

## **Beware of Pity**

by *Schaubühne Berlin & Complicité* (Germany/UK)

Adapted from the book by *Stefan Zweig* (Germany)

Directed by *Simon McBurney* (UK)

16 – 17 May; Thu & Fri, 7.30pm

*Esplanade Theatre*

\$40\*, \$60\*, \$80

Limited student tickets at \$10

*\*Limited concessions available for students, NSFs and seniors*

2h, no intermission

Rating to be advised

Performed in German with English surtitles.

**Stunningly told by one of UK's most respected directors, Simon McBurney, with actors from the famed Schaubühne Berlin, Beware of Pity is an emotionally-gripping play about the treacherous nature of pity.**

How do we confront another person's suffering? Is one's desire to save another person an act of true empathy or merely a balm for one's guilt? These are the questions that haunt *Beware of Pity*, the only novel by Austrian writer Stefan Zweig, and one of the world's most popular writers in the early 20th century.

In this critically-acclaimed stage adaptation, UK director McBurney skilfully unravels the complex themes of moral paralysis and psychological guilt, with equal measures of compassion and persuasion.

Together with the accomplished actors of the Schaubühne Berlin, they create a nuanced, vivid account of Anton Hofmiller, a young Austro-Hungarian cavalry officer, who slides into a destructive romance with Edith, the paralysed daughter of a wealthy family.

Against the backdrop of the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the turn of the First World War, this piercing psychological melodrama about misguided compassion reaches its inexorable end in the tragic dissolution of the couple's relationship.

Triumphantly received at sold-out shows across Europe, *Beware of Pity's* poignant characters and emotional themes speaks with renewed resonance for our complex times.

*"With dazzling virtuosity, McBurney and his team evoke a vanished world." ★★★★★*  
*The Guardian*

*"Takes on the compelling quality of a thriller" ★★★★★* *Financial Times*

*"It draws you in and shakes you" ★★★★★* *The Times*

## **Dionysus**

by Suzuki Company of Toga & Purnati Indonesia (Japan/Indonesia)

Directed by Tadashi Suzuki

17 & 18 May; Fri, 8pm; Sat, 3pm & 8pm

Victoria Theatre

\$40\*, \$60

Limited student tickets at \$10

\*Limited concessions available for students, NSFs and seniors

1h 15m, no intermission

Rating to be advised

Performed in Batak, Japanese, Javanese, Madurese, Manado, Mandarin, Sundanese, Rejang with English surtitles.

**From the hands of visionary director Tadashi Suzuki comes a masterful, cross-cultural adaptation of Greek tragedy, *The Bacchae*, featuring an impressive cast of Indonesian, Japanese and Chinese actors.**

Written near the end of his life, *The Bacchae* has been hailed as one of Athenian playwright Euripides' greatest dramas. Dionysus – the God of wine unleashes his plot to punish Pentheus, King of Thebes, for denying Dionysus's divinity. Madness ensues as Dionysus lures Pentheus to his death, torn to pieces by feverish worshippers, including his own mother, Agave.

One of the most revered voices in theatre today, Suzuki is an eloquent interpreter of Greek tragedy for the contemporary stage. In a unique collaboration with art production house Purnati Indonesia, Suzuki continues to break new ground as he re-envisions this ancient conflict of madness and reason through an intriguing Pan-Asian lens.

*Dionysus* will showcase costumes by Indonesian designer Auguste Soesastro and Suzuki himself, along with a musical score featuring Indonesian instruments composed by Takada Midori.

Following several years of intense training in Suzuki's world-renowned acting method, *Dionysus'* impressive cast of Indonesian, Japanese and Chinese actors are set to dominate the stage with their keen presence.

## **ST/LL**

by *Shiro Takatani (Dumb Type)*

*24 & 25 May; Fri & Sat, 8pm*

*Esplanade Theatre*

*\$40\*, \$60\*, \$80*

*Limited student tickets at \$10*

*\*Limited concessions available for students, NSFs and seniors*

*1h 15m, no intermission*

*Rating to be advised*

In this stunning performance-installation, Japanese artist Shiro Takatani's meditation on silence unfolds in an exquisite multimedia staging, along with music by world-renowned composer, Ryuichi Sakamoto.

An endless veil of water overwhelms the stage. Cutlery, books and glasses, suspended in the air, free fall in slow motion. Voluminous swaths of black are cast against luminous human figures awaiting dinner. Thus, the arresting scenes of Shiro Takatani's performance-installation ST/LL unfold with deliberate and mysterious precision.

A founding member of artist collective Dumb Type, Takatani has been hailed for his inventive use of the media arts for the contemporary stage. With ST/LL, he transports audiences to a hypnotic stage – an exquisite mix of multimedia mirages, edgy lighting and sonic textures – where time and perception are stretched to their very limits.

Performed to rapt audiences in Europe, Tokyo and Taiwan, the sensory pleasures of ST/LL are further savoured with an ambient score by world-renowned composer Ryuichi Sakamoto – Takatani's long-time collaborator – and fellow composers Marihiko Hara and Takuya Minami.

Supple, surprising, and filled with symbolism, ST/LL's shape-shifting scenes and playful visual subversion will remain etched in your mind, long after the curtains fall.

**Ryuichi Sakamoto – Fragments –**

with *Shiro Takatani* (Japan)

28 May; Tue, 8pm

Esplanade Theatre

\$150\*

*\*Limited concessions available for students, NSFs and seniors*

*Approximately 1h 15mins, with no intermission*

**Elegant, nuanced and profoundly moving, *Ryuichi Sakamoto – fragments* is an intimate concert featuring two maestros, iconic composer and musician Ryuichi Sakamoto and Japanese multimedia artist, Shiro Takatani.**

In this concert, Oscar-winning composer Ryuichi Sakamoto joins his friend and long-time collaborator Shiro Takatani, founder of Japanese art collective Dumb Type, to imagine a resplendent performance with a strong focus on improvisation and the sonority of everyday objects.

