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Media Alert

Young artist leads the 24-Hour Playwriting Competition legacy

Singapore, 4 July 2022 – Now into its 25th year, the much-loved playwriting competition in Singapore, the **24-Hour Playwriting Competition** returns on 16-17 July. For the first time, T:>Works invites past participant and transdisciplinary poet and performance maker, Ang Kia Yee, to conceptualise this year’s competition. They responded to the call by proposing the first ever hybrid competition with a focus on eco-centric considerations, exploring liveability and sustainability.

The T:>Works *24-Hour Playwriting Competition* was first held in 1996 and developed as part of TheatreWorks *Writers’ Lab* conceptualised by Artistic Director Ong Keng Sen. It is designed to connect the arts with the community. Participants write a completely new play in 24 hours, with various stimuli given throughout the time period. It comprises two categories, Youth and Open, and aims to nurture and develop playwrights from the community.

Ang Kia Yee previously participated and won prizes in the *24-Hour Playwriting Competitions* of 2013, 2015, and 2018. Invited to conceptualise this year’s competition, Ang proposed a hybrid event which comprises both on-site and online gatherings, as well as an eco-centric theme.

“As with most of my work, the process was a matter of following my intuition. In this case, it asks ‘What shades of mourning/grief/fear need public airing and collective dreaming, in order to move from helplessness to empowered healing and change?’ This question led me to ideas that relate to land and our contested ties to it as well as the pressing questions of living sustainably with our environments. As the competition seeks to open up rather than prescribed perspectives, I thought of the two contrasting sites as stimuli that will inspire and set the writers thinking,” recounts Ang.

During research for the competition, Ang found multiple farms, including *Green Circle Eco-Farm*, whose leases are ending after more than two decades of nurturing the land. Showing signs of how contested resources are in Singapore, Green Circle’s

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predicament is a prime example of the need to find a balance between development and sustainability. Participants of the *24-Hour Playwriting Competition* may possibly be the last visitors to the farm before it is returned to the State at the end of July.

The second location is *Magorium*, an innovative start-up which offers an alternative view to sustainability with proprietary recycling technology as a solution to plastic waste, literally paving the way towards a more sustainable future. Participants in the playwriting competition may visit either of these two locations and are invited to incorporate elements from these sites into their final scripts.

Judges for this edition are established writers Jean Tay and Nabilah Said, as well as emerging theatre-maker Cherilyn Woo. Interestingly, the judges had also participated in past editions of the *24-Hour Playwriting Competition* and will be on hand during the competition to brainstorm ideas and share survival tips with participants.

The eco-centric sensibility is also extended to the writing workshop which accompanies the competition annually. This year the writing workshop is led by Esther Vincent, the author of *Red Earth* (Blue Cactus Press, 2021) and editor-in-chief and founder of *The Tiger Moth Review*. Looking at eco-writing and specifically working off literature, she invites participants to consider how approaches to writing from different genres such as creative non-fiction enable them to see scripting differently.

Details:

24-Hour Playwriting Competition

16-17 July, Saturday-Sunday, 11am-11am

Includes tours to [Green Circle Eco-Farm](#) or [Magorium](#)

With online gathering on Telegram and Zoom

Youth Category: 15-18 years old

Open Category: 19 years and above

Registration fee: S\$55

Registration link: <http://www.tinyurl.com/24hpwc2022>

Writing Workshop: Shifting Perspective with Esther Vincent

9 July, Saturday, 2-4.30pm

Online via Zoom

Open to the public

Workshop fee: S\$25

Discounted price to participants of the playwriting competition: S\$12

Registration link: bit.ly/register-writingworkshop2022

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Annex 1

The *24-Hour Playwriting Competition* is conceptualised by Ang Kia Yee.

Ang Kia Yee is a Singapore-based transdisciplinary poet and performance-maker. They work primarily with text and movement, though they sometimes tend to their affinity with inanimate objects. They often speak and move within the spaces of desire, speculation, futurity and ecology, with undercurrents of love and deep time. They previously participated and won prizes in the *24-Hour Playwriting Competition* in 2013, 2015, and 2018. Most recently, they were a New Scripts resident playwright at Centre 42 for their script titled "Lovers Text Lovers".

