CREATIVE CONVERGENCE: SAME SAME, AND DIFFERENT

ISPA 2026 SINGAPORE CONGRESS

19–22 MAY

PROGRAMME

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WELCOME TO SINGAPORE

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2026 Mid-Year Congress of the International Society for the Performing Arts (ISPA).

It is a privilege for Singapore to once again host this distinguished gathering of performing arts professionals in our vibrant city after more than two decades. For over 70 years, ISPA has united the global performing arts community in the shared pursuit of collaboration, dialogue, and exchange - to harness the arts both as an expression of creativity and culture, as well as a force to enrich our communities.

Singapore shares this belief in the unique ability of the arts to uplift and inspire. In a diverse, multicultural society like ours, the arts give expression to our layered identities and allow our people to connect to one another's histories, cultures and aspirations. By creating spaces for dialogue and fostering inclusion, they strengthen our social fabric and make us one united people. Through expanding participation in the arts, the Singapore Government seeks to create more opportunities for people from different backgrounds to express themselves and connect with one another.

We are committed to ensuring the arts remain accessible, meaningful, and impactful for all.

This Congress comes at a time when the global situation appears uncertain, and connection and understanding are more important than ever. The conversations we will have over the next four days, around the theme of "Creative Convergence: Same Same And Different", hold the potential to deepen empathy, spark dialogue, and strengthen the role of the arts in shaping more inclusive and cohesive societies.

To our friends and colleagues from around the world, we are glad you are here. I hope you do take the time to explore our city, and may Singapore and Singaporeans leave you with fond memories, and may we grow closer through these experiences.

My thanks to the National Arts Council and its partners, as well as ISPA, for working together on a comprehensive and memorable programme.

Wishing all a meaningful Congress, and great experiences that bring all of us closer together as a global community.

Mr David Neo
Acting Minister for Culture, Community and Youth
& Senior Minister of State for Education

ISPA! Where you'll get your next great idea!

The International Society for the Performing Arts (ISPA) is a global network of more than 500 leaders in the performing arts, representing more than 185 cities across all regions of the world. ISPA's mission is to strengthen the performing arts globally through the advancement of leadership, the exchange of ideas, and the fostering of a diverse and engaged membership. ISPA members represent the full ecosystem of the performing arts, including facilities, presenters, independent creative producers, artist managers, festivals, funders, consultants, and other professionals working in the field.

But what does that mean?

ISPA is:

- **A meeting place** – we hold two Congresses every year, one in New York and one in a different global city. In addition, we host several **regional events** annually.
- Your resource for expanding your **personal and professional network**.
- Where you learn about the performing arts in different regions of the world.
- How you stay up to date on issues, challenges, and solutions from colleagues around the globe.
- About facilitating **emerging, mid-career, and established leaders** in their careers, both locally and internationally.

Stronger with your participation!

International Society for the Performing Arts
ISPA

Dear Colleagues,

Selamat Datang! Huānying! Vannakkam! Welcome!

The theme of ISPA's 2026 Congress is Creative Convergence: Same Same, And Different. It therefore seems both fitting and timely to welcome delegates in all four of Singapore's official languages.

At a moment when much of the world appears more focused on what divides us than what connects us, it is a genuine pleasure to gather in Singapore and celebrate both our shared purpose and our differences.

This program offers many opportunities to engage—both informally and formally—with members of the local arts community, as well as colleagues from across the region. I encourage you to embrace these opportunities fully: see widely, participate actively, and remain open to new perspectives and experiences.

On behalf of ISPA's Board of Directors, its membership, and the assembled delegation, I extend sincere thanks to the National Arts Council (NAC) for hosting this Congress and for their longstanding partnership. The teams at ISPA and NAC welcome you warmly and invite you to explore the unfamiliar, the unexpected, and the inspiring.

With warm regards,

Mr David Baile
Chief Executive Officer
International Society for the Performing Arts

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the Board of the International Society for the Performing Arts, welcome to Singapore.

This year's theme, Creative Convergence: Same Same, And Different, turns on a small but deliberate word: and, not but. It holds difference in place without resolving it.

That thought runs through the programme. The sessions ask us to honour tradition and embrace transformation (what Gustav Mahler called "the preservation of fire" rather than "the worship of ashes"); to redraw the line between artist and audience; to let leaders of different generations and worldviews disagree (respectfully!). The programme does not ask us to choose. It asks us to hold more than one thing at once.

That posture is not always comfortable in a world that asks us as leaders to offer a clear position and the quick line. But the performing arts have always been the practice ground for it, letting opposites speak to each other and finding meaning in the space between.

My thanks to the National Arts Council Singapore, to our partners and supporters, and to each of you for being here. Singapore promises to be our theme made visible, and I look forward to discovering its rich cultural life alongside you.

My hope, above all, is that you take something meaningful home with you (a new perspective, an unexpected partnership, a challenging question) and conversations of every kind: easy ones, difficult ones, and conversations where we cannot quite agree and grow because of it.

With warm wishes,

Mr Alfonso Leal del Ojo
Chair, Board of Directors
International Society for the Performing Arts
(Chief Executive, The English Concert)

ABOUT NAC

About the National Arts Council

The National Arts Council (NAC) is a statutory board under the Ministry of Culture, Community, and Youth that champions the arts in Singapore. The Council promotes artistic excellence by providing diverse opportunities for artists and arts organisations while expanding access for audiences to appreciate the impact of the arts in enriching lives. By working closely with the arts community and partners, the Council seeks to build a connected society, creative economy and distinctive city through the arts.

Our Mission

We champion an arts sector that inspires society, sparks creativity and connects Singapore to the world.

Our Vision

A creative city that inspires.

NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL
SINGAPORE

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the National Arts Council (Singapore), it is our pleasure to welcome you to Singapore for the ISPA 2026 Singapore Congress.

More than two decades have passed since ISPA last convened in Southeast Asia, and we are honoured to host the Congress in Singapore this year. Over the next four days, we hope this gathering will provide a meaningful platform for dialogue and exchange among colleagues who share a deep commitment to the future of performing arts.

Singapore's ambition is to be a city made more distinctive by the arts - one in which artistic practice is woven into everyday life, and where our artists engage confidently with international peers. Hosting ISPA reflects this aspiration. At National Arts Council, we remain committed to building a sustainable arts ecosystem.

This means supporting artists and arts groups, strengthening sector capabilities and developing opportunities for collaboration both within Singapore and beyond.

This Congress, centred on *Creative Convergence: Same Same, And Different*, invites us to consider how diverse perspectives can come together to generate new possibilities. Across its programme that takes on many interesting formats ranging from panel discussions and performances to precinct visits, the Congress offers opportunities to engage with the ideas, practices, and relationships that will shape the future of the performing arts.

