



Esplanade  
Presents

The Studios

AN ESPLANADE PRODUCTION

HOW I LEARNED TO  
**DRIVE**  
BY PAULA VOGEL

DIRECTED BY  
RENEE YEONG

19 - 21 APR 2024, FRI - SUN

FRI 8PM | SAT 3PM & 8PM | SUN 3PM

ESPLANADE THEATRE STUDIO

TRIP

A programme of TRIP - a platform to  
showcase work by early-career directors.

R18

Contains references to sexual assault and grooming of minors.

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# About Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

Esplanade is Singapore's national performing arts centre and one of the busiest arts centres in the world. Since its opening in 2002, the centre has presented more than 58,000 performances and activities, drawing an audience of 37 million patrons and 123 million visitors. This architectural icon, with its distinctive twin shells, houses world-class performance spaces complemented by a comprehensive range of professional support services.

Esplanade's vision is to be a performing arts centre for everyone and its programming is guided by its social mission—to entertain, engage, educate and inspire. It seeks to enrich everyone's lives, including seniors, youth, children and underserved communities, through the arts. The centre's year-long calendar of about 3,500 arts performances and activities span different cultures, languages and genres including dance, music, theatre, and more. Of these, more than 70% are presented free for all to enjoy. Esplanade's visual arts programmes at its public spaces also allow visitors to view and explore art works for free.

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.

Esplanade regularly presents world-renowned companies and artists that attract international attention and add to Singapore's cultural vibrancy. The centre is also a popular performance home for arts groups and commercial presenters who hire its venues to stage a wide range of programmes. These carefully curated presentations complement Esplanade's own diverse offerings for audiences.

Esplanade works in close partnership with local, regional and international artists to develop artistic capabilities, push artistic boundaries and engage audiences. The centre supports the creation of artistic content by commissioning and producing new Singapore and Asian work for the international stage. As an Approved Training Organisation (ATO) of the SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG), Esplanade conducts a range of courses that 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 – 2023. 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](http://Esplanade.com) for more information.

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# PROGRAMMER'S MESSAGE

Welcome back to *TRIP*!

*TRIP* was conceived as a two-year programme—as part of *The Studios*—to support the next generation of theatre directors in the Singapore theatre scene.

Last year, our inaugural batch, consisting of Sim Yan Ying “YY” and Renee Yeong, each staged a work from an assigned pool of scripts. For the second and final year of *TRIP*, the directors rose to the challenge of directing a work of their choice, pushing their craft and themselves out of their comfort zones. With its genesis in her own experience of growing older, YY has conceived and directed *pass-ages*, a new work that combines storytelling and choreography to draw focus on the female experience of aging in a local context. Renee tackles the heavy subject matter of sexual grooming, assault and paedophilia in *How I Learned to Drive*. With its heightened theatricality and non-linear storytelling, this opportunity has allowed her to expand her directorial approach.

It has been quite a *TRIP*. Over the last two years, together with the *TRIP* Resource Panel, designers, and production team, we have had the pleasure of working closely with YY and Renee, getting to know them and having a front row seat to their growth—creative and otherwise. If you have journeyed with them thus far, we hope that you too can perceive the growth of these two beautiful minds; how they've navigated the ups and downs of theatremaking to arrive at this point, which we celebrate with them today.

While we have reached the end of this particular path with YY and Renee, we are confident in the work of these two directors and are excited to watch their careers unfold. YY and Renee, thank you for trusting us with this, and we wish you our very best. Our deepest gratitude to Edith, Alin and Sean, the *TRIP* Resource Panel of directors, for their unwavering support and words of wisdom. We also thank the designers, production and stage management teams who have generously given their time, experience and mentorship during the creative process.

And finally, we thank you, the audience, for being here with us, and invite you to follow their journey as well.

Have a good *TRIP*!

**Vanessa Loh**  
**Programmer,**  
**The Esplanade Co Ltd**

ABOUT

# TRIP

*TRIP* is a programme by Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay, presented as part of *The Studios*, that provides early-career directors with the opportunity to direct their own productions and showcase their work at the Esplanade Theatre Studio. For more information about *TRIP*, please visit:

[www.esplanade.com/get-involved/artistdevelopment-platforms/trip](http://www.esplanade.com/get-involved/artistdevelopment-platforms/trip)

## A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



After my first read of *How I Learned to Drive*, I wanted to throw up. It wasn't because of the topic. I knew the play was about child sexual abuse and I was mentally prepared for it.

What I couldn't stomach was the play's stark realism in portraying a survivor's healing journey. There were moments when I found myself liking Uncle Peck, Li'l Bit's abuser. I caught myself thinking "what a nice guy" or "what a caring uncle"—a reaction that left me disgusted with myself afterward. I realized that my reaction mirrored Li'l Bit's own conflicted feelings toward her uncle. She loves him and hates him, and the shame she feels in loving her abuser is paralyzing. It was these contradictions that prompted me to select this play for *TRIP*.

It pushed me to delve deeper into the complexities surrounding child sexual abuse—not just the act itself but also its enduring impact. I started listening to podcasts, documentaries, and articles all around this issue of child sexual abuse.

I came across a video of a female US Prison Guard working in a men's correctional facility. She was rarely assigned to work with inmates as they often harassed the female guards. However, one day, due to staffing shortages, she was allocated to the child molester dorm (child molesters must be kept in a separate dorm so they're not attacked by other inmates). She didn't know what to expect leading up to that shift. To her surprise, the inmates were extremely polite, respectful and friendly, unlike the rest of the violent inmates. If she wasn't aware of their offences she would have mistaken them for your average joe.