Bio of judges for *24-Hour Playwriting Competition 2022*

Jean Tay

Jean Tay graduated with a double degree in creative writing and economics from Brown University, USA. She has written over 20 plays and musicals, including "Chinatown Crossings", "The Shape of a Bird", "Senang", "Sisters", "Everything but the Brain", "Boom" and "Plunge". Jean also wrote the books for the musicals "Great Wall: One Woman's Journey", "The Admiral's Odyssey", and "Man of Letters". Her plays have been performed in Singapore, US, UK, and Italy. She has been nominated four times for Best Original Script for the Life! Theatre Awards, and won for "Everything But the Brain" in 2006. Her plays "Everything but the Brain" and "Boom" have been used as 'O' and 'N' Level literature texts for secondary schools. Jean is the founding Artistic Director of Saga Seed Theatre, which aims to provide a platform for new writing in Singapore.

Nabilah Said

[Nabilah](#) is a playwright, editor and poet. Recent work includes "Angkat" (2019), which won Best Original Script at the 2020 Life Theatre Awards, and "Inside Voices", which won the Outstanding New Work award at London's VAULT Festival 2019. She was a dramaturg for "Where Are You?", directed by Sim Yan Ying, which was presented under WILD Rice's Directors' Residency Programme in 2021. She has also presented work with companies such as Teater Ekamatra, The Necessary Stage and Bhumi Collective. She is the founder of collectives Main Tulis Group and Rupa co.lab.

Nabilah is the former editor of a regional arts website ArtsEquator. She has an MA in Writing for Performance from Goldsmiths, University of London.

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Cherilyn Woo

[Cherilyn](#) is a Freelance Theatre Director and Writer based in Singapore who has worked with various professional companies like Nine Years Theatre (NYT), Singapore Repertory Theatre, Singapore Symphony Orchestra and The Arts House. Her most recent directing credits are “Order on the Go” (The Entity), “The Sound Inside” (SRT), and “Oedipus” (NYT).

Aside from adapting classics for her works with NYT, she also writes rap for performances with Patch and Punnet. Under the collective Issy x Cher, she has written two versions of A Collection of Things, one for live performance and another for an interactive experience in Serangoon Gardens using Telegram.

The Writing Workshop: Shifting Perspectives is led by Esther Vincent.

Esther Vincent is the author of Red Earth (Blue Cactus Press, 2021) and editor-in-chief and founder of The Tiger Moth Review, an independent eco journal of art + literature. She is co-editor of “Making Kin: Ecofeminist Essays from Singapore” (Ethos Books, 2021) and two poetry anthologies, “Poetry Moves” (Ethos Books, 2020) and “Little Things” (Ethos Books, 2013). Her essays are forthcoming or have been published in The Trumpeter, EcoTheo Collective, Sinking City Review and Quarterly Literary Review Singapore. A literature educator by profession, she is passionate about the entanglements in art, science, literature, spirituality and ecology.

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Annex 2

About T:>Works

Established in 1985, T:>Works is an independent and international arts company based in Singapore at its space, 72-13. It is currently led by Artistic Director, Dr. Ong Keng Sen.

T:>Works' mission and vision are the pioneering of thought leadership in the arts focused on transdisciplinary, transcultural, and inclusive processes.

To this end, there is a strong educational perspective with research and discourse contextualising histories, contemporary experiences, and situated art practices of the global south.

T:>Works also serves to investigate the current urgencies of being located in Singapore through different creative expressions in the public sphere. It is a recipient of the National Arts Council Major Company Grant from 1 April 2022 until 31 March 2025. T:>Works is an Institute of Public Character with charity status.

About 24-Hour Playwriting Competition

The T:>Works *24-Hour Playwriting Competition* was first held in 1996, this competition is one of the longest-running creative platforms in Singapore. Developed as part of TheatreWorks *Writers' Lab* conceptualised by Artistic Director Ong Keng Sen, it is designed to connect the arts with the community. Participants write a completely new play in 24 hours, with various stimuli given throughout the time period. It comprises two categories, Youth and Open, and aims to nurture and develop playwrights from the community.