

WRITTEN BY KAITE O'REILLY

DIRECTED BY PHILLIP ZARRILLI



LIE
WITH
ME

7-9 NOVEMBER 2019
ESPLANADE THEATRE STUDIO

PRESENTED BY INTERCULTURAL THEATRE INSTITUTE
IN COLLABORATION WITH ESPLANADE - THEATRES ON THE BAY



PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

In 2017, I was commissioned to write a play for the graduating acting students of the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA), working with director Kirstie Davis. It was an intriguing invitation: What kind of performance text could I write which showcased eight young actors, but which avoided the entrenched hierarchies of 'principal' and 'supporting' actors? What kind of script would enable parity of time on stage for a large cast, while also showcasing individual talent?

The answer came through Arthur Schnitzler's *Reigen*, more widely known as *La Ronde*, a controversial play written in 1897 critiquing sexual mores and class ideology through a 'round dance' of encounters between eight figures from all sections of society. Banned in its time and not produced until 1920 in Berlin, the play has continued to be a useful vehicle for generations of theatre makers to explore the moralities and sexual/social issues of their age.

My version borrows heavily from the dramaturgy of the original — this 'daisy chain' of encounters — but I was interested in more diverse interactions other than the solely sexual exchanges, as in Schnitzler's work. Although some of the figures' status at times deliberately echo those in *La Ronde*, the content, references, exchanges, settings and outcomes are completely different and original.

This production for Intercultural Theatre Institute is an exploration of the connections and degrees of separation between individuals in post-truth, contemporary urban life. What lies do we tell each other — and ourselves — in order to survive in an increasingly 'throw-away' consumerist society? How do we package ourselves to be attractive both to the work market and to potential partners? What are the evolving 'rules' of sexual encounter in a 'swipe right' culture?

We wanted this text to have resonance for the ITI 2019 cohort — it was important that they had ownership of the content, the explorations of relationships and dynamics, and that the script reflected a city they recognised.

With this in mind, we began a revision of the text weeks before rehearsals began, via Skype, setting the actors research tasks



which both stimulated and informed me of the politics, attitudes and practice in Singapore of everything from online 'influencers' to funeral rites, migrant workers to gay marriage. When director Phillip Zarrilli and I arrived in Singapore and began our intensive rehearsals, we invited the actors' involvement in adjusting the language of the text and its specific cultural references, so it would be familiar and recognisable to them as contemporary Singapore.

But this is not meant to be a snapshot of Singapore — what this exercise has revealed, and what Schnitzler's original shows, is the ever-changing, multi-layered nature of our cities and the shape-shifting nature of the self. A city is experienced through many lenses, situations, and personal, economic and political perspectives — it is folly to try and encapsulate 'all'. But I hope we have caught something of the present, captured a sense of the precarious times we inhabit, and the challenging future our young people face.

I am indebted to the actors for their knowledge, generosity and enthusiasm during this exhilarating adaptation process, grateful to the excellent company and crew and the always surprising, ever-steady guidance of our director. It is a privilege and delight to work in Singapore, especially with the unique and essential ITI, who I have been fortunate to be associated with as part of their international faculty (intercultural dramaturgy) for many years. Long may you continue! Good luck to the graduating cohort as they take on the world!

KAITE O'REILLY
PLAYWRIGHT



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

It is a pleasure to have been invited back to ITI to direct Kaite O'Reilly's *Lie with Me* with this year's graduating cohort of eight students. I was fortunate to be here teaching two years ago and was able to do some initial ground-work with this specific group of students — introducing them to my approach to the pre-performative training of actors using Asian martial arts and yoga. It has been a joy to work with this group over our six-week rehearsal period on *Lie With Me*.

Lie With Me provides snapshots of moments of encounter in the lives of contemporary young people — moments of connection and/or disconnection. As she explains in her playwright's note, O'Reilly has worked with the cast to set her text within the Singapore context.

During our rehearsal period, our work on *Lie With Me* began by revisiting the preparatory training which emphasises work on attention and sensory awareness — how to be 'present' in each moment of performance. We have focused our rehearsal work on the details of each moment of human encounter in each scene.

I am fortunate to have had a long-term relationship with ITI that dates back to the early years soon after Theatre Training and Research Programme (TTRP) was founded by Kuo Pao Kun and T. Sasitharan. During my first visit, I shared with TTRP students the pre-performative training as we applied the principles of the training to work on Samuel Beckett's later/shorter plays.