The performance draws from Sakamoto's latest solo album, *async*, along with newer works.

Described as "an imaginary soundtrack to a film Andrei Tarkovsky never finished", *async* is one of Sakamoto's most deeply personal albums following the maestro's own battle with cancer, and an introspective reflection on the essential nature of life and death.

Sakamoto's intense, masterful playing is heightened by Takatani's cinematic visuals, full of poetic metaphors with its evocation of natural phenomena. The performance pulls the audience into singular, shared moments of Sakamoto's sound creation and exploration.

Don't miss this intimate, sublime performance by one of Asia's most accomplished musicians, and a celebration of a creative friendship spanning decades.

## **Körper**

by *Sasha Waltz & Hans Peter Kuhn* (Germany)

*31 May & 1 Jun; Fri & Sat, 8pm*

*Esplanade Theatre*

*\$40\*, \$60\*, \$80, \$100*

*Limited student tickets at \$10*

*\*Limited concessions available for students, NSFs and seniors*

*1h 30m, no intermission*

*Contains nudity.*

*Ratings to be advised*

Berlin dance-maker Sasha Waltz's provocative signature work, *Körper*, investigates the structure of the body against the mortality of human existence.

Since its debut in 2000, *Körper* has been hailed as one of the most iconic works from Berlin dance-maker Sasha Waltz's career. Celebrated for her groundbreaking choreography, rich theatricality and technical precision, her company *Sasha Waltz & Guests* has collaborated with over 300 artists and ensembles on over 80 productions. Combining dance, body-focused imagery with intimate personal monologues, *Körper* asks the question: what is the body and how is it constructed?

Together with 12 dancers in *Körper*, Waltz creates a series of spectacular living tableaux. The dancers are weighed and measured; bodies are stacked akin to human walls; the performers writhe and squirm, celebrating the body in all its stark corporeality.

Drawing unexpected links between the body with architecture, science and history, Waltz's masterful and incisive analysis of the body makes *Körper* an intellectual tour-de-force. With the world accelerating into the age of genetic manipulation, *Körper*'s clinical investigation of the body speaks with extraordinary relevance for our times.

★★★★ "Provokes wonder, terror and hilarity" *The Guardian*

## **The Mysterious Lai Teck 神秘莱特**

by Ho Tzu Nyen 何子彦(Singapore)

**Festival Commission**

17 - 19 May; Fri & Sat, 8pm; Sun, 5pm & 8pm

SOTA Drama Theatre

\$40\*

*\*Limited concessions available for students, NSFs and seniors*

*\*在籍学生、国民服役人员及乐龄人士能获得有限优惠票*

1hr, no intermission

时长约 1 小时, 无中场休息

**General Ratings**

分级制: 普通级

*Performed in Mandarin with English surtitles.*

*华语演出, 附英文字幕。*

**In *The Mysterious Lai Teck*, acclaimed Singaporean artist Ho Tzu Nyen leads you into the labyrinthine underworld of spies, in this portrait of one of Southeast Asia's most shadowy historical figures.**

Who is Lai Teck?

History remembers him as the leader of the Malayan Communist Party from 1939 to 1947, and a triple agent for the French, British and Japanese secret police. Yet the real man is an enigma. Rumoured to have over 30 pseudonyms, his story is full of gaps and contradictions culled from the accounts of fellow spies and traitors, and various authors of histories.

Blending fact and fictional speculation, visual artist Ho recreates the charged atmosphere of Lai Teck's times in an inventive staging, featuring an animatronic puppet, visual projections and theatrical drapes.

Offering a window into an embattled period of Southeast Asian history, *The Mysterious Lai Teck* is an extended reflection emerging from Ho's long-term project, *The Critical Dictionary of Southeast Asia*.

*The Mysterious Lai Teck* is a thrilling snapshot of the shifting face of Southeast Asia in the Age of Treason, and of a man caught between the ruthless forces of history.

在《神秘莱特》中，备受赞誉的新加坡艺术家何子彦将借由东南亚最神秘隐晦的历史人物之一，带你进入错综复杂的间谍黑社会。

谁是莱特？

根据历史，他是 1939 至 1947 年间的马共领袖，继后显示他是同时效力于法国、英国、日本的三重特工。然而莱特的真实身份始终是个谜。传言指他有超过 30 个化名，根据共事者，包括间谍、叛徒和诸多历史作者的忆述，莱特的故事并不完整，且矛盾重重。土生土长的新加坡视觉艺术家何子彦，将透过创新的舞台表演，运用动漫木偶、视像投影和舞台帷幕，重塑莱特时代谍对谍的那种一触即发的氛围。

《神秘莱特》为大家提供了一个了解东南亚陷入四面楚歌历史时期的一扇窗，也是何子彦对其长期项目《东南亚关键词典》的一次延伸思考。

融合了小说，以及间谍活动、谍报机构与背叛变节等的描述，作品《神秘莱特》是对叛国时期东南亚的变化，以及主人翁夹在无情历史力量中的惊心动魄之写照。

## **A Dream Under the Southern Bough: Reverie 南柯一梦之如梦**

by Toy Factory Productions Ltd (Singapore)

TOY 肥料厂 (新加坡)

**Festival Commission**

31 May – 2 Jun; Fri & Sat, 8pm; Sun, 3pm

Drama Centre Theatre

\$40\*, \$60

Limited student tickets at \$10

学生票: \$10

\*Limited concessions available for students, NSFs and seniors

\*在籍学生、国民服役人员及乐龄人士能获得有限优惠票

2h 20m, including a 20m intermission

时长约2小时20分钟, 包括20分钟中场休息

**General Rating**

分级制: 普通级

Performed in Mandarin with English and Mandarin surtitles.

