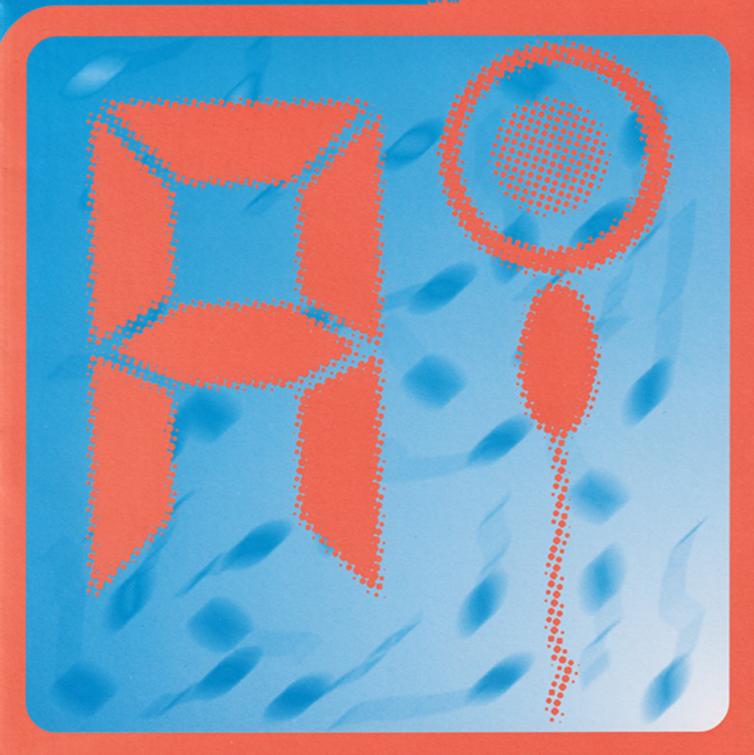
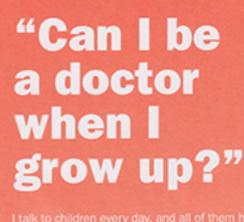
THE WEST OF S

CONCEIVED IN
THE FEBTILE MIND OF
NORA SAMOSIE
AND WRITTEN BY

12 TO 22 FEBRUARY 1998 THE JUBILEE HALL APM





I talk to children every day, and all of them have these wonderful ideas for the future. What big dreams they have for such little people! Rocket scientists, doctors, archaeologists, teachers.

But it takes a lot of hard work and determination to see dreams turn into reality. Fortunately, with help like a \$50 million human resource development and scholarship fund, bursaries and overseas training programmes, Glaxo Wellcome tries to fulfill these children's wishes. You see, they believe in investing in the future of these children – and in the future of the world.

Because Glaxo Wellcome is wholeheartedly devoted to their Research and Development programmes, they will never end their search for new cures and better medicines. A quest that has inspired many to renew their hopes for the future. So that we may all dare to dream.

Dreams are wonderful thoughts that make us smile a little wider, work a little harder. But isn't it all worth while?

GlaxoWellcome

Working in partnership for a healthler world

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S MALES SAGE

Where are the new directors, new playwrights and new performance companies in Singapore? This is a question I have been asked time and time again. As I survey the scene, I must admit that the players in the theatre scene have remained the same. Many of the companies celebrated our tenth anniversaries in the last three years. I cannot see any new theatre company on the horizon, one who is producing at least three productions a year. Perhaps the new directors are joining established existing companies? Again I would be hardput to find that many new directors or programmes to help develop new talent in this area. Most of the active directors were initiated in the late eighties.

Hence it is with great relief that I embrace Nora Samosir's directorial debut. Nora has worked with TheatreWorks as lead actress since 1985. It has become a TheatreWorks tradition to encourage actors who want to crossover to become directors. This began as early as 1989 with Ivan Heng and Christine Lim, 1990 with Lim Yu Beng, Koh Boon Pin and Rani Moorthy, and 1992 with Lok Meng Chue.

