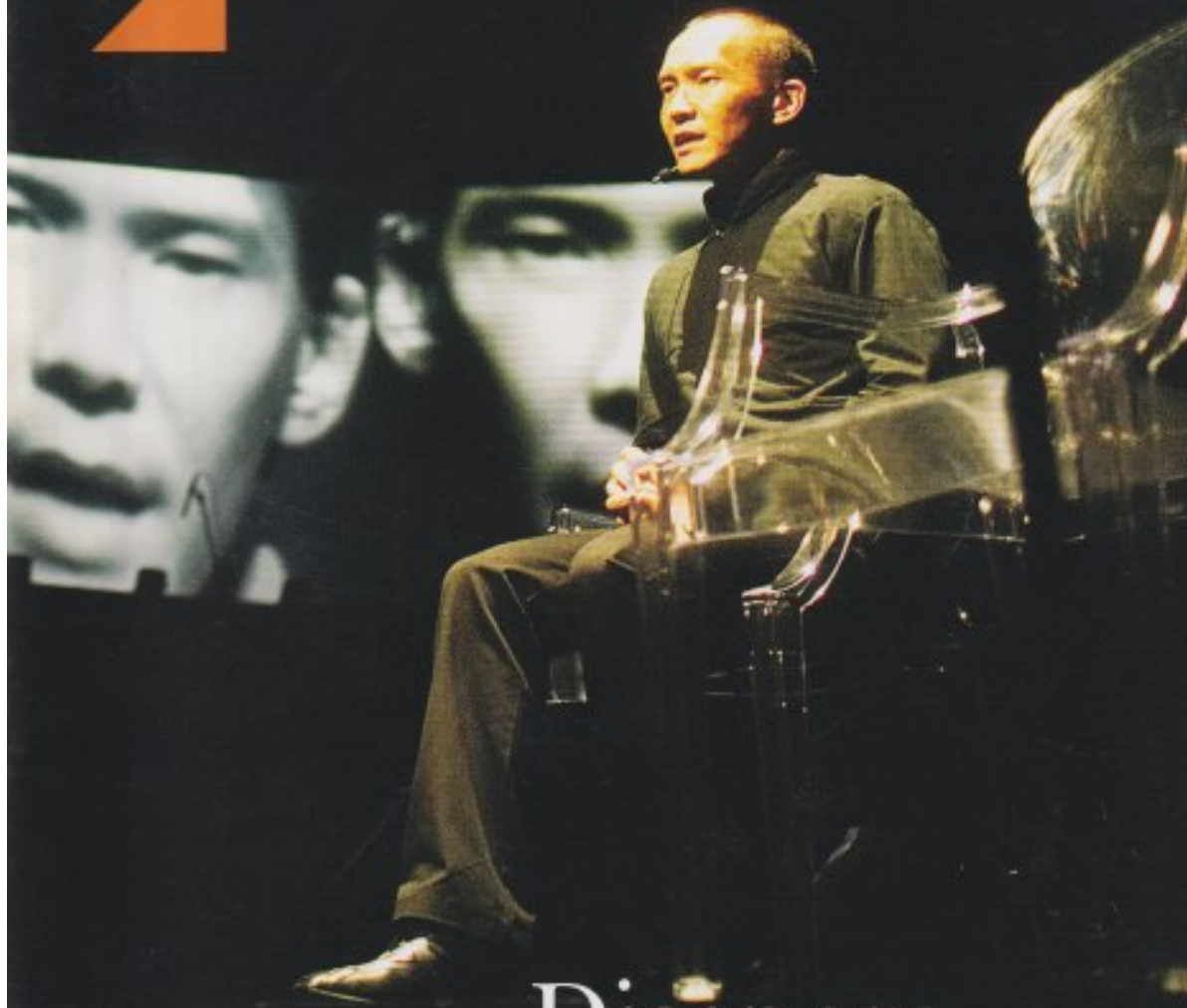




EDINBURGH
INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL

2009



Diaspora

TheatreWorks (Singapore)
Singapore Chinese Orchestra

Supported by





EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

A warm welcome to Festival 09.

The founders of the Edinburgh International Festival sought to create a celebration of the arts that would provide 'a platform for the flowering of the human spirit'. Over sixty years later that ideal still has extraordinary resonance.

The Festival has always been a source of inspiration for many. By bringing together audiences and artists from across the globe, the Festival provides a unique context in which ideas can be shared, shaped and challenged, by the arts.

It is no accident that our founders' ambition was realised in Edinburgh, home of the Enlightenment. Edinburgh was, and is, a birthplace of ideas. In the 18th century it was the source of innovations in philosophy, science and technology that continue to underpin our contemporary age. Then and throughout history, Scottish thinkers have been shaping our understanding of the world.

Festival 09 celebrates that creativity and daring, exploring its impact at home and beyond our shores, in the period of Enlightenment itself and through to the 21st century. We acknowledge its darker aspects too, recognising that radical ideas rarely go unchallenged.

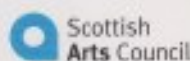
I hope you will join me in celebrating Scotland's many and varied contributions to the world. I look forward to exploring those achievements with you and hope you are similarly inspired.

