Theatre's *FRAGO* (2017). He was last seen onstage in *Acting Mad* (2019) with The Necessary Stage. Andre is currently headed into his final year of BA (Hons) Film at LASALLE College of the Arts as a directing major.

Actor

**Rebecca Ashley Dass**  
**as Wong**

Rebecca is an actor for theatre, television, film and voiceover work. She has had the opportunity to work with many reputable companies, such as Pangdemonium, Sight Lines Entertainment, Singapore Repertory Theatre, Marina Bay Sands and Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay, in equally notable productions, her most recent production having been under Wild Rice for their re-staging of *HOTEL*.



## Set Designer

### TK Hay

TK (he/him) is a theatre designer working in Singapore and the UK. He was a recipient of the National Arts Council Undergraduate Scholarship (2016) and trained at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. He subsequently won the Linbury Prize for Stage Design (2019) and was Best Designer at the Stage Debut Awards (2022). Recent design credits include *Beginning* (Royal Exchange Theatre), *Mayflies* (York Theatre Royal), and *Making of a Monster* (Wales Millennium Centre).

## tkhay.design

## Costume Stylist

### Yvette Ng

Yvette's path in theatre started from operations, and evolved into design and styling both locally and internationally. She has worked with Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay, TheatreWorks, Singapore Repertory Theatre, Revolution Media Pte Ltd, Cirque Du Soleil and The Opera People.

## Lighting Designer

### Alberta Wileo

Alberta Wileo is a freelance lighting designer and recipient of the 2023 Straits Time Life Theatre Award for Best Lighting Design. He has designed for companies such as Arts Fission, Action Theatre, Singapore Repertory Theatre, Singapore Lyric Opera, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Dance Theatre, Wild Rice, Apsaras Arts, Frontier Dance,

TheatreWorks, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, The Opera People, New Opera Singapore, amongst others. In November 2022, he designed for the *TRUE COLORS CONCERT* in Tokyo presented by Nippon Foundation, which starred Katy Perry and Japanese superstar Kyary Pamyu Pamyu.

## Sound Designer

### Jing Ng

A recipient of the National Arts Council Scholarship, Jing graduated with first-class honours from Rose Bruford College (UK), specialising in Performance Sound. Having designed for various productions over 10 years of practice, he aspires to provide audiences with a wholesome sonic experience—what, why and how you listen through a live performance. His work has been nominated in the Off West End Theatre Awards and the Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards.

## Sound Engineer

### Guo Ningru

Ning is a Singaporean theatre sound designer, composer, and mixer. After almost a decade of sound designing and working with sound in Singapore, she was awarded the National Arts Council Scholarship to pursue her MFA in Sound Design in the University of California, Irvine.

She enjoys exploring new ways to create immersive sound experiences for installed spaces and theatrical performances.

Recent works include Composition for *The Importance of Being Earnest* (UC Irvine) and Sound Design for *Mrs Packard* (UC Irvine), *Chess - The Musical* (UC Irvine), *The Effect* (Pangdemonium, Singapore), *Chinglish* (Pangdemonium, Singapore), *Cat in the Hat* (Singapore Repertory Theatre, Singapore) and *The Laramie Project* (Singapore Repertory Theatre, Singapore), *Pompeii* (Singapore International Festival of Arts).

## Producer

### Shridar Mani

With more than a decade of programming and producing experience, Shridar's current practice centers on bringing to light socio-cultural issues by re-thinking traditional forms and modes of presentation within the framework of contemporary artistic practice, and putting art forms and practices in dialogue with each other to build and sustain stronger artistic communities in Singapore. He is also the co-founder and company manager of The Opera People, a Singapore-based opera company, redefining the experience of opera and the co-founder of local arts initiative Other Tongues – A Festival of Minority Voices. He is currently also one half of The Public Space, a production house with an arts-centred vision, designing experiences that bring people, stories, and ideas together.

## Production Manager

### Cindy Yeong

Cindy is one of Singapore's most experienced production managers. She spent 11 years in the iconic multi-venue performing arts complex, Esplanade – Theatres by the Bay. During her time as Production Manager (PM) she oversaw the production management team for *da:ns* festival and *Huayi – Chinese Festival of Arts*.