At the end of the Congress, we hope you leave Singapore with fresh perspectives, meaningful connections, and a renewed sense of shared purpose for the road ahead.

We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to the ISPA team for their close partnership and collaboration. We are deeply grateful for their trust in Singapore as this year's host.

We wish you a wonderful Congress!

Ms Goh Swee Chen
Chairman,
National Arts Council (Singapore)

Mrs Elaine Ng
Chief Executive Officer,
National Arts Council (Singapore)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Venue Partners

Programme Partner

Hospitality Partner

Special thanks to the following individuals and organisations for their invaluable guidance and support:

Centre 42

Chok Kerong

Gaurav Kripalani

ibis budget Singapore Bugis

ibis budget Singapore Selegie

ibis Styles Singapore Albert Hotel

Hotel Waterloo Singapore - Handwritten Collection

Natalie Hennedige and Cake Theatrical Productions

Paradox Singapore

PARKROYAL on Beach Road, Singapore

PARKROYAL COLLECTION Marina Bay, Singapore

Raffles Hotel

Rendezvous Hotel Singapore

The Theatre Practice

University of the Arts Singapore

ISPA 2026 Singapore Congress Advisory Panel and Singapore Regional Fellowship Fellows

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Chong Tze Chien

Dapheny Chen

Khairina Khalid

Kuo Jian Hong

Kuik Swee Boon

Prof Kwok Kian Woon

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Nelson Chia

Shaza Ishak

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Shridar Mani

Tan Koon Meng, Danny

Yvonne Tham

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Membership and Events Intern

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Program and
Advancement Manager

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Ruby Tan	Senior Manager Performing Arts - Music
Serene Leong	Senior Manager Education & Manpower Development - Manpower Development
Lee De Yi	Manager Performing Arts - Dance & Traditional Arts
Loh Wei Zong	Manager Performing Arts - Dance & Traditional Arts
Ning Poh	Assistant Manager Performing Arts - Special Projects
Phyllis Oh	Assistant Manager Performing Arts - Special Projects
Yeong Su Ann	Assistant Manager Performing Arts - Special Projects

Download the official ISPA26SG app to make the most of your Congress experience.

Getting Started

1. Go to the App Store or Play Store
2. Search for "ISPA26SG" and download the app
3. Launch the app
4. Log in using the email address you registered for the Congress
5. Input the OTP (one-time password) sent to your registered email address

Key Features

Event Agenda —
Save your favourite sessions, view daily schedules, and discover speakers and topics.

Networking —
Connect with other attendees, chat, exchange contacts, and schedule meetings.

Directions —
Find venues instantly so you can navigate with ease.

Snapsight:
Live Translation & Session Summaries —
As each session unfolds, Snapsight provides live transcription, key takeaways, and an idea cloud mapping the main topics covered. Approximately within 15 minutes of each session ending, you will receive an executive summary of what was discussed, available in multiple languages.

Venue Accessibility

Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

Wheelchair Loan Service —

Wheelchairs are available upon request at no cost on the premises. Please contact the Customer Experience team at 6828 8377 if you require the use of a wheelchair.

Accessible Parking —

There are designated parking lots for patrons with mobility challenges. These are located at both levels of the basement carpark, close to the entrances to the centre.

Lift Access —

All lifts at Esplanade which are accessible to the public are wheelchair-friendly.

Accessible Toilets —

These toilets can accommodate wheelchairs and are conveniently located around the centre. Automatic doors are installed at these toilets for ease of use.

Hand Rails —

To provide support for elderly patrons, or patrons with mobility challenges, when walking up or down the staircases along both sides of the Concourse.

Tactile Floor Markings —

Textured ground surfaces offer directional aid for patrons who are blind or have low vision. They are installed at the carpark, drop-off points and Forecourt Garden.

Backrests —

Backrests have been installed along the last row of seats at the Outdoor Theatre, designed for the comfort of all patrons, especially the elderly.

Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre

Accessible Parking —

There are designated parking lots on every level of the carpark for patrons with mobility difficulties. They are located next to the lift lobby.

Lift Access —

All lifts are wheelchair-accessible. Lift announcements, and braille and tactile markings have been installed to assist the visually impaired when using the lifts.

As part of safe management measures, the lifts in the carpark lobbies have been temporarily shut down. If you need help to get around the centre after parking, please call 6812 7229 for assistance.

Wheelchair Loan Service —

Wheelchairs are available for loan at no charge for use within the premises.

Accessible Toilets —

Accessible toilets are conveniently located on every level of the Centre, except Level 2.

Special Seating Arrangements —

Accessible seats are available for patrons with mobility difficulties at the performance venues.

Braille Handrails —

Handrails at the premises are installed with braille information to guide the visually impaired.

Rest Areas —

Benches and seats are placed around the premises in quiet areas for patrons' use.

DAY 1 19 MAY 2026

TIME	EVENT	VENUE
12.00PM – 5.00PM	Registration	Esplanade Singtel Waterfront Theatre
1.15PM	Doors Open	
1.45PM	Congress Begins	
2.10PM– 2.25PM	Welcome by CEO/ISPA and Chair/National Arts Council	
2.25PM – 2.40PM	Performance: Flame of the Forest featuring shazza	
2.45PM – 3.00PM	Opening Address by Tharman Shanmugaratnam President of the Republic of Singapore	
3.00PM – 4.30PM	Session 1: What Endures, What Transforms: Art Across Cultures and Generations	
4.30PM – 5.00PM	Network & Refresh	
5.00PM – 5.30PM	ISPA26SG Spotlight: Update on Festivals in Mainland China - Li Ming (CN) Networks in Southeast Asia - Siree Riewpaiboon (TH)	
5.30PM – 5.45PM	End of Day Wrap-Up	
5.45PM – 6.00PM	Performance: Janji Kita: Echoes of our Land by Nadi Singapura	Esplanade Lawn & Makansutra @ Gluttons Bay
6.00PM – 8.00PM	Opening Reception	

All times and programmes are subjected to change.

DAY 2 20 MAY 2026

TIME	EVENT	VENUE
9.30AM – 12.30AM	Registration	Esplanade Singtel Waterfront Theatre Foyer
9.30AM – 10.00AM	*RSVP required* Apsaras Dance Company: Agápe - The Human Connection	Esplanade Recital Studio
10.30AM – 10.45AM	Welcome & Recap	Esplanade Singtel Waterfront Theatre
10.45AM – 12.15PM	Session 2: Viewer, Participant, Co-Creator: Capturing the Evolving Audience	
12.15PM – 12.30PM	Performance: Kriya: Artists In Action	
12.30PM – 5.30PM	*RSVP required* Lunch & Open City *Transport provided*	Various Arts Precincts
6.00PM – 9.00PM	Cocktail Klatch & ISPA Out on the Town - Performances @ Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA) *Transport provided*	Victoria Theatre and Victoria Concert Hall Atrium

All times and programmes are subjected to change.