Jonathan Mills

Director, Edinburgh International Festival

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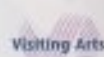
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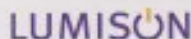
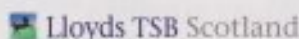
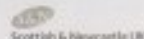
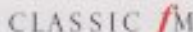
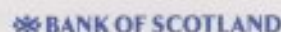


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Spanish choreographer Cesc Gelabert and his talented young company perform two brand new works. *Sense Fi* is a beautiful exploration of an inner journey. *Conquassabit*, set to music by Handel, goes through a hurricane from its destructive leading edge, the still centre in the eye of the storm to its tail spitting out debris.

'poetic, mystical... danced with such stunning élan' THE HERALD

'an exhilarating, tautly tuned troupe' THE SUNDAY TIMES

Friday 21, Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 August 8.00pm
Edinburgh Festival Theatre



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homecomingscotland2009.com

A very warm welcome on behalf of Homecoming Scotland to the Edinburgh International Festival and *Diaspora*, a spectacular production that explores themes central to Scotland's first ever Homecoming year.

Created and timed to mark the 250th anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, Homecoming Scotland 2009 is a celebration of some of Scotland's great contributions to the world including Burns, great minds and innovations, whisky, golf, and our rich ancestry, culture and heritage.

The Homecoming invitation calls on Scotland's friends and family around the world to join the celebrations. With more than 300 Homecoming events and festivals taking place all over the country throughout the year, we hope that you are inspired by this Homecoming event and take the opportunity to further explore the exciting and diverse programme.

As one of Scotland's iconic events, the Edinburgh International Festival always engages and inspires. This year is no exception. Reflecting Homecoming's 'Great Minds and Innovations' theme, the wider Festival programme has been inspired by the Enlightenment, an extraordinary period of creativity when Edinburgh was central to the ideas and inventions that laid the foundations for so much of the modern world. The result is quite outstanding.

So, whether you've 'come home' to the Festival or to Scotland this year, we wish you a superb evening and a wonderful Homecoming year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marie Christie".

Marie Christie

Project Director, Homecoming Scotland 2009



NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL
SINGAPORE

The invitation of *Diaspora* to the 2009 Edinburgh International Festival marks several key milestones for Singapore arts. It is a privilege to be presented by the Edinburgh International Festival, alongside some of the world's finest artists and arts companies.

I am heartened to see this project come to fruition. *Diaspora* was first commissioned for the 2006 World Bank / International Monetary Fund Meetings in Singapore. This tour to Scotland has been made possible in part through the support of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Scottish Arts Council and the National Arts Council of Singapore, as well as a Strategic Alliance formed between Edinburgh International Festival and the Singapore Arts Festival. This tour underscores our common interest in furthering inter-cultural dialogue and wider artistic exchange.

Diaspora also headlines the Singapore Showcase in Edinburgh 2009. We are presenting a collection of Singapore writers, musicians, dance and theatre practitioners throughout the various festivals this August. We are encouraged by the endorsement of partners such as Edinburgh International Festival, the Edinburgh International Book Festival, the Edinburgh Jazz & Blues Festival and the Edinburgh Mela. It is reassuring to know that in spite of the economic challenges, many of our counterparts remain committed to celebrating new voices and expressions, and we look forward to more conversations and creative collaborations in the near future.

I wish you inspired encounters this evening, at the Singapore Showcase and throughout the Edinburgh Festivals.

Edmund Cheng
Chairman
National Arts Council, Singapore



EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

Homecoming Scotland 2009 National Arts Council (Singapore) Singapore Arts Festival Visiting Arts

Scotland's Year of Homecoming has excited much debate about how Scotland should seek to celebrate and attract the Scottish diaspora whose influence on the world has been so profound.

At the Edinburgh International Festival, we have chosen the Scottish Enlightenment as the historical and philosophical springboard for an exploration of what it means to be Scottish and of how the Scottish diaspora is a reflection of both Scotland's history and renown.

Ong Keng Sen's *Diaspora* is a sweeping, panoramic performance exploring memory, migration, assimilation and the triumph of the human spirit. This visionary production would not have been possible without the considerable support received from Homecoming Scotland, National Arts Council (Singapore), Singapore Arts Festival and Visiting Arts.

Please join me in thanking each of these organisations for their valuable collaboration and contribution.

Jonathan Mills
Director, Edinburgh International Festival



**EDINBURGH
INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL**

presents

Diaspora

Ong Keng Sen

TheatreWorks (Singapore)

Singapore Chinese Orchestra

European premiere

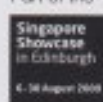
Saturday 15, Sunday 16 August 8.00pm
The Edinburgh Playhouse

The performance lasts approximately 1 hour 45 minutes with one interval

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The use of cameras, video and tape recorders is forbidden

Please ensure that all mobile phones and electronic devices are switched off



Diaspora

by Ong Keng Sen

Director and writer

Ong Keng Sen

Conductor

Tsung Yeh

Video installation

Choy Ka Fai

Electronic composer

Toru Yamanaka

Lighting designer

Scott Zielinski

Visual artists

**Rabiya Choudhry, Ariani Darmawan,
Zai Kuning, Dinh Q. Lê,
Navin Rawanchaikul and Tintin Wulia**

Actors

**Koh Boon Pin, Janice Koh,
Lim Kay Tong and Nora Samosir**

Singapore Chinese

Jia Yu, Lin Zhu, Xu Hui,

Orchestra soloists

Yue Quan Chan, Yin Zhi Yang

Producer

Tay Tong

Stage manager

Valerie Oliveiro

Technical manager

Andy Lim

Assistant set designer

James Page

Assistant stage manager

Terry Anne Ciofalo

Assistant to electronic composer

Shinya Watanabe

Sound engineer

Jeffrey Yue

Video assistant

Kailash, Josh Chai

Staging

Jed Lim, Cody Chen

Production

Valerie Sim, Helen Tay

Publicity

Malvina Tan

TheatreWorks (Singapore)

