

SCENES: Participatory Practices

○ Artistic Directors

About Han Xuemei (Drama Box)

Artistic Director

Han Xuemei is a theatre practitioner based in Singapore. She believes in socially engaged practice, and imagines the arts as an integral ingredient for beauty and hope in society. Her artistic practice involves designing spaces and conditions for people to exercise their right to be creative, disrupt routines and deconstruct paradigms.

Her recent explorations *FLOWERS* (2019), *The Gift* (2018) and *MISSING: The City of Lost Things* (2018) are multi-disciplinary experiences that engage the audience in deeply visceral and personal ways.

She has been a resident artist with Drama Box since 2013, and was recently nominated by Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay (Singapore's national performing arts centre) to participate in the 2019 ADAM (Asia Discovers Asia Meeting) Artist Lab.

About Chng Yi Kai (Drama Box)

Assistant Artistic Director

Curator (Conversations)

Chng Yi Kai is a budding artist who aspires to create effective means of engaging the community through art. A graduate from Yale-NUS College with a major in Anthropology, his foray into theatre began with joining the second cohort of Drama Box's youth wing ARTivate, after graduating from Singapore Polytechnic's Diploma in Applied Drama and Psychology.

He had participated as an actor in some of Drama Box's projects, including *Bus Stop*, *Confessions* and *Exit*, and as project manager on *Kopitiam* and installation and photography artist on *IgnorLAND of its Loss*. Yi Kai's acting credits also include Art Studio, the Singapore International Festival of the Arts 2017 festival opener by Nine Years Theatre, and *KNOTS* by STRANGER, at the New Works Festival 2019. He is one of the founding members of theatre collective STRANGER.

About Kok Heng Leun (Drama Box)

Assistant Artistic Director

Director (The Lesson – An Online Experiment)

Kok Heng Leun is a prominent figure in the Singapore arts scene, having built his career as a theatre director, playwright, dramaturg and educator. He is known for engaging the community on various issues through the arts, championing civic discourse across different segments of society. Having begun his work in the theatre almost 30 years ago, some notable directorial works include *Drift*, *Trick or Threat*, *Manifesto* and *Underclass*. His explorations with multi-disciplinary engaged arts has produced works like *Project Mending Sky*, a series on environmental issues, *Both Sides, Now*, a project that seeks to normalise end-of-life conversations and *It Won't Be Too Long*, which touched on the dynamics of space in Singapore.

- **Experiences**

About Jamie Lewis

The Little Old Cooking Club That Could

Jamie is an artist, facilitator and dramaturg. She creates and curates site-responsive participatory experiences, facilitating meditations on culture, place, and time, often through autobiographical stories, conversation and food, and with people who don't always consider themselves artists.

You may also find her teaching, or consulting on audience development and communications across arts organisations and small businesses. She is also currently the Program Manager at Theatre Network Australia, on the Board of Multicultural Arts Victoria, and was in the 2018 cohort of Australia Council for the Arts' Future Leaders program.

www.jamielewis.com.au

About Komunidad X

KXMOBA

KOMUNIDAD X (KX) is an anti-disciplinary* collective committed to creating "life" performances for civic engagement and social development. Comprised of social actors working at the intersection of art, culture and development, it is the collective arm of Sipat Lawin Inc (SLI) an edge-work contemporary cultural laboratory. KX is primarily based in Manila, cultivating a social ecology of performance development platforms with different communities across the Philippines and around the world.

- **Workshops**

About anGie seah

Homework

anGie seah is a Singaporean artist whose multidisciplinary practice traverses the mediums of drawing, sculpture, performance art, sound and video to respond to the enigma of life and explore facets of the human condition. Since 2000 anGie has exhibited works, taken part in artist residencies and participated in art festivals in locations such as Germany (ZKM Centre for New Media), Japan (NIPAF/Fukuoka Asian Art Museum), France (Palais de Tokyo, Museum of Contemporary Arts Lyon) and Singapore (Singapore Biennale). For more than a decade, she has been actively involved in many community art projects locally and internationally, conducting participatory workshops for families, underprivileged children, youths at risks, children and seniors with special needs. anGie believes working within a community gives her a chance to step outside of her practice and be with the reality of life, through people.

