

THEATREWORKS
ARTISTIC DIRECTION ONG KENG SEN

In partnership with



24-HR PLAYWRITING COMPETITION

by TheatreWorks Writers' Lab

2019 Prize Presentation

14 September 2019, Saturday
4pm, 72-13





Image by Axonn Media Services

TheatreWorks' annual 24-Hour Playwriting Competition began in 1996. It is the longest running playwriting competition in Singapore. Developed as part of TheatreWorks Writers' Lab conceptualised by Artistic Director Ong Keng Sen, it is designed to connect the arts with the community. To that end, we are privileged to have the support of South East CDC who has supported the competition for the last twelve years.

This year, the 24-Hr Playwriting Competition welcomed 77 participants. 60% of them participated in the competition for the first time. This is a healthy indication of the competition's popularity and need in the Singapore arts landscape. Its continued presence is also a result of TheatreWorks' innovative ways of engaging the public.

This year, I was invited to create an anchor programme for the Writers' Lab. I proposed a new three-week interdisciplinary public project called N.O.W. – not ordinary work – and the competition sat within it.

Supported by the three-week event, we offered several pre-competition programmes such as the Basic Playwriting Workshop led by Jean Tay. Participants were also invited to attend *Three Fat Virgins Unassembled*, an iconic play written in the 1990s by the Writers' Lab alumni Ovidia Yu.

Opportunities were also made available for participants to attend other events in N.O.W. including readings of new writings by emerging playwrights mentored under the Writers' Lab mentoring programme. The engagement and dialogue-inclined structure of N.O.W. makes it a good platform for the participants to interact with the arts community and see possibilities of developing their craft.

We could not have done this without our partners. We are ever grateful for our partnership with the South East CDC. Special thanks goes out to Dr Mohamad Maliki Osman, the Mayor of South East District, the team at SECDC and all their District Councillors. Thank you to the team at Former Ford Factory, the National Archives and the National Library Board. They were instrumental in making the 24 hours smooth, fun as well as educational. Our heartfelt appreciation also goes out to you, the participants. Your enthusiasm sustains our endeavour of putting the competition together. Keep your creative spirit and mind thriving and let's do it again next year.

Noorlinah Mohamed
Artistic Director, N.O.W.

JUDGES' COMMENTS



Image by Aaxonn Media Services

Rayann Condy

Long contemplative walks... communing with nature... time, free from disruption. This is what I imagine when I consider the ideal circumstances to write. Being locked in a potentially haunted museum, with 70 odd strangers and nowhere to sleep but the floor sounds more like the pitch for a torturous new reality TV show! Yet this is exactly what 75 mad, bold individuals did (by choice)! AND at the end of it they produced stories that transport, characters that connect, voices that resonate and images that burn into the memory (and usually without so many terrible clichés).

To the participants of the 2019 24-Hr Playwriting Competition, I am in awe, you have well and truly suffered for your art! Deservedly, don the title 'play write', you've earned it! And sincerely, thank you for making the world 75 stories better.

Jean Tay

The venue of the Former Ford Factory proved to be fertile ground for the participants for this year's edition of the 24-Hr Playwriting Competition. There was amazing diversity in the plays submitted, which ranged from intimate solo pieces, ambitious historical epics, intense family dramas and rib-tickling comedies. This was testament to the creativity of the participants, who dove deep into the subject material and interpreted and integrated the different stimuli in thoughtful and imaginative ways. I particularly enjoyed the way that local context and language were infused into many of the plays, giving them a richness and authenticity that is uniquely our own. It is a wonderful starting point which showcases the potential of local writers, and I look forward to seeing these plays developed more fully.

Ma Yanling

It was a sweet torture to read through 75 scripts that had a very specific opening line: "Life is like weaving a Ketupat". I learnt about the traditions and origins of the Ketupat and many philosophies of life that the Ketupat metaphor conjured. I could almost feel the texture of rice in my mouth by the time I was quarter-way through the scripts, with perhaps a bit of indigestion. But, there were many writers whose opening lines then unravelled into stories that captured the complexity of human connect-edness, whether in times of war or in the everyday. It was such a pleasure to witness the diversity of stories that emerged within a 24-hour time frame. The scripts in the Youth Category were more evidently influenced by the site of the Former Ford Factory, where plays were inspired by Singapore's history; while the scripts turned in for the Open Category were a delightful and surprising mix of contexts, narratives and styles - like a hearty buffet of Ketupat dishes reimagined.

ABOUT

THE WRITERS' LAB

Conceived by Artistic Director Ong Keng Sen in 1990, The Writers' Lab has been pioneering in encouraging and developing Singapore playwriting with its varied as well as far-reaching programmes. The Writers' Lab aims to provide exceptional first-time and emerging playwrights with opportunities to hone their creative writing skills through an incubating environment. In addition, The Writers' Lab also maintains its R&D profile by affording established writers and Writers' Lab alumni an enhanced environment to advance their new works.

THEATREWORKS

TheatreWorks, established in 1985, is an independent and international performance company based in Singapore. It is unique for its reinvention of traditional performances through a contemporary juxtaposition of aesthetics. TheatreWorks has two main red lines in its work: the first is the creation and presentation of inter-disciplinary or intercultural programmes, the second being documentary performances. TheatreWorks reflects a concern with negotiation, synergy, as well as artistic sharing between individuals and societies. TheatreWorks has consciously created 72-13, a space, to have more diverse and inclusive dialogues. TheatreWorks intends to share the transcendental potential of art through innovative contemporary performances engaging audiences with uncommon alternatives.

SOUTH EAST COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

South East CDC was set up on 24 November 2001. It oversees the Marine Parade Group Representative Constituency (GRC), East Coast GRC, Fengshan Single Member Constituency (SMC), Mountbatten SMC and MacPherson SMC, and serves a population of about half a million residents. At the helm of South East CDC is Mayor Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman, who steers efforts in achieving the three strategic thrusts that guide the work of the CDCs. Termed the "ABCs of Community Bonding" — Assisting the Needy, Bonding the People and Connecting the Community — South East CDC initiates and manages programmes in collaboration with both community and corporate partners along these three strategic thrusts, so as to nurture a vibrant and self-reliant community.

CREDITS

Games Mistress

Director

Cast

Production &

Stage Management

Crew

Presented by

Part of

Strategic Partner

Venue Partners

Munah Bagharib

Rayann Condy

Julius Foo

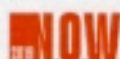
Sharda Harrison

Michael Tan

Ng Siaw Hui

Ng Bi Yu

Kailash



THEATREWORKS TEAM

Artistic Director

General Manager

Administrator

Finance & Accounts

Interns

Ong Keng Sen

Mervyn Quek

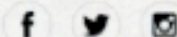
Ong Soomei

Rosalyn Zaidua

Liyana Safari & Shue-er Peralta

www.theatreworks.org.sg, www.72-13.com

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