1997 was no exception. I found myself supporting many actors who were making a serious transition into directing; Lim Kay Siu, Casey Lim and Nora. This is an indication of a growing need to continue developing our theatre artists and setting them new challenges. This must be a priority despite the fact that the environment is pressurising Singaporean artists to be ready-made commodities. If we do not invest now, Singaporeans will not be prepared to neither play on the world arena nor attract artistic attention to Singapore as a regional cultural hub. If Lim Kay Tong did not give me the opportunity to direct and lead TheatreWorks in 1988, I very much doubt that within ten years, I could have been commissioned to direct Lear with actors, dancers and musicians from 6 countries.

We need to support and nurture our artists especially in the next few years. As the economic crisis threatens to continue, we have to dig deeper, develop greater visions. Instead of scaling down, we need to put our limited resources to better use, that is to develop the soft ware. This soft ware, the Singaporean artist, is the lifeblood, the spirit of our performance culture. Give them the opportunities instead of buying glossy ready-mades. This short-sightedness might ultimately cause the greatest damage. The Singapore theatre scene despite being the most vibrant artform in Singapore is not ready to be an industry yet - we cannot simply leave it to the market forces. Market forces will stifle whatever fledging talents we have and smother artistic challenges which could lead us into the new millennium.

I am also pleased to announce the revival of the TheatreWorks Writers Laboratory after the hiatus of one year. In that one year, unfortunately, the number of new writers who had full-length plays produced professionally on the Singapore stage were pitifully small. I hope that with the revival, TheatreWorks can contribute to a new crop of writers to Singapore theatre as we did with Ovidia Yu, Eleanor Wong, Robin Loon, Desmond Sim, and Tan Tarn How in the early nineties.

Ong Keng Sen February 1998



At Thomson, we accept no barriers between today and the future. To us, moving from "Now" to "Tomorrow" is along the path of revolutionary and evolutionary technologies. As one of the leading companies to introduce the revolutionary best selling DSS (Digital Satellite System) and with interactive Open TV and DVD (Digital Video Disc), Thomson is consciously creating the technologies for tomorrow, today. So join us, in making the great leap forward.



THOMSON REM

Cheryl Wong Ching Yee

AGE:

32

SEX:

F

OCCUPATION:

Playwright

RELEVANT HISTORY:

umm none

Everything in life, I believe, happens by chance.

This play was waiting to be written but never found an opportunity - and it was by chance that I spoke to Nora and she told me about what she had been thinking. So the play was written.

I would like to think that it was not by chance that we thought about the same thing - perhaps it was.

To me, the play is about possibilities and the courage to explore possibilities; but often possibilities and chance are never quite distinguishable. When the two merge, we have life.

I hope to celebrate life with this play: life in its conception, its maturity and its endurance.

Thank you actors for playing, thank you Nora for acting and thank you for coming.

All this, I hope, did not happen by chance.

Cheryl Wong Ching Yee January 1998

Nora Samosir

AGE:

40

SEX:

F

OCCUPATION:

Director

RELEVANT HISTORY:

Stage and TV actress of 15 years,

directing debut.

This is my first baby, in more ways than one.

A.I. was conceived in my imagination; midwifed by brave and like-minded actors with a sympathetic writer attending. I have safely delivered this child but only through an intense period of collective gestation.

The experience has been both anxiety-ridden and very rewarding.

Why did I have this child? I wanted to give voice to the dreams and fears of many people of my generation; not just women; but anyone who has ever wanted to have children.

The rest of creation does not seem to have any angst about procreation, so why do we? Is it because we have freedom of choice?

I wanted to explore the reasons why people do decide to have a child, men and women; because it is an instinct that transcends gender - a man's to be a father and a woman's longing to be a mother.

The characters you will see tonight are not representative of the human race but individuals with their private needs and urges. We are not advocating single parenthood but we hope to draw you into the lives of these characters and then, reflect on your own.

Welcome to their lives.

