LITERARY SINGAPORE
A directory of contemporary writing in Singapore
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Introduction

The international perception of Singapore is often defined by her economic success, her unique approach to urban planning, a rigorous education system and, not least, ethnic and religious harmony. Less known however, is literary production in the city-state. The fiction, poetry, drama, literature for children, and comics which have been published over recent decades testify to a dynamic literary diversity and a multi-cultural, multi-lingual presence. Literary Singapore is a directory of 139 writers actively writing in English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil, the country's four official languages. It represents a spectrum of acclaimed, distinguished, celebrated or recognised writers and artists who have imagined, interpreted and expressed life, living, and what it means to be human. It includes useful information on publishers, related organisations and literary journals in Singapore.

The Directory is by no means exhaustive; rather, it offers a broad range of voices in contemporary Singaporean writing, and a comprehensive look at Singaporean writers from different generations, writing in different languages, styles and genres. It will be readily apparent that the human and literary imagination is hardly dependent on, or limited by, the size of the writer's country. The Directory was edited by Dr Leong Liew Geok, who went the extra mile in a complex project, and to whom we are deeply grateful. We hope that international audiences looking for new voices or world-views will find in it a rich resource, a useful guide, an interesting compilation. Singaporeans will discover evolving literary traditions and a surprisingly rich – and growing – literary heritage. They will be able to encounter literature not written in their own mother tongue, and engage with works not usually associated with literature.

The Literary Arts Team
National Arts Council
Singapore
English poet, short story writer, and trilingual playwright, Alfian Bin Sa’at is Resident Playwright of W!LD RICE Theatre Company. He has published two volumes of poetry, *One Fierce Hour* (1998) and *A History of Amnesia* (2001). In 2001, he won the Golden Point Award for Poetry and also received the National Arts Council’s Young Artist Award. *Corridor: Twelve Short Stories* (1999) won a Commendation Award in the 1998 Singapore Literature Prize. His Malay language plays have been produced by Teater Ekamatra. While “Causeway” (1998) won a Commendation award from Majlis Bahasa Melayu Singapura [Malay Language Council of Singapore], “Fugitives” (2002), co-written with Ng How Wee, marked his first foray into Chinese language theatre. Nominated six times for Best Original Script for *The Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards*, he eventually won for “Landmarks: Asian Boys Vol.2” (2004) and “Nadira” (2009). Alfian’s plays have been translated into German, Swedish and Danish, and have been performed in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, London and other European cities. Malay Sketches (2012), comprising 50 short stories, will be released in March.

“Alfian Sa’at has, in this second book written, arguably, one of the most powerful collections by a Singaporean... This is a poetry reminding us relentlessly of the human potential - and therefore a society’s potential - for shutting our senses to disease we might have helped aggravate, or, for daring to look unflinchingly at the roots of our suffering.” Lee Tzu Pheng, *The Straits Times Life!, 7 July 2001*

“As a writer, Alfian has committed himself to engaging with Singaporean issues of identity, family, culture, and belonging... Alfian’s collection reveals a fiercely committed, inventive individual who seeks to challenge, to confront, and hopefully to resolve.” Susan Philip, *Asiatic Journal, Vol 4, No 2 (Dec 2010)*

**Alfian Bin Sa’at**

**A History of Amnesia** (2001)

Unapologetic, unafraid and unyielding, Alfian’s second collection of verse delves with greater depth into the concerns of his first volume to reclaim collective history and memory. This is one of the most dissonant and penetrating voices in Singaporean poetry.
Meira Chand

Of Indian-Swiss parentage, Meira Chand was born and educated in London. She lived her adult life in Japan and India before moving to Singapore in 1997. She is the author of eight novels, seven of which are A Different Sky (2010), Highly Commended in the 2001 National Book Development Council of Singapore Book Awards, for Fiction in English. Her other works of fiction are Poets, Priests and Prostitutes (1990), Life-Cycle of Homo Sapiens, Male (1992), Seventeen (1996), and Tangerine (1997), which won the Singapore Literature Prize in 1996. Chand is an Associate of the Centre for the Arts, National University of Singapore and a Distinguished Reader at the National Library. She has been Regional Chairperson for the Commonwealth Writers Prizes and a Visiting Fellow at Mansfield College, Oxford. She is involved in many programmes to promote literature and young writers in Singapore.