DAY 3 21 MAY 2026

TIME	EVENT	VENUE
9.00AM – 1.00PM	Registration	Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre (SCCC) Auditorium Foyer
10.00AM – 12.00PM	Pitch New Works	SCCC Auditorium
12.00PM – 12.20PM	Welcome by CEO/SCCC Performance: Galloping Rhythms · Lion City in Motion 2026 by Drum Feng, NADI Singapura and Singapore Dhol Squad	SCCC Level 7 Foyer
12.00PM – 2.00PM	ProEx & Lunch	SCCC Level 7 and 9
2.00PM – 2.30PM	Welcome back & Recap Performance: Convergence: Nanyin X Asli by Siong Leng	SCCC Auditorium
2.30PM – 3.30PM	Session 3A: Beyond Boundaries: Arts in an Interconnected Age (Healthcare)	
3.30PM – 4.00PM	Network & Refresh	
4.00PM – 5.00PM	Session 3B: Beyond Boundaries: Arts in an Interconnected Age (Artificial Intelligence)	
5.00PM – 5.05PM	End of Day Wrap-Up	
6.00PM – 10.00PM	ISPA Out on the Town Performances @ Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA)	Various Locations

All times and programmes are subjected to change.

DAY 4 22 MAY 2026

TIME	EVENT	VENUE
9.00AM – 11.30AM	Registration	Esplanade Theatre Studio Level 4
10.00AM – 11.30AM	Kopi Klatch *Your start time is flexible. Explore at your own pace and join us anytime from 10.00AM*	Foreword Coffee + Esplanade Theatre Studio Level 4
11.30AM – 2.00PM	Lunch on Your Own	Free & Easy
1.00PM – 4.00PM	Registration	Singtel Waterfront Foyer
2.00PM – 2.05PM	Welcome	Esplanade Singtel Waterfront Theatre
2.05PM – 2.30PM	Performance: Bridges in Motion	
2.30PM – 3.00PM	ISPA26SG Spotlight: International Collaborations and the Asian Arts Ecosystem - Ong Keng Sen (SG), ISPA Distinguished Artist Arts & Climate Change in the Pacific - Letila Mitchell (FJ)	
3.00PM – 4.30PM	Session 4: The Art of Regeneration: Leadership in Times of Change	
4.30PM – 4.35PM	Closing by CEO/NAC	
4.35PM – 4.50PM	Performance: The Long Now by Litmus Jazz Ensemble & Gin Lam	
4.50PM – 4.55PM	Congress Closing	
5.00PM – 7.00 PM	Closing Reception	BAIA (Esplanade)

All times and programmes are subjected to change.

PANEL 1:
What Endures, What Transforms: Art Across Cultures and Generations

19 May, Tuesday, 3.00PM – 4.30PM
Esplanade Singtel Waterfront Theatre

Across the world, living traditions carry centuries of elements like cultural memory and community identity. How have these traditions endured across generations? What does it mean to push boundaries in works rooted in tradition, and how is this done respectfully? How do artmakers navigate the tensions between preservation and reinvention, between the local and the global?

This panel, What Endures, What Transforms: Art Across Cultures and Generations, explores how artmakers in Southeast Asia and beyond honour their traditions, navigate their influence over contemporary practices, and forge intercultural collaboration across borders and generations.

Moderator
Dr Venka Purushothaman
President
LASALLE College of the Arts
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
University of the Arts
Singapore

Speakers
Gabriel Prokofiev
Composer & Founder
Nonclassical
United Kingdom

Joon-Yee Kwok
Festival Director
OzAsia Festival
Australia

Maria Tri Sulistyani
Founder
Papermoon Puppet Theatre
Indonesia

Meenakshy Bhaskar
Artistic Director & CEO
Bhaskar's Arts Academy
Singapore

PANEL 2:
Viewer, Participant, Co-Creator: Capturing the Evolving Audience

20 May, Wednesday, 10.45AM – 12.15PM
Esplanade Singtel Waterfront Theatre

Audiences today are constantly shifting – in age, values, expectations and the ways they experience art.

As artists and art organisations navigate changing cultural and technological landscapes, how do we keep our finger on who our audiences are – and who they could become? How do we reach those who have never felt the arts were meant for them?

From intimate encounters to mass digital reach, from traditional spectators to co-creators: this long table conversation invites everyone to reflect on what it means to build connection and relevance today.

Together, we'll explore how artmakers continue to find their people and how audiences, in turn, shape the art we make.

Moderator
Paul Tan
CEO
Community Foundation of Singapore (CFS)
Singapore

Speakers
Angela Tan
Executive Director
ART:DiS
Singapore

Forrina Chen
Founder, Artistic Director
The A.S.K (Arts Space for Kids)
China

Malcolm Whittaker
Artist & Creative Producer
re:group performance collective
Australia

Dr Sharon Chang
Director of Data & Research
National Arts Council
Research Director
The Culture Academy
Singapore

Sornchai Chatwiriyachai
Founder & Artistic Director
Malongdu Theatre
Thailand

PANEL 3:
Beyond Boundaries:
Arts in an Interconnected Age

21 May, Thursday
Session 3A Healthcare, 2.30PM – 3.30PM
Session 3B Artificial Intelligence, 4.00PM – 5.00PM
Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre Auditorium

What becomes possible when artists create in dialogue with partners such as healthcare leaders and technologists? How can the arts shape — not simply respond to — the ways other sectors define value, innovation, and human experience?

This panel explores how cross-sector collaboration is expanding the frontiers of human-centred design. As healthcare delivery models are reimagined and artificial intelligence reshapes creativity and authorship, artists bring critical inquiry, empathy, and ethical imagination into these evolving systems.

Through real-world examples, speakers will examine how partnerships across disciplines generate new modes of practice, new forms of impact, and more resilient creative ecosystems.

Moderator
Pooja Nansi
Poet, Performer & Educator
Singapore

Speakers
3A Healthcare

Edwin Wee
Creative Director & Co-Founder
Decadance Co
Singapore

A/Prof Gan Wee Hoe
CEO, SingHealth Community Hospitals
Pro Tem CEO, Eastern General Hospital
Singapore

3B Artificial Intelligence

Harry Yeff aka Reeps100
Artist & Technologist
United Kingdom

PANEL 4:
The Art of Regeneration: Leadership in Times of Change

22 May, Friday, 3.00PM – 4.30PM
Esplanade Singtel Waterfront Theatre

What does it take to keep the arts alive, relevant and future-ready?