Since then, I have been a 'regular' visitor — returning to teach or direct. In 2004, I had the great pleasure of directing Ota Shogo's *The Water Station* at the Esplanade Theatre Studio — a production that included Adrianna Koralewska, Felimon Blanco, Hung Pei Ching, Maria Au Mong Chao, Melissa Leung,



Miyuki Kamimura, Noushad Mohamed Kunju, Xiao Jian, Xris Li, Andy Ng, Peter Sau, Sim Pern Yiau, Themis Lin Pei-Ann, Walter Leung, Yeo Yann Yann, Jeungsook Yoo, Kuo Jing Hong and Klaus Seewald.

In 2009, I directed Martin Crimp's *Attempts on her Life* also at Esplanade Theatre Studio, working with Amy Tam Ka Man, Beto Ruiz, Sajeev Purushothama Kurup, Seng Soo Ming, Sia Ee Mien, Sreejith Ramanan, Zachary Ho, Claire Lindsay, Michael Stubblefield, Soledad Garre-Rubio, Heidi Love and Hye Ok Kim.

PHILLIP ZARRILLI
DIRECTOR

CREDITS

PLAYWRIGHT Kaite O'Reilly

DIRECTOR Phillip Zarrilli

PRODUCTION DESIGNER Dorothy Png

SOUND DESIGNER Lee Yew Jin (Ctrl Fre@k)

ASSOCIATE SOUND DESIGNER Jeffrey Yue (Ctrl Fre@k)

CAST

Earnest Hope Tinambacan, Jin Chen,
Regina Toon, Ted Nudgent Fernandez Tac-An,
Theresa Wee-Yenko, Tysha Khan, Wendy Toh,
Nour el Houda Essafi (a.k.a. Yiseong)

PRODUCTION MANAGER Natalie Lim

STAGE MANAGER Marilyn Chew

SPECIAL THANKS

to Loore Martma for her presence throughout the process

ITI students work as a professional company in their third year,
and undertake ticketed public performances. These Final Year Productions
are an integral part of the ITI curriculum.

**WHAT ARE THE EVOLVING 'RULES'
OF SEXUAL ENCOUNTERS IN A
'SWIPE RIGHT' CULTURE?**

**WHAT LIES DO WE TELL EACH
OTHER AND OURSELVES IN ORDER
TO SURVIVE IN AN
INCREASINGLY 'THROW-AWAY'
CONSUMERIST SOCIETY?**

**HOW DO WE FORM GENUINE
RELATIONSHIPS IN THIS
POST-TRUTH UNSTABLE WORLD?**



EARNEST HOPE TINAMBACAN

e.hopetinambacan@gmail.com

Earnest Hope Tinambacan is a theatre actor, director, playwright and singer-songwriter based in Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental, Philippines. He started his theatre journey at the age of 12 as a member of the LIYAB cultural group in Misamis Occidental. As a student at Silliman University, he performed in university musical productions such as *The King and I* and *Man of La Mancha*. He is also a senior member and former president of Youth Advocates Through Theater Arts (YATTA), with whom he has acted in plays all around the Philippines, including *Aaah Bakus!*, performed at PETA Theater in Quezon City. He has also written plays for YATTA, including *Isla Tawak*, performed at the Asian Youth Theatre Festival 2018 in Singapore.

Hope has performed in devised play *ArmMUT* in Stuttgart, Germany, award-winning play *In My Father's House* directed by acclaimed Filipino director Amiel Leonardia, and *Heaven As The Sea (An Ulahingan Story)* directed by ITI alumna Denise Aguilar. He has directed several plays, including the musical *Scharon Mani, The Vagina Monologues* and *The VManologues*. In 2018, Hope was a collaborator-actor in Kolab Mindanao and Kolab2 Theatre Devising Workshop and Performance organised by La Salle University, Ozamiz City, in partnership with ITI.

Hope is a recipient of the U.S.-ASEAN Scholarship and a beneficiary of the Möbius Fund, which provides loans for actor-students.



JIN CHEN

seagin7@gmail.com

Jin is a theatre director and actor. She initially studied e-commerce at South China University of Technology while also participating in theatre workshops and performing in local productions, such as site-specific work *Body Space in Yangjiang* by Li Ning, and physical theatre piece *The Wind* by Jiangnan Ligu at the Beijing Fringe Festival. She also co-founded Yooxi-Yooxi Arts Festival in her hometown, Yangjiang.