“A Different Sky is historical fiction at its most complex and engaging…Chand balances the communist groupings, Japanese Occupation and emerging nationalism with skill…As history A Different Sky is engrossing, as fiction, highly enjoyable.” Literary Review, June 2010

“Chand tells the story in a direct and compelling manner. The prose sweeps forward, and she evokes the period beautifully…” The Telegraph, 9th June 2010

Colin Cheong

Colin Cheong is a novelist, short-story writer and poet. His first novel, The Stolen Child (1989), was Highly Commended in the 1990 National Book Development Council of Singapore Book Awards, for Fiction in English. His other works of fiction are Poets, Priests and Prostitutes (1990), Life-Cycle of Homo Sapiens, Male (1992), Seventeen (1996), and Tangerine (1997), which won the Singapore Literature Prize in 1996. The Man in the Cupboard (1999), in unpublished form, was also awarded the Merit Prize in the 1998 Singapore Literature Prize competition. His poetry collection, Void Decks and Other Empty Places (1996), won the Commendation Award in the 1995 Singapore Literature Prize competition. The collection is available at the National Online Repository of Artistic Works (NORA). Cheong has spent the last decade writing commemorative books for corporate clients. Polite Fiction (2011), his latest work of creative fiction, has just been published.

Polite Fiction is about the rude reality behind the stories we tell about ourselves. Colin Cheong’s latest work weaves a central story through the lives of a cast of characters hiding behind their own polite fictions. Each chapter sends sanitized fairy tales back to the realm of shadows where they lie in wait – to remind us of how much we lie.

“Colin Cheong’s ‘Polite Fiction’ is a beautifully written novel of the 1980s. It is about the ‘polite world’ and the private world of a boy and his family, about the pressure of being a good son, about the expectations placed on the next generation, and the courage to do the right thing.”

“…Cheong’s novel is about the world of the closet, of the things we tell ourselves and the things we pretend to believe.”

“Colin Cheong’s Polite Fiction is a bildungsroman. Wings finds that his family is breaking up. He’s failing in school. The Scouts are no refuge. His friends, no comfort. And worst of all, he’s fallen in love. He has to deal with it all – if only he could find a way to make sense of it all, and the courage to do the right thing.”
Felix Cheong

Named by Reader’s Digest as the 29th Most Trusted Singaporean of 2010, Felix Cheong is the author of seven books: four collections of poetry, two teen detective novels and a non-fiction anthology of interviews. He has also written two plays and edited a volume of essays. His latest volume of poetry is Sudden in Youth: New and Selected Poems (2009). Cheong has been invited to read at writers’ festivals in Edinburgh, West Cork, Austin, Sydney, Brisbane, Christchurch, Hong Kong, Chengdu, Kuala Lumpur, Ubud, Bangalore and Singapore. In 2000, he received the National Arts Council’s Young Artist Award for Literature. Broken by the Rain (2003) was nominated for the Singapore Literature Prize in 2004. Cheong, who has a Master of Philosophy in Creative Writing from the University of Queensland, is currently an adjunct lecturer at LASALLE College of the Arts, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and Temasek Polytechnic.

“Felix Cheong shows us in Sudden In Youth that he is, when at his best, an indisputably talented poet possessed of an assured voice who also happens to have a lot to say.” Richard Lord, writersconnect.org, November 22, 2009

“It is an entertaining whodunit with a well-researched bit of Singapore history cleverly thrown in.” Kristina Tom, The Straits Times

Michael Chiang

Born in Malaysia, Michael Chiang is a playwright best known for crowd-pleasing hits like “Army Daze” (1987), “Beauty World” (1988) and “Private Parts” (1992). “Army Daze” was turned into a film in 1996. Chiang’s endearingly local comedies helped demystify theatre for the mainstream public, which explains why many of his plays still enjoy regular revivals (with ever larger-scale productions) to this day. Few realise that playwriting is purely a hobby for Chiang, who has spent the past three decades in print media, starting out as a newspaper journalist and going on to become CEO of a major publishing company. He created and launched many popular news-stand titles, including 8 Days, the entertainment weekly that remains one of the country’s best-selling titles. He now runs his own media consultancy.

