

**Intercultural Theatre Institute Ltd**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**for the financial period ending 31 March 2024**

Intercultural Theatre Institute Ltd was incorporated on 23 September 2008 as a company limited by guarantee (i.e., non-profit-distributing), and registered as a charity on 17 November 2009. It was approved as an Institution of Public Character (IPC) with effect from 1 January 2010, with the most recent extension being from 25 February 2024 to 24 February 2025. The name was changed on 27 December 2010, from Theatre Training & Research Space (Singapore) Ltd. ITI's governing instrument is a Constitution.

Unique Entity Number: 200818680E (UEN)

Registered address: 11 Upper Wilkie Road, Singapore 228120

CPE registration period: 18/05/24 to 17/05/28

## **OBJECTIVES**

The main objectives of Intercultural Theatre Institute Ltd are:

- to promote education and training in theatre, performance and performing arts; and
- to provide research in theatre, theatre training, performance, performance training, performing arts and performing arts training.

## **MISSION**

To nurture skills, technical competence, critical awareness, social engagement and artistic autonomy in theatre artists so that they are capable of contributing significantly to the theatre-making processes and cultures of their own communities.

## **PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES**

The training of theatre actors through the 3-year, full-time programme known as the Professional Diploma in Intercultural Theatre (Acting), research through the Asian Intercultural Conference held once every 3 years.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Chairman: Mr. Andrew Nai (appointed 1 September 2022)  
Director at Aura Private Equity, Aura Group  
oversees Finance

Directors: Mr. Arun Mahizhnan (appointed 23 Sept 2008)  
Special Research Advisor, Institute of Policy Studies  
oversees Nominations/Board succession, and Reviews of processes/internal audit

Mr. Chew Kheng Chuan (appointed 23 Sept 2008)  
Independent consultant in philanthropy  
oversees Fundraising

Ms. Loh Chay Koon Winifred (appointed 2 July 2018)  
Director, LeadForte Consulting  
oversees HR

Dr. Nazry Bahrawi (appointed 1 August 2019)  
Senior Lecturer, Singapore University of Technology and Design  
oversees Core Programme

Ms. Jean Tay (appointed 1 February 2023)  
Playwright  
oversees Programmes

The Board reviews and approves the strategic plan and annual budget prepared by the management and reviews the performance of the key executive staff. No staff sit on the Board. Board members do not receive remuneration.

The Board takes an active approach to the selection, recruitment, and induction of new Board members, with ongoing succession planning. Mr Arun and Mr Chew have served since incorporation and therefore for more than 10 years. ITI requires them to stay on until 2026 because of their significant and valuable contributions as directors, the small size of the board, and the need to maintain continuity. A plan for their succession is in place, and timelines have been extended up to 2026 and 2027 because of disruptions from the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to replace 1 key executive staff in the coming financial year. Evaluation of Board effectiveness is done every 2 years by the Board in group discussion.

4 Board meetings were held in the year. There was full attendance except Dr Nazry was unable to attend because of working overseas, and Ms Loh and Mr Chew were unable to attend 1 each. In addition to Board meetings, each Director attended working committee meetings and working meetings with ITI staff, achieving full attendance.

**Auditor:** Mr. Liaw Wei Kee of JCP Trust PAC

**Bankers:** United Overseas Bank Ltd  
Standard Chartered Bank (Singapore) Ltd

## KEY EXECUTIVE STAFF

Mr T. Sasitharan, Director

- Appointed 1 Dec 2009
- Co-founded the Theatre Training & Research Programme (TTRP), the predecessor of ITI, and was Director from its founding to its acquisition by ITI in 2009; previously Artistic Director of The Substation; has experience in acting, theatre, and critical writing.

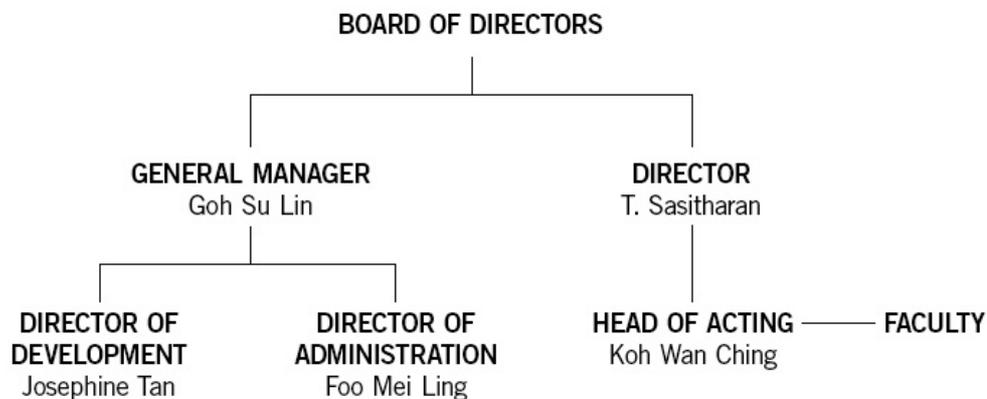
Ms Goh Su Lin, General Manager

- Appointed 1 Dec 2009
- General Manager of TTRP from 2001 to 2009; previously General Manager of The Necessary Stage Ltd; has experience in business management, curriculum development, education and training.

## ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

From 1 July 2023, Acting/Movement Teacher Koh Wan Ching was appointed Head of Acting, reporting to Director T. Sasitharan, and with responsibility for the Professional Diploma in Intercultural Theatre (Acting).

Also in July 2023, Director of Administration Hannah Tan retired, and Asst Director Foo Mei Ling was promoted to Director from 1 February 2024.



## REVIEW OF THE PERIOD

1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Intercultural Theatre Institute (“ITI”) continued its theatre training work in the Professional Diploma in Intercultural Theatre (Acting), as well as work towards establishing longer term sustainability.

5 students graduated in December 2023 with the Professional Diploma in Intercultural Theatre (Acting). They had completed 2 public performances - original play *The Chair* directed by Li Xie, presented at the Drama Centre Black Box; and *Fall & The Music-Lovers – a doublebill*, directed by Arne Neeme and presented in collaboration with Esplanade – Theatres On The Bay. This is a graduation rate of 83%; 1 of the cohort had left in their 1<sup>st</sup> year of training. While it is below the benchmark of 88% drawn from the average of the preceding 3 years, management had reviewed the reasons for the attrition and concluded that there is no need for corrective action.

In January 2024, 5 students passed into their final year and 4 students passed into their second year of training, while 4 new students were enrolled for the academic year beginning 2 January 2024.

The student performance data for Academic Year 2023 (Jan to Dec) is as follows:

Progression rate		Benchmark (ave of preceding 3 years)
Year 2 students	100%	100%
Year 1 students	80%	100%

One Year 1 student did not meet the required standards and left the programme, despite the faculty’s efforts on their behalf.

ITI carried out the curriculum without issues, with classes proceeding in Acting for the Contemporary Stage; Immersions in Theatre Traditions (Wayang Wong and Kutiyattam); Voice & Speech; Movement for Acting & Performance; Post Modular Lab; Humanities/Cultural and Literary Theory; Technical Theatre for Acting & Performance; Taiji for Actors: Natural Condition for Open Applications; and for the Year 3 students, various Seminars and the Final-Year Theatremaking Project in addition to the public performances mentioned earlier.

From January to March 2024, the ITI Year 2 students were joined by 2 BPA (Performance Making) students from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, Edith Cowan University. Their immersion in ITI earned them credits towards their degrees.

For the wider theatre/arts community, ITI presented the Asian Intercultural Conference 2024, in collaboration with Esplanade – Theatres On The Bay. From 27 to 29

November, the academics and artists from Singapore, Australia, China, India, Sweden, the Philippines, and the United Kingdom who were Presenters, Work Demonstration leaders, and participants reflected on and discussed the theme 'Preparing to Act - History and Heritage as Resource'. (The 2021 edition of this triennial conference had been cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.)

ITI hosted, co-organized and participated in workshops and speaking engagements with the local and regional theatre community in Singapore (Poetic Body workshop by Andy Ng Wai-shek; Theatre360 conference by SRT), Hong Kong (with Tang Shu-wing Theatre Studio; Blank Space Studio), Macau (with Dirks Theatre), Kuala Lumpur (with Pitapat Theatre at KLPAC), and Ozamiz City (with InTlate PH at Mindanao InterCultural Exchanges). ITI also presented a series of sharing sessions by alumni from Korea, Malaysia, India and Singapore, with alumnus Walter Leung organising his own sharing in Hong Kong.

In February, ITI launched "**Residency at ITI**", the first artist-in-residency programme at the school, inviting applications from Singapore-based theatre practitioners, researchers, and experimental performance-makers. The residency aims to facilitate independent practice research and experimental performance-making within the local community. The programme offers space and time for artists to develop their practice through dialogue and experimentation, with a focus on facilitating a process-based approach. It also include exchanges and learning between the Resident(s) and ITI students and faculty.

ITI Director T. Sasitharan was conferred the National University of Singapore Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (NUS-FASS) **Distinguished Alumni Award** for his contributions towards "the betterment and promotion of the arts and social sciences".