Jin holds an MA in Creative Practice and Direction from Guildford School of Acting (GSA), University of Surrey, UK, where she directed *I Never Get Dressed Till After Dark On Sundays* by Tennessee Williams, under the guidance of her mentor Terrie Fender, the former head of GSA. There, she combined her interest in physical theatre and contemporary dance with an exploration of text.

After returning to China's theatre scene, Jin realised her experience in Europe had largely shaped her view of theatre, while she knew less about Asian theatre. She therefore decided to join ITI to explore communication, understanding and creation in theatre in a time of interculturalism.

Jin is a beneficiary of the Möbius Fund.



REGINA TOON

reginatoon@hotmail.com

Much to her parents' credit, Regina grew up with music, dance and literature. This naturally opened the door to theatre for her. Prior to her training in ITI, she trained at East 15 Acting School (UK), Natanakairali (India), Shanghai Theatre Academy (China) and the International Noh Institute (Japan). She also trained in classical ballet under the Royal Academy of Dance and vocally at the Lee Wei Song School of Music. Regina has also published a book of poetry titled *Coordinates*.

Regina was born in Singapore, but has travelled, trained and worked in multiple countries and cultures. This has acquainted her with different ways of thinking, being and living. She feels it is this exposure that has given her the sensitivity to appreciate the value of interculturalism. She is grateful that she is able to constantly rediscover herself and the world, in the work of theatre.

Regina is a recipient of the ITI-William Teo Scholarship, the Tan Chay Bing Education Fund Scholarship and the ITI Scholarship, and is a beneficiary of the Möbius Fund.



THERESA WEE-YENKO

theresaweeyenko@gmail.com

Theresa is a member of Emergency Shelter in Singapore, and is currently working on *Encounters of Dance and Music in Instant Composition* (Dance Nucleus).

Stage credits include *Off Stage* (Emergency Shelter, 2018), *Uproot* (The Theatre Practice Lab, 2016), *Let's Get Back Together* (Red Pill Productions, 2014) and *Romeo and Juliet* (Toy Factory, 2014).

Theresa is a recipient of the ITI Scholarship and the Tan Chay Bing Education Fund Scholarship.



TED NUAGENT FERNANDEZ TAC-AN

teditac.an@gmail.com

Ted is the Culture and Arts Director of La Salle University (LSU), Ozamiz City. While working as a high school Mathematics teacher, Ted was asked to teach performing arts at LSU's Senior High School, leading him to pursue practice-based theatre training at ITI.

As Associate Director of LSU Teatro Guindegan, Ted's roles include actor, choreographer, stage manager, production designer and director. His recent works include *Damgo: A Midsummer Night's Dream Adaptation*, *PATCHED* (at Ashirwad International Theatre Festival, India), *Istoryahe Lang Ko*, *Hugis* (performed in Indonesia), *Awane*, *Ang Alamat ng Lamok*, *Antigone* and *NOLI*.

Ted was one of 12 theatre practitioners selected to devise *Likha-Lakbayan* for Tanghal National University and College Theater Festival, touring to five cities in the Philippines. As a recipient of the Indonesian Arts and Culture Scholarship, he spent three months learning the arts and culture of Jogjakarta, Indonesia. In Singapore, he has performed at the Singapore Writers Festival, Malay CultureFest and Neon Lights Festival.

In the future, Ted hopes to continue collaborating with various practitioners alongside his teaching job and develop artistic advocacy works for children, youth and the environment.

Ted is a recipient of the Tan Chay Bing Education Fund Scholarship and a beneficiary of the Möbius Fund.



TYSHA KHAN

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Tysha is a Singapore-based actor and writer. She has worked in productions by companies such as Teater Kami and UNSAID, often on topics that mean a lot to her, such as race relations or LGBT rights. Her recent performances include *Anak Melayu* (Teater Kami). Besides performing on stage, Tysha acts on screen, hosts, and has her own YouTube channel called Go Jerr. She is also a published poet, and has translated films and interviews.

Tysha's training at ITI has opened up new vistas in acting and performance: vocally, physically, and in the way she thinks about — and writes — theatre. She possesses a strong interest in voice work and aims to teach it one day.

As the first Malay-Muslim woman to graduate from ITI, Tysha hopes to create theatre that effectively captures the culture of her community. She also aims to keep making and performing work that explores different facets of identity and delves into societal issues.

Tysha is a recipient of the ITI Scholarship and a beneficiary of the Möbius Fund. She is also a recipient of the Goh Chok Tong Youth Promise Award, a scholarship that is given to Malay/Muslim youths with the potential to be role models for the community.



WENDY TOH

zhuo.wendy@gmail.com

Wendy Toh is a Singapore-based performer whose numerous acting credits span both screen and theatre.