Army Daze (1985)

Humorous look at National Service in Singapore, seen through the eyes of a middle-class mummy’s boy. Largely based on the writer’s own NS experience in the 70s, the book adroitly captures the fears and frustrations of every 18-year-old undergoing BMT (Basic Military Training).

Private Parts & Other Play Things (1994)


Crying House (2006)

A haunted house in Katong. A strange SMS from their teacher who’s gone missing. And a decades-old murder that remains unsolved. Tash Nathan, Katong. A strange SMS

Other Play Things


Sudden in Youth: New and Selected Poems (2009)

Sixty-six poems. Out of the mundane, a flash of the lyrical. And always, the inventive wordplay, touching on themes from crisis of faith to divorce, from fatherhood to being, yes, tattooed. Sudden in Youth brings together the best of Felix Cheong’s poetry.
Troy Chin

Troy Chin returned home to try his hand at making comic books after almost a decade of studying and working in America. Beginning with the first part of The Resident Tourist in 2007, Troy went on to chronicle an autobiographical journey via a five-panel graphic novel, with the most recent book (Part 5) launched in 2011. Parts 1-3 were translated into Thai in 2010, while a Singapore Internationale grant also allowed Chin to showcase The Resident Tourist excerpts at a solo exhibition in Berlin during the summer of 2010. While The Resident Tourist captures a darker, more introspective tone, the four-panel strip format (Loti) (2009), currently into its second volume, depicts a lighter, more humorous slice of Singaporean life. Chin also contributed stories to the first two volumes of the Southeast Asian comics anthology, Liquid City (2008 and 2010), published by US-based comics giant, Image Comics. He received the Young Artist Award (Literary Arts) from the National Arts Council in 2011.

“A palatable mixture of melancholy and literary joy.”
Joey Kang, Good Paper, June 2011

“This is first-rate non-fiction, the quintessential pop-culture product of present-day Singapore.”
Umpagan Ampikaipakan, New Straits Times, 4 Jan 2010

Chong Tze Chien

A Theatre Studies graduate of the National University of Singapore, Chong Tze Chien is an award-winning and published playwright and director. His awards include the Singapore Dramatist Award (1998) for “PIE”, The Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards for Best Director and Production of the Year and for Best Original Script in 2011 for “Charged” (2010). “Turn by Turn We Turn” (2011) dramatises the development and eventual demise of traditional hand puppetry in China. Chong writes frequently for television channels and films, including “Gurushetram: 24 Hours of Anger” (co-written with T T Dhavamani; 2010), Singapore’s first Tamil feature film, which has been sold to India and neighbouring countries. His work has been read and dramatised by the Royal Court Theatre (UK) in 2000 and the Singapore London Playhouse in 2005. In August 2006, “Furthest North, Deepest South” had its international premiere at the 14th Sziget Festival in Budapest, Hungary. For his contributions to Singaporean theatre, Chong received the Young Artist Award from the National Arts Council in 2006. He was with The Necessary Stage from 2000 to 2004. He is presently Company Director of another theatre company, The Finger Players. Chong’s play, ”Turn by Turn We Turn” (2011), which he also directed, won The Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards (2012) for Best Director and Production of the Year.

“His writing shows that his understanding of the human condition is incredibly perceptive.” Musa Fazal, Flying Inkpot - Review of “SPOILT” [http://www.inkpotreviews.com/]

“Charged does not disappoint. It tackles issues of race with brutal frankness and a refreshing lack of political correctness...The script is explosive, yet sensitive and nuanced.”
Kenneth Kwok, The Flying Inkpot

Four Plays (2011)
Chong’s sophomore collection of plays, including “Charged”, winner of the 2011 The Straits Times Life!Theatre Award for Best Script. Through his signature use of experimental and innovative puppetry and stage devices, Chong’s “Charged” is Singapore’s most controversial and nuanced political play to date - addressing the issue of racial tensions in the most explosive of scenarios - that of a Chinese corporal shooting his Malay counterpart while on military duty.
Malaysian-born Dave Chua, who has a degree in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science from the University of California, Berkeley, took up writing in 1992. He was joint-winner of the 1995 Golden Point Award for his short story, “Father’s Gifts.” Gone Case [1997] received the Singapore Literature Prize Commendation Award in 1996. In 2001, he won the second prize at the Singapore Screenplay Awards for Feature-Length Scripts. Chua was a recipient of the National Arts Council’s Arts Creation Fund in 2009. The Beating and Other Stories (2011) has just been published.

