

MEDIA RELEASE

THE ARTGROUND – A CURIOUS PLACE TO BE: LAUNCH OF NEW ARTS CENTRE FOR CHILDREN



Parents and little ones enjoying Baby Space, a multi-sensory installation designed for babies 16 months and under, at The Artground

Singapore, 7 July 2017 – The Artground, Singapore’s newest multi-disciplinary arts centre designed for children aged 12 and under, officially opened its doors at the Goodman Arts Centre today. Featuring purpose-built spaces that cater to the different ages and learning stages of children, The Artground offers enriching artistic experiences across a variety of art forms, encouraging a sense of curiosity and self-expression in our next generation. The Artground is developed by The Ground Co Limited, in collaboration with the National Arts Council.

2 Ms Luanne Poh, Director of The Ground Co Limited, shares, “We believe that all children are intrinsically curious, and at The Artground, we hope to provide opportunities for them to remain



so. With the space and the myriad of programming possibilities, we aim to facilitate learning through play and empower children to express themselves in multiple ways. We are driven by our vision ‘to let art do, what art does’ – to provide experiences that keep our children thinking, questioning, exploring, appreciating and discovering through art.”

3 Occupying over 500 square metres, The Artground comprises four accessible arts play spaces. *Baby Stage* is a safe space for parents, babies and early walkers to explore together. It features walkways and slopes with a slight incline, a feature essential to motivating crawlers to transition to walkers. Over at the *Ground Floor*, kids aged 2 and up can look forward to interactive installations which will be refreshed thrice a year, while at the *WhiteBox*, they can catch child-friendly performances in a bright, cosy theatre space. To encourage children to embrace the wonders of nature, The Artground has also created the *Good Garden*, a whimsical outdoor space that invites visitors to interact with the greenery around them. (See Annex A for images and more information)

4 The various venues will host both indoor and outdoor arts programmes, free and ticketed throughout the year. An interactive visual art exhibition titled *Down The Rabbit Hole* by mixed media artist Poh Ya See will be the inaugural installation at the *Ground Floor*, inviting visitors to hop, skip, climb and crawl to explore the hidden world of animals that live underground. For the first time in Southeast Asia, *Baby Space*, a multi-sensory installation designed for babies 16 months and below, will be on show at the *WhiteBox*. Melding together contemporary dance, music, poetry and visual art together for most babies’ first encounter with the arts, babies are encouraged to explore and interact with the performers and elements of the installation. *Baby Space* is created by Sweden-based award-winning choreographer, theatre maker and cultural worker Dalija Acin Thelander. (See Annex B for further information on programmes)

5 The Artground offers regular programming for the public and welcomes school groups as well as the special-needs and underserved communities. Educators can look forward to workshops that are designed to inspire and equip them with new skills. In addition, The Artground will serve as a platform for artists to develop new and innovative ways of engaging children through multiple art forms. Practitioners keen to create art programmes for young audiences can use The Artground as an incubation space for original home-grown content, and look for



opportunities to collaborate with other like-minded home-grown and overseas artists. The Artground also hopes to present works created and developed within this space, at regional and international platforms for young audiences; and likewise serve as a space to feature quality works from around the region.

6 Ms Grace Ng, Director, Education and Development, National Arts Council, says, “We are very excited to be introducing The Artground to make quality arts experiences accessible to children of all abilities, needs and backgrounds. The arts are a powerful way to help children develop creatively and we are happy that this space will provide differentiated programming reaching out to diverse communities. Collaborations such as this with The Ground Co Limited are important to drive the ongoing development and growth of the arts ecosystem, as we strive to make the arts integral to the lives of young people’.”

7 The Artground is open to the public from 8 July 2017 onwards. Interested parties can find out more about the space and its programmes at www.theartground.com.sg and join the conversation via Facebook and Instagram at @TheArtground, and hashtag #theartground.