华语演出, 附英文和中文字幕。

A naval officer, Chun Yu Fen ventures into his fantastical dream in the Ant Kingdom in this ambitious undertaking of adapting Ming Dynasty playwright's Tang Xianzu's masterpiece onto the modern stage by Singaporean company Toy Factory.

The dream world is an often-explored motif in the greatest works of Ming playwright Tang Xianzu, including *A Dream Under the Southern Bough*. Hailed as the Shakespeare of the East, Tang's romantic view of love and dreams were a foil against the feudal conventions of his time.

Bringing Tang's lyrical play to the modern stage, Toy Factory presents the highly-anticipated first half of this epic play in *A Dream Under the Southern Bough: Reverie*, as disgraced naval officer Chun Yu Fen falls asleep and is thrust into the Ant Kingdom.

In the ensuing 22 chapters of this wondrous journey, Chun finds himself in a situation beyond his wildest dreams, now betrothed to the Kingdom's princess and the newly appointed governor of the Southern Bough. It appears to be a time for revelry – but trouble is brewing and inching ever closer.

From the vision of award-winning Goh Boon Teck, don't miss this enchanting installment of *Reverie*, which meets its dramatic culmination in *Existence*, to be presented in SIFA 2020.

TOY 肥料厂根据明代剧作家汤显祖的史诗剧作《南柯记》，悉心改编的《南柯一梦》二部曲之如梦，将继续主人翁淳于棼在其蚂蚁王国的梦幻旅程。

梦，是明代剧作家汤显祖最为珍爱的主题，在他最伟大的几部作品包括《南柯记》在内，都与梦相关。有东方莎士比亚之誉的汤显祖，对爱情与梦境的浪漫观点与他所处封建时代的思维大相径庭。

TOY 肥料厂再次将汤显祖的如歌作品搬上现代戏剧舞台，观众将跟随主人翁淳于棼的脚步入梦蚂蚁王国，开始一场人生的如梦盛宴。

在这一段奇幻旅程中，淳于棼赫然发现自己身处在一个超出他想象的梦境里——自己不仅同公主订亲，还被委任为南柯郡太守。然而，在这个看似值得狂欢之际，种种的麻烦与问题正悄悄地酝酿逼近。

依旧由吴文德执导的《南柯一梦》之如梦，将继续婉约旖旎之姿演绎那种似乎了悟人生的感触。同时值得期待的是，**2020**年推出的巅峰完结篇《南柯一梦》之辱梦——将带您回归现实世界，触目蓦然一惊，人生倏忽，名利虚无。

**Displaced Persons' Welcome Dinner**

by *Checkpoint Theatre* (Singapore)  
**Festival Commission**

24 – 26 May; Fri & Sat, 8pm; Sun, 3pm

*Victoria Theatre*

\$40\*, \$60

*Limited student tickets at \$10*

*\*Limited concessions available for students, NSFs and seniors*

*2h, no intermission*

*Rating to be advised*

**From critically-acclaimed theatre company Checkpoint Theatre comes *Displaced Persons' Welcome Dinner*, a powerful new play about humanitarian workers caught in the crosshairs of a crisis.**

A crisis tests the resolve of the international staff of a refugee camp. Can they stay sane, stay alive, and stay strong when their minds, bodies, and spirits are called upon to do the impossible?

In a multidisciplinary theatrical work set against the backdrop of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, *Displaced Persons' Welcome Dinner*, commissioned by SIFA 2019, investigates the realities of the aid industry. With sensitivity and nuance, playwright Huzir Sulaiman delves beneath media portrayals to discover a world where good people struggle with treacherous politics and flawed institutions.

Directed by Claire Wong, this unflinching examination of the idealism and heroism of humanitarian workers raises vital questions about our world – from the nature of conflict, the toxic nature of institutions, and the challenges we face when confronted with powers larger than ourselves.

This plays contains mature content including dialogue relating to sexual assault.

## **Crowd**

by *Gisèle Vienne* (France)

1 & 2 Jun; Sat & Sun, 8pm

Victoria Theatre

\$40\*, \$60

Limited student tickets at \$10

*\*Limited concessions available for students, NSFs and seniors*

1h 30m, no intermission

Rating to be advised

***Crowd* is choreographer-director Gisèle Vienne's deep dive into the dark side within us. Inspired by the techno rave scene of 1990s Berlin, 15 dancers create temporal distortions, alternate realities and dreamscapes, exposing the core of our "inner selves".**

With a background in music, puppetry, philosophy and the visual arts, Gisèle Vienne is recognised for her unique theatrical language that melds a fine arts sensitivity with a cinematic eye.

In *Crowd*, Vienne unleashes the cathartic power of the stage and draws you irresistibly into its scenes of visual anarchy. Lifting the curtain on the everyday identities of 15 young revellers at an open-field party, Vienne lays bare their individual and collective emotions to confront us with the buried side of their inner narratives.

Driven by a mesmerising electronic dance music selection including techno anthems spanning from Underground Resistance to Jeff Mills— the uncanny movements of bodies, together with rhythmic distortions and optical effects, plays tricks with the viewer and makes our linear perception of time stand still.

Don't miss this hypnotic work—at once an intoxicating musical outing, a visual feast, and a searing dissection of the violence at the heart of the modern human condition.