This panel brings together leaders from different backgrounds and generations to explore how diverse experiences and evolving values can shape resilient art organisations.

We discuss the exchange of wisdom and innovation, how to make space for new voices, and where collaboration across generations can steer leadership.

Moderator
Kok Heng Leun
Founder & Artist
Drama Box (Singapore)
Singapore

Speakers
María Claudia Parias Durán
Director General
Arts Institute of Bogotá (Idartes)
Colombia

Phloeun Prim
Executive Director
Living Arts International
Cambodia

Yvonne Tham
CEO
Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay
Singapore

ABOUT THE
ANTHONY FIELD ACADEMY

The Anthony Field Academy is an intensive arts administration programme dedicated to developing the next generation of talent. Key to the programme is that it is tailored to the needs of the arts community in which the Congress is being held. The format and content may change from year to year but the intent remains the same.

The Anthony Field Academy was first introduced at ISPA as the Academy in Stockholm in 1998. Founded as an intensive arts administration programme, the Academy developed over the years to support the needs of the local arts community during ISPA's international Congress. ISPA capitalises on arts leaders of today to pass down knowledge and experience to the arts leaders of tomorrow.

About The Theatre Practice – Producer & Co-curator

ABOUT THE
2026 ANTHONY FIELD ACADEMY SINGAPORE CHAPTER: RE-IMAGINING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH

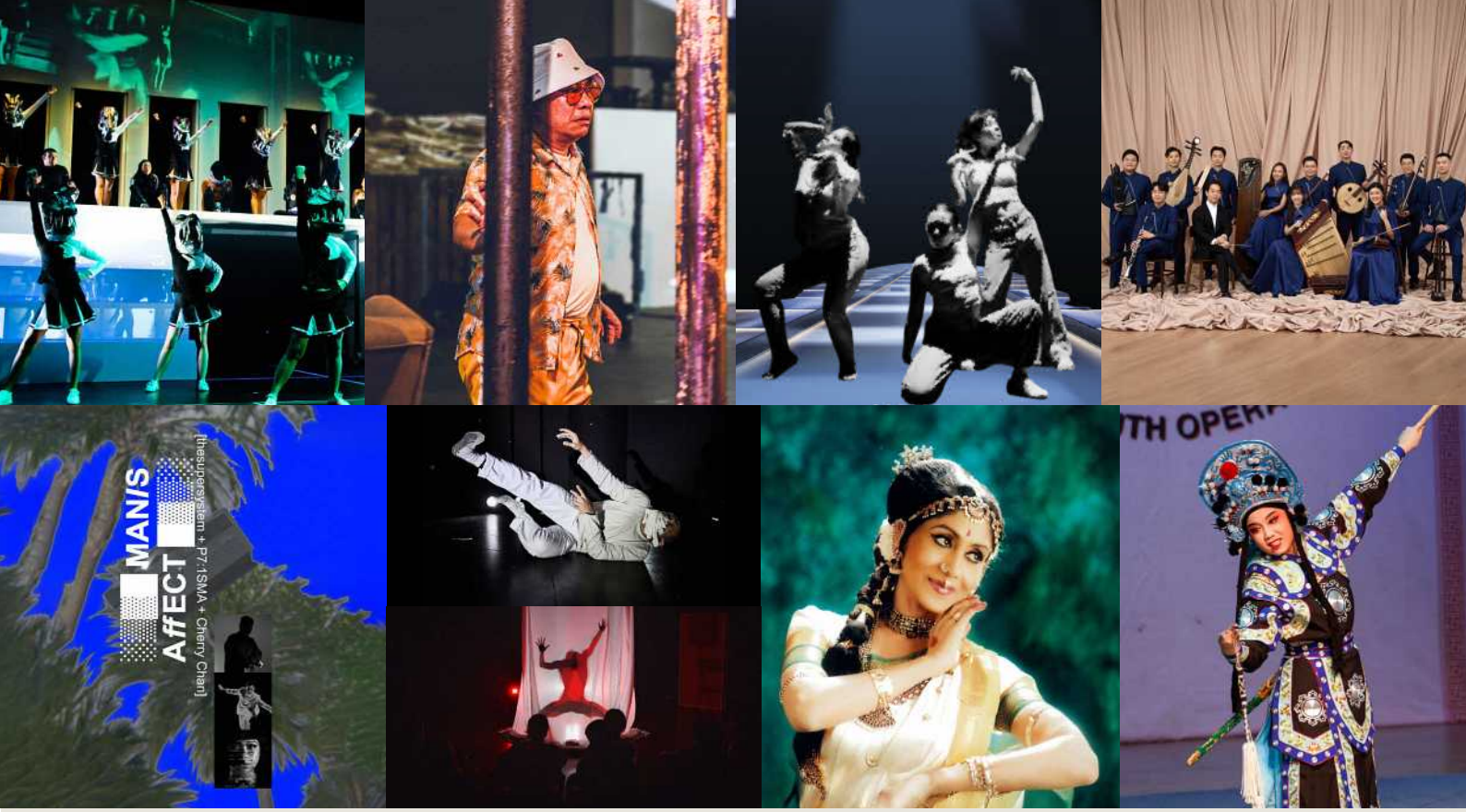
Co-Curated by The Theatre Practice (Singapore) and Creative Climate (Australia)

In the 2026 edition held in Singapore, this gathering positions sustainability not as a checklist or a top-down mandate, but as a living, shared inquiry shaped by the experiences and insights of all participants. Across provocations, sharings and working sessions, artists, producers and arts workers are invited to explore the multiple dimensions of transformation—from environmental and infrastructural to social and cultural—through the lens of the performing arts. The approach is circular and collaborative: where diverse industry professionals - artists, administrators and cultural leaders - share stories, tools and challenges, learning from one another in real time. Together, the sessions form a journey, where every participant contributes to imagining sustainable practices that are locally rooted, culturally resonant, and collectively owned.

About Creative Climate (Australia) – Co-curator

OPEN CITY

Natalie Hennedige
Creative Director



Stamford Arts Centre & Waterloo Arts Belt **20 May 2026, 1.30PM – 5.30PM**

The Waterloo district has long carried a sense of porousness. Temples, churches, theatres, schools, and coffee shops exist beside one another. Moving through the neighbourhood means encountering different systems of belief, performance and daily rituals within the span of a few streets.