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For hi-res images of The Artground, please download from the following link: <https://app.box.com/s/y1a3zlxurzqldhz0asp68q4uyil0svue>

Kindly credit all images as follow - Courtesy of the National Arts Council.

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About the National Arts Council

The National Arts Council champions the arts in Singapore. By nurturing creative excellence and supporting broad audience engagement, we want to develop Singapore as a distinctive global city where the arts inspire our people and connect our communities. We preserve our rich, cultural traditions while we cultivate accomplished artists and vibrant companies for the future. Our support for the arts is comprehensive – from grants and partnerships to industry facilitation and arts housing. The Council welcomes greater private and corporate giving to and through the arts so that together we can make the arts an integral part of everyone's lives. For more information on the Council's mission and plans, visit www.nac.gov.sg.

About The Ground Co Limited

Founded in 2016, The Ground Co Limited is an incubator invested in investigating, dissecting and cultivating aesthetic forms to create new artistic expressions. We are interested in collaborative practices and working with creatives across different mediums.



Annex A: The Artground

Address:	Block J #01-40 90 Goodman Road Singapore 439053
Opening Hours:	Wednesday – Thursday: 9.30am – 5.30pm Friday – Sundays & Public Holiday: 9.30am – 6.30pm *Closed on Mondays and Tuesdays
Admission Charges:	Free admission for the opening month of July Interactive installations at the Ground Floor are free year-round.
Programmes:	Ticketed programmes and workshops have varied prices and can be purchased on-site.
Accessibility:	Suitable for children aged 0 to 12. The Artground welcomes visitors with limited mobility and special needs. The center is designed to accommodate visitors on wheelchairs and everyone is welcome regardless of their sensory needs.

Venues within The Artground

Baby Stage (ages 0 – toddlers)

Designed for the really little ones, crawlers and those who have only just learnt how to walk, the Baby Stage is a safe and comfortable space for parents and babies to hang out and explore.

Ground Floor (ages 2 – 12)

The Ground Floor is the main space that houses The Artground's tri-annual installations. This space will always feature something new and exciting for those aged 2 and up to crawl through, climb over, listen to, observe, touch and feel to learn more about the world around them.

WhiteBox (ages 0 – 12, depending on programme)

The WhiteBox is the heart and soul of The Artground. A black box with a lighter brighter feel, it is a cosy and unadorned theatre space for children to learn, discover and be curious.

The Good Garden (ages 2 – 12)

A whimsical space that invites visitors to connect with nature and to use their senses to cultivate and celebrate creativity, diversity and life. The Good Garden is where visitors will learn what it means to help things grow.

Annex B: Programmes

DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE



Date	7th July – 29th October 2017
Time	Wednesday – Thursday, 9.30am – 5.30pm Friday – Sundays & Public Holidays, 9.30am – 6.30pm *Closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.
Admission fees	Free admission
For more info	http://theartground.com.sg/event/down-the-rabbit-hole/

Down The Rabbit Hole is an interactive visual arts exhibition that invites you to hop, skip, climb and crawl to explore the hidden world of animals that live underground. Meet some unexpected furry friends, amazing insects and tiny little creatures and be wowed by their mysterious underground homes as you make your way through the installation.

About the Artist

Poh Ya See is a mixed media artist whose practice weaves current social trends with personal experience. She constantly seeks to put a smile on the faces of her audience by expressing quirky and whimsical narratives in her art pieces through a pallet of cheerful colours and a medley of motifs.

BABY SPACE



Date & Time	14th, 21st July, Friday at 10.30am and 1pm 8th, 9th, 15th, 16th, 22nd, 23rd July, Saturday and Sunday at 10.30am, 1pm and 3pm
Admission fees	\$18 per parent-baby pair
For more info	http://theartground.com.sg/event/baby-space/

Baby Space is a multi-sensory installation designed for babies 16 months and under. It is where contemporary dance, music, poetry and visual art meld together to form an immersive encounter with the arts. Babies will be encouraged to interact with the dancers and explore the installation in their own unique ways even after the performance is over.