## **Bedtime Stories**

by URLAND (The Netherlands)

21 – 26 May; Tue - Sun, 7.30pm

Meeting point: The Plaza, National Library Building

100 Victoria Street, National Library Board

\$35\*

*\*Limited concessions available for students, NSFs and seniors*

1h 15m, no intermission

Rating to be advised

**When was the last time someone told you a story under the stars? Let Dutch actor Thomas Dudkiewicz lead you into a strange and brilliantly dark world in *Bedtime Stories*.**

“It was a dark and lonesome night...” so begins actor Thomas Dudkiewicz in *Bedtime Stories*. Conceived by Dutch collective URLAND, this pitch-perfect narrated performance takes its inspiration from radio plays, using just Dudkiewicz’s voice and well-timed sound effects to bring to life an enchanting cast of characters.

Meet Lilly, a precocious young girl, her father, Max and doting grandfather George, both master storytellers. Every night before bed, Lilly enters a fantastical universe created just for her, where she encounters a host of strange and menacing creatures.

Laugh, squirm and dream along as *Bedtime Stories* catapults towards its unexpected ending, keeping you on edge from scene to scene at a secret location!

## **Frogman**

by *curious directive* (UK)

21 - 26 May; Tue - Thu, 8pm; Fri, 8pm; Sat, 2pm, 8pm; Sun, 1pm

SOTA Studio Theatre

\$40\*

*\*Limited concessions available for students, NSFs and seniors*

*Admission only for audience ages 13 years and above*

Fusing a groundbreaking virtual reality experience with a thrilling murder mystery, Frogman by critically-acclaimed UK company curious directive takes you to the cutting edge of live storytelling today.

Enter the world of Frogman – a supernatural thriller where the skeletons of childhood reappear in the present.

It's 2019, and Meera, a coral reef scientist, is informed by detectives that her father is being charged for the murder of her childhood friend, Ashleigh Richardson, who disappeared in 1995. Springing back and forth between two timelines, the mystery unfolds through childhood sleepovers with young Meera and her friends, to an underwater search-and-rescue mission. It's a race against time to find the missing girl.

At the crossroads of contemporary performance and cutting-edge technology, Frogman is a coming-of-age drama exploring the fragility of the childhood imagination. UK company curious directive's pioneering integration of live theatre and virtual reality will open your mind to the possibilities for storytelling in the digital age.

*"...beautiful to behold" The Stage, UK*

*"curious directive are theatre pioneers." The Daily Telegraph, UK*

*"Touching and nostalgic" The Independent, UK*

## **Bill Frisell Trio**

featuring *Rudy Royston & Thomas Morgan* (USA)

*29 May; Tue, 8pm*

*Victoria Theatre*

*\*\$50*

*Limited student tickets at \$10*

*\*Limited concessions available for students, NSFs and seniors*

*Duration 1h 30m, no intermission*

**From mellow jazz tones to gorgeous lyrical harmonies, Grammy-award winning composer and celebrated guitarist Bill Frisell triumphantly takes the stage in this Singapore premiere..**

For over 40 years, the extraordinarily original and prolific Bill Frisell has been a seminal figure in modern American music. From jazz, bluegrass, country, rock and roll, to folk, interspaced with bursts of the avant-garde, Frisell's sound traverses the sweep of contemporary American musical history, yet remains instantly recognisable and wonderfully intimate.

Yet, what makes Frisell a joy to watch is his free and improvisatory style, one which continues to astonish audiences around the world. His inimitable guitar skills are at the centre of it all – producing an infinite spectrum of reverberating chords from a single electric guitar.

Joined by Thomas Morgan, one of the most in-demand bassists on the international scene, and Rudy Royston, a consummate drummer in the jazz world, *Bill Frisell Trio* will feature a lively improvisatory set and some of Frisell's most iconic compositions.

Enjoy a wonderful evening with these world-class musicians as they bring to the stage their sheer love and passion for music.

## **Peter and the Wolf**

*by Silo Theatre (New Zealand)*

Composed by *Sergei Prokofiev*

Adapted by *Sophie Roberts* and *Leon Radojkovic*

*18-20 May; Sat - Mon, 10am & 3pm*

*KC Arts Centre*

*Home of SRT*

*\$30, \$40\**

*\*Family package of 4 available at \$120*

*45m, no intermission*

*Suitable for audiences age 5 years and above*

**A story of courage, adventure and friendship, this award-winning adaptation of Sergei Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* is a magical treat for young and old with music, puppetry and live animation.**

*Peter and the Wolf* is a beloved musical fairy tale written by Sergei Prokofiev in 1936, originally intended to teach children about the instruments in an orchestra. In this award-winning contemporary adaptation by New Zealand director Sophie Roberts, the orchestra is replaced with a six-piece band and the story is told as a visual spectacle through the use of live animation and puppetry.

After travelling across the world to live with his grumpy Grandfather, Peter is struggling to make friends in his new home. When a wolf escapes from the local zoo, Peter sees an opportunity to become a hero and sets off across the city to capture the wolf. Follow Peter's journey into the unknown through the lens of a video camera as it discovers a magical world filled with puppets, miniature set pieces and music.

Don't miss this enduring tale for anyone aged five and up.

## **WE CAN DANCE**

by *Daily tous les jours*, featuring *ScRach MarcS* (Canada/Singapore)

*10 May – 2 June; Daily, Various Timings*  
*The Plaza, National Library Building*  
*Free*

We Can Dance invites Singaporeans to transform their city walls into a collective dance!

This large-scale interactive installation, by Canadian artists *Daily tous les jours*, was inspired by an earlier creation called *McLarena* and explores the principle of a “canon” where performers reproduce in regular intervals parts of a song or choreography.

With original choreography created in collaboration with local dancers, *ScRach MarcS*, for SIFA 2019, bring your dance moves and get animated in this free-to-public imitation game!

Step into the recording booth and record your dance following the original choreography, or the previous participant’s interpretation of it; then watch a giant, dynamic version of yourself join the troupe of We Can “Dancers”, projected on the walls of the National Library Plaza.