Singapore Chinese Orchestra



Prologue

The Hybrid

Video: Ariani Darmawan

Music: Singapore Chinese Orchestra
soloists Yin Zhi Yang (Xiao) and
Xu Hui (Guzheng) with
*Three Variants of the Plum
Blossom*

Scene 1

Fly 1

Music: Toru Yamanaka

Scene 2

My Father

a collaboration with Tintin Wulia

Scene 3

I Just Wanted To Be

Music: Toru Yamanaka

Scene 4

The Imaginary Country: Departure

Video: Dinh Q. Le

Music: Singapore Chinese Orchestra
with A Leo's Discourse by Chan
Hing-yan, Toru Yamanaka

Scene 5

The Movie in my Head

Music: Toru Yamanaka

Scene 6

New Lives

Music: Singapore Chinese Orchestra with
Suite for Chinese Instruments
by Tan Dun

Scene 7

Phantoms

Music: Toru Yamanaka

Scene 8

Finding One's Way Home

Music: Singapore Chinese Orchestra
soloist Yin Zhi Yang (Xun) with
The Song of Chu
by Zhang Wei Liang

Scene 9

My Mother

Music: Toru Yamanaka

Scene 10

The Vietnamese American

Music: Toru Yamanaka



Scene 11

Sea Nomads

Video: Zai Kuning

Music: Singapore Chinese Orchestra with
Empress Earth by Tang Jian Ping

Scene 16

Fly 2

Music: Singapore Chinese Orchestra with
Suite For Chinese Instruments
by Tan Dun

Scene 12

Distance

Scene 17

New Traditions

Scene 13

Searching for Navin

Video: Navin Rawanchaikul

Scene 18

The Texture of Memory

Music: Toru Yamanaka

Interval

Scene 19

My Personal Diaspora

Scene 14

Homecoming

with Rabiya Choudhry

Music: Toru Yamanaka

Scene 20

The Choice

Music: Toru Yamanaka

Music: Singapore Chinese Orchestra
soloists Lin Zhu (Hu Qin), Jia Yu
(Pi Pa) and Yue Quan Chan (Da Ji)
with *Seven Images of the Moon*

Scene 21

Calton Hill

Scene 15

History Repeats

Music: Singapore Chinese Orchestra with
A Leo's Discourse by
Chan Hing-yan

Epilogue

Soundbytes

Music: Singapore Chinese Orchestra with
Melody Waves by Michael Nyman



Resilience and Hybridity

The idea of making a work about the diasporas has been in my mind for a long time, since I myself am a child of the diaspora. Singapore is a diaspora country in that most of us are born there as a result of migrations by earlier generations. Singapore was said to be a fishing village with a very small transient population of fishermen. Some even say that the Orang Laut (sea nomads) were the first people there.

Interestingly, it was to these islands of what is today Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia that part of the Scottish Enlightenment went. Such botanists as William Jack (1795–1822) and Joseph Arnold (1782–1818) collected specimens of plants there to take back to Edinburgh. Today, some of those plants are in the Royal Botanical Gardens. The largest flowering plant, *Rafflesia arnoldii*, was discovered by Arnold in Sumatra. The Earl Minto of Roxburgh, then Viceroy of India, funded the British explorer Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles (1781–1826) on his expeditions to Indonesia. In 2008 there was controversy when Indonesia requested the return of the Minto Stone, a 1000-year-old relic, which had stood in the Minto estate in Hawick since the early 19th century.

It was the Scottish anatomist and physician William Hunter (1718–83), whose work led to the establishment of the Hunterian Museum in Glasgow, who first requested Chinese artists to paint flora and fauna. These paintings later came into the possession of Raffles. Raffles and William Farquhar (1774–1839), another enlightened Scotsman, continued this tradition of documentation to bring knowledge back to Scotland and to the Empire. Hunter and John Leyden (1775–1811), a Scottish orientalist and master of languages, perished on Raffles' expedition to Java. But the connections of the regions through travel, from the migration of ideas, of passion, of spirit, persist long after individuals have died.

Human cultures were porous long before the globalization we experience today: barter trade, collaboration and colonization have existed for hundreds — if not thousands — of years. As the topics of globalization and migration are so huge, I narrowed my focus to a few visual artists from diasporic Asian backgrounds. Beginning with the individual and the specific, I approached six artists, including Rabiya Choudhry from Edinburgh, and invited them to consider their personal mythologies, to ponder their journeys, to respond to the word 'diaspora'. As a starting-point, they led me to their families and their backgrounds. Thus began three years of research, filming, visiting ten countries and interviewing countless individuals of the diaspora. Accompanied by the video artist Choy Ka Fai, who became my camera eye and who subsequently produced the video installation that you experience tonight, I had a rollercoaster ride. Inevitably I was moved by one question: 'What would you like to be done with your remains at the end of life?' Both the young and the elderly gave surprising and committed answers, which convinced me that we were on the right road.