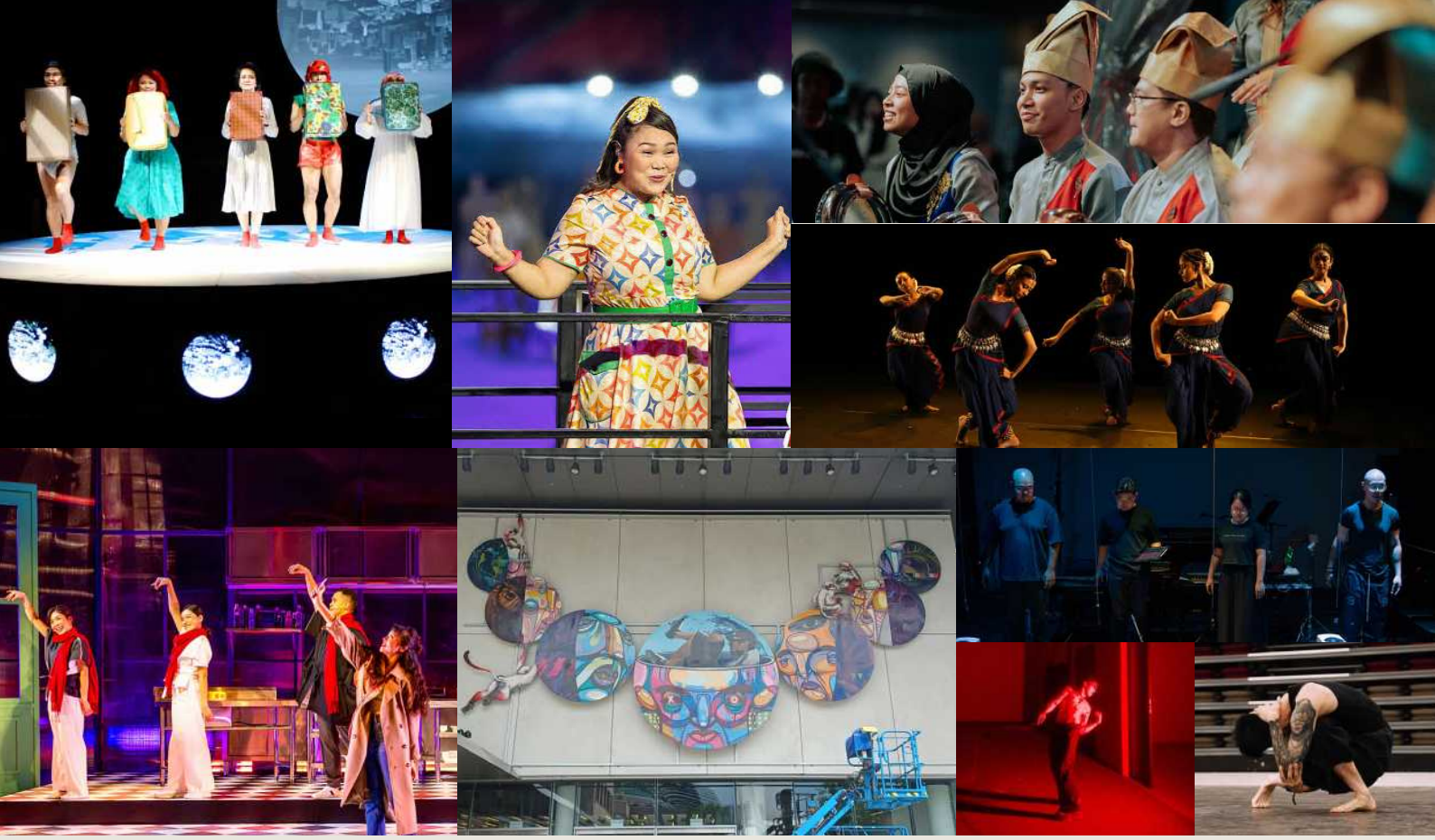
The afternoon opens with a vegetarian lunch by Eight Treasures, whose contemporary approach to Chinese cuisine carries its own conversation between inheritance and reinvention. The route then unfolds through encounters with Centre 42, Shantha Ratii Initiatives, Dingyi Music Company, Traditional Arts Centre, P7:1SMA, Cherry Chan, Heider Ismail, Rizman Putra, Azizi and Julius Foo.

Questions of transmission move quietly through the afternoon. Some artists work through forms carried carefully across generations. Others respond to the present through contemporary performance, sound and visual experimentation. Together, they form a continuum of practices concerned with how embodied knowledge passes from one person to another through continued use, adaptation and care.

Stamford Arts Centre is managed by Arts House Group.

List of Artists:

1. Cake Theatrical Productions x Julius Foo
2. Centre 42
3. Dingyi Music Company
4. P7:1SMA × Cherry Chan × thesupersystem
5. Rizman Putra × Azizi
6. Shantha Ratii Initiatives
7. Traditional Arts Centre



Aliwal Arts Centre & Kampong Gelam **20 May 2026, 1.30PM – 5.30PM**

Kampong Gelam contains many layers at once: tourist quarter, spiritual centre, food enclave, rehearsal ground. The neighbourhood resists singular readings because so many histories continue to overlap within it. Aliwal Arts Centre reflects that same condition. Within the building, very different artistic languages coexist wall to wall.

The afternoon begins over lunch by Geni Singapore, whose regional Malay cooking speaks to centuries of trade, migration and cultural exchange across the region. The afternoon continues through performances, installations, sound works and interventions by Syafiq Halid and Hothouse supported by the National Arts Council's Arts x Tech Lab Initiative, RSCLS, Nine Years Theatre, weirdaftertaste, Leo Yee, Jack Lim, Nadi Singapura, Chowk Productions and Siti Khalijah.

Different communities occupy the same cultural ecology. The route becomes a way of thinking about Singapore as a continuous act of coexistence.

Aliwal Arts Centre is managed by Arts House Group.

List of Artists:

1. Cake Theatrical Productions + Siti K.
2. Chowk Productions
3. Syafiq Halid* + Hothouse*
4. Nadi Singapura + Chowk Productions
5. Nine Years Theatre
6. RSCLS
7. weirdaftertaste × Leo Yee × Jack Lim

*Supported by NAC's Arts x Tech Lab

Goodman Arts Centre **20 May 2026, 1.30PM – 5.30PM**

Goodman Arts Centre stands on land that once faced the sea. Before reclamation redrew the coastline, this part of Singapore opened onto mangroves, river mouths and coastal settlements where seafaring indigenous communities once lived along the water's edge.