“The graphic novel format also enables the writer and artist to show, rather than tell, resulting in uncluttered, poignant moments.” Nicholas Yong, The Straits Times, Jan 3, 2011

Dave Chua

Elangovan, bilingual poet-playwright-director, was educated in Raffles Institution, and obtained his BA [Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts] and MA [Middlesex University, UK] in Theatre Directing. He has published three collections of poetry and 11 collections of plays, among which are “Talaq” [“Divorce”] (1999) and “Smegma” (2006), and three Singapore Internationale award-winning collections: “Flush” (2002), “Oodaadi” [“Medium”; 2003], and “1915” (2005). The most striking feature in his plays is the representation of historically and culturally identifiable experiences shared by the multi-ethnic communities in Singapore. His works carry radical content and often combative, but convincing, rhetoric that shatters any attempt to perpetuate the culture of silence here or anywhere. The sheer unrelenting force of his quest to speak truth to power is evident in his writings. He is the Artistic Director of Agni Kootthu [Theatre of Fire]. He received the Southeast Asia Write Award in 1997.

Elangovan
Shamini Flint


‘Shamini Flint moves things along at a cracking pace and the dapper Belgian detective with the superior little grey cells would have been intrigued. I feel sure, to meet one of his 21st-century rivals.’

Susan Kurosan, The Australian, 11 Dec 2010

Otto Fong

Otto Fong was a Science teacher in Raffles Institution for eight years. In 2008, he left to become a full-time comic artist and publisher. He created the comic trilogy, Sir Fong’s Adventures In Science. The series aims to entertain and educate readers aged 9–14 by weaving sci-fi plots into the Singapore science syllabus. It was named “Ten Good Local Reads” by The Straits Times in 2005, was on the National Library’s “Top Ten Borrowed List” in 2009 and was also named by The Straits Times as the “Children’s Bestseller” in 2010. In 2010, Otto created Balance, a comic book published in collaboration with HELP Family Service Centre, that highlights the plight of single-parent families. He has also written several Chinese plays, including the first R(A) [Restricted (Artistic)] Mandarin play in Singapore, ‘Another Tribe’ (1992), and two Singapore Arts Festival plays, ‘Mr Beng’ (1999) and “HERStory” (2011).

“It’s as fantastic and educational as it sounds. Otto Fong combines humour, interesting characters, a Singapore background and a science lesson... We need more such Singapore books – seriously fun!” Shameen Idiculla, What’s Up (a newspaper for primary schools); Nov-Dec 2009, p 21

“Book 2 is simple, funny and packed with information... you never really feel as if you are reading a regular science text book. Nor do you get bored – the action zips along to the very last page and will keep you hooked.” Shameen Idiculla, What’s Up (a newspaper for primary schools); Nov-Dec 2009, p 21

“It’s as fantastic and educational as it sounds. Otto Fong combines humour, interesting characters, a Singapore background and a science lesson... We need more such Singapore books – seriously fun!” Tan Shoo Liah, Lifestyles magazine, Nov 2010, p 55
Adeline Foo


Heng Siok Tian

Ho Minfong

Born in Burma, Ho Minfong was raised in Thailand and now divides her time between Singapore and New York. She graduated from Tunghai University (Taiwan) and Cornell. She developed “Sing to the Dawn”, a 1975 prize-winning story, into a novel (1984) which was turned into a musical (1996) and an animated film (2008). "Tanjong Rhu" won First Prize in the 1982 Singapore Short Story Competition and the 1983 Asiaweek Short Story Competition. Rice Without Rain (1986), won the 1988 National Book Development Council of Singapore Award (Fiction) and was a runner-up in the 1987 Commonwealth Prize. The Clay Marble (1991) came from Ho’s experience as a nutritionist in 1980 at the Thai–Cambodian border, where numerous refugees had fled the war in Cambodia. Journeys: An Anthology of Short Stories (2008) compiles 12 of Ho’s stories. Her books for younger children, Hush! A Thai Lullaby (1996) and Maples in the Mist: Children’s Poems from the Tang Dynasty (1996), have earned her recognition in the United States. Ho was a recipient of the Southeast Asia Write Award in 1996, the Cultural Medallion (1997) and the Caldecott Honor Award (1997).

