



THEATREWORKS

ARTISTIC DIRECTION ONG KENG SEN

Image by Jun Ichikawa



"The precision of the gestures, the slowness and the concentration, the constant physical engagement all contributes to instill a quality of hypnotic presence."

- Smaranda Olcese,
Inferno Magazine, Paris

"In that sense, this sprawling showcase - part catwalk, part infectious karaoke session, part multimedia installation - is director Ong Keng Sen's own slick, futuristic museum of moving dioramas, a showcase of a confluence of people from all across the world who have decided to make Singapore their home."

- Corrie Tan,
The Straits Times, Singapore

Directed by **Ong Keng Sen**
In Collaboration with **Chris Lee, Reckless Ericka, Kaffe Matthews, Brian Gothong Tan, Francis Ng**
Co-commissioned by Singapore en France - le festival and Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA) 2015
Premiered in Palais de Tokyo

THE INCREDIBLE ADVENTURES OF BORDER CROSSERS

The Incredible Adventures of Border Crossers tells a story of past, present and future through the voices of border crossers. Real-life border crossers who have never acted before from Europe, the Americas, and the Asia-Pacific are invited to be performers in this piece. Sharing their everyday stories as incredible adventures, they inhabit the installation - singing, dancing, and invoking pioneer travellers of the past. A living museum of people from across the continents, this 5-and-a-half hour performance is at once an installation, karaoke and fashion runway - unlike any theatre you've seen before. *The Incredible Adventures of Border Crossers* is a stunning combination of music, visual culture, live video, fashion, documentary and performance that envisions communications in a not-so-distant future megapolis, amidst a heterotopia of individuals.

This performance can be created with the local residents of any city, who are not performers, with a script created from the participants' own words, stories and histories.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6IAFV3VmBHM>

Established in 1985, TheatreWorks (Singapore) is an independent and international performance company led by Artistic Director, ONG Keng Sen. Ong has been the Artistic Director of TheatreWorks since 1988 where he has created much of his groundbreaking art. Ong has made his career as a performance director with sensitivity towards weaving traditional Asian arts into contemporary creation since 1997. His talent has been the ability to negotiate diverse traditional arts of Asia bringing the best traditional masters together in one performance with contemporary arts of all kind from film to dance to plastic arts to music. Hence he has actively contributed to the evolution of Asian identities in the theatre as well as the subsequent transglobalisation of the Asian aesthetic in contemporary arts. Central to his artistic direction has been the ability to coex traditional artists into contemporary frames and his intercultural approach of one holistic production. His seminal work is the nomadic artist residency, The Flying Circus Project which brings together international artists traveling through Asia, sharing their contexts amongst themselves and young people in the local sites.

Ong's works have been presented throughout the world including Edinburgh International Festival; Palais de Tokyo in Paris; Tanzquartier Wien; Landestheater Linz (European Cultural Capital 2009); Rotterdam Schouwburg; Oslo Dansenshus; Stockholm Dansenshus; Zurich Theater Spektakel; Roma Europa Festival (Rome); Grand Theatre de la Ville Luxembourg; Idans Festival Istanbul; Cairo Experimental Theatre Festival; Panorama Rio de Janeiro; and Melbourne Festival.

Ong is the Founding Festival Director of the all-new Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA). He directed four editions of SIFA from 2014 to 2017. He is the first Singapore artist to have received both the National Arts Council Young Artist Award (1992) and the Cultural Medallion (2003).

His approach to traditional arts of Asian in contemporary arts is grounded in his studies of intercultural performance with the Performance Studies Department at Tisch School of the Arts, NYU, and his intellectual girth in practice comes from holding a law degree.

For more information and to explore possible collaborations, please contact Mervyn Quek at mervyn@theatreworks.org.sg

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