A central inspiration for *Diaspora* was Dinh Q. Lê. He was the only visual artist of the six who was already making work about his diaspora, his displacement from wars, his search for home and for belonging. He told me that once, on a beach at sunset, he had met a community of people who walked out into the sea. A boat picked them up several hundred metres from shore. They turned out to be clam farmers. This reminded him of his experience of evacuation when he became a boat person, and he made a video of them.

Navin Rawanchaikul responded with a humorous music video about searching for people in Mumbai with the same name as his. From suburban musicians to personal stories of trauma, Arani Darmawan and Tintin Wulia shared fragments of their lives from the archipelago. Zai Kuning created video images of the Orang Laut nomads; they have no dwellings but are at home on the sea. What is home after all? Is it a destination that we ever reach? Is it only the process — the existence — that can still our wounded hearts?

I had asked Rabiya Choudhry to join us onstage for *Diaspora*. I am particularly interested in her work as an expression of a new generation of Scots. When you meet her you realize that she is balanced, and well adjusted to her mixed or double heritage. Of course she has anxieties, but it is clear that those anxieties are channelled into art. The present generation of Scots embrace the anxieties in Rabiya's work as a reflection of their own. This is a reflection of the times: everyone has begun to feel the alienation of being an outsider, and that alienation is alive and well as 'otherness' is negotiated through art.

From all the interviews I made with the artists and their families, I wrote the script of *Diaspora*, drawing on the artists' personal stories as well as other research interviews. These small, local stories are the building-blocks of the epic and the dramatic, not the impressive monuments that societies have constructed. My encounters led me to reflect



on my own diaspora. The narrator of the piece, played by Koh Boon Pin, ultimately reflects on the creation of traditions within his family, the break from history and the growth of new myths. These are constant processes in diaspora families as we exist in a contemporary urban environment with an ancient heritage. As children of the diaspora, we are left to invent our beginnings, our origins, from the fragments randomly passed to us.

Diaspora is an intricate layering of three elements: music, video and human stories. It is a landscape of sound bytes, image and audio stimulation. Its basis is contemporary communication mediated by the media. How else do we hear stories of other people's migration except through the BBC and CNN? That has become our way of life.

The music is from two main sources: the global club music which we hear in cities throughout the world (electronica composed by Toru Yamanaka) and the classical music of a mother culture from Asia (played by the Singapore Chinese Orchestra). The orchestra, conducted by Tsung Yeh, provides a time-line of the last 2000 years from fragments of the song of Chu to new Chinese music by Tan Dun and music by Michael Nyman (commissioned by the Singapore Chinese Orchestra). We begin our story with a *gambang kromong* chamber orchestra, revealing the syncretization that has occurred in music in South East Asia. Early arrivals from China in the 17th century adapted local instruments to play music in Indonesia, to remind themselves of a past home. The authentic disappears naturally as communities evolve organically on the local soil.

© Ong Keng Sen



Dreams and Displacement

'Patriotism is your conviction that this country is superior to all other countries because you were born in it.' George Bernard Shaw's famous quotation about the more jingoistic aspect of the idea of national identity is one with which many would surely agree. Yet the issue of identity — of a place to which you belong beyond the caprice of simple physical location — is something that runs deeper in most people than the stereotypes we equate with both our own and other's national and cultural identity.

Last night I dreamt I went to the Wyong River Bridge again. That might seem somewhat feeble to Daphne Du Maurier's *Manderley*; yet it tells one something about origins and destinations. Physical locations can sometimes represent psychological dislocations. I came to the UK from Australia at the age of 22, almost exactly half my life ago; yet whenever a state of anxiety besets me, this bridge near a small town off the old Pacific Highway, with an adjacent barbecue ground on the banks of the river, returns. It was a minor landmark in many childhood journeys from Sydney to Toukley on the NSW Central Coast, which seemed insignificant at the time, yet it contrives to burst into my unconscious now and then. Its particular symbolism about transition is obvious, yet the reason for its specific location is more enigmatic. What it clearly tells me, though, is that home is a place of the mind. After many happy years in Britain, I dream in Australian.

Expatriates of other nations have recounted similar dreams of distant childhood places, yet all these people are first-generation settlers in the UK. What of subsequent generations? If they do not dream of Australia, they will be aware of vague nuances of cultural difference. Yet an Australian diaspora need not be a strong and centralized cultural discourse. For many people in the UK, and in other countries, the diaspora is a lifeline to a home that needs to be more solid, tangible and protective than a dream.

The concept of diaspora was born with the eviction of the Jews from Israel, first by the Babylonians in 607 BC, then by the Romans in 70 AD. Translated from a Greek term referring to the dispersal of seeds, the word is still customarily only capitalized or lent the definite article when referring to those original victims of expulsion from their own country.

For all its ancient origins, diaspora is very much a modern concept. Only with the capacity for relatively rapid transportation of people in large numbers from one country to another has the idea become commonplace, with most countries playing host to cultural groupings from outside their national boundaries. It was often said that the city with the second-largest population of Greeks in the world, after Athens, was Melbourne. Though certain more reactionary elements regarded this statistic with bemusement, the greater number of the Australian population looked on it with a certain pride. Thus a distinctive Greek-Australian identity was born, and continues to flourish.