About Kumar

Rant with Kumar

Kumar, is a Singaporean Indian comedian and television host, actor, and drag queen. He made his name at the now defunct Boom Boom Room and was, for a time, synonymous with the cabaret nightclub as its resident performer. Having spent nearly two decades as an entertainer, he has amassed a string of television, stage, and film credits. He released his biographical book, *Kumar: From Rags To Drag*, in September 2011, in which he publicly came out as gay, making him one of the few openly-gay public figures in Singapore.

About Myra Loke (The Finger Players)

Breathing Objects

Myra Loke is a puppeteer, actor, educator, designer and theatre-maker. She started her journey in Singapore's theatre 13 years ago when she co-created and participated in ARTivate (Pioneer Batch), a youth wing of Drama Box Ltd.

Now, Myra is the Co-Artistic Director and a member of the artistic core team of The Finger Players. She has since performed in *Framed*, *By Adolf*, *The Spirits Play*, *ITSY- The Musical*, *The Flying Dutchman*, *Turn by Turn We Turn* and several others. Myra also works very closely with The Finger Players as a props-maker and puppet designer.

In 2017, Myra co-created "You Can Reach The Sky", Singapore's first immersive theatrical experience for babies. In 2018, Myra co-founded an arts collective, The Wanderlings, where she continues her work in engaging young people and people with special needs.

About Gwee Li Sui

Healing with Humour

Gwee Li Sui is a poet, a graphic artist, and a literary critic. He wrote Singapore's first long-form graphic novel in English, *Myth of the Stone*, in 1993. His works of verse include *Who Wants to Buy a Book of Poems?* (1998), *One Thousand and One Nights* (2014), *Who Wants to Buy an Expanded Edition of a Book of Poems?* (2015), *The Other Merlion and Friends* (2015), *Haikuku* (2017), and *Death Wish* (2017). Gwee has also edited acclaimed literary anthologies, taught at several universities, and lectured on a range of subjects. He has written *FEAR NO POETRY!: An Essential Guide to Close Reading* (2014), *Spiaking Singlish: A Companion to How Singaporeans Communicate* (2017), and *The Leeter Tunku* (2019), a Singlish translation of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince*.

About Zarina Muhammad

Acts and Antidotes For Surviving Eclipses, Peculiar Habitats and Contradictory Certainties

Zarina Muhammad is a Singapore-based artist, educator and researcher-writer whose practice is deeply entwined with a critical re-examination of oral histories, ethnographic literature and other historiographic accounts about Southeast Asia.

Working at the intersections of performance, mixed media installation, text, ritual, sound and moving image, she is interested in the broader contexts of myth-making, haunted historiographies and role of the artist as “cultural ventriloquist” who lends multiple voices to spectral matters and speculative histories. She has been working on a long-term project on Southeast Asia’s provisional relationship to the occult, ritual magic and the immaterial against the dynamics of global modernity and the social production of rationality.

P7:1SMA

Kemas Ritual

About Norhaizad Adam

Norhaizad Adam is a dance artist and performance maker based in Singapore. He is trained in Malay folk dance and develops his artistic endeavours through various residencies. Currently, he is the Artistic Director of P7:1SMA Ltd.

Exploring dance to perform self-worth, he questions the power of socio-politics and observes how nationalism and traditionalism affects the Malay diaspora. He continually blurs the rules and transmission of the Malay folk form. Norhaizad seeks to subvert the presentation of minority identity, advocating towards the context of post-dance.

About Hasyimah Harith

Hasyimah Harith engages in conversation circles to build relationships and inform her movement practice-based research. She rounds up a collective desire to celebrate pleasure in her performance-making. She brings private acts into public space to examine judgement of the female body.

With Malay folk dance training, she questions values through the lens of a Malay woman today. Hasyimah seeks to collaborate with community to design a pedagogy through wisdom of Malay dance that has an agency to contemporary issues.