She has acted in award-winning films and regional television dramas such as HBO Asia's *Serangoon Road*. She is also a core member of Tapestry Playback Theatre, and has trained and worked with Jinen Butoh School under Atsushi Takenouchi.

Wendy also practices a wide range of fine art, creating abstract canvasses and thought-provoking mixed media installations. After graduation, Wendy hopes to deepen her Butoh practice and further explore physical theatre.

Wendy is a recipient of the ITI Scholarship and the Tan Chay Bing Education Fund Scholarship, and a beneficiary of the Möbius Fund.



NOUR EL HOUDA ESSAFI (A.K.A. YISEONG)

nour48houda@gmail.com

At a young age, Nour el Houda a.k.a. Yiseong was selected into a specialised performing arts school in Paris, where she trained in classical ballet, violin and piano, performing onstage in an orchestra and a ballet ensemble (performances included *An American in Paris*, a ballet adaptation by His Majesty Norodom Sihamoni of Cambodia and *Madame Haïm*).

She later trained in performing art forms such as Cambodian Khmer dance, as well as Indian Kathak under Mrs Sharmila Sharma Guruji, and learned to play Taiko drums with Paris Taiko Ensemble.

Coming to ITI has been a life-changing decision that has enabled Yiseong to rediscover herself, her roots, and the definition of what an artist should be.

Yiseong is a beneficiary of the Möbius Fund.



CREATIVE TEAM

KAITE O'REILLY

PLAYWRIGHT

Kaite O'Reilly is an award-winning writer and dramaturg who writes for stage, screen and radio. Awards include the Peggy Ramsay Award, Manchester Theatre Awards Best Play of the Year, Theatre-Wales Award, and the Ted Hughes Award for New Work in Poetry for *Persians* for National Theatre Wales. She was honoured in the 2018 Elliott Hayes International Dramaturgy Award for her innovative work across hearing and Deaf cultures in performance. Widely published and produced, she works internationally.

In 2018, O'Reilly premiered her Unlimited International Commission *And Suddenly I Disappear: The Singapore/UK 'd' Monologues* — a dialogue about difference, diversity and disability from opposite sides of the world, in Singapore and in London's Southbank Centre before touring.

2019 productions include the Irish premiere of *Cosy* (Cork Midsummer Festival), Taking Flight's UK tour of *peeling*, the US premiere of *peeling* by Sound Theatre and *Lie With Me* at Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay, Singapore, with ITI.

Her plays, including *The 'd' Monologues*, are collected in the critically acclaimed *Atypical Plays for Atypical Actors*, published by Oberon. *Persians* is published by Fair Acre Press. Her first feature film is in development with Mad as Birds Films.

www.kaiteoreilly.com

PHILLIP ZARRILLI

DIRECTOR

Phillip Zarrilli is internationally known as a director, performer, and for training actors using Asian martial arts and yoga. As Artistic Director of The Llanarth Group, Zarrilli's recent directorial work includes both Irish and world premieres of Kaite O'Reilly's *Cosy* with Gaitkrash for the Cork Midsummer Festival (2019) and with Wales Millennium Centre (2016); world/UK premieres of Kaite O'Reilly's *And Suddenly I Disappear*, an Unlimited commission with Singapore partners Access Path Productions and Peter Sau, Gallery Theatre, National Museum of Singapore (2018) and Southbank Centre, London (2018); world premiere of *richard III redux* co-authored by O'Reilly and Zarrilli (Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff, with festival performances in Mainz, Germany and Barcelona, 2018/2020); *...semblance...sequel... specter: Beckett's Footfalls and Play*, The National Theatre Company (Costa Rica) with Collective Escenico Dragon (2017), and The National Theatre, San Jose (2018). The Llanarth Group's *Told by the Wind*, co-created by O'Reilly and Zarrilli with Jo Shapland, has been invited for performances at the 2020 ITFoK Festival in Thrissur, Kerala.

Zarrilli has a long-term relationship with ITI, and regularly conducts residencies and workshops throughout the world and at his private studio in Wales, UK. He is an award-winning author and scholar. His most recent books include his sole authored (*toward*) *a phenomenology of acting* (Routledge Press, London, 2019), and *Intercultural Acting and Performer Training*, co-edited with T. Sasitharan and Anuradha Kapur (Routledge, 2019).

