



**Esplanade  
Presents**

**The Studios**

AN ESPLANADE PRODUCTION

# pass·ages



CONCEPTUALISED & DIRECTED BY  
**Sim Yan Ying “YY”**

WRITTEN BY  
**Jean Tay**

CHOREOGRAPHED BY  
**Dapheny Chen**

**12 - 14 Apr 2024, Fri - Sun**  
**Esplanade Theatre Studio**  
FRI, 8PM | SAT, 3PM & 8PM | SUN, 3PM

**TRIP**

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

# 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 – 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 ageing 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



*pass-ages* emerged from a period of reflection on ageing prompted by various encounters in recent years. As I navigate the early stages of my ageing journey, I became deeply curious about the experiences of women at different stages of life—their challenges and triumphs. In a way, I wanted to better understand the road that lies ahead, and to be able to confront and let go of my own fears and anxieties around ageing.

In this work, we explore the passage of time and the concept of inevitability. To quote our sound artist Jing, "How do we fight against, flow with, and find peace within the forces we cannot control?" While the narrative unfolds across four parallel tracks that do not directly intersect, you may discover resonances between them and how they engage in dialogue. The ensemble scenes, additionally, aim to create a space for contemplation, offering a metaphorical and subliminal exploration of ageing in women.

The development of this work unfolded through a three-phase process. Prior to Phase One, Jean, Dapheny, and I began ideating, crafting foundational outlines of characters, writing vignettes, and discussing movement concepts. In Phase One, we collaborated with the performers to further develop these characters and explore movement possibilities, through improvisations, research sharing, and exchange of skillsets. We then moved into Phase Two with an early full draft, conducting workshops to refine the text, test performance and staging ideas, delve deeper into character development, and explore design elements. Finally, Phase Three marked the full-fledged rehearsal period, encompassing table work, staging of scenes, design integration, and run throughs, culminating in the show you experience today.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to writer Jean, for the unparalleled incisiveness, sincerity, and creative brilliance that she has brought to our work. To choreographer Dapheny, whose ability and adaptability in crafting choreography for



four diverse performers across backgrounds is truly remarkable. To dramaturg Shanthini, who reliably delivers honest feedback with kindness, and for consistently reminding me to trust in myself. To stage manager Carolene, for her professionalism, calmness, and fortitude, from which I have learnt so much. To producer Vanessa, for being such a safe and supportive presence, and for managing the many moving parts with focus and grace.

Thank you to the performers Dana, Nirmala, Shanice, and Suhaili for their unwavering dedication, inspiring contributions, and countless hours invested in and out of rehearsals for this work. To the designers Gabriel, Genevieve, Jing, and Petrina for a fulfilling collaborative process, during which I have enjoyed exchanging ideas and gaining insights from their perspectives and expertise. To production manager Danfong, production coordinator Jiong, ASM Syiqin, costume coordinator An Ni, interim producer Shireen, thank you for your utmost resourcefulness and hard work in supporting this production the best way possible.

To the audience—I hope that you will encounter something in *pass-ages* that resonates with or inspires you, wherever you may be in your ageing process. Thank you for joining us today.

**Sim Yan Ying "YY"**



# Dramaturg's Notes: Insights into the Process

Conceptualised and directed by Sim Yan Ying "YY", the interdisciplinary world of *pass-ages* offers provocations for what it means to age - an inevitable process that cuts through and across the domains of the physiological and psychological. Over three phases YY, playwright Jean Tay and choreographer Dapheny Chen worked with artists from the disciplines of visual art, traditional dance, clowning and theatre.

Dramaturgically, it was important to chart each character's journey but never losing sight of each one's place in the play. The diversity of ages and skills within the ensemble had to be carefully considered in how movement and spoken words could be interwoven. Constant conversations with other creatives were equally important to calibrate how subtext could be infused across all staging devices like sound, set, lighting and multimedia. This was an important strategy to tie the four characters together and to create the world of *pass-ages*.