Singapore, a state founded almost exclusively on the concept of diaspora, and the home base of TheatreWorks, seems uniquely placed to comment on notions of selfhood in a foreign land. The performance we experience tonight was drawn together from many lands in a country where a multitude of languages is spoken and where nearly the entire population can claim origins in other countries. Singapore is a place of destination, not origin. In such a place, one might therefore expect immense racial tensions; but, strangely, the greatest acts of xenophobia perpetrated there were performed not by locals but by outsiders.

Most educated Europeans will know of the brutal imprisonment of Singapore's white European population during the wartime Japanese occupation, but fewer will have heard of the Sook Ching massacre. This occurred at the same time, and saw the deaths of between 25,000 and 50,000 ethnic Chinese peoples. That this population was seeking postwar reparations for these crimes long after the British Empire had settled its own claims with Japan might tell us something about the history of imperialism in Asia.

Outside Singapore, the developed world has seen more than a few incidences of hostility to incoming populations, and it is this phenomenon that goes a long way to explaining the need of people to seek their identity in some place of origin distant from the land they inhabit. In Britain, the last century or so has seen a series of outbreaks of public hysteria about newly arrived peoples. The Aliens Act, passed in 1905 by the British Parliament, attempted to restrict the influx of Jewish refugees escaping pogroms and ghettoization in eastern Europe; it was the first of several acts passed over the subsequent century intended to curb immigration. The *Manchester Evening Chronicle's* editorial of the time, demanding that 'the dirty, destitute, diseased, verminous and criminal foreigner who dumps himself on our soil and rates simultaneously, shall be forbidden to land', exemplified the populist view as portrayed by the media.

Similar political commentaries accompanied the arrival of both Kenyan and Ugandan Asian peoples, expelled from their homes in the latter 1960s and early 1970s. If the language is more carefully modulated, the sense of identifying an otherness in the discussion of the British Asian community since the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York and the London transport suicide bombings might also be said to reflect a century-old disquiet about a section of Britain's population, the identity and ethnicity of which shifts contingent on circumstance.



The phenomenon of new communities being established in Britain was accompanied by a century of popular art reflecting this concept, often with alarm or distaste. From M.P. Shiel's novel *The Purple Cloud* (1901) through such films as Hammer's *The Plague of the Zombies* (1966), there has been a recurrent theme that promulgated the idea that the cohabiting of races would bring about a form of apocalypse. Though much effort was made to counter the bigotry inherent in such works, little of it entered the mainstream, and it is only over the last generation that a substantial body of work been produced in which immigrant communities themselves spoke rather than being spoken for.

In the UK, a country with an aptitude for electing to office members of the far right, with intolerant attitudes to questions of race, communities identified as 'other' have tended to draw together, seeking a security in old customs not offered in a new country. This can lead to its own problems, as people long separated from their psychological homes have no means of imagining the changes happening in their places of origin. Home, in these circumstances, remains frozen in time, existing in the historical moment the native country was left; people are cut off from the realization that their old country, like the new one, is subject to historical change. Alongside the security of a known and perfectly understood set of cultural mores, there lies the danger that the rites observed by the community of the diaspora might be seen in its place of origin as archaic and ossified relics of a bygone age. But there is a comfort in custom, and it is more likely to be sought in a hostile environment than a welcoming one.

I am unquestionably an economic migrant, by the textbook definition currently applied to many people seeking refuge in the UK. But I have never encountered a question over my right to stay. Norman Tebbit's famous comment that residency in the UK should be decided by whether an immigrant supports the England cricket team is another criterion by which I should be deported. It is perhaps for these reasons that, beyond a casual chat with fellow Australians encountered in day-to-day life, I do not seek out an expatriate community to which to belong. But people should be permitted to dream in Polish, Urdu, Mandarin or Australian — and, as I have found, will do so whether they wish to or not.

© Steve Cramer

Steve Cramer is a freelance journalist and lecturer in drama based in Edinburgh



Ong Keng Sen *director, writer*

Singapore-born Ong Keng Sen read intercultural performance at Tisch School of the Arts, New York University, and also holds a degree in law. He has taught in such places as the NYU Asian/Pacific/American Institute and DasArts in Amsterdam, and been the recipient of fellowships from the Japan Foundation, British Council, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in Berlin and Asian Cultural Council (New York). Notable productions include the *Asian Shakespeare Trilogy* (*Lear*, *Desdemona* and *Search: Hamlet*) and several docu-performances, presented at venues and festivals worldwide. He is Leverhulme artist-in-residence at the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at the University of Edinburgh. In 1994 he established the Flying Circus Project, uniting traditional and contemporary Asian artists across all disciplines, since expanding to include European, American and Arabic artists. In 1999 he initiated Arts Network Asia, encouraging collaborations and exchanges between Asian artists in the region, while continuing to work to enhance the understanding of contemporary Asia in Europe and to initiate more artistic and cultural collaborations between the two continents. For the House of World Cultures in Berlin he created and curated the first two In Transit festivals (2002, 2003), focusing on exchanges between artists from all over the world, and *Spaces and Shadows*, a three-month-long programme on contemporary South East Asian arts. He also curated the *Insomnia@ICA* season of Indonesian, Thai and Singaporean cutting-edge young visual artists for the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London.