The more I explored, the more I realised that this issue is far from black and white. While the reprehensibility of child sexual abuse is undeniable, understanding the dynamics of abuse, the psychology of survivors, and the societal mechanisms that allow such horrors to persist is extremely complex and nuanced.

Li'l Bit's journey embodies this complexity—a narrative filled with contradictions, intricacies, and uncomfortable truths. Uncle Peck challenges our preconceived notions of what a predator looks like, forcing us to confront disturbing realities about those we least expect. Li'l Bit challenges our assumptions about a survivor's path to healing; it is not linear, especially when you've been groomed and manipulated your whole life to believe something.

There are more Uncle Pecks among us than we care to admit.

And more Li'l Bits than we would like.

How can we better protect our children and support those who we couldn't protect?

*How I Learned to Drive* is my final production in Esplanade's TRIP programme. I have grown immensely and have challenged and pushed myself in so many ways that would have been impossible to do anywhere else.

Thank you to the Resource Panel—Edith, Sean, Alin, for their wisdom and guidance.

Thank you to all the creatives I've worked with—Petrina, Jing, Gabriel, Hella, Ning, Anthony, James, Max, Sabrina, Masturah, Andrew, Rui Shan, Arielle, Vester, Michelle, Dan Fong, Evelyn, Celest, Wee Nee, Georgia, Rosie, Rayann and plenty of others who have challenged me and brought my ideas to life.

Thank you to Lynn, Alicia, Vanessa, and the rest of the Esplanade team for being my rock throughout my entire time here.

Thank you to my family, friends, and Sam who were there from the beginning and will always be there regardless of my career.

Thank you to YY—my best friend, my peer, my Virgo, who keeps my feet on the ground when my Gemini self gets the better of me, who has seen my growth as an artist from NYU till now.

Thank you to everyone else that have interacted with me over the past two years.

Onward and upward!!

**Renee Yeong**

# SYNOPSIS



This is a story of a woman who learns the rules of the road and life from behind the wheel: ten years after leaving her childhood home in rural Maryland, Li'l Bit is back and ready to confront the traumas of her past. But how can she begin to heal?

Winner of the 1998 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, *How I Learned to Drive* follows the story of Li'l Bit, who was sexually abused by her Uncle Peck since she was 11 years old, while in the driver's seat of a Ford Mustang with her uncle as her driving instructor. Her schoolmates and family were none the wiser—how could friendly neighbourhood Uncle Peck be capable of such a heinous crime?

Now, at age 30, Li'l Bit is finally ready to heal—in order to do that, she must revisit some of the key moments in her adolescence that have shaped and changed her, for better and for worse. These moments involve not just Uncle Peck, but also the people around her: schoolmates who bullied and sexualised her for her larger-than-average chest, her aunt, who blamed Li'l Bit for stealing her husband, and the waiter who stood by as Uncle Peck manipulated Li'l Bit to drink while underage.

Wildly funny, surprising and ultimately devastating, *How I Learned to Drive* navigates the minefields of trauma, healing, survival and stolen childhood. It asks not just what happens to victims of abuse—but how society can be complicit in its occurrence.

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(2hr, no intermission) Performed in English.

R18. Advisory: Contains references to sexual assault and grooming of minors.

There will be a post-show dialogue with director, Renee Yeong after the performances on 20 Apr, Sat, 8pm and 21 Apr, Sun, 3pm.

# Q&A WITH THE DIRECTOR

## **Where do you start with a script like this?**

I started by doing a lot of research and marinating in it. I knew working on this play meant spending a lot of time understanding the complexities of a very sensitive issue and I wanted to make sure I did it justice. In rehearsal, we spent the first two days sitting at a table talking about articles, anecdotes, media, all around this issue both in Singapore and beyond. Researching it by myself is one thing, but then bringing in the experiences of others takes the play to a whole other level.

## **What are some of the challenges and opportunities you have faced in putting together this production?**

The challenge of this play was the whole reason I wanted to do it. It has a lot of moving parts, there's singing and dancing, there're very graphic and intense scenes, and other farcical campy scenes that border on vaudevillian. It is also a memory play and non-chronological. Put that altogether and you get an organised chaos. Our challenge as a team was how do we make sense of all this chaos and present it in a way that stays true to the chaos that ravages Li'l Bit's mind but still makes sense to us at the same time.

## **What is your favourite moment in this process of *TRIP*?**

I don't have one favourite moment. My favourite moments are all the times my team and I have taken a big risk with my collaborators, and having it pay off. Whether that's re-staging an entire show two weeks before opening or changing the direction of a design element in a completely new direction—we knew there was always a chance it might fail and we're left with nothing. But when it pays off it can make all the difference to the story we're trying to tell. I'm grateful to have worked with artists who are not afraid to take risks with me.

## **What is your greatest takeaway from these two years of *TRIP*?**

Don't let your age or experience get in the way of communicating your vision. If you're working with good people, they want to hear what you have to say. You're the director. Don't self-censor.



## What's up next for you as a director?

I have an audio fiction podcast dropping in Summer 2024 called *SAYANG*. It's a sci-fi solarpunk story about a visually impaired warden of the Bornean jungle who cares for his grove by listening to it using a microchip implanted in his brain. When loggers come to raid his grove, he is forced to reconsider his self-imposed solitude. It's a story about hope and love, about the triumph of the human spirit and connection, and it's about trees! It'll be available wherever you get your podcasts!