The show's premise of giving voice and agency (including the underrepresented aspects of ageing) was also honoured in YY's directorial journey with the ensemble. Deliberate efforts were made to ensure that every member was given the rightful platform for expression and empowerment. In the first two phases the cast led some workshops. This not only created a sense of shared experience of embracing unfamiliar techniques and venturing beyond their artistic comfort zones. It also allowed YY and Jean to observe them and conceive the characters we see today - each ensemble member potentially becoming a mirror or foil to their characters. Tapping on the individual skill sets became paramount in the creation of Millie and Shivani. Research, such as care for the elderly and understanding medical conditions, served as the artistic compass for developing Ching and Ogy. As such, anecdotes, conversations with the ensemble, interviews, academic studies, and cultural traditions were carefully embedded into the expressive forms of both words and gestures by Jean and Dapheny respectively.

Creating a common working language and structure in the rehearsal space was crucial for the third phase. YY introduced acting techniques and objectives, while Dapheny translated them into task-based choreography, creating a cohesive artistic language. Through iterative table reads and scene work, complex ideas and modes of presentations were refined and redeveloped, culminating in poignant moments like the lotus scenes—a metaphorical exploration of the ephemeral nature of ageing. Here the performative expressions that splice naturalistic moments of the characters offers space for reprieve and reflection. Isn't the unblemished lotus and wilting translucent petals a continuing journey for the *teratai*? Is it in these moments of vulnerability that we truly witness strength?



# Synopsis



Blending humour and heartache, *pass-ages* brings us on a journey through the evolving landscape of ageing, as we witness four women navigating distinct passages through life. We meet the elderly Ching, who struggles to reclaim her personhood and dignity in the face of dementia; Shivani, a mature dancer determined to stake her claim to the stage; Ogy, a woman in a desperate race against her biological clock; and teenage Millie, who is coping with the five stages of grief in her own peculiar way.

Inspired by contributions from performers Dana Lam, Nirmala Seshadri, Suhaili Safari and Shanice Stanislaus, this interdisciplinary production boldly confronts the complex realities and anxieties of growing old(er) as a woman. *pass-ages* invites us to re-examine our relationship with ageing, and asks: how do we truly embrace the inevitable?

(1hr 40mins, no intermission)

Performed in English, some Malay and Cantonese. Creative Captioning is provided for select scenes.

Advisory: This production includes some coarse language and sensitive topics, such as pregnancy loss, ageism, and death and dying.

There will be a post-show dialogue with director, Sim Yan Ying "YY" after the performances on 13 Apr, Sat, 8pm and 14 Apr, Sun, 3pm.



## Q&A with the Director



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

Working with four performers across various ages, backgrounds, creative approaches, movement vocabularies, and theatrical experiences. Balancing between fostering an open, collaborative environment conducive for creativity and ensuring everyone's ideas are heard, while aligning our efforts towards a clear and specific vision. (Still) learning to care for myself amidst energy expended in caring for others.

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

Having fulfilling creative conversations where ideas flow and take off, and the moments of laughter amidst the rigour and intensity of the work.

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

That it is not easy being a young female director, and that it is time to work very intentionally on my confidence and self-esteem.

**What's up next for you after *TRIP* (as a Director)?**

I'll be co-conceptualising and directing a new interdisciplinary work with Alvin Tan, directing a new play by Laura Hayes, restaging a production for young audiences, and collaborating on an independent dance theatre production with Nah Jieying. I am looking forward to the diversity of projects and exploring different approaches to each one.



# Biographies

## Sim Yan Ying “YY”

Conceptualiser, Director & Script Editor



Sim Yan Ying "YY" is a theatre artist based in Singapore and New York. She creates as a director, performer, and deviser, and strives to make works that are experimental and accessible, physical in nature, and reflective of a diversity of lived experiences. YY believes in the power of live performance to bridge perspectives within and across communities in an increasingly polarised world.

Her original works include: *Where Are You?* (Wild Rice/Mabou Mines), a series of productions on how we experience grief and confront death; *Who Are You?* (Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay), a devised performance about migrant-local relationships in Singapore; *I LOVE WHITE MEN* (Caveat NYC/Ars Nova/Dixon Place), a one-woman show excavating white worship and postcolonial baggage from an immigrant's perspective in New York; and *Without Reason* (ArtsWok Collaborative/Esplanade) about the struggles of an interracial relationship in Singapore.

Digital works: *Who's There?* (New Ohio Theatre), an international collaboration about the socio-political and racial unrests in 2020; *(un)becoming* (T.>Works N.O.W. 2021), exploring the complex dynamics of mother-daughter relationships in modern-day Singapore; and *Bloodlines* 血脉 (Fault Line Theatre), a work-in-progress with artists across the Sinosphere examining the volatility and promise of Chinese-ness.