Based in Montreal, *Daily tous les jours* is an interaction design and art studio, creating large-scale collective experiences in public spaces since 2010.

## **Oreste by Ifigenia**

by *Tan Shou Chen* and *Ng Tian Hui* (Singapore)

25 & 26 May; Sat, 8pm; Sun, 5pm

Chamber, Festival House

\$20\*

*\*Limited concessions available for students, NSFs and seniors*

*1h 20m, no intermission*

*Rating to be advised.*

Ifigenia gave herself to the sacrificial sword so the Greeks could launch their war against Troy. Saved by Artemis, she becomes the priestess for the city of Tauris. Now in charge, Ifigenia faces an impossible choice: follow the law and slay her unfortunate brother, Oreste, or summon everything she has to save her only kin.

This new work by theatre-maker Tan Shou Chen and music director Ng Tian Hui responds to George Frideric Handel's opera *Oreste*. In Handel's treatment, Ifigenia is portrayed as a supporting character in Oreste's journey. Against the backdrop of Euripedes' *Ifigenia Among the Taurines*, this staging turns the spotlight to this enigmatic woman, using Handel's music to tell the story of Oreste according to Ifigenia, with the opera dramatising the relationship between these two central figures.

## **100 Keyboards**

By ASUNA (Japan)

### ***Exhibition***

*16 - 19 May; Thu – Sun; Various Timings*

*Gallery II, Festival House*

*Free*

### ***Performance***

*17 - 20 May; Mon, 3pm; Fri, 8pm; Sat, 7pm & 10pm; Sun, 8pm*

*Gallery II, Festival House*

*\$20\**

*\*Limited concessions available for students, NSFs and seniors*

*1h 20m, no intermission*

*Rating to be advised*

*Audiences may be required to sit on the floor*

Making its Singapore premiere at SIFA 2019, Japanese avant-garde sound artist ASUNA presents his landmark work and site-specific listening experience, *100 Keyboards*. A stalwart of Tokyo's experimental music scene, ASUNA's playful genre-bending sonic experiments cross from ambient to hip-hop to low-fi pop and improvisation.

ASUNA's creative genius is on full display in *100 Keyboards*. With 100 battery-operated analogue keyboards, he manipulates sound waves to create a intriguing and fascinating ambient wash of overlapping notes and sonic textures that envelop you from every direction. Listen to the subtle variations of sound as they vary based on your location in the performance space.

## **Impulse**

by *Varsha* (Singapore)

*1 & 2 Jun; Sat and Sun, 8pm*

*Play Den, Festival House*

*\$20\**

*\*Limited concessions available for students, NSFs and seniors.*

*1h 30m, no intermission*

*Rating to be advised*

*Performed in English, Tamil, Telugu, Hindi*

Come witness virtuosity and joyful music-making with *Varsha*, an up-and-coming local group who blend their musical roots in the Indian culture with rhythmic music as the foundation for their compelling improvisations. Since their debut in 2014, *Varsha* has been pushing the boundaries of tradition with its synergy of styles, from jazz, classical Indian and popular Indian music.

In this performance, *Varsha* will premiere new original compositions, along with the group's arrangements of classic jazz standards. Adding to their unique sound is veteran guitarist Paul Danial and guest saxophonist Tim O'Dwyer. Translating their enthusiasm to audiences, don't miss this inspiring night of music and improvisation!

## **Asian Dramaturgs' Network Conference 2019: Dramaturgy and the Human Condition**

*25 & 26 May; Sat & Sun, various sessions between 9am - 6pm  
Blue Room, The Arts House*

**Dramaturgs work with choices and actions – the ones made by a creative team working on a performance, and their own in relation to how they intend to play their role(s), and what they hope to achieve.**

To act with purpose and meaning, dramaturgs must be deeply interested in the human condition, using their knowledge, experience and relationships with performance and artists to produce particular affects and effects.

*Dramaturgy and the Human Condition* engages with key questions for the dramaturg in Asia in an increasingly complex world in need of critical action and speech. Over two days, dramaturgs, artmakers and observers from the region explore performance-making in relation to crucial concerns about being human, raising possible frameworks for responding to change and choice from an Asian perspective.

**An Asian Dramaturgs' Network programme for SIFA 2019.**

## **In Conversation with Tadashi Suzuki (Japan)**

*18 May; Sat, 4.30pm  
Blue Room, Festival House  
Free by registration at [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

*1h 30m, no intermission  
Rating to be advised  
Patrons are advised to be seated 15 minutes before the programme begins.  
Unclaimed seats may be given away to walk-in patrons.*

Join us for the fascinating opportunity to get up-close with the world-renowned director, whose thinking and practice has had a powerful influence on theatre.

As founder and director of the Suzuki Company of Toga (SCOT), Suzuki's activities reflect an aggressive approach to dealing with the fundamental issues of our times. His past works, which include *The Trojan Women*, *King Lear* and *Madame de Sade* reflect a concern with structure of the theatre group, the creation and use of theatrical space, and the overcoming of national and cultural barriers in creating work that is truly universal.

## **In Conversation: Ho Tzu Nyen (Singapore)**

*19 May; Sun, 2pm*

*Living Room, Festival House*

*Free with registration at [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

*1h 30m, no intermission*

*Rating to be advised*

*Patrons are advised to be seated 15 minutes before the programme begins.*

*Unclaimed seats may be given away to walk-in patrons.*

Acclaimed Singaporean artist Ho Tzu Nyen makes films, installations and theatrical performances that often begin as engagements with historical and philosophical texts and artifacts. His recent works are populated by ambiguous and metamorphic figures such as the weretiger (*One or Several Tigers*, 2017), the triple agent (*The Nameless*, 2015) and the traitor (*The Mysterious Lai Teck*, 2018) under the umbrella of his on-going project *The Critical Dictionary of Southeast Asia*.