The afternoon begins with lunch by Ahimsa Sanctuary, whose plant based cooking draws from Ayurvedic traditions centred on balance, nourishment and care. From there, the route moves through studios, rehearsal rooms and corridors with artists including Era Dance Theatre, Paper Monkey Theatre, RAW Moves, The Artground, The Observatory, weish and Andrew Marko.

A particular quality of attention begins to emerge across the route. These are artists tending to what risks being lost: dance forms carried across generations, ancient storytelling traditions, fading folk songs and geological signals that precede change.

Goodman Arts Centre is managed by Arts House Group.

List of Artists:

1. Cake Theatrical Productions + Andrew Marko
2. Era Dance Theatre
3. Paper Monkey Theatre
4. RAW Moves
5. The Artground
6. The Observatory + weish

Pitch New Works

ISPA's Pitch New Works Program provides a global platform for creators and arts professionals to share and discover new performing arts projects. Twice a year, ten outstanding submissions are chosen to present to an international delegation of performing arts industry leaders at ISPA's Congresses. The program has a strong record of helping participants secure project support, representation, touring engagements, premiere locations, and other opportunities.

Projects:

A Drop in the Ocean
Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay
and The Artground
Singapore

dogma
People Watching
Canada

HEY! YOU
Théâtre des Enfants Terribles
Taiwan

HOME LAND and SEA
The Royal New Zealand Ballet with The
New Zealand Dance Company
New Zealand

One Day We'll Understand
CultureLink Singapore in partnership
with Chamber Made
Singapore, Australia

Paiwan Zoo
Tjimur Dance Theatre,
commissioned by the National Theater
& Concert Hall, Taiwan
Taiwan

POV
re:group performance collective
Australia

Senebesh & The Dolphins
Fuel
United Kingdom

Strangely Familiar《熟悉的陌生》
T.H.E Dance Company, commissioned by
Asia+ Festival (Hong Kong) & Singapore
International Festival of Arts (SIFA)
Singapore

The Bridge
Shenzhen Opera & Dance Theatre
and Feng Ling Productions
China, United Kingdom

PERFORMANCES

Chok Kerong
Artistic Director

Flame of the Forest ft. shazza
Flame of the Forest
shazza

19 May 2026
2.25PM – 2.40PM

Yan: *Original Composition by Flame of the Forest*
Known for its bold and festive character, the suona reveals a new voice here — one of delicacy and nuance alongside its power. Featuring Jacky Ng on suona, the piece is inspired by Chinese melodic phrasing and structure, woven with modern cinematic textures.

Wau Bulan: *Arranged by Flame of the Forest*
This piece is a reimagining of the beloved Malay folk song rooted in the dikir barat tradition. Led by vocalist Aliff Azman, the piece unfolds through call-and-response exchanges between soloist and ensemble, building from a meditative opening through shifting grooves of joget and inang into an exhilarating singalong finale.

Medieval: *Originally by shazza | Arranged by Flame of the Forest*
shazza's anthem of feminine defiance and reclamation, transformed by FOTF into an ethnic rock piece, fusing South Indian thennmangu folk drumming with rock. Featuring Niranjan Pandian on bansuri and Govin Tan on tabla.

Performance credits

Janji Kita: Echoes of our Land

Nadi Singapura

19 May 2026
5.45PM – 6.00PM

Janji Kita: Echoes of our Land by Nadi Singapura invites audiences to reflect on shared values, identity, and purpose. The works *Nazam Pribumi* and *The Migration* weave music and movement into a communal experience grounded in the wisdom of the Nusantara.

At its core lies the narrator's message—*Janji Kita* (Our Promise)—a call to discipline, humility, and responsibility, urging us to guard our actions and intentions while considering what it means to live meaningfully and honour the "*bumi bertuah*" (blessed land). *Nazam Pribumi* opens this reflection through layered rhythms of traditional Malay percussion—rebana, kompang, hadrah, and jidur—interlaced with the Minangkabau talempong.

In *The Migration*, this call is answered as performers move in unison, embodying journeys of people and culture across time, dissolving boundaries between performer and audience. Through this work, Nadi Singapura brings tradition into contemporary spaces, ensuring the promises of the Nusantara remain alive and resonant today for future generations.

Performance credits

Kriya: Artists in Action

Kriya

20 May 2026
12.15PM – 12.30PM

Kriya – Artists in Action is a vibrant confluence of rhythm, melody, and movement, uniting Singapore's national award-winning artists in a celebration of creative synergy. Featuring the lyrical beauty of the Chinese and Western flute, the emotive depth of Carnatic vocals, the dynamic pulse of the tabla, and the earthy vibrance of Malay percussion, the work presents a sonic tapestry interwoven with the expressive languages of Bharatanatyam and Kathak dance.

Rooted in the Sanskrit meaning of "action", Kriya stands as a bold showcase of tradition and innovation, where each artist brings their unique voice into dynamic interplay, embodying Singapore's rich, multicultural spirit through collaborative performance.

Performance credits

Convergence: Nanyin X Asli
Siong Leng

21 May 2026
2.15PM – 2.30PM

Convergence is a distilled reimagining of *Longing* by Siong Leng, bringing together the evocative vocal traditions of Nanyin and Asli in an intimate and rare collaboration.

Centered on the theme of longing, the performance explores yearning, devotion, and emotional distance through voice as its primary storytelling medium. Stripped to its essence, it foregrounds the distinctive vocal aesthetics, phrasing, and expressive nuances of each tradition.

Structured as a seamless journey through selected moments from the original six-scene work, this abridged version offers a renewed perspective on traditional repertoire. It invites audiences into a contemplative soundscape where memory, emotion, and cultural dialogue converge—revealing both contrast and harmony between Nanyin and Asli within a contemporary performance context.

Performance credits

Bridges in Motion
Bridges in Motion

22 May 2026
2.05PM – 2.30PM

Conceived as a cross-cultural collaboration, *Bridges in Motion* celebrates artistic diplomacy, shaped by the unique friendship and creative exchange between Singapore and Malaysia. It is an exploration of interconnectedness across people, places, and disciplines.

It features a 15-minute re-staging of selected excerpts from the original 70-minute cine-concert, centred on the theme "*Same Same, And Different*". It distills moments of convergence and contrast, where shared cultural vocabularies unfold into distinct contemporary expressions, reflecting on identity, exchange, and coexistence. Blending live orchestration, dance, experimental soundscapes, and costumes, the production brings together over 50 emerging collaborators from traditional and electric-fusion backgrounds.

Bridges in Motion was first presented at the Triennial Cultural Showcase 2025—a flagship bilateral initiative marking 60 years of cultural and diplomatic ties between Singapore and Malaysia, organised by Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth of Singapore (MCCY) in collaboration with Malaysia's Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC).