YY obtained a BFA in Theatre and a BA in Psychology from New York University, and has trained in programmes such as the SITI Company's Summer Intensive, Singapore Repertory Theatre's Directing Residency, and The Necessary Stage's Devising Platform. She is presently a Director under *The Studios: TRIP* at Esplanade, an Associate Artist at Fault Line Theatre, and a participant of Emergency Academy as well as T.H.E Dance Company's Training Initiative.

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



## Jean Tay

Writer



Jean Tay graduated in 1997 with a double-degree in creative writing and economics from Brown University, USA. Plays produced include *Chinatown Crossings*, *The Shape of a Bird*, *It Won't Be Too Long: The Cemetery – Dusk*, *Senang*, *Sisters*, *Boom*, *Everything but the Brain*, *Plunge*, *The Knot* and *Water from the Well*. Jean also wrote the books for the musicals *The Great Wall: One Woman's Journey*, *The Admiral's Odyssey*, *Man of Letters*, and a children's musical *Pinocchio*. She has written over 20 plays and musicals, which have been performed in Singapore, the US, the UK, Italy and Indonesia.

In 2000, her play *The Knot* was awarded 1st prize for Action Theatre's 10-minute Play Competition. She has been nominated four times for Best Original Script for the Life! Theatre Awards, and won for *Everything but the Brain* in 2006.

Jean was attached to Singapore Repertory Theatre (SRT) as resident playwright from 2006 – 2009, and helmed SRT's Young Company Writing Programme from 2012 – 2016. Her plays *Everything but the Brain* and *Boom* have been published by Epigram Books and used as 'O' and 'N' Level literature texts for secondary school students. Jean is the founding Artistic Director of Saga Seed Theatre, set up in 2015 to bring Singaporean stories to the stage, and provide a platform to nurture local talent.



## Dapheny Chen

Choreographer



Photo Credit: Jootz See

Dapheny Chen is an independent dance artist who negotiates between the roles of a choreographer, performer, educator and arts manager.

She is concerned about the provocations, connections and criticality that arise from making and viewing dance. Breaking away from her conventional dance training, she examines socio-political ideologies to navigate the possibilities of contemporary dance, while seeking to create alternative nodes of experience and entry points as conversations for change and knowledge. Her practice embraces the multiple facets of choreography and dance that change with time and state. While acknowledging the agile and transient nature of processes involved in creation, she breaks down previous definitions of the form to reform new experiences.

Dapheny has danced with Ah Hock and Peng Yu (2004), L.A. Dance Connection (2003 – 2008), Frontier Danceland (2010 – 2011) and Re:Dance Theatre (2012 – 2015). She is focused on the sustainability of dance artists and their related work and labour practices.





Photo Credit: Crispian Chan

## Dana Lam

Dana Lam is a visual artist, writer and performer who approaches her multidisciplinary practice as a way of experiencing and interrogating becoming.

Notable performances include *Still Life*, which she wrote and performed in collaboration with Checkpoint Theatre in 2019. In 2023, Checkpoint Theatre published her visual journal, *The Art of Being a Grandmother: An Incomplete Diary of Becoming*.

Lam's essay, *Woman/Artist/Citizen: Running with Her Dreams*, is a chapter in the book, *Why Not? Thinking about Singapore's Tomorrow*, due out May 2024, edited by Margaret Thomas and Kanwaljit Soin, published by World Scientific.

Lam has worked as a newspaper reporter and volunteered at AWARE (Association of Women for Action and Research), serving as its President from 2000 – 2002 and again from 2009 – 2011.



Photo Credit: Crispian Chan

## Nirmala Seshadri

Nirmala Seshadri is a dance artist and researcher whose work critically engages with *bharatanatyam*, a classical dance form.

She uses the body and performance space to interrogate existing inequalities, problematising boundaries of time, place, gender, and caste, among other social constructs. She draws from *bharatanatyam*, *butoh*, breathwork, and yoga to create an innovative movement approach, termed Antarika.

A recipient of the Young Artist Award from the National Arts Council (Singapore), Singar Mani (Mumbai) and Balasaraswati Endowment Award (Chennai), she graduated with an MA in Dance Anthropology from the University of Roehampton, London.