Tsung Yeh *conductor*

Shanghai-born Tsung Yeh began playing the piano at the age of five and commenced conducting studies in 1979 at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, continuing at Mannes College of Music in New York and at Yale University. In 1991, as part of a mentoring programme with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, he worked closely with Daniel Barenboim and Pierre Boulez. He has held posts with the Northwest Indiana, St Louis and Albany Symphony orchestras, the Florida Orchestra and the Hong Kong Sinfonietta, and appeared as guest conductor in North America, the Far East and Europe, including with ensemble 2e2m and the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France. He has also been Principal Conductor of the Hua Xia Ensemble in Beijing and is one of the founders of the Shanghai New Ensemble. He was appointed Music Director of the Singapore Chinese Orchestra in 2002 and has toured with them in Europe and throughout China. He holds the same post with the South Bend Symphony Orchestra (Indiana, USA), the first conductor to serve simultaneously as music director of both a Chinese and a Western symphony orchestra. He has been an Artistic Director of the Symphonic Workshop Ltd in the Czech Republic since 1992 and has also taught at the Musik Hochschule in Zürich and at Conductors' Guild workshops in Chicago and Indianapolis.

Choy Ka Fai *video installation*

New media artist and contemporary performance director Choy Ka Fai has created numerous multidisciplinary projects and collaborations internationally, bringing together visual arts, music, film, dance and theatre. He has been Associate Artistic Director of TheatreWorks since 2007, continuing to focus on uniting performance, technology and media arts in such works as *Drift Net*, the *V.I.S.T.A Lab* series, *DanceDanceDance*, *Reservoir* and *RPM*. Choy has also designed video installations in collaboration with TheatreWorks' Artistic Director Ong Keng Sen, in productions including *Sandakan Threnody*, *Diaspora* and *Awaking*, which were presented at Singapore Arts Festival, Energex Brisbane Festival and Melbourne International Arts Festival. He is Co-Artistic Director of celebrated Singapore arts collective Kill Your Television (KYTV), his directorial works touring major arts institutions and festivals worldwide, including the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, House of World Cultures, Berlin, Fukuoka Asian Art Triennial, Taipei Art Festival and Indonesian Dance Festival. His latest video installation/quasi-documentary *Rectangular Dream* — on Singapore's public housing programme — was presented at Khokhlovskaya Manufaktura in Moscow, as part of the Spotlight Singapore in Moscow project, and seen earlier this year at 8Q sam (Singapore Art Museum) as part of the exhibition *At Home Abroad*.



Toru Yamanaka *composer*

Toru Yamanaka was born in Osaka, Japan. As a composer, producer, club DJ and organizer, he has collaborated with various artists around the world. Between 1984 and 2000 he was a member of the Japanese performance group Dumb Type, as a composer and sound designer. Since 2000 he has collaborated with the Singaporean theatre director Ong Keng Sen, including, in 2006, two theatrical productions: *Geisha* and *Diaspora*. In 2004 he organized a contemporary performance unit called flo+out, which has appeared internationally and released its first CD+DVD album in 2006.



Scott Zielinski *lighting designer*

Scott Zielinski is based in New York, where his lighting designs have included the Broadway production of *Topdog/Underdog* as well as productions for the Lincoln Center and the Joseph Papp Public Theater. He has also created designs for theatre, dance and opera extensively elsewhere in the USA and throughout the world, including productions for the Adelaide, Edinburgh and Gothenburg festivals; for De Nederlandse Opera (Amsterdam), Toronto Opera, English National Opera and Lithuanian National Opera; for the Royal National Theatre (London) and National Theatre of Iceland; and for dance companies in Istanbul, Oslo, Paris, Stockholm, Stuttgart and Vienna.





Rabiya Choudhry

Glasgow-born Rabiya Choudhry is a visual artist currently living and working in Edinburgh. She graduated from the Edinburgh College of Art with a Bachelor of Arts degree (with first-class honours) in painting in 2004 and a Masters in fine art in 2006. She has exhibited at Edinburgh venues including the Bongo Club, Dance Base and the Edinburgh International Conference Centre. Her works have also been seen in London, at the Royal Academy of Arts and Five Years Gallery, among others. She won the George Jackson Hutchison Memorial Prize at the ECA, was awarded a prize at the City of Edinburgh Council Visual Arts and Craft Awards, and has been nominated for a number of awards in recent years, including at the Becks Futures exhibition.



Ariani Darmawan

Ariani Darmawan is a video artist/film-maker/writer who lives and works in Bandung, Indonesia, and has participated in numerous international film festivals and art exhibitions. She studied Architecture at the Parahyangan Catholic University in Bandung before taking up a place to study Fine Arts at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. The contrasting thought processes required for architecture and for fine art — the programmatic versus the impressionistic — proved a melting-pot for her twin worlds of writing and the moving image. Most of her works comment on power/identity, on language along with its construction of meanings, where she constantly erases and re-draws the lines of reality. *Dragons Beget Dragons*, a documentary about *gambang kromong* music and the acculturation of the Chinese Jakartans, attracted a lot of attention in her country for being provocative and critical to the issue of racism. She has also produced a short film, *The Anniversaries*, whose script won a special mention at the Jakarta International Film Festival 2005; the film itself had its premiere in December 2006.