Performance credits

The Long Now
Litmus Jazz Ensemble
Gin Lam

22 May 2026
4.35PM – 4.50PM

"Now" is never just a moment. *The Long Now* is the recognition that the precise moment you're in grows out of the past and is a seed for the future. – Brian Eno

In this programme, Litmus Jazz Ensemble and Gin Lam explore the idea of *The Long Now* through original compositions and choreography shaped by the lineages of jazz and hip-hop. "The Long Now", a term coined by British musician Brian Eno in response to the age of acceleration, refers to an expanded view of the present that recognises it as part of a continuum, shaped by the past and extending into the future.

By bridging the past and present, the programme reflects on culture, continuity, transformation, and possibility – offering a window into the evolving future of the arts in Singapore and what it represents in an increasingly interconnected world.

Performance credits

Presented by Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

Agápe - The Human Connection

Apsaras Dance Company
Singapore Symphony Orchestra

20 May 2026
9.30AM – 10.00AM

In conjunction with its Golden Jubilee, Apsaras Dance Company is proud to collaborate with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra (SSO) and Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay to present an exclusive preview excerpt of *Agápe*, to be premiered in August 2026.

Inspired by the Greek word agápe that encapsulates the meaning of deep human connection, *Agápe* is a multidisciplinary work exploring the beauty of human relationships: with oneself, between others, with nature, and across cultures.

The performance brings together leading Indian classical and crossover musicians from both Singapore and India, musicians from the SSO, Singaporean dancers from Apsaras Dance Company and guest dancers from India. Led by Artistic Director Aravinth Kumarasamy in collaboration with SSO's Joshua Tan, the creative team also features choreographer and guest dancer Rama Vaidhyanathan (India), principal dancer Mohanapriyan Thavarajah (Sri Lanka), music composer Dr Rajkumar Bharathi (India), with music arranger and director Sai Shravanam (India).

This optional performance has limited capacity, and requires delegates to RSVP in advance.

Presented by Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre

Galloping Rhythms · Lion City in Motion 2026

Drum Feng
NADI Singapura
Singapore Dhol Squad

21 May 2026
12.10PM – 12.25PM

Galloping Rhythms · Lion City in Motion 2026 (鼓舞骏声 • 奔腾狮城 2026) is a multicultural percussive showcase presented by Drum Feng in collaboration with NADI Singapura and Singapore Dhol Squad. First presented at the Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre's Spring Reception 2026, the piece was created by Drum Feng's founder Glen Ng to capture the spirit of renewal and energy as Singapore charges into the new year.

Taking inspiration from the Year of the Horse, the performance symbolises vitality, speed, and forward momentum. The rhythmic dialogue between Chinese, Malay, and Indian percussion traditions mirrors the gallop of horses — strong, unrelenting, and full of life. The piece ends in a powerful flourish — an auspicious wish echoing the blessing of "马到成功" (success upon arrival).

SIFA

As Singapore's annual pinnacle performing arts festival, the Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA) presents captivating and diverse works across theatre, music, dance, film and visual arts. First launched as the Singapore Festival of Arts in 1977, the festival has gone through several evolutions and inspired generations of arts lovers and practitioners.

Today, the highly anticipated festival is a high point on Singapore's arts and cultural calendar. SIFA continues its festival mission to champion the creation and presentation of Singaporean and international works.

Enjoy 2 complimentary SIFA show tickets as an ISPA delegate, plus 10% off any additional bookings.

SIFA Booking Code: **SIFAISPA10**

Makan Culture

Jo Tan (Singapore)

Festival Market @ Empress Lawn

A community performance that ticks various nation-building boxes is disrupted by a critic, sparking off a lively debate about what elevates food and art. Through a communal sharing of local eats and spicy stories, the audience and performers come together to answer the question – What makes us worthy?

Be part of this riotous interactive experience featuring music, theatre and even puppetry, all which you can wash down with an actual Singapore dish as part of this food-inspired performance.

15 – 17 May
Fri – Sun
6PM, 8PM & 10PM

20 – 24 May
Wed – Sun
6PM, 8PM & 10PM

28 – 30 May
Thu – Sat
6PM, 8PM & 10PM

Tickets:
$20

Strangely Familiar《熟悉的陌生》

T.H.E Dance Company (Singapore)

Victoria Theatre

An evolving presence enters the space – neither fully human nor entirely machine. In *Strangely Familiar*, five dance artists encounter this shifting digital being, moving at the threshold between instinct and invention.

Rooted in T.H.E's HollowBody methodology, the work centres the body as a living site of listening, adaptation, and alertness to what it cannot fully grasp. As physical and virtual forces share the same terrain and an otherworldly ecosystem reveals itself, the encounter becomes a mirror – inviting reflection on coexistence, healing, and how the futures we imagine may depend on our capacity to live with what we create.

Directed and choreographed by T.H.E's Founding Artistic Director Kuik Swee Boon, *Strangely Familiar* brings together collaborators across Asia and beyond. The work is co-commissioned by Asia+ Festival (Hong Kong) and SIFA, with additional support from the William and Lena Lim Trust.

22 – 23 May
Fri – Sun
8PM

24 May
Sun
2PM

Tickets:
$38, $48

Last Rites

Liu Xiaoyi / Emergency Stairs (Singapore)

School of the Arts (SOTA) Studio Theatre

Last Rites brings together five veteran performance artists from across Asia in a new cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary theatrical work exploring endings, legacy and artistic immortality.

Built from intimate interviews with the artists — whose average age is 74 — the piece reflects on their original callings, personal struggles and philosophies on art and life, rather than depicting death directly. Their stories trace decades of perseverance, conviction and cultural exchange: from Yang Shi Bin's bond with mentor Kuo Pao Kun and Jung Dong-hwan's belief in treating every performance as his last, to Nam Geung-ho's radical street performances, Kanji Shimizu's reflections on life and death through Noh, and Didik Nini Thowok's advocacy for cross-cultural understanding despite discrimination.

Blurring the boundaries between the virtual and the real, memory and imagination, *Last Rites* asks a poignant question: after everything ends, can an artist's spirit live on through performance?

22 May, Fri
8PM

23 May, Sat
2PM & 8PM

Tickets:
$38

CONGRESS MAP

MAIN CONGRESS VENUES:

1. Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay
2. Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre

PLACES OF INTEREST:

3. Stamford Arts Centre
4. The Theatre Practice
5. 42 Waterloo Street
6. Aliwal Arts Centre
7. Asian Civilisations Museum
8. Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall
9. The Arts House
10. SIFA Festival Village @ Empress Lawn
11. Marina Bay Sands Singapore
12. Singapore Flyer
13. ArtScience Museum
14. Goodman Arts Centre
15. Lau Pa Sat

DISTRICTS:

16. Chinatown
17. Little India
18. Kampong Gelam

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2026 GLOBAL CHALLENGE CAMPAIGN

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Expand access. Amplify voices. Strengthen the global arts community. Your support powers ISPA's Global Fellowship, Regional Initiatives, Pitch New Works, and Digital Programs.