GENRE / CATEGORY OF BOOK
Young Adult Fiction

LANGUAGE
English

AWARDS
Rice Without Rain was awarded First Prize in the NBDCS Book Awards [1988] and Best Books for Young Adults, American Library Association [1991]. The Clay Marble was awarded Best Children’s Book [USA, 1991] and was among Notable Children’s Trade Books in the Language Arts [1992].

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978-981-4302-68-5

Philip Jeyaretnam

Philip Jeyaretnam is a Cambridge-educated lawyer and writer. His first book, First Loves (1987), comprising nine linked stories, was on the Sunday Times Bestseller List for 18 months and was Highly Commended by the National Book Development Council of Singapore (1998). His subsequent works include Raffles Place Ragtime (1988), also a best-seller, which deals with the rat race of modern society. Abraham’s Promise (1995) was Highly Commended in the 1996 National Book Development Council of Singapore Awards, and Tigers in Paradise (2004) collects both his earlier works, and includes two essays on Singaporean literature in English. He was a Visiting Fulbright Fellow at Harvard Law School in 1988, and received the Airey Neave Award for constitutional law writing, writing on the rule of law. He received the National Arts Council’s Young Artist Award in 1993, and the Southeast Asia Write Award in 2003. Jeyaretnam has attended the University of Iowa’s International Writing Program, The Melbourne Writers’ Festival, and the Cambridge Seminar. He is a Senior Counsel and Managing Partner of law firm Rodly & Davidson. He was President of the Law Society from 2004–2007. He lives in Singapore with his wife and three children.


GENRE / CATEGORY OF BOOK
Fiction

LANGUAGE
English

AWARDS
Highly Commended (Fiction), NBDCS Awards [1996]

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978912327925


This anthology includes the two novels Raffles Place Ragtime and Abraham’s Promise, Jeyaretnam’s collection of short stories [First Loves], with three new stories, essays and a Foreword by Peter Wicks.

GENRE / CATEGORY OF BOOK
Fiction

LANGUAGE
English

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Abraham’s Promise (1994, repr. May 2010)

Abraham Isaac, teacher of Latin, philosopher and father, has, after many years, a young pupil. Teaching pulls him back into memories of his past life and loves, when he believed he had a valuable role to play as a proud citizen of a new country. But now he is old, and the burden of his years weighs on him heavily. Abraham is estranged from his strong, successful son. Descending into the past, Abraham is led to an understanding and reconciliation of his life and times, hard-won in maturity.

GENRE / CATEGORY OF BOOK
Fiction

LANGUAGE
English

AWARDS
English

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Koh Buck Song

Koh Buck Song is the author and editor of nineteen books, including three volumes of verse, *A Brief History Of Toa Payoh* (1992), *The Worth Of Wonder* (2001) and *The Ocean of Ambition* (2003), and several anthologies, including *Singapore: Places, Poems, Paintings* (1993). He co-edited with Umej Bhatia *From Boys To Men: A Literary Anthology Of National Service In Singapore* (2002). He was writer-in-residence at the Scottish Poetry Library in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1992, and has also represented Singapore at literary events in the Philippines, UK and US. Koh was previously literary editor of *The Straits Times*, as well as General Editor of the literary journal, *Singa*. His poems have appeared in anthologies including *Writing Singapore: A Historical Anthology of Singapore Literature* (2009) and *Reflecting On The Merlion* (2009), and have been exhibited at venues like the National Museum, Singapore Art Museum and the Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay. The *Worth Of Wonder* was the first volume of Singaporean poetry in English published in the 21st century.