# RENEE YEONG

## DIRECTOR

Renee Yeong (She/They) is a Singaporean director, trained in New York, based in London, interested in telling contemporary stories about women, the LGBTQ+ community, and other marginalised groups in Singapore, UK, US, and beyond.

Their recent directing credits include *Grounded* (STC), *I am trying to say something true* (Esplanade *TRIP*), *Lotus Root Support Group* (Singapore), *I LOVE WHITE MEN* (Dixon Place, Ars Nova's ANT Fest, and *Caveat* NYC), *Annie Aspen's Musical Space Spectacular!* (Ars Nova's ANT Fest), *When We Were Young and Unafraid*, and *Dry Land* (Playwrights Horizons Downtown/NYU).



As an assistant director, she has worked with Tony Award-winning director Rachel Chavkin on Bess Wohl's world premiere play *Continuity* at Manhattan Theatre Club and Huzir Sulaiman on *The Nuclear Family* for Checkpoint Theatre, up until its COVID postponement.

Renee is also big on audio and podcasts and will be releasing their debut audio fiction podcast *SAYANG* with long-time collaborator Nicholas Chan, produced by award-winning Singaporean media firm Andas Productions, in Summer 2024.

Apart from being in the inaugural batch of *TRIP*, Renee is also an alumnus of the 2019 Lincoln Center Director's Lab and an associate member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Union. She earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts at New York University in Directing in 2018.

# PAULA VOGEL

## PLAYWRIGHT

PAULA VOGEL is a Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright whose plays include *INDECENT* (Tony Award for Best Play), *HOW I LEARNED TO DRIVE* (Broadway production set for spring 2020; Pulitzer Prize for Drama, the Lortel Prize, OBIE Award, Drama Desk Award, Outer Critics Circle and New York Drama Critics Awards for Best Play), *THE LONG CHRISTMAS RIDE HOME*, *THE MINEOLA TWINS*, *THE BALTIMORE WALTZ*, *HOT'N'THROBBING*, *DESDEMONA*, AND *BABY MAKES SEVEN*, *THE OLDEST PROFESSION* and *A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS*.

Her plays have been produced by Second Stage, New York Theatre Workshop, the Vineyard Theatre, Roundabout, and Circle Repertory Company, Center Stage, Intiman, Trinity

Repertory, Woolly Mammoth, Huntington Theatre, Magic Theatre, The Goodman Theatre, American Repertory Theatre, Dallas Theatre Berkeley Repertory, and Alley Theatres to name a few. Harrogate Theatre and the Donmar Theatre have produced her work in England.

Internationally, her plays have been produced in English in Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand and in translation in Italy, Germany, Taiwan, South Africa, Australia, Romania, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Poland Slovenia, Canada, Portugal, France, Greece, Japanese, Norway, Finland, Iceland, Peru, Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Brazil and many other countries.



John Simon once remarked that Paula Vogel had more awards than a “black sofa collects lint.” Honors include induction in the American Theatre Hall of Fame, the Dramatists Guild Lifetime Achievement Award, the Lily Award, the Thornton Wilder Prize, the Obie Award for Lifetime Achievement, the New York Drama Critics Circle Award, the William Inge Award, the Elliott Norton Award, a Susan Smith Blackburn Award, the PEN/Laura Pels Award, a TCG Residency Award, a Guggenheim, a Pew Charitable Trust Award, and fellowships and residencies at Sundance Theatre Lab, Hedgebrook, The Rockefeller Center’s Bellagio Center, Yaddo, MacDowell Colony, and the Bunting.

She is particularly proud of her Thirtini Award from 13P, and honored by three Awards in her name: the Paula Vogel Award for playwrights given by The Vineyard Theatre, the Paula Vogel Award from the American College Theatre Festival, and the Paula Vogel mentorship program, curated by Quiara Hudes and Young Playwrights of Philadelphia.

Paula was playwright in residence at The Signature Theatre (2004-05 season), and Theatre Communications Group publishes six volumes of her work. Paula continues her playwriting intensives with community organizations, students, theater companies, subscribers and writers across the globe. She is the 2019 inaugural UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television Hearst Theater Lab Initiative Distinguished Playwright-in-Residence and has recently taught at Sewanee, Shanghai Theatre Academy and Nanjing University, University of Texas at Austin, and the Playwrights Center in Minneapolis. From 1984 to 2008, Paula Vogel founded and ran the playwriting program at Brown University; during that time she started a theatre workshop for women in Maximum Security at the Adults Correction Institute in Cranston, Rhode Island. It continues to this day, sponsored by the Pembroke Center for Women at Brown University. From 2008-2012, she was the O’Neill Chair at Yale School of Drama.

[PaulaVogelPlaywright.com](http://PaulaVogelPlaywright.com)

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## ABOUT THE CAST

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# MASTURAH OLII

## LI'L BIT

Masturah is an actor, host and theatremaker. She graduated with BA (Hons) in Theatre Arts from Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and was awarded Best Graduate and valedictorian of her cohort. Masturah was also a recipient of the MENDAKI Special Achievement Award for Excellence, MENDAKI Anugerah Award (2017) and the SINDA Excellence Award (2017). Notable theatre credits include: *Mari Kita Main Wayang* by Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay (2023), *Fairplay* by Wild Rice (2023 & 2019), *Opposition* (2022), *Blank Can Change* (2021), *Acting Mad* (2019 and 2022) by The Necessary Stage; *Anak Melayu* (2019) by Teater Kami; and *Rubber Girl on the Loose* (2019) by Cake Theatre.