Nirmala's artistic works include *Outcaste Eternal* (1999), *Crossroads* (2003), *Moments in Time* (2002), *Then and Now* (2003), *Radha Now* (2006), *I watched the flowers* (2012), *I Carry Your Heart* (2015), *The Problematic Danseuse* (2020) and *Dance Affectionate* (2021).

[www.danceaffectionate.com](http://www.danceaffectionate.com)  
[www.nirmalaseshadri.net](http://www.nirmalaseshadri.net)





Photo Credit: Crispian Chan

## Shanice Stanislaus

Shanice Stanislaus is a multiple award-winning clown and actor. Her comedy-clown show *Mail Ordered* is the winner of three Canadian Awards; the Pick of the Fringe award (Vancouver), Patron's Pick Award (Toronto), and the Jester's Cap Emerging Artist Award (Calgary), and was nominated for the Artistic Risk award at the Vancouver Fringe Festival.

Select theatrical credits include: *Dance to Death* (El Festival Del Grec Barcelona), *The Brides* (David Glass Ensemble), *Where Are You?* (Wild Rice), *The House of Bernarda Alba*, (Flamenco Sin Fronteras), *La Mariposa Borracha* (Gateway Theatre), *Insert Clown Here* (Parlous Theatre Toronto) and *All My Parents Are Asian* (Majong Mafia Comedy Toronto). She has trained and worked with French master clown Philippe Gaulier and the contemporary clown theatre company, Spymonkey (UK).

Shanice is also a creative entrepreneur and the founder of Creatives Inspirit, a Singapore-based creative arts company dedicated to bringing more clowning and play to communities worldwide. She has taught clown and play-based dance workshops with Clown Gym (NYC), International Schools Theatre Association (UK), Wild Rice, and the Singapore Repertory Theatre.



Photo Credit: Crispian Chan

## Suhaili Safari

Suhaili Safari is a Singapore-based artist both in theatre and music. For two decades, she has performed on stages both locally and internationally, with recent works such as *Inside Voices* (2019, Lazy Native) which won Best Outstanding Work at the annual Vaults Festival in London, *Animal Farm* (2022, Wild Rice) and *Kepaten Obor: Igniting A Withered Torch*, her first independent work which was nominated for Best Original Script at the 2023 ST Life Theatre Awards.

As a vocal artist, she has contributed to improvisation sessions from Sounding Now's *Open Spaces* at YST Conservatory (2019), The Observatory's Playfreely sessions, in particular, *No Man's Land*, an all-women music improvisation (2017) and most recently, in the live-cinema production, *Pompeii* (Singapore International Festival of Arts, 2023).



## Nidya Shanthini Manokara

### Dramaturg

Dr Nidya Shanthini Manokara is a dance and theatre practitioner-researcher, educator, performer and dramaturg. She works extensively on research projects and performances that investigate the intersection of movement, dance and theatre to critically analyse performance-making. Her notable works include the *Wandering Women Project* (2024, 2019), *Rain Motions* (2023), *Shivam: Form to Formless* (2021), *BITTEN: Return to Our Roots* (2018) and *Becoming Mother* (2017). As the Resident Dramaturg with RAW Moves, she has collaborated on interdisciplinary dance works with sound artists, speculative designers, photographers, puppeteers, playwrights, architects and movement artists. Shanthini is a lecturer at LASALLE College of the Arts and aspires to inculcate a culture of discursive conversations about performance processes.

## Petrina Dawn Tan

### Set Designer

Petrina Dawn Tan holds a Master of Arts 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 and 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 a co-artist for public art piece *YELLOW*, Associate Lighting Designer for *From Singapore to Singaporean - The Bicentennial Experience* and Associate Lighting Designer for *Art of the Brick* at the ArtScience Museum.

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

## Gabriel Chan

### Lighting Designer

Recipient of the Singapore National Arts Council Overseas Bursary, Gabriel graduated from the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts with First Class Honours in Lighting Design. He was also awarded the Strand Lighting Scholarship, funding his training at the Metropolitan Opera, New York ('09 Winter Opera Season). He was conferred the Young Artist Award in 2019 for his artistic excellence and contribution to Singapore's performing arts scene. A chameleon of a designer, Gabriel is well versed in lighting for the theatre, dance, music concerts, international sporting and live national broadcast events.

