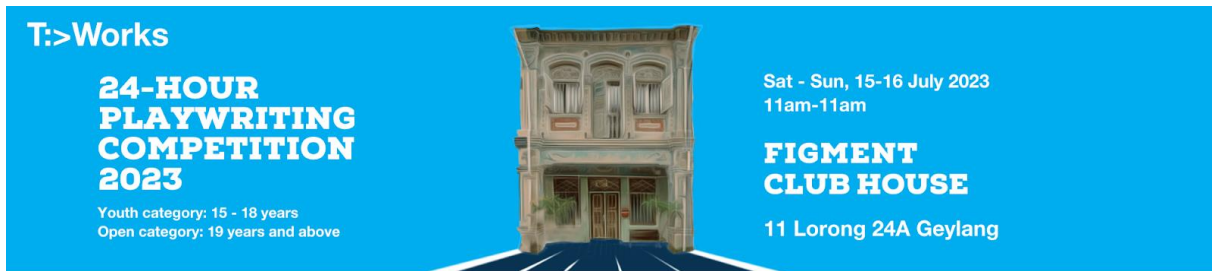


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A Theatrical Harvest: T:>Works Unveils Winning Scripts of the 24-Hour Playwriting Competition 2023

Singapore, 14 November 2023 - Following the inspiring and fiercely creative edition of the 24-Hour Playwriting Competition held at Figment Club House from 15–16 July 2023, T:>Works is delighted to announce the winners from the Open and Youth categories. In celebration of these playwrights’ accomplishments, T:>Works will also present an afternoon of dramatised readings of select winning scripts on 3 February 2024 at 72-13.

This year’s adjudicators – Aidli Mosbit, Chong Tze Chien and Joel Tan – awarded the following writers the top three places and a special mention in their respective categories:

OPEN CATEGORY:

- First Prize: *Threnody* by Wong Chen Seong
- Second Prize: *In The Limbo* by Choy Chiaw Yee
- Third Prize: *A Static Life* by Choy Chee Yew
- Special Mention: *Motion Sickness* by Yam Rong Yao, Timothy

YOUTH CATEGORY:

- First Prize: *Khichuri* by Triparna Poddar
- Second Prize: *Buy My House* by Er Kay Lynn
- Third Prize: *A Voracious Shark, Gorge, and Corner* by Eng Wan-Yu Owena
- Special Mention: *Back Again* by Ariel Mary Puhaindran

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The winners of both categories will receive cash prizes of \$350 for the first prize, \$250 for the second prize, and \$150 for the third prize. In addition, all winners will also receive a one-year membership to Figment Arts Club, which provides access to a network of global citizens through creative events and activations.

24-Hour Playwriting Competition 2023 set in the heart of Geylang

After three successful years of navigating digital and hybrid formats, T:>Works celebrated the competition's return as a fully on-site experience at Figment Club House, with support from the South East Community Development Council. One of the key themes T:>Works has been exploring in the last few iterations of the competition is sustainability and ecology. Beyond the realm of green and climate change concerns, the theme encompasses the holistic sustainability of our surroundings, from urban planning, architectural renewal, and sustainable cityscapes to resource conservation, and the creation of eco-friendly spaces.

To encourage rumination on this year's competition themes of urban renewal and sustainable living, participants were required to integrate various stimuli into their plays, from specific spoken lines, and a plot point, to keywords like "sustain", "reduce" and "conserve". A guided evening walk around the eclectic Geylang neighbourhood filled with historical richness, including a pit stop at Eng Tiang Huat, a Chinese cultural store, served as a catalyst for further inspiration.

Adjudicators' Analysis of Winning Scripts

This year's winning entries meditate on familiar preoccupations of family, dislocation, and home through inventive, irreverent, and theatrical lenses. The scripts showcased exceptional originality, craftsmanship, and vision as the prompts were weaved into engaging narratives and well-developed characters all within the flurry of 24 hours.

Chong Tze Chien, an award-winning playwright/director said, "The top winners had their unique visions matched by their ability to paint characters vividly, anchoring them in emotional wants and backstories, rendering their narrative trajectories clear and effective."

Joel Tan, a prolific playwright commented, "The winners in the Youth category showed remarkable confidence and ambition, addressing mature themes in complex and original ways. While the open category winners showcased rich narratives with many confessions of long-held hauntings."

"Figment Club House embodied the spirit of heritage, restoration, and sustainability, fuelling an inspiring celebration of creative expression. This fusion of ideas and history ignited a collective passion for storytelling, bridging our past with a sustainable future," said Aidli Mosbit, a seasoned theatre practitioner in the Singapore theatre scene.

What's Next

Select scripts will go through development by T:>Works alongside established directors, writers, and performers. To round off this year's 24-Hour Playwriting Competition and to celebrate the playwrights' achievements, T:>Works will be hosting dramatised readings of these scripts on **3rd February 2024** at 72-13. More information on the event will be provided in the new year.