Photo Credit: Crispian Chan

Masturah is also a theatre educator. She teaches drama programmes at Yishun Innova Junior College, Eunoia Junior College, Bedok View Secondary School, Marymount Convent School and more.

In 2023, Masturah was appointed as Co-Artistic Director of Buds Theatre.

# ANDREW LUA PECK

Andrew is an actor, host, voice-over artist and director for film and theatre. Andrew's versatility as an actor has seen him cast in vastly different roles in local and international work. His craft has led him to places such as Barcelona, Japan, the Philippines and even the Himalayas. He is grateful to be back prancing on stage in these trying times.

His more recent theatre projects include *How Did I Mess Up This Bad: An Analysis* (Unsaid Ltd), 《奇幻海》 (Esplanade), *Rubies* (Gateway Arts), *LKY Musical* (2022, Singapore Repertory Theatre), *The Amazing Celestial Race and Snow White* (Wild Rice) just to name a few.

Much love to his family, FLY Entertainment and all of you supporting the Arts. God Bless.

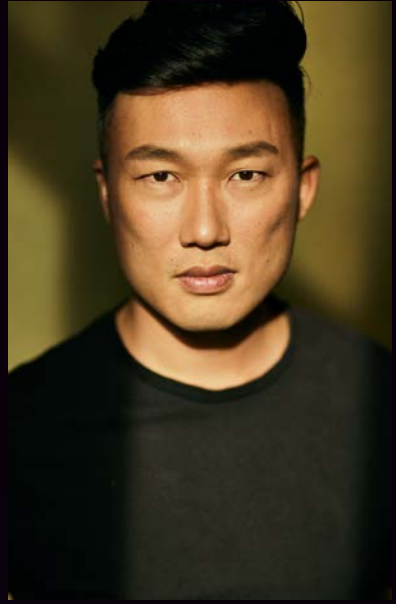


Photo Credit: Crispian Chan

# TAN RUI SHAN FEMALE GREEK CHORUS

Tan Rui Shan is a dynamic actress and choreographer whose acting portfolio includes a range of noteworthy productions like *Kwa Geok Choo* (Toy Factory), *Three Years in the Life and Death of Land* (The Necessary Stage) and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves* (Wild Rice). She has also choreographed for shows like *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Singapore Repertory Theatre). As a co-founder of Bitesize Theatre Productions, Rui Shan has also created original works with her collective, such as *The Monster in the Mirror Musical*.



# VESTER NG

## MALE GREEK CHORUS

Vester has performed in numerous films and theatre productions. As an actor, Vester is committed to character-building, always giving more than what the director demands. Along with his undeniable talent, Vester is a real live wire. He has the ability to bring out the best in all his fellow actors, regardless of age or experience... so he's been told!



# ARIELE JASMINE VAN ZUIJLEN

## TEENAGE GREEK CHORUS

Arielle graduated from the School Of The Arts, Singapore, in 2020 with an International Baccalaureate Career-Related Programme (IBCP) Excellence Award for her specialisation in Theatre.

Having entered the industry during the Covid-19 pandemic, Arielle has had the opportunity of performing for TheatreWorks in *(un)becoming* (2021) and *Green Leaves* (2022), and for Singapore Repertory Theatre's *The Almighty Sometimes* (2022) as Anna, for which she won Best Actress at the 2023 Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards.



She has also had the opportunity to explore other roles in the industry, as stage manager for Bored Whale Theatre's *Unsolicited Advice For My Ex* (2020), and as a researcher/transcriber for The Necessary Stage's re-staging of *Acting Mad* (2022).

Arielle is excited to continue exploring and learning from those around her, engaging in opportunities to create meaningful performances.

## ABOUT THE PRODUCTION TEAM

# GUO NINGRU

## SOUND DESIGNER

Ningru was recently awarded the Singapore National Arts Council's Young Artist Award (2022), recognising her achievements and contributions to the local and international arts scene.

She was also a recipient of the Singapore National Arts Scholarship by the National Arts Council (2016), and graduated with a Masters in Fine Arts in Sound Design from the esteemed Sound Design programme in the University of California Irvine.

Over the past decade, Ningru has designed sound for numerous plays, musicals and performances. She particularly enjoys exploring immersive audio for theatrical performances. Her MFA thesis, *Going Immersive - Spatial Audio for Theatre*, details the current technologies and methods for sound designers to utilise spatial audio in theatrical performances.

Recent works include *Grounded* (Singapore Theatre Company), *Infinitely Closer* (T.H.E Dance Company), and *Between You and Me* (Nine Years Theatre).



# PETRINA DAWN TAN

## SET DESIGNER

Petrina Dawn Tan holds a Master of Art in Collaborative Theatre Production and Design from Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. She practices Scenography (Set & Lighting) and conceptualised a range of projects including music festivals, circus acts and installations with elements of audience participation.

She won Best Set for *The Truth* (Singapore Theatre Company) at the 2020 Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards and was nominated in 2022 for Best Set in *A Dream Under The Southern Bough: Existence* (Toy Factory Productions) and in 2017 for Best Lighting for her work on *Manifesto* (The Necessary Stage & Drama Box). Her work for *Recalling Mother* (Checkpoint Theatre) has been seen internationally, travelling from Singapore to Brisbane and Adelaide. Other lighting or set designs for theatre performances include *Grounded* (Singapore Theatre Company), *The Monster in The Mirror* (Gateway Arts Ltd), *Electrify My World* (Nine Years Theatre) and *The Son* (Pangdemonium).

