

Community Brief

An occasional bulletin of projects, events and engagements that underscore ITI's commitment to and involvement with the wider community in and outside Singapore

June 2012

Events & Speaking Engagements.....



Student Presentations

30 April 2012, 31 May 2012

ITI students showed their work in Kutiyattam at the end of April, after 10 weeks of instruction by ITI master teacher Gopalan Nair Venu, Director of Natanakairali Research and Performing Centre for Traditional Arts in India. After the showing which formed part of their assessment, they performed again in the evening to a select group of guests - over 40 family members, friends and colleagues from the arts community attended.

On 31 May the students made their semester-end presentations for Acting, Movement, and Voice, and also repeated the presentations in the evening for invited guests.

Six Degrees Official Launch Party

11 May 2012

T. Sasitharan, Co-Founder and Director of ITI, was one of the speakers at Six Degrees' official launch party. The event was sponsored by Phillips and Asahi and partners included Wild Oats, Objectifs Films and Red Rat Radical. Over 160 independent professionals from the arts, design and media sectors and organisation representatives, turned up to help celebrate the launch. Freelancers were the guests of honour for the evening.



In his speech Sasi emphasised the importance of being independent and - at the same time-having a platform and community for support.

"The life of a freelancer is a paradoxical one. You need to be alone, you need your sense of independence because that's where your creativity comes from. But at the same time, you need to be connected, you need networks and you need communities... This was the dream of Six Degrees. We wanted to bring people together who wanted to be free."

~ T. Sasitharan, Co-Founder and Director of ITI

INTERCULTURAL
THEATRE
INSTITUTE

Emily Hill, 11 Upper Wilkie Road
Singapore 228120
T +65 6338 5133
admin@iti.edu.sg
www.iti.edu.sg

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/ITI->



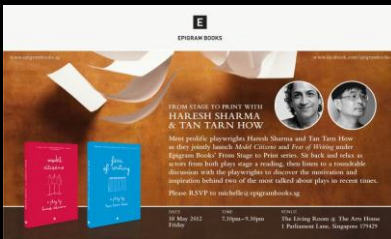
The other two speakers for the evening, representatives from Kult and Resorts World Sentosa, thanked freelancers – the guests of honour for the evening – for their contributions to the arts and creative industries.

"From my perspective Six Degrees is a lifeline, it is a lifeline for the arts; for the artists, for professionals, for people who believe in what they do. And this [Six Degrees] is the umbilical cord, the anchor, which is going to hold them together and help them through stormy weather... – so it is a wonderful proposition. Real people doing real things!"

~ **Benson Puah, CEO, National Arts Council**

For the video and more Interviews from the launch please go to:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rFz-1g-TPA&feature=relmfu>



Epigram Book Launch: “Model Citizens” and “Fear of Writing”

18 May 2012

The Arts House hosted a group of literary enthusiasts during the launch of “*Model Citizens*” and “*Fear of Writing*” by playwrights Hareesh Sharma and Tan Tarn How. Published under Epigram Books’ From Stage to Print series, the two political plays touch on sensitive issues such as censorship, multiculturalism, and social-class differences.

Sasi helmed the panel discussion which raised and answered questions on the playwrights’ writing processes, and touched on their personal opinions on the political scene in Singapore. Mr Alvin Tan, Artistic Director of The Necessary Stage, was also on the panel to add his comments and insights.



UB Arts Management Summer School 2012

1-9 June 2012

ITI collaborated once again with the University at Buffalo, The State University of New York. The UB’s graduate Arts Management Singapore Summer School 2012 was themed “The Construction and Constitution of Culture and the Arts in a Borderless World” and took place from 1-9 June at Emily Hill.



Arts managers, policy makers, artists and educators, discussed, explained and inspired the UB students to think about questions like whether or not it is possible to maintain distinct art-forms and cultural identity while being responsive to technological and other forms of change.

Among others, Janice Koh, Audrey Wong, Cherian George, Yvonne Tham and JP Nathan were guest speakers during the Summer School 2012 hosted by ITI.



Arts Community “Sticker Lady” Town Hall Meeting, at Emily Hill

12 June 2012

About 80 participants, including artists, theatre practitioners, teachers and press representatives, gathered at Emily Hill on 12 June for a Town Hall Meeting organised and moderated by The Necessary Stage's artistic director Alvin Tan and Sasi.