About the Creator

Dalija Acin Thelander is an award-winning choreographer, theatre maker and cultural worker based in Stockholm, Sweden. Her work aspires to contribute to the notion of choreography as an expanded practice and focuses on the sensuous interrelationship of body, mind, and environment. She is involved in the research and creation of contemporary dance for babies and children and lectures on the importance of these early encounters with art.

She is the initiator and coordinator of the Generator, a collaborative platform that develops dance theatre for children in the Balkan region. She is also the co-founder and coordinator of Station Service for Contemporary Dance Belgrade and co-founder and co-curator of Kondenz, a festival for performing arts, in Belgrade, Serbia. She is also the co-founder of Nomad Dance Academy for which she initiates, curates and produces numerous programmes and productions.

GARDENING WORKSHOPS AT THE GOOD GARDEN



Date	Year-round programme
Time	Wednesday – Thursday, 9.30am – 5.30pm Friday – Sundays & Public Holidays, 9.30am – 6.30pm *Closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.
Admission fees	Free admission during the opening month of July 2017 Fees apply from August 2017 onwards
For more info	http://theartground.com.sg/event/opening-weekend/

The Good Garden will be home to a host of gardening workshops brought to you by Cultivate Central throughout the year. Participants will get the opportunity to engage with and experience nature, creativity and art through the wonderful world of urban food gardening. Our series of Creative Urban Gardening workshops will offer a seed to plate experience that will help foster a deep connection with food and where it comes from. Join us at The Good Garden to get your hands dirty while you work with nature.



About Cultivate Central

Cultivate Central has been dedicated to helping people grow food in small urban spaces since its inception in 2014. It aims to make growing food and living sustainably second nature to children. The team behind Cultivate Central comprises of permaculture designers and apprentice urban farmers. Permaculture design principles aid in creating beautiful and bountiful compact food gardens and building spaces to encourage observation, artistic expression, creative problem-solving and play. The team designs and creates simple urban food growing solutions to give everyone living in the city the opportunity to grow some food despite space and time constraints.



Annex C: Biographies

Luanne Poh, Director, The Ground Co Limited

Luanne has more than 20 years' involvement with the arts. Her interest in the arts started young where she eventually became President of Drama Club in her secondary school, Tanjong Katong Girls' School. She continued her keen interest by enrolling in Lasalle-SIA College of the Arts. It was here that she was awarded the Georgette Chen scholarship in recognition of her potential to contribute to the local arts scene.

Luanne was involved in more than 50 theatre productions across the entire gamut of theatre activities, from backstage to producing. This included large scale productions like Beauty World (Theatre Works) & WOMAD to festivals to M1 Youth Connection (now known as M1 Singapore Fringe Festival) and the inauguration of The Esplanade in 2002. In her work as a producer at the Esplanade, she has worked with home-grown theatre companies for art presentations for students. Of note would be in 2015, where she commissioned work Samsui Women: One Brick at a Time with The Finger Players. This was nominated in the 2016 M1 - ST Life Theatre Awards as the inaugural Best Production for the Young

For almost 10 years, Luanne has kick-started programs for young audiences in The Esplanade, namely "Feed Your Imagination" (targeted at young audiences 7 – 17 years) and PLAYtime! (targeted at young audiences 2 – 4 years old). She has worked with local artists to develop a repertoire of local original works for young audiences. This includes Ian Loy whom she identified and successfully nominated for Young Artist Award 2014.

Since 2013, she has led and curated Octoburst, a children's festival in The Esplanade. Here, she has worked closely with overseas productions from UK, Australia to Italy, and built her global network of companies who focus and excel in creating quality theatre for young audiences (TYA). She has extensive experience with the industry of TYA and has demonstrated capabilities over the years in curating for children theatre. As a key driver in this area in Esplanade for the last 10 years, she has extensive contacts with all the relevant children theatre practitioners in Singapore and overseas.