Nora Samosir

AGE:

SEX:

OCCUPATION:

RELEVANT HISTORY: Local artist working in print and 3-D

NAME:

Suven Chan

AGE:

SEX:

OCCUPATION:

Lighting Designer

RELEVANT HISTORY: Came from Hongkong to be technical manager of

The Substation in 1991. Previous work for TheatreWorks includes "Hot Dogs and Eternal

Triangles".

NAME:

AGE:

SEX:

OCCUPATION:

RELEVANT HISTORY: Acting since Primary School. Recently started

NAME:

Mark Chan

AGE:

SEX:

OCCUPATION:

Music Composer

RELEVANT HISTORY: Composer and recording artist of world music.

TheatreWorks' composer-in-residence. Past productions include "Lear", "Lao Jiu" and

"3 Children"

AGE: SEX:

OCCUPATION:

RELEVANT HISTORY: Involved in theatre for almost 10 years. Known for

> directing works targetted at youth including "Lanterns Never Go Out" and "I Have A Friend".

When I was younger I used to feel very awkward with, and I think even fearful of children and babies. If you had told me that one day I would actually feel the urge to have one of my own, I would have laughed. But my biological clock has indeed been ringing off and on for the last seven years or so. And then I think - Oh God, what do I do now?!?

I suppose like Sandra I could try to do something about it. But ah, that's another story......

NAME:

AGE: 42 SEX

OCCUPATION:

RELEVANT HISTORY:

My first venture into acting was playing opposite Nora, in TheatreWorks' first production, Be My Sushi Tonight. I was very much the greenhorn, and Nora must have been frustrated, acting with this terribly earnest actor who didn't know what he was doing. That was in 1985.

Since then, we have worked together in virtually every production that I consider to have been a landmark in my career.

It seems fitting, and I am so happy that she has asked me to be involved in this, her directorial debut for TheatreWorks. I just hope I can be as helpful to her as she was to me.

NAME: Loong Seng Onn

AGE: SEX:

OCCUPATION:

RELEVANT HISTORY:

Actor

A.l. can be about many issues - my favourite take on it - well, it's about choice - how to deal with our sometimes unconscious and profoundest desires/needs/wants and the difficulty of making a decision in the face of rationality and an unsympathetic and unemphatetic society. But really, it's very simple isn't it - it's all about 3 men and a baby (to be).

NAME:

AGE: SEX: OCCUPATION:

RELEVANT HISTORY: Acted in a number of plays including "Rigor Mortis"

> and "MacBeth" and helped backstage in a number of other productions. "A.I." marks his TheatreWorks

I've always loved kids and wanted to be a father but I never wanted to go through the hassle of marriage. Don't think I have the patience for it.

It seems that labour pains isn't the only thing a woman has to endure if she wants to have a baby nowadays, especially when she's single.

The legal questions and complications that arise from such a proposition are mind-boggling.

It is true that Singapore legislation has generous provisions for women. One example would be the Termination of Pregnancy Act which states that a woman is the only person who decides whether she wants to keep or abort the child. This holds true even to married women: they need not consult or even get their spouse's consent should they decide to terminate their pregnancy. By extrapolation, a woman can also have fairly independent control over the conception as she does over the termination of her pregnancy. In other words, a woman has basically uncontrolled power over her own body. It does sound fairly logical and simple - a single woman can just have unprotected sex with a man and get pregnant and voila! She has herself a baby.

But what if she doesn't want to have sex with a man - and she just wants to have a baby via artificial insemination?

She is not entitled to any of the 'deposits' at the local sperm bank - the laws strictly prohibit that. So, she can easily find a candidate who is willing to masturbate and ejaculate his sperm into a syringe and within the time limit that the sperm remains 'viable' - a woman can inject the semen into her vagina and voila! She may be pregnant.

But what if she just wants the child and not the father? This could very well be the motivation of conceiving the child not only out of wedlock but also out of sexual intercourse - the hassle of dealing with a man.