Ho sheds light on his creative process and critical investigations into Southeast Asia, which serve as the material for his latest work *The Mysterious Lai Teck*. Gain an appreciation for the richness of Ho's artistic practice and insights into some of his most representative works.

## **In Conversation with Shiro Takatani (Japan)**

Moderated by *Akiko Takeshita* (Producer, Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media)

*25 May; Sat, 2pm*

*Living Room, Festival House*

*Free by registration at [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

*1 h 30m, no intermission*

*Patrons are advised to be seated 15 minutes before the programme begins.*

*Unclaimed seats may be given away to walk-in patrons.*

From installation, exhibitions to performance, Japanese artist Shiro Takatani is known for his use of multimedia to create multidisciplinary, visually-arresting works. One of the founders of experimental Japanese art collective Dumb Type, Takatani also works as a solo artist. Takatani's evolution as an artist has also seen him collaborate with cutting-edge musicians like Ryuichi Sakamoto and Rei Harakami.

Join Takatani in this conversation about his artistic influences, his views on the use of multimedia in his artistic creations, and his collaborations with diverse artists.

**In Conversation with Bill Frisell (USA)**

Moderated by *Associate Professor Dr Tony Makarome* (Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music)

*30 May; Thu, 7.30pm  
Living Room, Festival House  
Free by registration at [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

*1hr 30m, no intermission  
Patrons are advised to be seated 15 minutes before the programme begins.  
Unclaimed seats may be given away to walk-in patrons.*

With a celebrated career spanning over four decades, the Grammy-award winning guitarist and composer Bill Frisell is recognised as one of America's most productive performing artists. A seminal figure in contemporary American musical history, Frisell's musical style runs the gamut from jazz, bluegrass, country, rock and roll, to folk, to even the avant-garde.

In this rare opportunity, meet the maestro in person to experience his passion and dedication to music. Learn about his life, influences and his unique creative approach defined by an extraordinary gift for fusing diverse musical styles to generate his own original sound.

## **In Conversation with Sasha Waltz (Germany)**

*1 Jun; Sat, 2pm*

*Blue Room, Festival House*

*Free by registration at [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

*1hr 30m, no intermission*

*Patrons are advised to be seated 15 minutes before the programme begins.*

*Unclaimed seats may be given away to walk-in patrons.*

Join us for this illuminating chat with Berlin-based choreographer Sasha Waltz, as she discusses her prolific career, diverse collaborations and approach in understanding the potential and multifarious dimensions of the human body.

Aweing audiences with some of the most dramatic spectacles on the contemporary dance stage, Waltz's choreography is defined by its body-focused imagery and exquisite technical precision. Her internationally renowned dance pieces include *Travelogue*, *Körper* as well as the immersive dance installation *inside out*. With her company *Sasha Waltz & Guests*, Waltz has collaborated with over 300 guest artists to create critically-acclaimed work.

## **An Overview of Ming Dynasty Drama: Focusing on Tang Xianzu and His Plays**

by *Dr Wang Bing* (Singapore)

*19 May; Sun, 11am*

*Blue Room, Festival House*

*Free by registration at [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

*2h, no intermission*

*Patrons are advised to be seated 15 minutes before the programme begins.*

*Unclaimed seats may be given away to walk-in patrons.*

*Conducted in Mandarin.*

Amongst the dramatists of the Ming Dynasty, Tang Xianzu is considered the greatest playwright. Highly revered in ancient literary and dramatic traditions, Tang is celebrated especially for his *Four Dreams' plays: The Purple Hairpin, The Peony Pavilion, A Dream under the Southern Bough, and Dream of Handan.*

This talk will trace the artistic evolution of opera during the Ming Dynasty, while contextualising Tang Xianzu's several dramatic masterpieces and his achievements within the historical context of his time.

明代戏曲概观：以汤显祖及其剧作为重点

有明一代，元杂剧由于南方戏曲形式的盛行而逐渐式微，最终北方刚健明快的音乐让位于南方柔和优美的旋律。南戏和传奇尤其受到知识精英、学者和文人的青睐。除了四大南戏（荆、刘、拜、杀）外，高明的《琵琶记》是第一部赢得文人称赞的南戏杰作。事实上，在明代戏剧家中，汤显祖被认为是最伟大的剧作家，在古代文学史和戏剧传统中备受推崇，特别是他的“临川四梦”传奇：《紫钗记》、《牡丹亭》、《南柯记》和《邯郸记》。本讲座将在描述明代戏曲发展的基础上，回顾汤显祖的几部戏剧杰作及其成就。

**Talk: From Traditional to Contemporary – A Producer’s Insight**

by *Restu Imansari Kusumaningrum* (Indonesia)

*20 May; Mon, 11am*

*Living Room, Festival House*

*Free with registration at [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

*1hr, no intermission*

*Patrons are advised to be seated 15 minutes before the programme begins.*

*Unclaimed seats may be given away to walk-in patrons.*

An experienced Indonesian arts producer and the founding artistic director of the Bali Purnati Foundation, Restu Imansari Kusumaningrum has an extensive background as a producer for dance and theatre. She has worked on Tadashi Suzuki's *Dionysus*, Robert Wilson's *I La Galigo*, and the Indonesian National Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2013 and 2015. In this talk, Restu shares her insights into her working process and her experience with artists in creating contemporary works from traditional art forms and practices.