Signature theatre designs include *Angel Island* (SIFA 2023), *The Almighty Sometimes*, *Constellations*, *Shakespeare in the Park: A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2023), *Julius Caesar*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *The Tempest*, *The LKY Musical* (Singapore Repertory Theatre), *A Dream*



*Under the Southern Bough: Existence* (SIFA 2021), *Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove*, *Sometime Moon*, *The Crab Flower Club 2022* (Toy Factory Productions), *Transplant*, *Every Brilliant Thing* (The Fingers Players) and *First Fleet* (Nine Years Theatre).

Gabriel also goes by the moniker Linesmith ([www.linesmith.net](http://www.linesmith.net)) authorised directly by Vectorworks Headquarters based in Washington for conducting training of the Vectorworks software, the leading drafting solution for Entertainment and Performing Arts technical design.

[www.gabrielchan.me](http://www.gabrielchan.me)

## Jing Ng

### Sound Artist & Composer

A recipient of the National Arts Council Scholarship in Singapore, Jing graduated with first class honours from Rose Bruford College (UK), specialising in Performance Sound. Having designed for various companies and productions over 10 years of practice, he aspires to provide a wholesome sonic experience for the audience—what, why and how you listen through a live performance.

As an arts educator at NAFA since 2017, Jing has been teaching the core principles and techniques of production sound design. These modules fosters future practitioners in developing a deeper understanding of sound in various artistic mediums and discovering the infinite possibilities of sonic arts.

He was nominated for Best Sound Design in the 2014 Off West End Theatre Awards, and the 2018, 2022 – 2024 at The Straits Times Life Theatre Awards in Singapore. Jing is currently developing future iterations of his installation work, *Distance Makes The Heart Ponder*.

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

[www.soundcloud.com/jingsound](https://www.soundcloud.com/jingsound)

## Genevieve Peck

### Projection Designer

Genevieve graduated from The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, London with a BA(Hons) in Theatre Practice, specialising in Lighting and Projection/Video Design.

Design credits include *Doubt: A Parable*, *People Places and Things*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Tango*, *The Effect* (Pangdemonium), *Four Horse Road*, *I Came At Last to the Seas*, *Lao Jiu: The Musical 2017*, *Liao Zhai Rocks! 2016* (The Theatre Practice), *ubin*, *Both Sides Now 2019*, *Missing* (Drama Box), *Everything For You*, *Between You and Me*, *Lear is Dead*, *Art Studio* (Nine Years Theatre), *Lungs*, *The Sound Inside*, *The Lifespan of a Fact* (Singapore Repertory Theatre), *Three Years in the Life and Death of Land* (The Necessary Stage), *The Commission* (Pangdemonium, SRT & Wild Rice).



## Loo An Ni

### Costume Coordinator

Loo An Ni is fascinated with the tactility of objects and spaces. This brought her into theatre where possibilities are endless. Having taken on various roles behind the scenes from design and construction of costumes and puppets to wardrobe management, her current interest is exploring how these two fields can meld with or complement each other. She is currently a member of The Finger Players' core team.

## The Backstage Affair - Production Stage Management

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 Hennedige. 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 Hennedige). 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.



# Production credits

## Creative Team

### **Conceptualiser, Director & Script Editor**

Sim Yan Ying "YY"

### **Writer**

Jean Tay

### **Choreographer**

Dapheny Chen

### **Performers**

Dana Lam

Nirmala Seshadri

Shanice Stanislaus

Suhaili Safari

### **Dramaturg**

Nidya Shanthini Manokara

### **Set Designer**

Petrina Dawn Tan

### **Lighting Designer**

Gabriel Chan

### **Sound Artist & Composer**

Jing Ng

### **Projection Designer**

Genevieve Peck

### **Costume Designer**

Sim Yan Ying "YY"

### **Costume Coordinator**

Loo An Ni



## Production Team

### Production Manager

Lam Dan Fong (The Backstage Affair)

### Production Coordinator

Cheow Jiong Ling (The Backstage Affair)

### Stage Manager

Carolene Ruth Liew (The Backstage Affair)

### Assistant Stage Manager

Wann Nurul Asyiqin Bte Rahim (The Backstage Affair)

### Producers

Vanessa Loh

Shireen Abdullah

## Resource Panel

Aidli 'Alin' Mosbit

Edith Podesta

Sean Tobin

## Acknowledgements

Special thanks to The Finger Players, Arielle Jasmine van Zuijlen, Ellen Lavilla, Jason Chia, Karen Tan, Nabilah Said, See Yong Xin, and Silvia Yong.