She could draft a contract with the donor which states clearly that she will not press the donor for any legal obligations and maintenance - and that he need not incur any further liabilities vis-à-vis the child. The contract is legal and binding - save for some

minor complications. The contract can be null and void if the courts find that it is contrary to public policy. At this time, legal scholars are split in their opinions as to whether such a contract will be deemed contrary to public policy. One side claims that if this begetting of children outside of the institution of marriage is not indicative of a trend and will not threaten the institution of marriage and the family, the contract can stand. The other claims that the contract could be seen as morally dubious. The law relating to sexually immoral contracts is not directly in point, but may provide some analogies. In the end, since there has been no precedence, we can never find out whether such a contract can stand.

Even if such an occasion should arise, the judge has the final say. And his decision may lie entirely on whether such a contract is harmful to the child. The contract may free the sperm donor from any legal and financial responsibilities - but it cannot prevent the donor from exercising it should he desire as it is his natural right. The contract can only provide that the donor is not liable for any damages should the woman want to sue him for maintenance. In any case, the contract is only legal and binding in so far as it involves two consenting adults and it is made between them. The child will always be entitled to claim maintenance from the donor. However, the status of the child remains "illegitimate child" who holds the same entitlements as any other child except for succession and citizenship rights. His mother will also have to appeal if she wants to claim tax relief.

So in the end, does a woman have the right to do what she wants with her body?

Sure she does, if she survives all the legal complications.

And that she is not contrary to public policy.
- Cheryl Wong Ching Yee.

PRODUCTION LIST

Playwright

Cheryl Wong Ching Yee

Director

Nora Samosir

Technical Manager

Tay Huey Meng

Production Director

Tay Tong

Set/Costume Designer

Dahlia Osman

Lighting Designer

Suven Chan

Sound Design

Casey Lim

Music Composition

Mark Char

Flyer/Programme Design Eugene Tan

Stage Manager Suraya Abdul Rashid

Assistant Stage Manager Jean Yue

Publicity/Print Executive Su-Lin Ngiam

Lighting Operator Liu Shubin

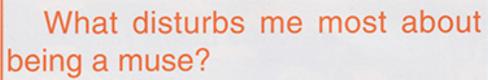
Sound Operator Michelle J Bong

Dresser Neelam Chugh

Production Assistant Michelle J Bong

Production Crew Ian Tan

Cast Elvira Holmberg
Lim Kay Siu
Loong Seng Onn
Vivek Winder







At Beauty World, I'll be so close to the action that someone might mistake me for one of the hostesses.

The Muse Programme offers the best seats in the house, plus benefits around town. Call TheatreWorks at 338 4077 and ask to speak to Nama.

THE FLYING CIRCUS PROJECT In 1996, TheatreWorks' Artistic

Director, Ong Keng Sen successfully launched The Flying Circus Project. As part of the New Asia drive, Ong established a sevenyear research and performance programme to take traditional Asian artforms into the 21st century. This would mean cultural preservation in an enlightened manner through the reinvention of tradition. Tradition and modernity is part of a continuum rather than two separate dichotomies.

The Flying Circus Project demonstrates the innovation and confidence of Asian artists who harness skills and artistry of the region into a new artform to welcome the next millennium. The Flying Circus Project nurtures an Asian world view but at the same time maintains the many different identities of the diverse Asian cultures. The search for a New Asia on stage is the search for a complex harmony which thrives on difference: different traditions, different languages, different aesthetics, different culture.

"When land bound animals begin to fly
Reaching for the unknown
As unexpected transformation
Rooted but Free
The same animal but different
Man's quest for flight continues
Circus
The antithesis of museum
Raw, exciting, dizzying, robust
Dangerous, magic
The sacred and the profane co-exist
Theatre of the people
Hanuman, monkey, leaps into flight"

lustration by Vincent Leow

Taking Asian Arts Into The Next Millennium. The Search for New Asia On Stage. Leading Asian Creativity.