**A Legend Reimagined**

by *Chong Tze Chien/The Finger Players* (Singapore)

**SIFA 2020 Festival Commission**

*25 May; Sat, 11am*

*Living Room, Festival House*

*Free with registration at [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

*1h, no intermission*

*Patrons are advised to be seated 15 minutes before the programme begins.*

*Unclaimed seats may be given away to walk-in patrons.*

Over the past year, Director/Playwright Chong Tze Chien of The Finger Players has been working on *Oiwa* - a new work commissioned by SIFA in 2020. This new and original work is a reimagining of a classic Japanese ghost story and features a team of collaborators from Japan and Singapore. In this sharing session, Tze Chien will talk about the rehearsal process, staging devices and demonstrate staging and puppetry concepts which the creative team is exploring. Join us to discover what goes into the making of a Finger Players production.

**Anticipating *The Year of No Return*: An Insight into the Creative Process**

by *The Necessary Stage* (Singapore)

**SIFA 2020 Festival Commission**

*1 Jun; Sat, 4pm,*

*Living Room, Festival House*

*Free with registration at [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

*1hr, no intermission*

*Patrons are advised to be seated 15 minutes before the programme begins.*

*Unclaimed seats may be given away to walk-in patrons.*

Get a glimpse into the creative process and research behind *The Necessary Stage's The Year of No Return*, a Festival Commission for 2020. Co-written by Haresh Sharma and Rody Vera, and directed by Alvin Tan, the interdisciplinary production is an Asian collaboration featuring artists from Singapore, Malaysia, Japan and The Philippines.

Failure to curb carbon emissions by 2020 will mean we cannot keep global warming below 2 degrees Celsius—the threshold that represents the point of no return.

In this presentation, Alvin Tan and Haresh Sharma of *The Necessary Stage*, along actor Siti Khalijah Zainal will share their creative processes for *The Year of No Return*, as well as provide a peek into the narratives beyond the science of climate change that may be explored in the work.

## **Sound - A Mutual Tuning**

By *Chong Li-Chuan* (Singapore)

*19 May; Sun, 4pm*

*Living Room, Festival House*

*Free with registration at [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

*1h 30m, no intermission*

*Patrons are advised to be seated 15 minutes before the programme begins.*

*Unclaimed seats may be given away to walk-in patrons.*

In this talk, composer and sound designer Chong Li-Chuan introduces the concept of acoustic ecology and the different modes of listening that often go unnoticed or unexamined in our everyday lives. Chong has collaborated with practitioners in theatre, dance, visual arts, architecture and spoken word on recent local works such as *Cut Kafka!*, *How Did The Cat Get So Fat?* and *Lear Is Dead*,

Chong will allow audiences to gain a deeper understanding of the artistic expressions explored in SIFA 2019's programme *ST/LL* by Shiro Takatani and Ryuichi Sakamoto. Chong discusses key concepts including the oscillation between the quotidian and the sublime, uncertainty and predictability, and the confluence of movement, sound, and image both concrete and abstract.

## **One Day We'll Understand**

by *Sim Chi Yin*

*24 & 25 May; Fri & Sat, 7.30pm*

*Play Den, Festival House*

*Free with registration at [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

*Patrons are advised to be seated 15 minutes before the programme begins.*

*Unclaimed seats may be given away to walk-in patrons.*

*One Day We'll Understand* takes photographer Sim Chi Yin's family history as a point of departure and explores a largely hidden chapter of the Cold War in Southeast Asia, in what is today Malaysia and Singapore.

In this performative reading, Nobel Peace Prize photographer for 2017 Chi Yin uncovers the unspoken story of her paternal grandfather, a leftist deported to China during the Malayan Emergency, and who was later executed by the anti-Communist Kuomintang soldiers. As she digs through oral histories and personal archives of a generation of anti-colonial activists, more questions emerge. In this reading, she asks: whose past is it? Whose truth? Whose fragile memories?

The reading will be followed by a conversation between Chi Yin and curator Sam I-Shan on her on-going work to archive these counter-narratives of the region.

## **The Nameless & The Name**

By *Ho Tzu Nyen* (Singapore)

23 May - 2 Jun; Daily, 10am -10pm

Gallery II, Festival House

Free

This video exhibition by Singaporean filmmaker and visual artist Ho Tzu Nyen features *The Nameless & The Name*, two films that offer a glimpse into Ho's investigation into the history of the Malayan Communist Party. They reflect the evolution of Ho's thoughts culminating in Ho's latest work, *The Mysterious Lai Teck*.

*The Nameless* focuses on Lai Teck, the Secretary-General of the Malayan Communist Party from 1939 to 1947. Revealed as a triple agent, Lai Teck's story is told with a series of stolen images, featuring a shape-shifting actor from a land of multiple allegiances. *The Name* is constructed out of film footage from various Western films showing actors engaged in the act of writing. It features excerpts from various books "written" by Gene Z. Hanrahan. Amongst them is an early historical account of the Malaysian Communist Party, with access to secret documents out of reach to others. Some suspect Hanrahan to be a cover for a secret organisation with links to the CIA.

**Producing Art & Technology - The YCAM Model**

by *Akiko Takeshita & Clarence Ng* (Japan & Singapore)

*23 May; Thu, 7.30pm*

*Blue Room, Festival House*

*Free by registration at [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

*1h 30m, no intermission*

*Patrons are advised to be seated 15 minutes before the programme begins.*

*Unclaimed seats may be given away to walk-in patrons.*

Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM] is an innovative producing arts centre in Japan that has been at the forefront of exploring collaborative projects where media technology, science, and arts, education and community intersect. In this session, Producer Akiko Takeshita and Project Manager Clarence Ng will give an introduction to YCAM and share their experience on the YCAM production process where professionals from multidisciplinary fields are dynamically integrated for various output

**Plunge: New Ways to Talk about Theatre**

By *Arts Republic* (Singapore)

*16 May – 2 Jun; Thu – Sun, Various timings*

*House Pour, Festival House*

*Free*

*For dates and timings of the post-show discussions, please visit [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

Have you fallen in love with a work of art, only to find yourself wanting to extend the experience by sharing it with others? Plunge: New Ways to Talk about Theatre is an exciting platform bringing people together to share their post-show musings from SIFA 2019 in a casual and fun setting.