DOROTHY PNG

PRODUCTION DESIGNER

A lighting designer by profession since 1994, Dorothy is a highly experienced and much sought-after designer for most of Singapore's theatre companies. She also collaborates with independent artists for their own performances, with a passion for creative experimentation. Her range of work spans across theatre, contemporary dance, ballet, opera, musicals, site-specific works, outdoor productions and music concerts.

Some of her favourite past lighting designs are: *Wings of Resonance* (a traditional flute music performance, 2018); *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Singapore Lyric Opera, 2017); *Farewell: The Body in 16 Chapters* (by Drama Box for Macao Arts Festival 2013); *Language Of Their Own* 《男男自语》 (for Singapore Arts Festival 2012); *The Ma(r)king of Nanjing: 1937* (by Nelson Chia); *RAW: Empty Interval* (a collaboration amongst good friends Lee Yongwei, Lim Chin Huat and Julius Foo); *Spellbound – Kit Chan Concert 2015* (at The Star).

Set design is her secondary field, and she does that as and when the occasion calls for it. Her recent set designs were for *Wings of Resonance* (Victoria Theatre) and *Garden.Uprooted* (a collaboration between The Philharmonic Orchestra and dance company Arts Fission, at Esplanade Theatre).



LEE YEW JIN AND JEFFREY YUE (CTRL FRE@K)

SOUND DESIGNER AND ASSOCIATE SOUND DESIGNER

Ctrl Fre@k is a show, system design and management company specialising in areas like performing arts, themed attractions and commercial events. The brainchild of like-minded individuals who have extensive experience working in key areas of technical production including sound, lighting and video, as well as both production and technical management for all scales and manners of productions in these ever-expanding fields.

Started in January 2010, Ctrl Fre@k seeks to provide well-researched, ingenious and high-quality design solutions that increase the production value of every project it undertakes. At the same time, it provides reliable technical support and acute problem-solving sensibilities that safeguard the interest and integrity of the production from conception to rehearsal and ultimately, the show(s). Their expertise in both hardware- and software-based production equipment, bridging creativity and methodical workflow enables them to tailor-make solutions to specific requirements.



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New Theatre(s) for A New World
23 – 25 November 2020

Theatres all over the world are facing new realities of life. The urgency of dealing with and defeating the rising tide of shrill populist nationalism, xenophobic exclusionism, failed globalism and an immanent environmental catastrophe can no longer be ignored or sidelined. These issues, complex and discomfiting, which threaten to tear the world apart, entrench divisions and polarise people on the planet, must be spotlighted and allowed to take centre-stage in AIC 2020. How do we respond as artists and theatre-makers to this challenge? That is the question this 3-day conference will seek to answer.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

Every three years, Intercultural Theatre Institute (ITI) organises the Asian Intercultural Conference (AIC) — an international gathering of theatre professionals, scholars and academics. The previous AIC saw 318 participants from 18 countries engage in a lively and critical review of contemporary theatre and intercultural work. AIC 2020 aims to engage even deeper and further with our presenters, delegates and partners.

More information will be available at www.asianintercultural.com.



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ABOUT ITI



Intercultural Theatre Institute (ITI), based in Singapore, is a three-year, practice-based, professional actor training programme founded on a rigorous, intercultural learning methodology with a view to producing original, contemporary theatre.

The school began as the Theatre Training & Research Programme (TTRP), founded in 2000 by renowned dramatist, Kuo Pao Kun (1939–2002), and current Director, T. Sasitharan — both Cultural Medallion recipients. It is shaped by Kuo Pao Kun's vision of intercultural learning that draws from a matrix of traditional theatre systems and modern theatre-making.

ITI's distinguished alumni include Peter Sau, recipient of the 2011 Young Artist Award and the Life! Theatre Awards; Yeo Yann Yann, winner of the 2013 Best Supporting Actress Award for her performance in *Ilo Ilo* at the Golden Horse Awards, the Vladivostok International Film Festival, and the Asia-Pacific Film Festival; Felimon Blanco, recipient of the 2013 Most Outstanding Zambosurian Award (Philippines); and Andy Ng and Melissa Leung, winners of Director of the Year and Performer of the Year respectively at the 2019 International Association of Theatre Critics (Hong Kong) Critics Awards.