1996 Southeast Asian Laboratory

The first year of the project saw over fifty masters in traditional arts and practitioners of modern dance, theatre and music coming together to share their skills and experiences in their individual fields. These masters and practitioners were personally handpicked and chosen by Ong from countries like Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and Singapore. A Japanese Noh master and Beijing opera artist from China were also invited to conduct workshops. A total of 232 workshops and classes were conducted over a period of six weeks from November to December 1996.

1997 saw the staging of the critically acclaimed Lear, directed by Ong Keng Sen and written by Rio Kishida. The reinvention of Shakespeare's King Lear focused on Lear's daughter, patriarchy and the tension between new and old Asia. Lear was staged in Tokyo, Osaka and Fukuoka over a period of 3 weeks, playing a total of 12 performances. Lear was produced by the Japan Foundation Asia Centre, which also partially funded the first year of The Flying Circus Project. Lear received favourable reviews from the critics and theatre practitioners from Japan and Asia.

1998 _{Japan}, India, Myanmar, Korea, Singapore

In 1998, The Flying Circus Project

- The learning of traditional skills in music, dance and theatre from traditional masters.
- The reinvention into contemporary performance.

The 1998 programme which will be held from mid November to mid December, will bring together 50 masters/performers/participants from Japan, India, Myanmar, Korea and Singapore for workshops and classes. The performers will be encouraged to develop creative strategies and to regenerate traditional arts in contemporary performances.

In conjunction with the Research and Development, TheatreWorks will present a Festival of Performances by master artists. The Festival by Masters from India, Korea and Myanmar in Fort Canning Park will be curated by Ong Keng Sen.

It is intended that the six weeks from 1998 will build a common vision which will result in the production of ar adaptation of Shakespeare's Othelic in 1999. At the moment, Othello wil be performed by an Indian traditiona performer in Kathakali, Kuttiyatum or Chhau, lago by a Japanese Noh actor. Desdemona by a Korean performer and music from Myanmar, Ideally, certain scenes will be echoed with traditional Burmese string puppets.

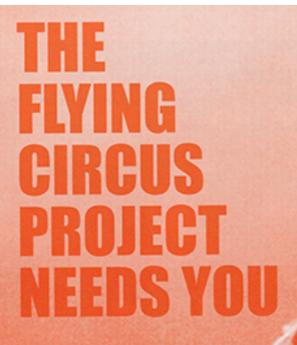
And Beyond

TheatreWorks plans to embark on the third and final phase of The Flying Circus Project in the year 2000, with a Laboratory gathering the finest artists and performers from the Phillipines, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Tibet and Papua New Guinea. This will be followed by a production of Julius Caesar in 2001. The entire project will culminate in 2002 with a presentation of the three plays as The Asian Shakespeare Trilogy, heralding a new age in cross-cultural Asian theatre.

As the project grows, the productions will be available for touring. For example, Lear could tour in 1998, and in the year 2000, both Lear and Othello will be available for touring. Similarly, selected artists from earlier Labs will be invited back.

The Flying Circus Project is unique and powerful in that it is purely on intra-Asian exchange. It is from a completely Asian perspective. Furthermore, the reinvention of tradition into the contemporary focuses on the living, organic nature of tradition in relation to the times.

With this mission in mind, TheatreWorks is presently looking for enlightened corporations to support this project on a year-to-year or long term basis. The project will give corporations around-the-world mileage for their sponsorship. For more information on how you can help, please call TheatreWorks' General Manager, Tay Tong at 338 4077. © copyright Keng Sen Ong & TheatreWorks 1996.



Be a part of this exciting project that invests in Asian artforms, brings them into the next millenium, and all over the world.

Contribute to the search for a New Asia, and be a part of it.

The Flying Circus
Project needs enlightened
corporations and individuals
to support her as she grows
year after year. Any amount
is significant enough, and
will contribute to the project
attaining new heights.

Corporations and individuals will leave their mark forever, and get international recognition and mileage.

So be an entrepreneur and a patron, and invest in us!! Please call TheatreWorks' General Manager, Tay Tong, at 338 4077 to prepare for take-off.

