



Press Release
SCENES: FORUM THEATRE
The official launch programme for
GoLi – The Moving Theatre

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Drama Box presents festival on Forum Theatre as part of 25th anniversary celebrations

In conjunction with its 25th anniversary celebrations, Drama Box is presenting a festival titled **SCENES: FORUM THEATRE**, the official launch programme for **GoLi - The Moving Theatre**.

GoLi - The Moving Theatre is the first inflatable theatre in Singapore! Conceptualised with Atelier Watt, it is a set of two inflatable structures of different sizes that are cross-ventilated, lightweight and portable. Simply put, it is a travelling theatre that will tour Singapore, bringing the arts to different places and instantly transforming the space with its vibrancy! It is where people can come together to reimagine our public spaces, drawing from our cultural assets, aspirations and potential.

**Goli is also the name of a traditional game popular in Singapore, a shared activity and memory of many Singaporeans. With simple props - a set of goli (marbles) and a shallow hole in the ground, a game starts. A game is spontaneous, right in front of homes, with neighbours and friends.*

SCENES: FORUM THEATRE

This July, GoLi will pop up at Serangoon Central (next to NEX Shopping Mall), bringing with it exciting Forum Theatre performances, other programmes and activities by youths, artists and organisations from Singapore and the rest of the world! **SCENES: FORUM THEATRE** celebrates the journey Drama Box has undertaken in the past 25 years, by placing the spotlight on Forum Theatre, something Drama Box has become known for. It is also a consolidation of Drama Box's work and beliefs from the beginning. Especially significant is that **SCENES** should kick-start the use of GoLi, a major milestone for Drama Box. GoLi represents a ground-up approach to Drama Box's work in the community and its commitment to bringing people together through socially engaged art.

"I recall many years ago, Heng Leun (artistic director of Drama Box) and I were joking about ourselves being out of work from sharing about and training more people in Forum Theatre. I'm actually very glad to see more people using the form in Singapore. I believe SCENES is a good chance for us to see its reach and impact from the time we started performing it in communities 15 years ago, and to witness how the form has grown and adapted to the changing times of Singapore, from a society where people did not openly share views to one where people are more outspoken, especially with the use of social media now," says Koh Hui Ling, artistic director of the festival.



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Performances by international Forum Theatre practitioners

For the first time, world-renowned arts groups such as **Jana Sanskriti (India)**, **Mind The Gap (United Kingdom)** and **Centre for Applied Theatre (Taiwan)** will stage their Forum Theatre performances alongside Drama Box for the audience in Singapore.

Performances by the youth community

“The Young Can Change the World” is a youth outreach programme over a period of one-and-a-half years, beginning in January 2014. These groups went through at least 18 hours of Forum Theatre workshops, which provided a space for participants to come together to share their thoughts and perspectives on various social issues. They started engaging in dialogues with their peers, and explored and excavated social issues that mattered to them through (i) Games and (ii) Image Theatre. These dialogues culminated into numerous Forum Theatre short plays, which they presented to an audience (ranging from other students in their schools to representatives from local Non-Governmental Organisations). Of the many Forum Theatre plays created, three pieces will be presented to the public at SCENES: FORUM THEATRE, extending the dialogue to a more diverse audience.

Besides performances, there will also be an exhibition that highlights concerns of the youths in Singapore, as well as a dialogue session led by young people, for young people, about the role that the youths can play in social engagement.

“The Young Can Change the World” was created to encourage critical thinking and constructive dialogue among the youths about social issues through the use of Forum Theatre, and thereafter, be inspired to take positive social action and become the change they want to see in the community.

Performances developed from working with different communities

Back in June 2014, Drama Box held the “Community Training Training Programme” where participants would subsequently develop a Forum Theatre project with a community of their choice, under the mentorship and guidance of Koh Hui Ling, who has more than 10 years of experience in community arts. The participants went through three workshop modules where they learnt about what makes theatre, how to work with the community as well as Forum Theatre techniques. The showcase of their Forum Theatre pieces will serve as a platform to raise awareness on the issues faced by different communities in Singapore.



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Non-theatre groups set up shop to share their social movements

Besides watching and learning about Forum Theatre, the audience can also relax in a space known as “playGROUND”, where non-theatre groups with a social cause get to table their idea of impacting the society. Each group presents their vision in wanting to fill the gaps they see in the society and communities in their own ways.

A chance to learn about Forum Theatre

During the festival, the audience can attend a sharing session with a panel of Forum Theatre practitioners from around the world, to gain insight into the role of Theatre of the Oppressed (of which Forum Theatre is a branch) in effecting socio-political change, and the part that artists play.

The festival also offers a platform for learning about the art form of Forum Theatre, through workshops with differing barriers or entry. Koh Hui Ling will give an introductory course to Forum Theatre, while Bárbara Santos, who has worked with the creator of Theatre of the Oppressed Augusto Boal himself, will conduct an intermediate workshop on developing word and sound elements in a Forum Theatre production. Kok Heng Leun, who is known to be one of Asia’s best Forum Theatre practitioners, will then conduct the third (advanced) level of “Breaking the Silence” Forum Theatre workshop.

Han Xuemei, Resident Artist of Drama Box, who is also artistic director of “The Young Can Change the World” says of **SCENES**, “It is like an ‘open market’, where anybody can feel free to offer his or her ideas and thoughts about social issues that matter to us as a community.

Every individual is unique, and by providing a platform for diverse and differing opinions, I hope that people who attend the festival take away an alternative way of looking at the issues around us. I look forward to people coming together to have honest and difficult conversations - to reflect, dialogue, and inspire one another.”

SCENES: FORUM THEATRE takes place from 3 – 10 July 2015.

Admission to all SCENES performances and sharing session is free!

*** Only the workshops are chargeable**

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APPENDIXES

Annex 1 – Programme details

Annex 2 – Production team & supporting partners

Annex 3 – Biographies