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CHINA SHANGHAI
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CHINASPAF 2026

China Shanghai
Performing Arts Fair

14 -17 OCT

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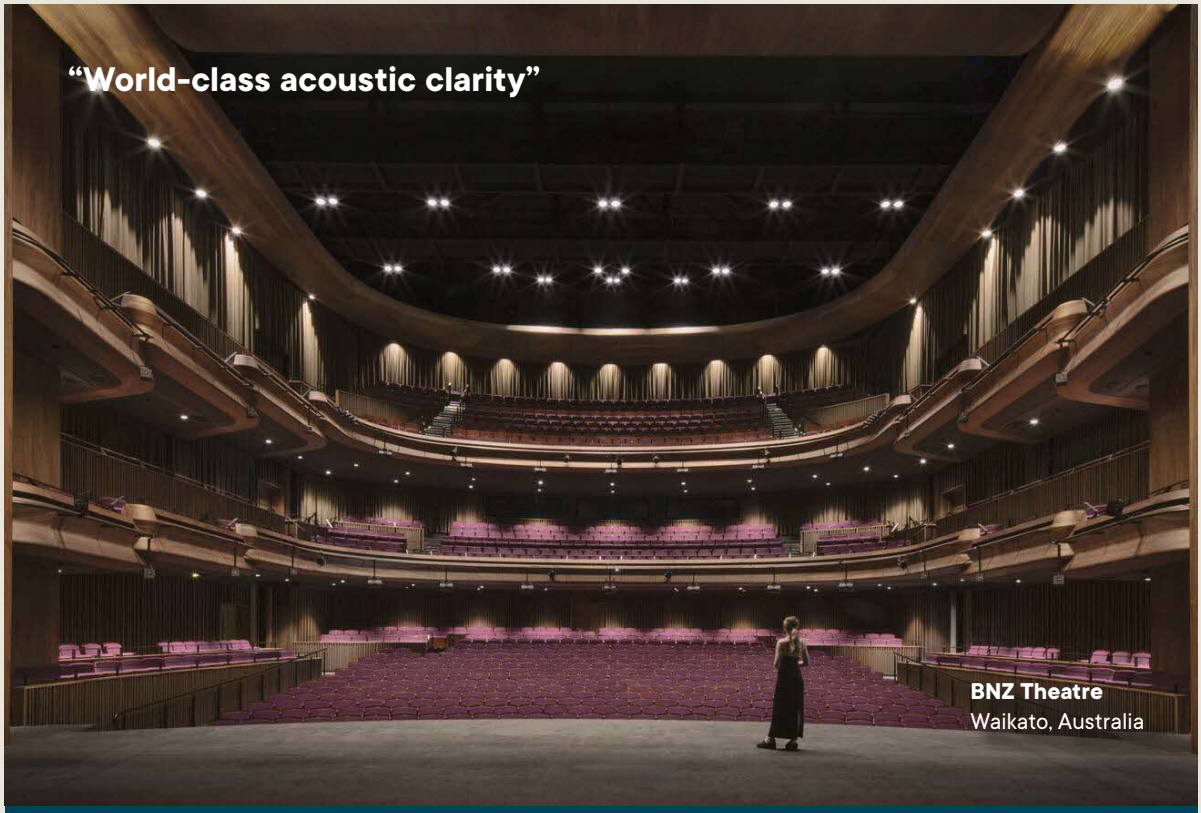

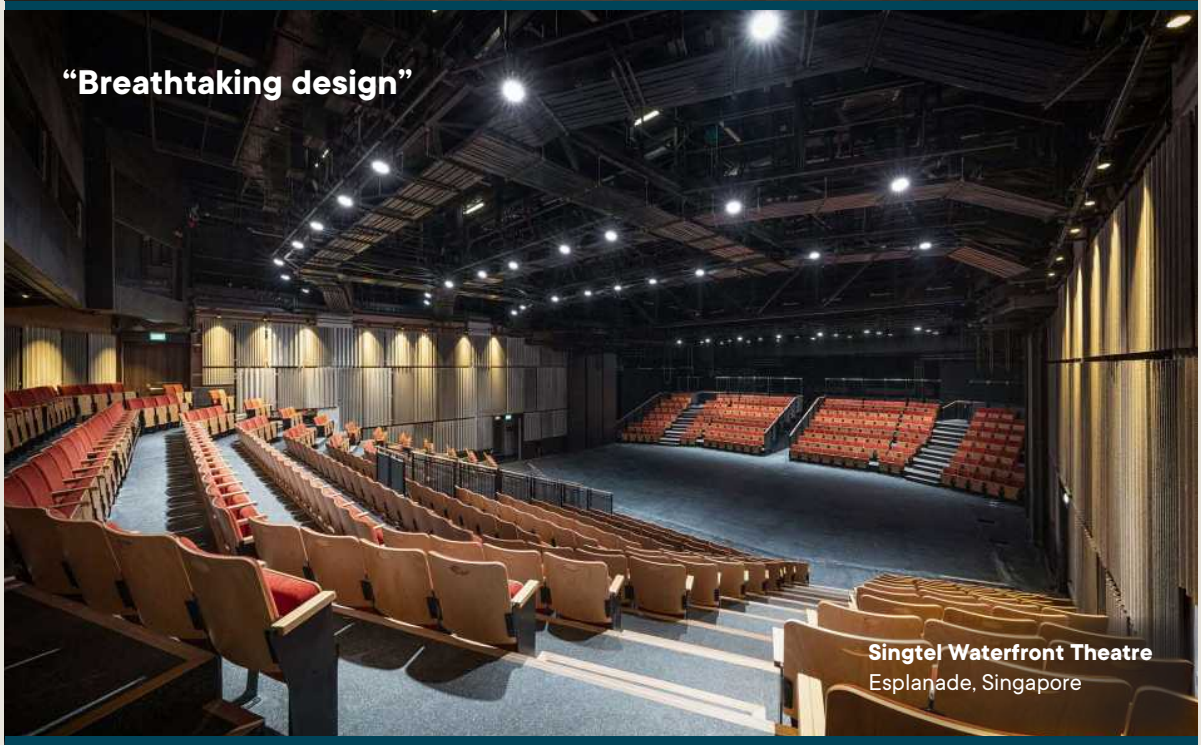

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