Zai Kuning

Singapore-born Zai Kuning is difficult to categorize, working as he does in the fields of video, poetry, theatre, dance, performance art, music and installation art. For five years, from its foundation in 1996 until its disbandment in 2001, he led the dance theatre group Metabolic Theatre Laboratory (MTL) as director, performer and trainer. Its main objective was to search for physical language/movement deeply rooted in or influenced by South East Asian rituals, and productions included *Prodigal Songs*, *Remnant 2000*, *Bluemunkish* and *No Alibi*, which toured Hong Kong, Korea and Seoul as part of the Little Asia Festival 2000. A TheatreWorks residency that year led to a lengthy project researching the lives of the Orang Laut in the Riau Archipelago, and in 2003 he completed his 30-minute film entitled *Riau*, which has been widely screened at international film festivals including Rotterdam and Pusan. His performance and visual art work has been presented in Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, Korea, Indonesia, Thailand, Bangladesh, Australia, America and Germany.

Dinh Q. Lê

Dinh Q. Lê was born in Ha-Tien, Vietnam, in 1968, but emigrated with his family in 1978, settling in California a year later. He returned to Vietnam for the first time in 1993, after having received his Masters in Fine Arts from the School of Visual Arts in New York, and currently lives in Ho Chi Minh City. His exhibitions include *Vietnam: Destination for the New Millennium — the Art of Dinh Q. Lê* at the Asia Society, New York, and *Persistent Vestiges: Drawings from the American-Vietnam War* at the Drawing Center, New York. His work has also been showcased worldwide in such exhibitions as *Universal Experience* at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago; *Only Skin Deep* at the International Center of Photography, New York; *Delays and Revolutions* at the Venice Biennale 2003; *Infinite Painting* at the Villa Manin Centre for Contemporary Art in Italy; and at the Gwangju Biennale 2006 in Korea, the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT) 2006 in Australia, and the Shoshana Wayne Gallery, Santa Monica.



Navin Rawanchaikul

Navin Rawanchaikul was born in Chiang Mai, Thailand, of immigrant Indian parentage. He has gained a reputation for developing community-based art projects that rely heavily on team spirit and collaboration. Many of his projects were created under the banner of the Navin Production Co. Ltd, which was established in 1994 with the *Mae Kha River* project, in which Rawanchaikul presented bottles of polluted river water as works of art. In 1995 he initiated his landmark *Taxi Gallery* project in Bangkok, the success of which prompted further such projects in more than 20 cities round the world. During the past decade he has participated in several international exhibitions, including solo exhibitions at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris and P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center in New York, and initiated a number of public art projects. *Fly with Me to Another World* was a year-long project in Lamphun and Chiang Mai, Thailand, culminating in the international symposium *Public Art Intervention* to discuss the intersections between contemporary art and social practices. In 2007 he held his solo exhibition *Navins of Bollywood*, commissioned by TheatreWorks in association with Tang Contemporary Art, Bangkok. He shares much of his time between Chiang Mai and Fukuoka, Japan.





Tintin Wulia

Tintin Wulia was born in Bali, Indonesia, and started dancing at an early age. Her childhood revolved round music school, where she began to compose. She subsequently trained as an architect and as a film composer, in Indonesia and the USA, and has recently undertaken postgraduate research in Fine Art at RMIT University, Australia. Her background in architecture and music could explain why she enjoys manipulating structure, form and function/content in the various media in which she works — be they spatial or audio-visual. Challenging definitions, she constantly steals from the techniques of documentary even when making her fiction, and pushes animation to its limit. Her works — outwardly simple yet very detailed in their concepts and constructions — tend to leave ample space for interpretation, even when presented with a strong narrative element. Screenings and installations have been seen worldwide, including at international film festivals (among them Rotterdam, New York Underground and Singapore), art exhibitions (including Istanbul Biennial, Liverpool Biennial, Yokohama Triennial and Jakarta OK.Video) and television (SBS TV, Australia), and at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London and the House of World Cultures in Berlin.



Koh Boon Pin

Koh Boon Pin is remembered for his multifaceted turns in such TheatreWorks productions as Tan Tarn How's *Six of the Best*, Michael Chiang's *Private Parts*, David Henry Hwang's *The Dance and the Railroad* and Steven Berkoff's *Metamorphosis*. His directorial work includes the TheatreWorks production of *Army Daze* and the NUSS production of Bizet's opera *Carmen*. He played the role of an uptight teacher in Eric Khoo's landmark *12 Storeys* (1997), the first Singaporean film to be screened at the Cannes Film Festival. In 2007 he performed in Wild Rice's production of *The Magic Fundoshi*, and was also part of the original TheatreWorks ensemble that began work on *Diaspora*.