She was also co-artist for the public art work *YELLOW*, Associate Lighting Designer for *From Singapore to Singaporean - The Bicentennial Experience* and Associate Lighting Designer for *Art of the Brick* at ArtScience Museum.

[www.petrinadawntan.com](http://www.petrinadawntan.com)

# M.NURFADHLI JASNI

## SET ASSISTANT

M.Nurfadhli Jasni is a Video Multimedia Designer and Set Designer who has graduated with a Diploma in Theatre Production from LASALLE College of the Arts. He has been working in performance, entertainment and digital content creation since 2016. He has been mentored by award-winning designers like Brian Gothong Tan and Petrina Dawn Tan and has worked with T:Works, Checkpoint Theatre, Gateway Theatre, Bhumi Collective and various musical and theatre productions at LASALLE.

# JAMES TAN

## LIGHTING DESIGNER

James Tan (Pangdemonium's Associate Artist/ Independent Lighting Designer) was conferred The Young Artist Award and awarded Arts Professional Scholarship by The National Arts Council of Singapore. He holds a Master of Fine Arts in Lighting Design, University of California San Diego. He has worked on multiple festivals and series with Singapore's National Performing Arts Centre, Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay, for events such as *da:ns festival*, *Kalaa Utsavam*, *Pesta Raya*, *Huayj*, *Moonfest* and *In New Light*. James leads the Pangdemonium Lighting Apprenticeship Program, which gives a lighting individual an exclusive opportunity to further develop their craft each season. Selected Theatre Lighting Design Credits: *The Glass Menagerie*, *Dragonflies* and *Next to Normal* (Pangdemonium), *Merdeka* and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (Wild Rice), *2:22 - A Ghost Story* and *Disgraced* (Singapore Repertory Theatre) and *Lord of the Flies* (Blank Space Theatre with Sightline Productions). Selected Events Lighting Design: *National Day Parade 2022* (Defence Science and Technology Agency), *From Singapore to Singaporean: The Bicentennial Experience* (Singapore Bicentennial Office), *OCBC Garden Rhapsody: Rainforest Orchestra - Asia & Australia Edition* (Gardens By The Bay) & *The Art of the Brick®* Exhibition by Nathan Sawaya (MBS ArtScience Museum). Selected Public Artwork: *Yellow* (Public Art Trust - Rewritten: The World Ahead of Us).

# MAX TAN

## COSTUME DESIGNER

Max started his eponymous label, MAX.TAN, with his breakout collection in 2007 at the Singapore Fashion Designers Contest, where he received an award. What began as a capsule collection became a full-fledged line. His Spring/Summer 2010 collection was featured as one of the top ten collections globally on the premier trend forecasting website, *Stylish.com*, alongside fashion powerhouses such as Alexander McQueen and Valentino. Over the past decade, Max has been recognised for his innovative designs that challenge fashion trends while incorporating his Asian roots. Max also lectures at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, and enjoys partnering with theatre groups in Singapore to design costumes for their key productions. Max was awarded Best Costume Design in 2017, 2021 and 2022 at the Straits Times Life! Theatre awards. MAX.TAN is represented by Boon showroom, Paris, and has started making inroads in the international fashion design scene.

# RAYANN CONDY

## INTIMACY DIRECTOR

Rayann (she/her) is passionate about supporting storytellers to create diverse, bold and real depictions of intimacy on stage and screen. She is a certified Intimacy Coordinator with IDC (USA). This makes her one of the first qualified intimacy professionals in Singapore. Having trained in the USA, she is keen to continue adapting the process for a more Southeast Asian context, using global best practices as a guide but recognising the local and cultural nuances of working in this region. Through her work, she hopes to help foster accountable, consent informed spaces that allow storytelling to flourish.

# THE BACKSTAGE AFFAIR

## PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Backstage Affair (BA) is made up of three experienced and passionate backstage management professionals who came together with a question on how to make a career in the backstage scene more sustainable. They are invested in shaping the professional and personal development of backstage management professionals and believe in the importance of community and collaboration in creating this better tomorrow.

# AIDLI'ALIN' MOSBIT

## RESOURCE PANEL

Aidli Mosbit graduated from Queensland University of Technology and has worked extensively with local companies like The Necessary Stage, Teater Kami, Wild Rice, Cake Theatre, Toy Factory, The Theatre Practice, Teater Ekamatra and Drama Box. With Noor Effendy Ibrahim and Alfian Sa'at, Aidli published an anthology of Malay plays in the book, *Bisik*. She has toured Scotland, Australia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Romania, Hong Kong and Hungary, performing Singapore-brand theatre.

A recipient of the National Art Council's Young Artist Award for Theatre in 2008, she played the leading role of Murni alongside Malaysia's legendary actor, Datuk Haji Rahim Razali, in Sanif Olek's film *Sayang Disayang* (2013), Singapore's official 2015 Oscar® Entry for Best Foreign Language Film. In 2016, she published her collection of Malay plays entitled *Chantek*, which was awarded the Hadiah Persuratan (Literary Award) 2017 by the Malay Language Council, Singapore.

Aidli is currently working in Temasek Polytechnic as the Senior Lecturer at the Centre for Transcultural Studies and has a Master of Education from the University of Adelaide.

# EDITH PODESTA

## RESOURCE PANEL

Edith Podesta is an award-winning actor, theatremaker and choreographer based in Singapore. She studied Acting and Movement Studies at the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA), holds a Master of Arts Fine Arts from LASALLE College of the Arts, and is currently the Associate Artistic Director of Young & Wild at Wild Rice.