Dear Joy,

Oh my goodness gracious me! They're staging "Beauty World" again! Toy, you have no idea how much I have always wanted to see it again after the last time in 1992. Now they are really bringing it back to celebrate its 10th anniversary.

And you know what I heard? Apparently the cast will be made up of ICS actors, just like "Mixed Signals" last year.

It's so exciting, oh my goodness gracious me!

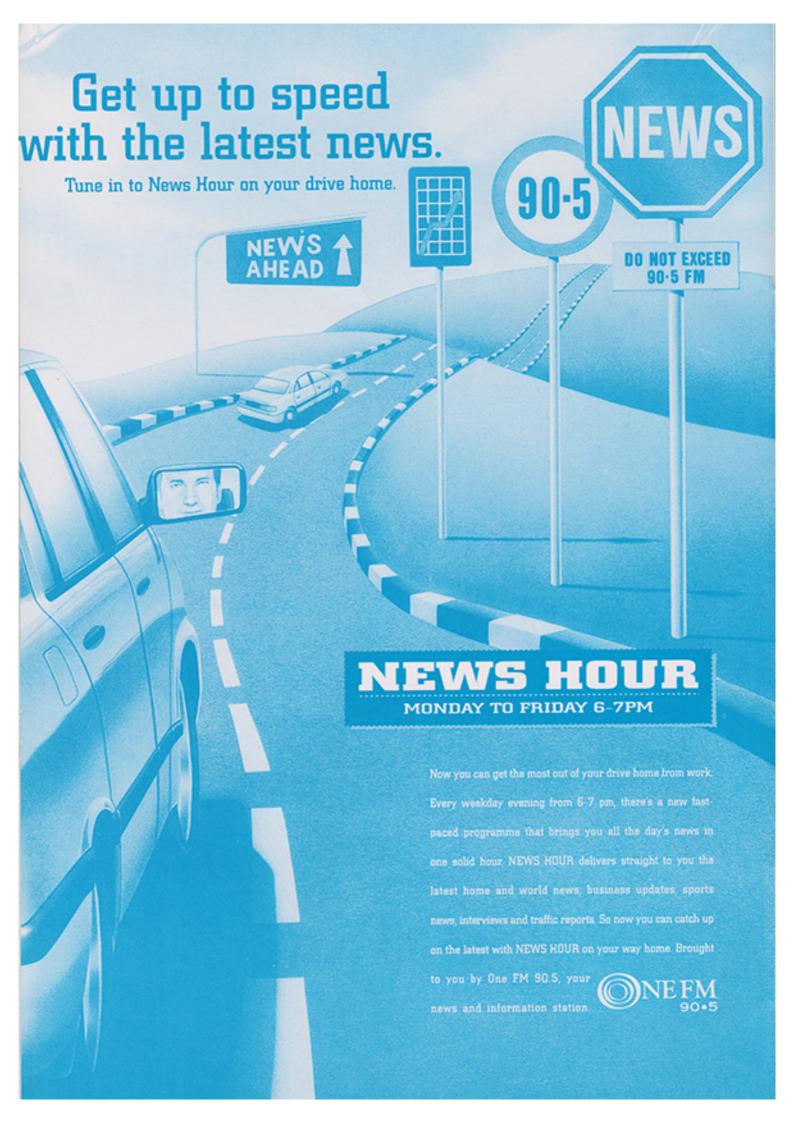
In case you didn't know Toy, "Beauty World" is Singapore's first ever musical and it was written by Michael Chiang and Dick Bee, and just as before it will be directed by Ong Keng Sen and choreographed by Xajip Ali.

The story is so exciting! It is about this innocent young girl from Batu Pahat who goes to Singapore and works in a cabaret to find her father, and the only thing she has to work on is a big jade pendant.

"Beauty World" will be running at the Victoria Theatre from the 16th to the 26th of April at The Victoria Theatre, so do you want to go?