Janice Koh

Janice Koh graduated in Theatre Studies from the National University of Singapore, subsequently attaining distinction in a Masters in Theatre from Goldsmiths College, London. In 2003 she won the coveted DBS Life! Theatre Award for Best Actress for her performance as Catherine in David Auburn's *Proof* and last year received a Best Actress nomination for her role in Ovidiu Yu's *Hitting (On) Women*. Other recent theatre work includes *The King Lear Project* by Ho Tzu Nyen and Fran Borgia (which had its premiere at the Kunstenfestivaldesarts in Brussels), TheatreWorks' *120 and Diaspora*, and both producing and acting in *Do Not Disturb — Late Checkout, Please* with Tan Kheng Hua. Her roles have ranged in age from 12 in *One Flew Spare* to 70 in Toy Factory's *First Light*. She has worked both as actor and collaborator with TheatreWorks and director Ong Keng Sen in *Descendants of the Eunuch Admiral* and *The Spirits Play*, both of which have toured to major venues in Berlin, Hamburg and Tokyo. On television she has starred in the drama series *Fighting Spiders* for Channel 5 (Singapore), while other projects include Arts Central's *Going Straits* and *4x4: Episodes of Singapore Art*, and the award-winning *Singapore Short Story Project*. She has also made guest appearances in *Phua Chu Kang* and *Growing Up*.



Lim Kay Tong

Lim Kay Tong is a veteran actor and a familiar face among his native Singaporean audience, with a long string of stage and performance credits to his name. Among his best-remembered theatre appearances are *The Coffin is Too Big for the Hole* (Hong Kong Festival of Arts Fringe), *No Parking on Odd Days* (Singapore Arts Festival), *Dance and the Railroad*, *Longing* and *Broken Birds* (TheatreWorks). His film and television credits include *Shanghai Surprise* starring Sean Penn and Madonna, *Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story*, *Mee Pok Man* directed by Eric Khoo, Emmy nominee *A Bright Shining Lie*, *Brokedown Palace*, *One Leg Kicking*, *Perth* and *The Photograph*, an Indonesian film that won a Special Jury Prize at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival and had its premiere in the USA at MOMA, New York. He has also delighted audiences over the years with his acting in several popular drama serials and mini-series, including *Noble House*, *Tanamera*, *Frankie's House* and *Growing Up*. He has also been nominated for Best Actor at the Asian Television Awards — twice for *Growing Up* and once for *En Bloc*. He currently sits on the board of directors for TheatreWorks, Singapore's first professional English-language performance company, which he also founded.





Nora Samosir

Nora Samosir has a postgraduate diploma in voice studies from the Central School of Speech and Drama, London, and a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree from York University, Toronto. She has appeared in numerous productions with all the major theatre companies in Singapore. Her acting credits with TheatreWorks include *Trojan Women* (1991), *Lao Jiu* (1997), *Pulse Version Theatre* (2003) and *120* (2007). In 2003 she won the coveted DBS Life! Theatre Award for Best Supporting Actress for her portrayal of Claire in David Auburn's *Proof*. She has also acted for Malay theatre and for Tamil television, and teaches theatre studies at the National University of Singapore.

TheatreWorks

TheatreWorks (Singapore) was established in 1985 and has been led since 1988 by its Artistic Director Ong Keng Sen. It seeks to promote and produce new writing and interdisciplinary performances, often in collaboration with international artists. It also provides residencies for visual artists, documentary film-makers and creatives working in contemporary visual culture and new media. The Flying Circus Project, a research and development programme, has become an internationally known and sought-after laboratory process. Another key initiative was the setting up, in 1999, of Arts Network Asia, encouraging and supporting regional artistic collaboration as well as developing managerial and administrative skills within Asia. Since 2005 the company's home at 72-13 Mohamed Sultan Road has also been host to the International Centre of Asian Arts (ICAA) — a research and development centre, a forum, and a performance platform for Asia's expression and its relationship to the rest of the world — and to the Singapore Creative Arts Nucleus (SCAN) — an incubator for emerging creatives that includes the Creatives-in-Residence programme and the company's long-running writing programme, the Writers Lab.

www.theatreworks.org.sg

www.72-13.com

www.artsnetworkasia.org

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TheatreWorks (Singapore) would like to thank the following for their support in Diaspora.

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Singapore Chinese Orchestra

The 75-strong Singapore Chinese Orchestra was founded in 1997 and is the only professional Chinese orchestra in Singapore, where it is based at the Singapore Conference Hall. Under its Music Director Tsung Yeh (since 2002) it has presented programmes including *Marco Polo and Princess Blue — A Symphonic Epic*, *The Grandeur of Tang*, *Thunderstorm* and *Admiral of the Seven Seas*, and in last year's Singapore Arts Festival it collaborated with TheatreWorks in *Awaking*, bringing together *kungfu* opera music and Elizabethan music. It has toured to major concert halls in China, to Taiwan and Macau, and further afield to Europe (including the Budapest Spring Festival and the London Singapore Season), also appearing at the World Economic Forum in 2003 and the 2006 International Monetary Fund (IMF) Annual Meeting. The orchestra took part in the Singapore National Day Parade in 2007, as part of a 240-strong combined force that also included the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Armed Forces Central Band, various ensembles and a choir. The orchestra has an outreach programme and presents outdoor concerts at national parks, schools and Singapore heartlands. It also regularly commissions new works and in 2006 organized its first composition competition, focusing on the incorporation of music elements from South East Asia.

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Lim Kong Pin

Gaoyin Suona

Jin Shi Yi*

Zhongyin Suona,

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Liu Jiang
Meng Jie

Percussion

Tan Loke Chuan †
Ngoh Kheng Seng
Shen Guo Qin
Teo Teng Tat
Wu Xiang Yang
Xu Hui

* Principal

† Acting Principal

‡ Acting Associate Principal

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