Her diverse artistic background includes co-founding A Group Of People, an award-winning collaborative ensemble of Singaporean actors and theatre-makers, whose production of *A Cage Goes In Search Of A Bird* won Production of the Year at the Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards in 2010. In 2014, she won the Straits Times Life! Theatre Best Actress Award for her role in Cake Theatrical Productions' *Illogic*, directed by Natalie Henedige. In 2017, she was awarded Best Original Script and Production of the Year for *BITCH: The Origin of the Female Species*, commissioned by the M1 Singapore Fringe Festival. In 2019, her production of *Leda and The Rage*, commissioned and produced by Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay, received the Production of the Year Award.

Edith has lectured at LASALLE College of the Arts, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and School of the Arts in Singapore, as well as NIDA, Conservatorium of Music and University of Technology in Australia.

# SEAN TOBIN

## RESOURCE PANEL

Sean has 30 years' experience working in theatre and education, most of it in Singapore. Sean has spent his career teaching and directing in the theatre, starting out with his first full-time job at Act 3 International.

Sean loves to direct but also sometimes performs and writes, and has a special interest in devising theatre and directing Singapore work. He has directed a range of professional productions, as well as a range of productions in education, community and even church settings.

From 2001 to 2004, Sean worked full-time with The Necessary Stage, where he began to hone his craft by directing productions such as *Such Sweet Sorrow*, *Sing Song and Close - In My Face*. During that time, he was appointed the company's Associate Artistic Director and headed the M1 Youth Connection, the Necessary Community Festival, while also leading the Theatre for Youth and Community.

From 2015 to 2020, Sean was the Artistic Director of the M1 Singapore Fringe Festival. He directed productions that featured in the festival, namely *Tongues* (in collaboration with Jason Wee) and *What Did You Learn Today?* (in collaboration with Natalie Henedige). Sean also directed *The Perfection of Ten* for Esplanade's *The Studios* in 2012 and the performance tour of *Marco Polo*, written by Jovi Tan Yit Long, winner of TheatreWorks' 24-Hour Playwriting Competition 2013 (Youth Category).

Sean was Head of Theatre Faculty with SOTA from 2009 to 2019 and continues to teach at the school full-time. He has directed school wide productions and faculty productions, namely *Body of Land*, *Clusterfish* by Haresh Sharma, *Smartbutt* by Jean Tay as well as *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Glass Menagerie*, to name a few.

Sean is currently finishing his Creative Writing MA with LASALLE College of the Arts (Goldsmiths), through which he has completed a new full-length play.

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PRODUCTION CREDITS

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## CREATIVE TEAM

**DIRECTOR**

**RENEE YEONG**

**PLAYWRIGHT**

**PAULA VOGEL**

**CAST**

**LI'L BIT - MASTURAH OLI**

**PECK - ANDREW LUA**

**MALE GREEK CHORUS - VESTER NG**

**FEMALE GREEK CHORUS - TAN RUI SHAN**

**TEENAGE GREEK CHORUS - ARIELLE JASMINE VAN ZUIJLEN**

## PRODUCTION TEAM

**SOUND DESIGN**

**GUO NINGRU**

**SET DESIGN**

**PETRINA DAWN TAN**

**SET ASSISTANT**

**M.NURFADHLI JASNI**

**LIGHTING DESIGN**

**JAMES TAN**

**COSTUME DESIGN**

**MAX TAN**

INTIMACY DIRECTOR

RAYANN CONDY

PRODUCTION MANAGER

EVELYN CHIA (THE BACKSTAGE AFFAIR)

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR

WANN NURUL ASYIQIN (THE BACKSTAGE AFFAIR)

STAGE MANAGER

CELESTINE WONG (THE BACKSTAGE AFFAIR)

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

GEORGIA SIM (THE BACKSTAGE AFFAIR)

PRODUCER

LYNN YANG

## RESOURCE PANEL

AIDLI 'ALIN' MOSBIT

EDITH PODESTA

SEAN TOBIN

SPECIAL THANKS TO YOLANDA CHIN, ROSIE MCGOWAN.

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As the production *How I Learned to Drive* contains references to sexual assault and grooming of minors, please find below some resources and information gathered from Sexual Assault Care Centre (SACC) at AWARE Singapore. Please visit <https://sacc.aware.org.sg> to find out more.

## CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND UNDERAGE SEX

<https://sacc.aware.org.sg/child-sexual-abuse-underage-sex/>

Child sexual abuse occurs when sexual activity takes place involving a minor.

Child sexual abuse can take various forms, both physical (such as molest or intercourse) and otherwise. These forms include exposing oneself, sending explicit messages or calls, masturbating in front of the victim or forcing the victim to masturbate, showing pornographic images and so on.

Child sexual abuse may be committed unto a child by someone of the same age, a few years older or much older than the victim. Many perpetrators have a prior relationship with the child—they might be family friends or relatives, teachers, coaches or babysitters.

Under Singapore's Penal Code, persons under the age of 16 are unable to **give consent to any sexual activity**. This means that even if a minor said "yes" to sexual acts, the law still sees it as non-consensual. If the minor is under the age of 14, the law carries a heavier punishment.

Child sexual abuse is more prevalent than many people realise. In 2017, 20% of SACC cases (out of 515 cases) involved a survivor who faced sexual abuse as a child. In 2018, it was 16% (out of 808 cases), and in 2019, it was 17% (out of 777 cases).