It was prompted by the recent arrest of a street artist who allegedly pasted stickers on traffic lights, stencil-painted roads and buildings with Singlish phrases such as “My Grandfather Road” and “Press Until Shioh”.

Sasi opened the meeting by setting a clear direction for discussion, that it was about the arts community's response to the incident and its implications for contemporary art in Singapore, and not about presuming to judge whether the artist should be punished or not. The two-hour meeting threw up a lively discussion of many issues, including freedom of expression in Singapore, the boundaries of street art and vandalism.



Talk and Tea with John Clark at ITI

14 June 2012

Robin Payne, ITI's Voice & Speech Teacher, organised a meeting with John Clark (former Director of NIDA, friend and mentor of Kuo Pao Kun, and of ITI), who was passing through Singapore.

John addressed ITI students, alumni and others on the notion of good theatre and what that meant to him. He made the point that the elements of good theatre remained constant over time and place - it is always about people, human beings; their stories, their natures and their loves and their tragedies. He drew examples from several productions he had recently attended, including *Peer Gynt*, *Frankenstein* and *Miss Julie*.

Other Events.....



CHOWK Students performed “Odissi”

2 June 2012

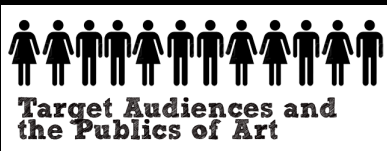
Since 2010 ITI has been sharing its facilities with CHOWK – a centre for dance.

CHOWK was founded by Raka Maitra who is training her students in Odissi (a highly stylised classical dance form from Orissa) and in contemporary dance.

Every year since 2007 the students have a public performance. This year for the first time this performance was located in their own studio in ITI's premises, with over 50 guests attending the event.

For more information, also about the upcoming conference entitled Continuity and Change in Indian Classical Dance on 3 August 2012, please go to: <http://www.facebook.com/Chowkdance>

Other News.....



The Substation Conferences presents: “Target Audiences and the Publics of Art”

7 April 2012

ITI was at the conference, “Target Audiences and the Publics of Art” at the Substation. The purpose of this conference was to examine the many concepts of audience and public: from general audiences to target audiences; publics for and of art.

The first of a series of three conferences for this year, The Substation will investigate the themes of interculturalism and independence/ censorship, in the next two.

Speakers include Lee Weng Choy, Kathy Rowland and Tan Tarn How.

WHAT'S UP: "Drama re-mixed"

21 April 2012

In the "*Drama re-mixed*" interview by Ng Yi-Sheng, Sasi talked about ITI, its background and discussed the Singapore School Project.

In his article Yi-Sheng wrote:

"In the heart of the city, on a hill not far from Dhoby Ghaut and Little India, there's a remarkable school called the Intercultural Theatre Institute (ITI). Students come here to learn to be actors. But, they aren't just taught how to perform one style of theatre. They're given training in four traditional Asian art forms: Beijing Opera from China, Wayang Wong from Indonesia, Kutiyattam from India and Noh theatre from Japan.

The school has impressed many people around the world. "Nowhere else is there a programme like this," said Stan Lai, a famous director from [Taiwan]. He believes that the school has the ability to shape a new generation of world-changing artists. Currently, the students come not only from Singapore, but also from India, the Philippines, Italy and even Bolivia in South America. All of them believe that by studying these ancient traditions, they can find ways to create the theatre of the future."

(WHAT'S UP is an award-winning monthly newspaper designed as a resource for the learning of English and other subjects. It is used in more than 50 primary and secondary schools.)

The Straits Times: "Arts and Media sector gets a \$20m boost"

June 2012

ITI director of development, and director of Six Degrees Josephine Tan was quoted in The Straits Times, 'One of the challenges freelancers face is that unlike full-time employees who are still paid a salary when they go for training courses, there is an opportunity cost for freelancers. Not only are they not paid when on course, they also stand to lose projects or gigs when they commit to attend professional development courses.'

Six Degrees is a network for artists and organisations in the creative industries. Artists who go for training can now receive training allowance of up to \$1,800 a month from this new fund set up by the Media Development Authority (MDA). *For more details and information please go to: www.mda.gov.sg/schemes.*