Scene Eight (*The Fall*) and Scene 17 (*Second Law of Thermodynamics*) include text written by Dana Lam.

The *bharatanatyam* solos, as well as *jathis* in Shivani's scenes are choreographed, composed and recited by Nirmala Seshadri. She has also sung the *ragas* in Shivani's final scene.

The choreography in Scene Three (*Make Believe*) is done by Shanice Stanislaus.

The choreography in Scene 16 (*The Nightmare*), as well as Malay translations in Scene 14 (*Car Ride*) and Scene 16 (*The Nightmare*) are done by Suhaili Safari.





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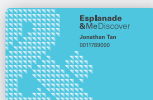


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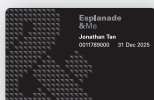
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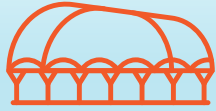
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*to our Esplanade partner, arts benefactor, donors and sponsors for believing in our vision to be a performing arts centre for everyone. They made all these possible!*



# 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.

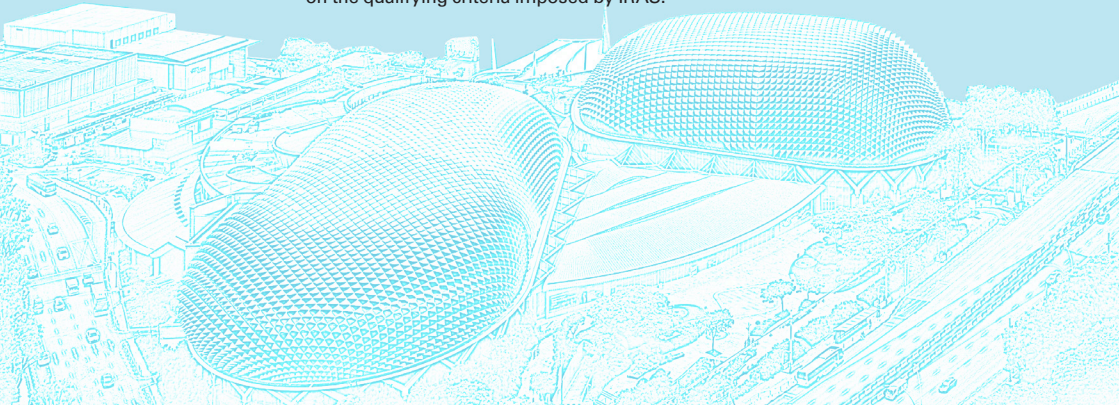
On behalf of the communities we serve, thank you!

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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 support.

---

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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.

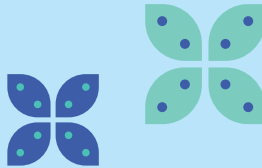


Esplanade also receives grants from the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, as well as support for our Community Programmes from the Tote Board Family, comprising Tote Board, Singapore Pools and Singapore Turf Club.



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  - Limited to one redemption per receipt.
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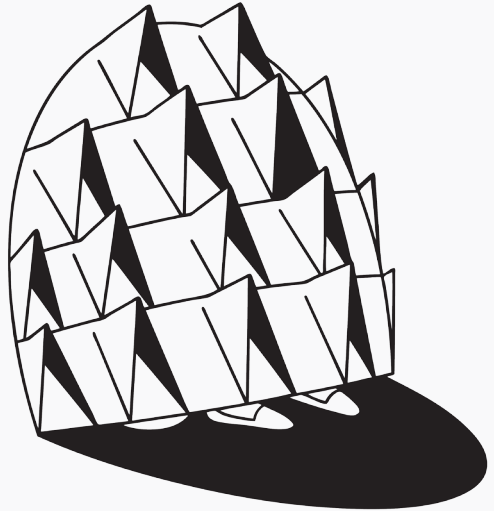
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”

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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

*"MS. VOGEL HAS WRITTEN A  
LOVELY, HARROWING GUIDE TO  
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**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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20 & 21 APR 2024

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"Sometimes the simplest ideas are the most surprising."

- MOONEY ON THEATRE

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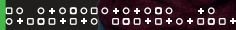
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