## WHAT IS SEXUAL GROOMING?

Sexual grooming is a deliberate process by which a perpetrator confuses and manipulates his victims. Typically, he may establish a relationship of trust with the child and sometimes the child's family, positioning himself as a source of support. He becomes close by paying special attention to a child, buying gifts or playing "hugging" and "tickling" games, making them feel loved and safe. At some point, he starts to blur the lines between care, love and sex to escalate his actions. He may begin to show his private parts, or induce a child to show his or hers. Doing this over a period of time normalises the abuse and allows for the crime to increase in intensity. A perpetrator may also suggest that the child had agreed to or even initiated the acts, further increasing his or her confusion and feelings of complicity.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO AS A VICTIM OR BYSTANDER?

A young sexual violence survivor can tell a trusted adult about what they are experiencing. This adult may be able to support them and stop further abuse. At an institution like a school or a workplace, the incident can be reported to the disciplinary committee, HR, governing bodies or support centres, so that authorities can intervene.

A supportive, non-judgmental first response is pivotal in cases of child sexual abuse. If a child speaks up, listen and believe them. If you notice behavioural changes or sexualised behaviour in a child, gently investigate instead of shutting the child down. Though first instincts might be to scold, there are better ways to listen, show empathy, and seek help together with the survivor—e.g. by allowing the child to finish speaking, and assuring them that they are listened to, not judged or blamed.

## WHAT TO DO IN THE FIRST 72 HOURS AFTER RAPE OR SEXUAL ASSAULT

<https://sacc.aware.org.sg/get-information/first-72-hours-rape-sexual-assault/>

**If you or someone you know has been raped in the last 72 hours it's important to follow three main steps:**

### 1. SAFETY FIRST

**Immediately following the assault:**

- Remove yourself from the perpetrator or places where it's likely that you would run into the perpetrator
- Stop all forms of contact with the perpetrator (ie calls, messages, social media)
- If there is any injury go to the nearest GP or hospital (for rape kit examination please read below).
- If you fear danger at any point, you can reach the police at 999

## 2. MEDICAL SUPPORT

If you experienced serious physical injury call 995 or go immediately to one of the following hospitals for treatment (the following hospitals are best equipped to support assault cases):

Kerbau Hospital (KK)

National University Hospital (NUH)

Singapore General Hospital (SGH)

### Other medical concerns:

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI): You may want to consider getting tested at a local polyclinic, private clinics, GP or hospital

Pregnancy: If you are concerned that you may be pregnant you can consider emergency contraception.

### Evidence Gathering

It's your choice whether or not you want to make a police report. However, evidence can be gathered regardless of that decision. This leaves your options open. There is no time limit on reporting a sexual crime.

**If you are unsure whether you want to report or not, you can collect some evidence on your own such as:**

- Take a photo of any physical injury or of the crime scene including location name or address (ie hotel name or block number)
- Message/call someone you trust and tell them what happened (they can act as a secondary witness later)
- Write down a detailed description of what happened, who, when and where and send an email to yourself which has a timestamp - even better if you can send it to someone you trust or to [SACC@aware.org.sg](mailto:SACC@aware.org.sg)
- Place clothing, sheets, or other objects relevant to the crime scene in a sealed plastic bag

**If you decide you would like to report, then immediately following the assault, try to:**

- Avoid bathing or showering
- Avoid using the restroom
- Avoid changing clothes or if you do place clothes in a plastic bag with any other personal belongings
- Avoid combing hair
- Resist cleaning up the area

It is natural to want to do all of these things after an assault. However, it is important if you want to report, to try not to. DNA evidence can be collected from your body, clothes or personal belongings within the first 72 hours of the assault.

**Police may refer you to have a Rape Kit Examination at hospital to preserve DNA evidence -**

- If you are below 21 then rape kit exam will require guardian's signature
- Rape Kit / Forensic medical exam can only be done if you have made a police report

### **3.SUPPORT**

It is normal for survivors to be in a state of shock or be confused about the experience. If you have been a victim of sexual assault, please know that it is not your fault. Recovering can take time and courage, but no one has to go through this experience alone.

Call someone you trust or go to a family member's or close friend's house. Or call any of the hotlines or resources below.

## RESOURCE LIST

If you or someone you know is in an abusive relationship, seek help by contacting the 24-hr National Anti-Violence & Sexual Harassment Helpline: 1800-777-0000 or make an online report: <https://go.gov.sg/navh>

The NAVH is a dedicated 24-hour helpline, by the Ministry of Social and Family Development, for reporting of violence or abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment.

If you or someone you know is in imminent danger, call the police at 999 immediately.

If you feel emotionally unsafe (i.e. thoughts of harming yourself or someone else), call a professional counsellor or helplines like:

### **Samaritans of Singapore (SOS)**

1767 (24-hrs hotline)

9151 1767 (24-hrs care text/ Whatsapp)