> Your Penpal from Singapore, Rosemary Joseph.





HEATREWORKS

TheatreWorks is an independent Singaporean theatre company which develops and nurtures professional theatre skills.

It is dedicated to reaching a broad section of the community and to taking Singaporean theatre abroad.

The Company recognises its responsibility in encouraging awareness on human and social issues.

Ultimately, TheatreWorks is inspired by and dedicated to sharing The Magic of Theatre.

TheatreWorks (S) Limited, a registered charity, was incorporated in February 1985 as the first English language adult professional theatre company in Singapore.

Over the years, TheatreWorks has been recognised for their successful fusion of Western and Eastern dramatic traditions, refreshing interpretations

and unconventional approach.

TheatreWorks has produced critically acclaimed works that have earned the company a reputation for being the best theatre company in Singapore. The company has toured internationally. In 1992, the company toured Japan and Malaysia with Three Children and presented Madame Mao's Memories at the Edinburgh Festival. In the same year, Beauty World toured Japan. In 1994, Lao Jiu was performed at the Festival of Perth, and in 1996 Descendants of the Eunuch Admiral was performed at the Cairo International Festival of Experimental Theatre. This play was awarded the Critics Award for Best Acting and was nominated as one of the Best Productions in the Festival. The latest outing by the company was in January this year, when it performaed a new piece at Journey to the East 1998, in Hong Kong. TheatreWorks' production of Descendants of the Eunuch Admiral will also tour to Berlin and Hamburg later this year.

With a varied programme, TheatreWorks' repertoire spans from popular plays like Beauty World, Private Parts and Lao Jiu to visual experiences such as Descendants of the Eunuch Admiral, The Yang Family (performed in a Chinatown shophouse) and Destinies of Flowers in the Mirror (performed inside the Suntec City Fountain). TheatreWorks has also spearheaded the concept of outdoor carnival theatre with their productions of Theatre Carnival on the Hill, Longing, and Broken Birds. These productions are testimonies to the company's commitment to develop theatre audiences qualitatively, as well as quantitatively. After starting the wave of popular theatre, TheatreWorks is now forging a new path with their cutting-edge works. With emphasis on interdisciplinary and inter-cultural styles and techniques, the works often blur the line between theatre, installation art, video art, photography, sound sculptures, dance and architecture.

As a pioneering theatre company, TheatreWorks realises its responsibility in nurturing and providing opportunities for theatre practitioners. Training programmes such as The Writers' Laboratory have forged closer ties with Singaporean playwrights, serving to encourage and nurture new writing. Other programmes include The Directors' Laboratory which nurtures young directors, and the SpringBoard programme, a theatre skills training programme conducted by theatre practitioners from the United Kingdom. As part of their mission, TheatreWorks also has a Theatre-In-Education programme for schools, public lectures and consultancy services on aspects of theatre productions, and student attachment programmes.

In the last quarter of 1996, TheatreWorks embarked on The Flying Circus Project. This major project, conceptualised and headed by TheatreWorks' Artistic Director, Ong Keng Sen, examines the traditional arts and seeks to

take them into the 21st century.

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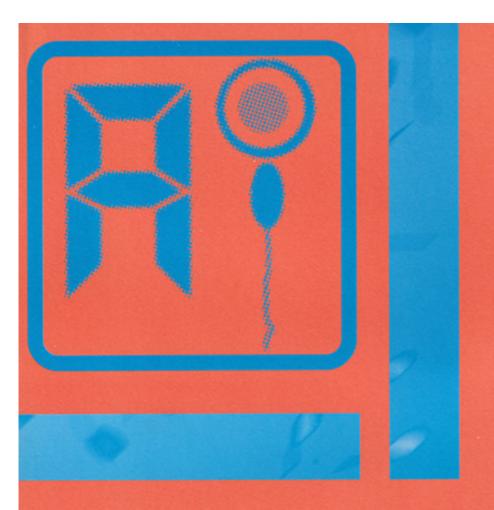
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