In 2015, Cindy joined Ctrl Fre@k Pte Ltd, heading its production management arm. She managed the production *Share The Hope*, a large-scale façade video mapping show, as part the opening carnival of National Gallery Singapore.

She was also one of the production managers for Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA) under Festival Director Ong Keng Sen as well as the Chinese Theatre Festival.

In 2017, Cindy joined Arts House Limited and was Head of Production, heading the Technical and Production team for SIFA under the helm of Gaurav Kripalani, and also acted as the Production Manager for the M1 Contact Festival.

## Technical Manager

### Kailash

Kailash is an independent arts practitioner based in Singapore with extensive experience working in the performing arts. His knowledge and experience spans beyond lighting design into video technology and technical management for performances, exhibitions and events.

Kailash was the Head of Lighting and Visual Media at Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay. With many productions under his belt, he has gone on to be the Technical Manager for the Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA). When not busy with SIFA, he also works with artists locally and internationally to meet their technical needs.

## Assistant Stage Manager

### Chong Wee Nee

Wee Nee is a theatre enthusiast with experience in wardrobe, production and stage management. Her past wardrobe management credits include *HOTEL* (Wild Rice) at OzAsia Festival in Adelaide, *Fourth Trimester* by Checkpoint Theatre and LOVE 972 stand-up comedy presented by MediaCorp. Recent production and stage management credits include: Singapore International Festival of Arts 2022, Singapore Writers Festival 2022, Disney100: Experience Wonder At Jewel, and Jay Chou Carnival World Tour 2022.

## Production Credits

Playwright

**Joel Tan**

Director

**Tan Shou Chen**

Actor

**Coco Wang Ling**  
as Sharon

Actor

**Irsyad Dawood**  
as Hanis

Actor

**Andre Chong**  
as Rong Cheng

Actor

**Rebecca Ashley Dass**  
as Wong

Set Designer

**TK Hay**

Costume Stylist

**Yvette Ng**

Lighting Designer

**Alberta Wileo**

Sound Designer

**Jing Ng**

Sound Engineer

**Guo Ningru**

Producer

**Shridar Mani**  
(The Public Space)

Audio Equipment

Special thanks to d&b audiotechnik for supporting *Mosaic* with Soundscape, an immersive audio solution, to create an unparalleled immersive sound experience for the audience.

The d&B Soundscape allows audiences to encounter a natural and life-like 3D sound journey to truly immerse them in and heighten their emotional rapport with the production.

Production

Manager

**Cindy Yeong**

Technical Manager

**Kailash**

Stage Manager

**Celestine Wong**

Assistant Stage

Manager

**Chong Wee Nee**

Key Visual Design

**Akbar Syadiq**

## Shifting Sands

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*Three Years in the Life and Death of Land (1994)*

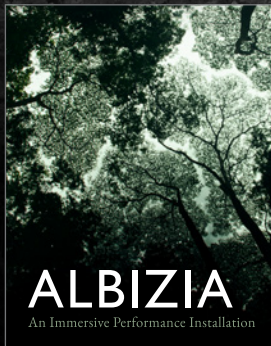
*Three Years in the Life and Death of Land* and *Mosaic* are among a long line of homegrown plays preoccupied with the theme of land – the lack of it, and the fraught emotions and politics surrounding what stays or goes.

Writer Daniel Teo looks the treatment of land through the decades and what it says about Singapore in [this essay for \*Esplanade Offstage\*](#).





# LANDINGS



An Esplanade Commission

## **ALBIZIA – An Immersive Performance Installation**

by Robert Zhao Renhui

Step into a lush secondary forest in Singapore, recreated through videos, photos and soundscapes in this sensory journey.

**31 Aug – 3 Sep, Thu – Sun**

Thu & Fri, 7.30pm

Sat & Sun, 1pm, 3pm, 5pm, 7.30pm & 9.30pm

Esplanade Theatre Studio

**Tickets from \$38**

[Find out more](#)



## **No Spot of Ground – A Promenade Writing Workshop**

by Rachel Chin and Danial Matin

Rove around Esplanade and Marina Bay and reflect on your relationship with memory in this part-scamper hunt and part-writing workshop.