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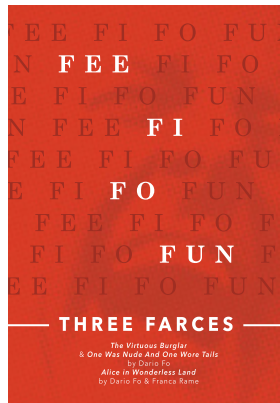
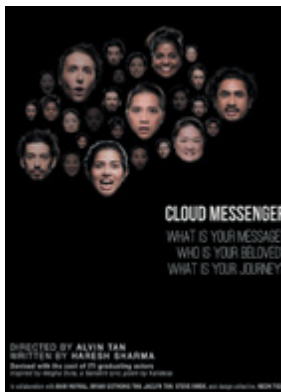
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Director, actor and educator;
Theatre faculty, School of the Arts, Singapore

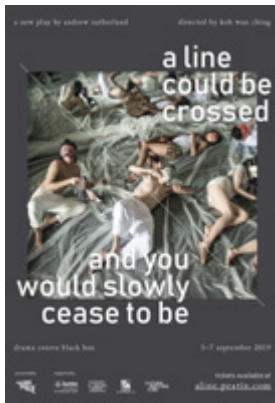
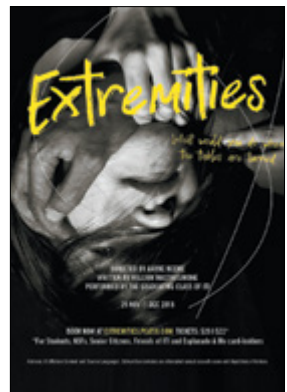
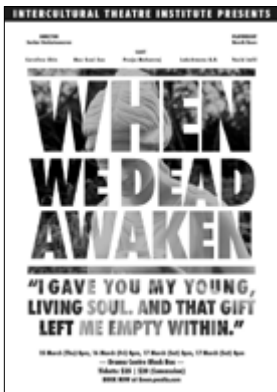
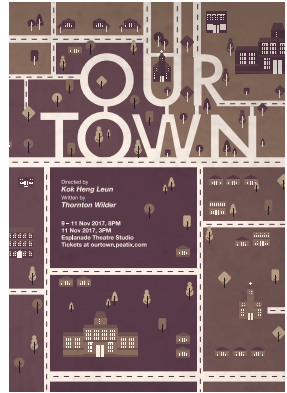
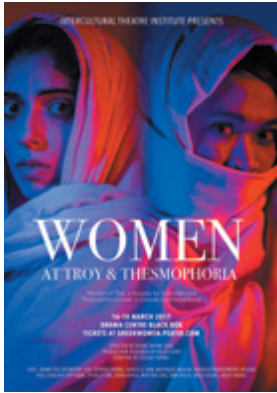
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Artistic Director, Nine Years Theatre, Singapore

GRADUATION PRODUCTIONS 2014-2016



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SUPPORT ITI

ITI is an independent theatre school founded on the belief that theatre has little meaning if it is not connected to life and society. Through the years, ITI has developed critically and socially engaged artists who are capable of working across cultural, linguistic, social and national boundaries, and who have contributed meaningfully to their cultures and communities.

ITI is a registered charity and an approved Institution of Public Character (IPC); more than 60% of its income has to come from fundraising. Donations to ITI are eligible for 250% tax exemption and dollar-to-dollar matching by the government's Cultural Matching Fund. Your donations will make a critical difference and support ITI in its seminal work.

GIVE AT [GIVING.SG/ITI](https://giving.sg/iti)

For more information, visit iti.edu.sg/support or contact us at admin@iti.edu.sg.

"I was trained to be not only a good actor but also a better person. So to those who want to make a difference, please consider supporting the students in ITI and we will make this world a better place using the arts"

~ Denise Mordeno Aguilar



Peter Sau ('03, Singapore) is the founder of Project Tandem, a training programme for disabled performing artists. He is also the associate director and cast member of *And Suddenly I Disappear: The Singapore 'd' Monologues*, the first disability-led theatre project created between the UK and Singapore. Peter is a recipient of the 2011 Young Artist Award and the Best Actor Award at the 2015 Life Theatre Awards.



Sankar Venkateswaran ('06, India) is the founder and artistic director of Theatre Roots & Wings.

He has set up a cultural space in Attappady, Kerala, where he works with the impoverished indigenous communities. Sankar is a recipient of the International Ibsen Scholarship 2013 and Aditya Vikram Birla Kalakiran Puraskar 2016.



Denise Mordeno Aguilar ('14, Philippines) is the artistic director of Pasundayag Community Arts and Assistant Secretary of the National Committee on Dramatic Arts in the Philippines. She is a recipient of the Lambago Art Award 2016, in recognition of her outstanding work as a theatre artist and her invaluable contribution to the development of arts and culture in Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines.

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CULTURAL
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FUND

