



*Festival Commission*

The Necessary Stage

### **THE YEAR OF NO RETURN**

21 – 23 May 2020, Thu – Sat, 8pm

Victoria Theatre

Advisory: Some Mature Content. Admission for audience age 13 years and above.

Performed in English, Japanese, Malay and Tagalog with English surtitles

#### Synopsis

**Rising sea levels. Melting polar ice caps. Biodiversity loss. Food shortages resulting in war, strife and refugee crises... Every day, we are inundated with dire consequences of the climate emergency.**

In the face of this threat to humanity, what do we do? Recycle? Switch to environmentally-friendly products? Be a vegan? Stop having children? What can we do?

But, despite evidence of our rapidly changing environment, why do we have such different responses to climate change? What makes one a denialist, or compels another to commit acts of civil disobedience in the name of climate justice?

What are our personal stories and struggles? Can we as individuals, and collectively, affect change? Or will politics and profit dictate the fate of this planet—our only home?

A groundbreaking interdisciplinary collaboration with artists from Japan, Malaysia, The Philippines and Singapore, *The Year of No Return* by Singapore theatre company The Necessary Stage seeks to unravel the complications and contradictions in humanity's responses to climate change, to question whether we live in an age of despair—or one of hope in the dark.

#### Journey with SIFA

As the team for *The Year of No Return* unite to create this production, it is a timely reminder that the threat of climate change is an equaliser that cuts across all social issues.

“It does not segregate by how much wealth you have; or your race, religion, gender, sexual orientation. It is an existential threat that compels us to assess all other social issues we care about through its lens,” says Melissa Lim, General Manager of The Necessary Stage and Dramaturg for *The Year of No Return*.

Gaurav Kripalani, Festival Director of SIFA adds, “It is timely that The Necessary Stage has chosen to address the urgent and important concern of climate change. It is an issue that SIFA attempts to reckon with throughout this year’s our programming, and *The Year of No Return* is significant in the way that it engages with a global discourse by galvanising actors from Singapore and all over the region. The conversation that TNS will be bringing to the stage is indeed a necessary one”.

#### Interviews:

Playwrights Haresh Sharma and Rody Vera as well as Artistic Director Alvin Tan will be available for interviews to share more on the following topics (proposed topics):

- Creative and devising processes for *The Year of No Return*
- A peek into the narratives beyond the science of climate change that may be explored in the work

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**2020**  
**singapore**  
**international**  
**festival of**  
**arts**

**15-31**  
**MAY**

## **ANNEX L**

- The collaborative process with two playwrights creating the work

### **About The Necessary Stage**

Established in 1987 by our Artistic Director Alvin Tan, The Necessary Stage (TNS) is a non-profit theatre company with charity status, with a mission is to create challenging, indigenous and innovative theatre that touches the heart and mind. TNS is supported by the National Arts Council under the Major Company Scheme for the period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2020, and is also the organiser and curator of the annual M1 Singapore Fringe Festival. TNS also has the honour of being the only arts company in Singapore helmed by two Cultural Medallion recipients: Artistic Director Alvin Tan and Resident Playwright Haresh Sharma.

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