**20 & 27 Aug 2023, Sun, 2pm**

Around Esplanade area

(Starting point: Esplanade Rehearsal Studio, to meet at Esplanade Theatre Studio entrance, Level 4)

**Tickets at \$28**

[Free, by registration](#)



## **In Conversation with Haresh Sharma and Joel Tan: Restagings and Reflections**

Moderated by Charlene Rajendran

Playwrights Haresh Sharma and Joel Tan get together to discuss the evolution of their plays through restagings and how responses to their work has changed.

**19 Aug, Sun, 5pm**  
Esplanade Studio 219

**[Free, by registration](#)**

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## **In Conversation: Memories, Nostalgia & Built Heritage**

by Dr Natalie Pang, Han Xuemei & Joel Tan

Untangle the complex web of personal and public memories, nostalgia and built heritage with researcher Dr Natalie Pang, theatre practitioner Han Xuemei and playwright Joel Tan.

**20 Aug, Sun, 5pm**  
Esplanade Studio 219

**[Free, by registration](#)**



# THANK YOU

for joining us at *The Studios 2023*.

Please take some time to share your  
feedback with us. Thank you.



Complete the survey here







**Esplanade  
Presents**



AN ESPLANADE  
COMMISSION & PRODUCTION

**Mari Kita  
Main  
Wayang**

Let's Stage A Play

BY FELIX CHIA

ADAPTED BY ZULFADLI RASHID · DIRECTED BY ALVIN TAN

**17 - 19 Nov 2023, Fri - Sun**  
Fri, 8pm | Sat & Sun, 2.30pm & 8pm | Singtel Waterfront Theatre at Esplanade

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**\$45, \$60\***  
\*Limited concessions: \$48  
\*Esplanade&Me Early Bird Specials available (4 - 31 Aug)



Esplanade is a charity and not-for-profit organisation. Help us bring the joy and inspiration of the arts to different communities, including the underserved.

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&Me**

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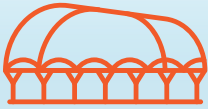
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# Esplanade gives our heartfelt thanks

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!



# 2,976

activities took place at Esplanade.



# 1,891

Non-Ticketed



# 821

Ticketed

# 2,062,549

People attended our activities at the centre.



Non-Ticketed

# 379,989

Ticketed

# 72,756



# 465

Activities

# 7,522

Participants

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.

\*Figures for Esplanade's activities from Apr 2021 to Mar 2022.



## Your contribution\* will make a difference.

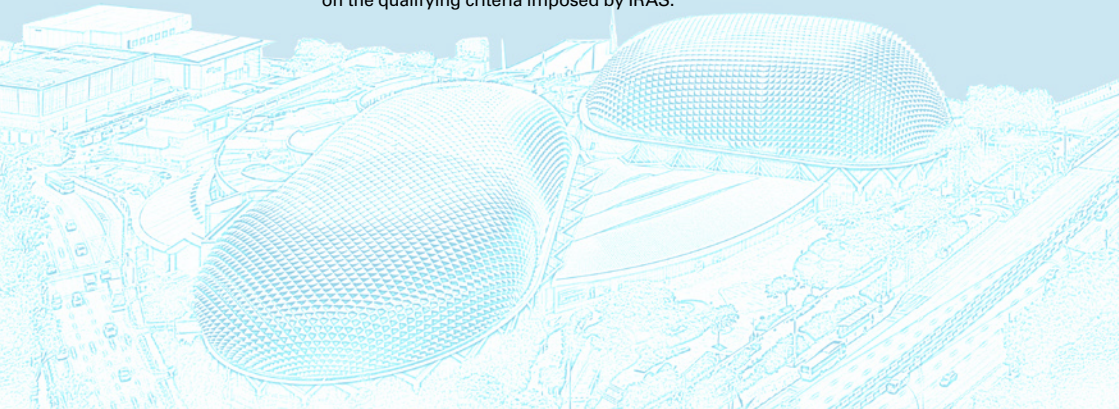
On behalf of the communities we serve, thank you!