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The 24-Hour Playwriting Competition is poised to make a dynamic return in **July 2024**, brimming with fresh energy and innovative concepts. T:>Works remains steadfast in its mission to encourage and challenge participants to thoughtfully engage with the contemporary world through their writing.

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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. For more information, visit tworworksasia.org.

About 24-Hour Playwriting Competition

The 24-Hour Playwriting Competition is a legacy programme that T:>Works has been hosting for the past 25 years since 1996, and has served as one of the longest-running creative platforms to nurture budding playwrights of all ages and backgrounds from the community. Developed as part of TheatreWorks Writers' Lab conceptualised by Artistic Director Ong Keng Sen, the competition is designed to connect the arts with the community. Participants write a completely new play in 24 hours, incorporating various stimuli given throughout the time period.

Annex A: Synopsis of Winning Scripts

Annex B: Photos from the 24-Hour Playwriting Competition 2023

For more information and interviews, please contact:

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Annex A - Synopsis of Winning Scripts

OPEN CATEGORY

***Threnody* by Wong Chen Seong**

Threnody revolves around the relationship between two brothers, XJ and Dan, as they navigate the complexities of their family history and personal struggles with health issues. The play explores themes of memory, identity, and how haunting lives in the mind, as the brothers reflect on their lives, past and future.

***In The Limbo* by Choy Chiaw Yee**

In The Limbo explores themes of heritage, change, and the tension between the past and the future when a package offering a new opportunity suddenly turns up in front of Mei and Ma. While Mei sees this as a chance for a new life, Ma is determined to hold onto the last remnant of their family history. How will they negotiate this tension and what will they eventually embrace?

***A Static Life* by Choy Chee Yew**

A Static Life is a surrealist play that touches on how dementia deteriorates not just a person's mind, but their relationships with loved ones. A dilapidated house and a broken analog television that only shows static are all that remind Madam Lee of her deceased husband. As outside forces, including her son Derrick close in, pushing her to move on, Madam Lee retreats further into what she's most familiar with, finding solace only in the haunted memories of her long-gone husband.

***Motion Sickness* by Yam Rong Yao, Timothy**

Brimming with witty dialogue, *Motion Sickness* is an ensemble piece about a group of junior college friends across two separate time periods. Six friends gather for an evening of drinks, but what was intended to be a celebration of their last day as JC students quickly spirals into juvenile bickering over perceived slights. Flash forward 18 years later when they reunite – old wounds threaten to overwhelm another planned night of commemoration. Dealing with the passage of time and the process of growing up, the play explores the question of whether the more things change, the more they ultimately stay the same.

YOUTH CATEGORY

***Khichuri* by Triparna Poddar**

Khichuri is a touching exploration of family ties, generational gaps, and evolving traditions in the heart of Little India. It follows the deep connection between Durga and her daughter, Aparajita, as they prepare the traditional dish, "khichuri," and unveils the challenges they face in reconciling change with tradition. The play highlights the struggle of maintaining family bonds across distance and shifting values, culminating in a poignant reunion that underscores the enduring significance of home and family.

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Buy My House by Er Kay Lynn

Buy My House unfolds many stories within a 1920s heritage shophouse situated in Geylang. Adrian Boon, a property agent, guides the audience through a captivating exploration of distinct eras. This immersive play skilfully weaves together humour, history, and local culture to underscore the vital importance of preserving the rich histories of old buildings.

A Voracious Shark, Gorge, and Corner by Eng Wan-Yu Owena

A Voracious Shark, Gorge, and Corner explores themes of belonging, nostalgia, and the complexities of personal and national identity. Set in Greenwich, London and Jurong, Singapore. It follows the interactions between characters Sha, Mariah, and Zachary as they discuss their experiences and feelings about home, identity, and change.

Back Again by Ariel Mary Puhaindran

Back Again is a poignant play that explores themes of family, loss, and the importance of connection. The story revolves around Laika, a young girl who reflects on her relationship with her late mother and the impact her absence has had on her life. The play delves into the complexities of familial relationships and the need for support and understanding during difficult times.

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Annex B – Photos from the 24-Hour Playwriting Competition 2023



1. Wong Chen Seong, Winner of the Open category, writing with his headphones on



2. Triparna Poddar, Winner of the Youth category, brainstorming for her script



3. Participants working hard on their script #1



4. Participants working hard on their script #2



5. Participants on a walking tour around Geylang



6. Participants gathering around third-generation owner Jeffrey Eng during a visit to Eng Tiang Huat Chinese Cultural Shop as he announces the next stimulus

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7. Teacher-participant encouraging a group of student-participants, from CHIJ Katong Convent.



8. A participant sharing a laugh with Judge Aidli Mosbit during a mid-day consultation session



9. Late-night consultation with mentor and Judge Aidli Mosbit



10. Banner of the 24-Hour Playwriting Competition outside Figment Club House

Photo credits: Penoramic Publishing
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For high-resolution pictures, please contact:
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