Designed to be a cross between a review discussion and post-show discussions, mingle and chat with fellow art-lovers at these informal sessions. Join us to deconstruct a theatre piece to make meaning for yourself and share your perceptions and interpretations of the work with others.

## **Critics Live: A post-show response to Displaced Persons' Welcome Dinner**

By *Arts Equator* (Singapore)

*25 May 2019; Sat, 10pm  
Living Room, Festival House  
Free by registration at [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

*1h, no intermission*

*Patrons are advised to be seated 15 minutes before the programme begins.  
Unclaimed seats may be given away to walk-in patrons.*

## **Asian Arts Media Roundtable**

*24 - 25 May; Fri – Sat  
F309, LASALLE College of the Art*

The Asian Arts Media Roundtable is a two-day meeting of arts editors, publishers, reviewers, arts journalists, critics, bloggers, podcasters, videocasters, academics and arts makers from Southeast Asia, East Asia and Asia-Pacific. Presented by ArtsEquator, the Roundtable is the first step towards establishing a network of arts media organisations and individual arts writers in the region that will have multiple impacts across the creation, discourse and consumption of the arts. There will be two sessions open to the public: a panel discussion on the role of arts media, and a public post-show discussion following Checkpoint Theatre's Displaced Persons' Welcome Dinner written by Huzir Sulaiman. For more information, visit [www.artsequator.com/aamr](http://www.artsequator.com/aamr).

## **Culture, Theatre, Body: The Works of Tadashi Suzuki**

*By Dr Lee Chee Keng*

*18 May; Sat, 1.30pm*

*Living Room, Festival House*

*Free with registration at [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

*1hr, no intermission*

*Patrons are advised to be seated 15 minutes before the programme begins.*

*Unclaimed seats may be given away to walk-in patrons.*

In this talk, Dr Lee Chee Keng, Assistant Professor of Theatre Practice at Yale NUS College, discusses director Tadashi Suzuki's creative practice, aesthetics and social ideas in relation to his company's base within the isolated mountain of Toga away from the Japan's major metropolitan cities.

Toga, a remote village in the mountains of Toyama prefecture along the coast of the sea of Japan, is home to the Suzuki Company of Toga (SCOT). Converting farm houses built in the traditional "praying hands" (*gassho-zukuri*) style into a theatre, Suzuki's company base has grown into a creative space for international artists and audiences to create, train, watch performances and recharge.

**Festival Closing Concert**

with *Singapore Symphony Orchestra*

Conducted by *Joshua Tan*

Featuring *Elena Wang, Julia Abueva* and *Sean Ghazi* (Singapore)

*2 Jun; Sun, 6pm*

*Shaw Foundation Symphony Stage, Singapore Botanic Gardens*

*Free*

*1h 15m, no intermission*

*Concert-goers are advised to take public transport to the venue.*

In this celebratory closing to SIFA 2019, this free concert welcomes back to Singapore leading vocalists Elena Wang, Julia Abueva, and Sean Ghazi to perform in an enchanted evening of musical tunes. SIFA is also delighted to present the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Joshua Tan. This is a special opportunity to hear your favourite songs performed with a full orchestra. Perfect for families, young and old.

**Talking About Three Sisters**

by *Nelson Chia/Nine Years Theatre* (Singapore)

**SIFA 2020 Festival Commission**

*25 May; Sat, 5pm*

*Living Room, Festival House*

*Free with registration at [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

*1h, no intermission*

*Patrons are advised to be seated 15 minutes before the programme begins.*

*Unclaimed seats may be given away to walk-in patrons.*

In the style of Nine Years Theatre's (NYT) signature Drink and Talk sessions – a causal dialogue with the audience over drinks – Artistic Director Nelson Chia will talk about NYT's long working relationship with the SITI Company of New York. In particular, Chia will discuss how the two companies met, their training and creative processes, and their decision to embark on a work together, to adapt Anton Chekhov's *Three Sisters*.

Audiences will get an insight into the conception of *Three Sisters* – to be presented at SIFA 2020 – and what embarking on a collaboration crossing language, cultures, geographical space and generations mean to both companies.

## **Singular Screens**

Curated By *Asian Film Archive*

*16 May - 2 Jun, Various timings  
Screening Room, Festival House  
Oldham Theatre, National Archives of Singapore*

*Films line-up to be announced in March. For more information on the schedule, please visit [sifa.sg](http://sifa.sg)*

The film programme for SIFA 2019, curated by the Asian Film Archive (AFA), features an international selection of exceptional new works celebrating independent and singular visions from Singapore and across the world. Valuing the ingenious and the risk-taking in cinema, *Singular Screens* hopes not only to be diverse in representation but bold in putting together its palette of cinematic adventures.

Screenings will be held at the Screening Room at the Festival House and AFA's first ever resident cinema, the newly opened Oldham Theatre, located at the recently-renovated National Archives of Singapore.

**De Relaxerette**

By Arjan Kruidhof and *Explore-the-North* (The Netherlands)

*10 - 20 May; Daily, various timings*

*Our Tampines Hub*

*Free*

*23 May - 2 Jun; Daily, various timings*

*The Plaza, National Library Building*

*Free*

Spend a dreamy afternoon with *De Relaxerette*, a charming revolving installation conceived by Dutch artist Arjan Kruidhof.

You're invited to lie down, grab your headphones and close your eyes, as you sink into this magical merry-go-round of hammocks. As you spin, listen to a collection of sounds and stories, and soak in the riveting rush of words by Dutch and Singaporean storytellers, narrated in English. Plan your perfect escape with *De Relaxerette* as we take you away, for just a moment, from this overflowing world.