Also in this period, ITI received affirmation of its work through the work of its alumni. ITI alumni have continued to prove the value of the training and contributed to their communities. In Singapore alone:

- **Peter Sau** ('03) was appointed the lead mentor for BEYOND DIS:PLAY, a two-year training programme for talented D/deaf, neurodivergent and disabled artists, preparing them for professional arts careers (July 2023 – June 2025)
- **Wan Ahmad** ('22) was part of the script development workshop of the *Christmas Island Project*, about the community in the remote Australian territory, led by playwright Nabilah Said, supported by Teater Ekamatra and Malthouse Theatre (Australia) (11–15 Sep)
- **Yazid Jalil** ('15) performed in a work-in-progress presentation, part of a three-year collaboration between The Finger Players and traditional Thai puppetry artists from Joe Louis Theatre Company. (21 Sep)
- **Caroline Chin** ('18), **Tan Weiyong** ('17), **Liz Sergeant Tan** ('16), **Uma Katju** ('17) and **Rhian Hiew** ('20) performed in *Few Last Words* by Chowk Productions. Blending odissi and clowning, the original work was directed by ITI

Acting and Movement teacher Guillermo Angelelli and choreographed by Raka Maitra. (28–30 Sep)

- **Tan Weiyong** ('17), **Caroline Chin** ('18) and **Han Kyongsu** ('20) collaborated with multidisciplinary artist Alecia Neo in *Performing Care*, a visual poem and exhibition at the Esplanade Tunnel, exploring complexities of caregiving. (29 Sep – 7 Jan 2024)
- **Daisy Zhao Xiaoqing** ('22) and **Peh Jun Kai** ('22), active members of the playback theatre community in Singapore, performed in *Others don't know, actually I ...* with Long Time No See Playback Theatre on 4 Nov. Daisy also participated in the International Playback Theatre Network conference with a team of Singaporean practitioners, in South Africa, in December.
- **Yazid Jalil** ('15) performed in the M1 Singapore Fringe Festival in *Oo-woo*, a play about care-taking and dementia by The Necessary Stage (24–28 Jan)
- **Vignesh Singh** ('20) completed a six-month artist residency at Gateway Arts, during which time he organised workshops, film screenings and jam sessions to develop the red nose clowning community in Singapore (26 Feb)
- **Grace Kalaiselvi** ('14) and **Tan Weiyong** ('17) created a new show for young children, *With You / Without You* presented by The Esplanade in their March On children's festival (9–10 Mar)
- **Yolanda Cheng Kam Yiu** ('23) performed in *Resounding Fervour* 《凤凰展翼》 by Siong Leng Musical Association, a collaboration featuring youth practitioners from Singapore, China and Indonesia (16 Mar)

ITI continued working to raise funds through donations, grants and other support, and to raise scholarships and a loan fund for students. The National Arts Council continued to support ITI's work, through a 3-year grant awarded to ITI from April 2021.

During the review period, ITI was supported by:

Director cum teacher	1
Full-time teachers	8
Part-time teachers	2
Full-time administrative support	9
Part-time finance staff	1

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## **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

ITI recorded a deficit of \$146,922 for the year, ending with retained earnings of \$1,813,326. This was lower than budgeted. ITI has encountered lower intake of students since the pandemic and this has affected income. There has also been a drop in donations. ITI has increased earned income from other sources and has made plans to improve enrolment next year and in subsequent years.

Raised income included \$300,000 from the National Arts Council in the final year of a 3-year grant, and a further \$200,000 in a separate grant. A further one-year grant has been secured for the next financial year.

In 2016, ITI established the Möbius Fund to provide loans to students who require financial assistance with course fees and living expenses. The loans are unsecured and non-interest-bearing up till one year after the student's graduation. Students are expected to complete repayment 11 years after graduation. As at 31 March 2024, the Fund had accumulated \$1,531,173 since its inception, had received \$89,778 in repayments, and had a balance of \$10,207.

## **STAFF MATTERS**

In this period, 3 staff received annual remuneration of more than \$100,000 and less than \$150,000 (and therefore also less than \$200,000). There was no paid staff who is a member of the family of the key executive staff or any board member of ITI, and no such staff who received remuneration exceeding \$50,000.

## **RESERVES POLICY**

ITI aims to hold reserves equivalent to at least 2 years' operating budget and is currently working towards this aim. The purpose is to tide over the organisation if there are times of financial difficulty. \$500,000 is to be held as cash or cash equivalents, and the balance is to be held as a fund, held and/or invested in accordance with the directions of the Board. The reserve fund may be used only with Board approval.

## **POLICY ON CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

To ensure the integrity and accountability in the performance of their official duties, board members and staff are required to declare any potential conflict of interest using a declaration form. The individual will then abstain from any discussion, voting or decision-making on the matter in question. For a Board member, the member should also offer to withdraw from the meeting, and the Board shall decide whether this should be accepted.

## **FUTURE PLANS AND COMMITMENTS**

1. Graduate 5 students in December 2023, conferring the Professional Diploma in Intercultural Theatre (Acting).
2. Begin classes in the Professional Diploma in Intercultural Theatre (Acting) on 2 January 2025 for Academic Year 2025, with Year 1, 2 and 3 students.
3. Recruit a General Manager or Executive Director by end 2024, as the current General Manager wishes to retire.
4. Maintain and/or improve current operational standards.
5. Continue work to establish long-term sustainability.