Find out how you too can make a difference through the arts at Esplanade.

Donate at [www.esplanade.com/donate](http://www.esplanade.com/donate)

To find out more, email us at [donations@esplanade.com](mailto:donations@esplanade.com) or speak with us at 6828 8321.

Esplanade is a charity and an Institution of a Public Character. Your donation to us is matched dollar-for-dollar by the Cultural Matching Fund. Please note that the prevailing tax exemption scheme for donors and sponsors of Arts-Related Businesses will depend on the qualifying criteria imposed by IRAS.



## 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. We thank everyone who has helped us bring joy, inspiration and positive impact to Singaporeans from all walks of life 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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The above are donors and sponsors who contributed \$1000 and above from April 2022–March 2023.

## Join us in sharing the joy of the arts and help us reach more communities in need.

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.



Esplanade also receives grants from the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, and support for its Community Programmes from the Tote Board Family, comprising Tote Board, Singapore Pools and Singapore Turf Club.



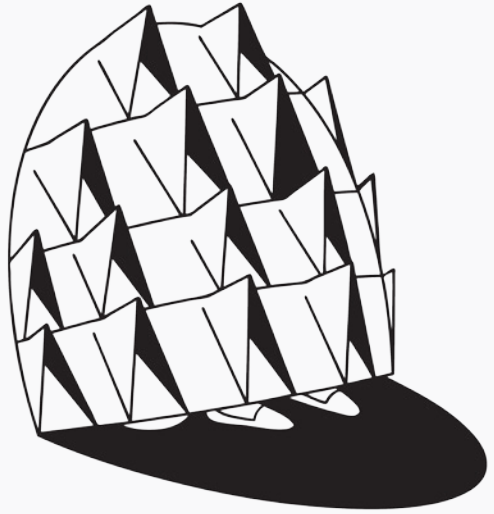
“

I could just scroll through IG or TikTok but I thought why should I when I can do the same on Offstage? It makes me feel like I know more things. Great arts content, anytime, anywhere.

Highly recommend.

”

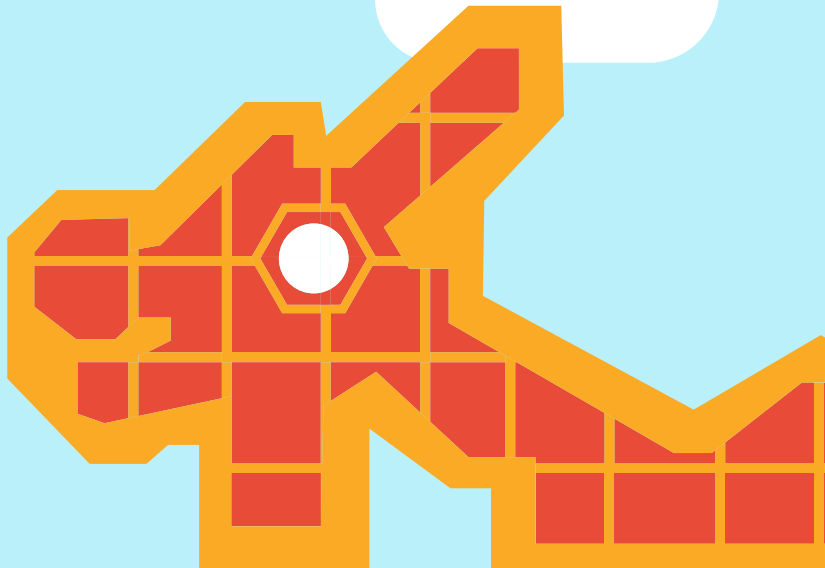
Totally Anonymous Person  
(who is not related to [www.esplanade.com/offstage](http://www.esplanade.com/offstage))



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**the  
studios**

Esplanade is a charity and not-for-profit organisation.  
Help us bring the joy and inspiration of the arts to  
different communities, including the underserved.

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