### **Institute of Mental Health (24-hrs)**

6389 2222

**You may also find the list of resources on the next two pages useful (note: information correct at time of print).**

# FAMILY VIOLENCE OR CHILD PROTECTION SPECIALIST CENTRES

PAVE - Integrated service for family violence, child protection and sexual abuse	PAVE provides services for persons who abuse, survivors and vulnerable family members such as children and the elderly, in dealing with interpersonal violence.	Tel: 6555 0390 Email: <a href="mailto:intake@pave.org.sg">intake@pave.org.sg</a> <a href="https://pave.org.sg/">https://pave.org.sg/</a>
TRANS SAFE Centre	TRANS SAFE Centre is a Protection Specialist Centre (PSC). They aim to promote safe relationship in families by providing help to victims of abuse, persons who abuse and their families who are affected by the abuse.	Tel: 6449 9088 Email: <a href="mailto:transsafe@trans.org.sg">transsafe@trans.org.sg</a> <a href="https://www.trans.org.sg/services-safe">https://www.trans.org.sg/services-safe</a>
Big Love Child Protection Specialist Centre	Big Love provides help for families with Child Protection concerns, including improving their functioning and resilience.	Tel: 6445 0400 Email: <a href="mailto:contact@biglove.org.sg">contact@biglove.org.sg</a>
HEART @ Fei Yue Child Protection Specialist Centre	HEART @ Fei Yue provides home-based services and support to families and children who face abuse or severe neglect at home.	Tel: 6819 9170
Care Corner Project StART	Care Corner specialises in protection, safety planning and violence control planning in support of people affected by domestic violence	Tel: 6476 1482 Email: <a href="mailto:projectstart@carecorner.org.sg">projectstart@carecorner.org.sg</a>
AWARE	<p>Women's rights and advocacy group that has various types of support for women in crisis.</p> <p>AWARE's Sexual Assault Care Centre (SACC) provides support and legal advice, regardless of what your next steps are, to anyone (men, women, anyone in the LGBTQI community). The SACC is also able to provide access to counselling for women and can make referrals for men.</p> <p>SACC has a befriender service for anyone who has been sexually assaulted and would like some support. You do not have to go to SACC to meet a befriender. You can call or email and they will meet you wherever you need them to.</p>	<p>Women's Helpline: 1800 777 5555 Mon – Fri(Excluding Public Holidays): 10am – 6pm</p> <p>Sexual Assault Care Centre helpline: 6779 0282</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:sacc@aware.org.sg">sacc@aware.org.sg</a></p>

# COUNSELLING SERVICES AND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Singapore Association of Mental Health	Offers counselling as well as various other forms of mental health support	Tel: 1800 283 7019 <a href="https://www.samhealth.org.sg/our-services/outreach/samh-insight-centre/#insight-overview">https://www.samhealth.org.sg/our-services/outreach/samh-insight-centre/#insight-overview</a>
Care Corner Counselling Centre		Tel: 6353 1180 <a href="https://www.carecorner.org.sg/service_category/mental-health-counselling/">https://www.carecorner.org.sg/service_category/mental-health-counselling/</a>  TOLL-FREE MANDARIN COUNSELLING HOTLINE 1800 3535 800
CHAT - Community Health Assessment Team	As the Centre of Excellence for Youth Mental Health in Singapore, they have been helping and supporting young people with mental health concerns since 2009. CHAT runs a national youth mental health outreach and assessment service for youth and young adults aged 16 to 30.	Tel: 6493 6500 / 6501 Email: <a href="mailto:CHAT@mentalhealth.sg">CHAT@mentalhealth.sg</a>
Silver Ribbon Singapore	Offers workshops and talks about mental health and a complimentary counselling service.	Tel: 6386 1928 <a href="https://www.silverribbonsingapore.com/ccs.html">https://www.silverribbonsingapore.com/ccs.html</a>
Counselling and Care Centre	Provides counselling and psychological counselling services.	Tel: 6536 6366 <a href="https://counsel.org.sg/">https://counsel.org.sg/</a>
Safe Space	An app that offers general mental health support via counselling and other resources.	<a href="https://app.safespace.sg/booking">https://app.safespace.sg/booking</a>
Oogachaga	Offers counselling primarily for LGBTQIA+ individuals, couples and families, as well as non-LGBTQIA+ family members and partners.	<a href="https://oogachaga.com/professional-counselling">https://oogachaga.com/professional-counselling</a> Whatsapp counselling: 8592 0609 Tue - Thu: 7pm - 10pm Sa: 2pm - 5pm

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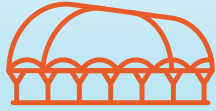


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# 4,562

activities took place at Esplanade.



# 3,354

 Free

# 1,057

 Paid

# 3,260,515

People attended our activities at the centre.



Free

# 1,487,680

Paid

# 287,931



# 602

 Activities

# 12,059

 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 2022 to Mar 2023.



## 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.

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## 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 support.

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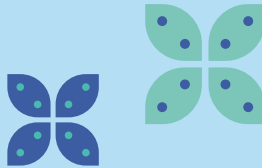
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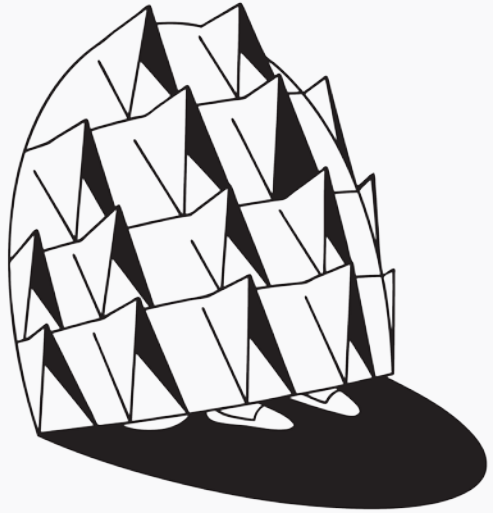
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
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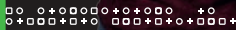




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The Umbilical Brothers (Australia)

DISTRACTION  
DISTRACTION  
DISTRACTION

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