

D I A S P O R A



DIASPORA

Invitations to the event can be obtained from TheatreWorks by calling 67377213 or emailing twworks@singnet.com.sg

by

TheatreWorks / Ong Keng Sen Official Cultural Performance of Singapore 2006

18 – 21 September 2006
Esplanade Concert Hall
7.30pm

Conceived, Written and Directed by Ong Keng Sen
Video Installation by Choy Ka Fai and Daniel Hartnett
Electronic Composition by Toru Yamanaka



In collaboration with

Ariani Darmawan

Zai Kuning

Dinh Q. Le

Navin Rawanchaikul

Tintin Wulla

In performance with

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

Rindu Malan (Gambang Kromong Orchestra)

&

The Singapore Chinese Orchestra
conducted by Maestro Tsung Yeh

Set Design: Gordana Svilar, Light Design: Scott Zielinski, Sound Design: Michia Meliani



A sweeping, panoramic docu-performance based on the Chinese saying "To seek a better life by crossing the Four Seas", *Diaspora* explores memory, migration, assimilation, the triumph of the human spirit in time and space.

Through stories of Vietnamese Americans, Indonesian Chinese, Indians in South East Asia, Orang Laut (or sea nomads), Ong Keng Sen evokes thoughts on home; identity; the dispersion of peoples through war, through birth, through choice. With a film team and a group of collaborating visual artists, Ong visited Ho Chi Minh City, Los Angeles, New York City, Bali, Jakarta, Bandung, the Riau Islands, Mumbai, Chiang Mai, Tokyo in search of true stories, myths, fantasies.

Journeys became the source of inspiration in this collaboration between Ong and visual artists Choy Ka Fai, Ariani Darmawan, Zai Kuning, Dinh Q. Le, Navin Rawanchaikul, Tintin Wulla. This epic image and sound panorama is underscored by a timeline of Chinese music spanning 2000 years, ranging from mountain songs to contemporary compositions, performed by the Singapore Chinese Orchestra, led by Maestro Tsung Yeh. Japanese composer Toru Yamanaka, gels these fragments of Chinese music together into an ambient environment resonant with nostalgia and future visions. At the music core, evoking the early days when Chinese settlers resorted to Indonesian music instruments to soothe their pangs for home, is the guest performance of a delicate hybrid gambang kromong orchestra from Jakarta with 80-year-old singer, Chim Masnah.

Commissioned by the organisers of Singapore 2006, and presented by DBS Bank, *Diaspora* is produced by Singapore's internationally renowned TheatreWorks, and is conceived, written and directed by Ong Keng Sen, showcasing the best and brightest from Asia and beyond.

A celebration of humanity and human tenacity.

"Travelling the seas, we fall asleep and dream; in these dreams we experience transience, reclamation, transformation. Often we do not have a choice as to where we are born but where do we want our remains to be returned to?"

Commissioned by



Singapore 2006



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