Stella Kon

Stella Kon was born in Edinburgh to parents from established Peranakan families in Singapore. Her best known work is "Emily of Emerald Hill" (1984), a one-woman drama which won Singapore’s National Playwriting Competition in 1982, and has had over 10 productions in four countries. She also won the same competition twice previously, for "The Bridge" (1977) and "Trial" (1982). Her shorter plays are collected in *A Breeding Pair* (1971), *The Immigrant and Other Plays* (1975) and *Emporium and Other Plays* (1977). Kon has written short stories for various anthologies, and two novels, *The Scholar and the Dragon* (1986) and *Eston* (1995). She is now Chairman of Musical Theatre Ltd, a Singapore not-for-profit organisation which compose original musicals. Kon has now turned to writing musicals: "Exodus" (2003), "Blue Willow House" (2006), "Victorian Days" (2006), "Peter and Pierre" (2006), "Lost in Transit" (2008) and "Merlion Rising" (2009).
Aaron Lee Song Yong

A lawyer by profession, Aaron Lee is a poet and editor. He has published two volumes of poetry, A Visitation of Sunlight (1997), which received the National Book Development Council of Singapore Merit Award in 1998, and Five Right Angles (2007). The former was named one of the best books in 1997 by The Straits Times; the latter was a finalist for the Singapore Literature Prize (2008). Lee co-edited with Alvin Pang the bestselling No Other City: The Ethos Anthology of Urban Poetry (2000), and with Pang, Ramon C Sunico and Alfred A Yuson, Love Gatherers All: The Philippines — Singapore Anthology of Love Poetry (2002). His work has been published internationally and he has read and spoken at literary events in Germany, Malaysia, Australia, the Philippines and the US. Lee is also an arts commentator and writing instructor.

“An impressive first volume... using words sensitively and with originality to intimate fragile intimations of the complex modern reality.”


A Visitation of Sunlight (1997)

A rousing poetry collection centred on the metaphor of a journey from darkness to light, from uncertainty to insight, mapped out in lucid and measured language.

Five Right Angles (2007)

Just as there exists no geometric shape with five right angles, no life corresponds exactly to expectation. Each poem in this collection speaks with guarded tenderness amid human demands amidst everyday urban existence. A larger picture emerges—one composed with beauty, pattern and order.

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A Visitation of Sunlight (1997)

A rousing poetry collection centred on the metaphor of a journey from darkness to light, from uncertainty to insight, mapped out in lucid and measured language.
Jin Pyn Lee

Jin Pyn Lee is a writer and filmmaker. An English Literature graduate from the National University of Singapore, Lee made publishing history when *The Elephant and the Tree* (2006), her debut children’s picture book, became the first in its genre from Singapore to be translated into Japanese, Spanish, Catalan and Chinese, in addition to its English language edition being sold in English-speaking countries around the world. The animation of the story in Japanese won a Best Animation award in Japan in 2009, another first for Singapore. In 2010, Lee’s *And the Dolphin Smiled* was published in *Just When Stories*, an anthology of stories by internationally acclaimed writers. Profits from this book and Lee’s writings go to various charities helping to conserve Asia’s natural heritage – a frequent theme in her articles and short films.

“Singapore has a new rare classic of its own. Jin Pyn has an alarming instinct for the nub of what makes a great fairytale.”

*The Sunday Times*, Dec 3, 2006

Charming story… accompanied by deceptively sophisticated graphic design, will have you smiling and feeling about five again.”

STYLE magazine, Dec 2006

“But it is Jin Pyn Lee’s *And the Dolphin Smiled* that really stands out, and this is all the more remarkable as it is only three and a half pages in length and a perfect example of how so much can be said in so few words.”

Fantasy Book Review, 22 Sep 2010

Madeleine Lee

Madeleine Lee has published four books of poetry: a single headlamp (2003), fifty three/zero three (2004), *y grec* (2005), co-written with Eleanor Wong, and *synaesthesia* (2008). Her fifth volume is in press. She has read at festivals in Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, and Taiwan. Her poems have appeared in many anthologies. They have been turned into film, dance, visual art, and translated into Bahasa Indonesia and Chinese. She was on the Steering Committee of the 2005 Singapore Writers Festival (SWF), where she conceived “Second Link”, a performance of Singaporean/Malaysian literature which played to favourable reviews in Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. For the 2007 SWF, Lee and Cake Theatre turned *y grec* into a theatrical production, later nominated for Best Production in *The Straits Times* Life! Theatre Awards (2008). Lee initiated NORA (www.nlb.gov.sg/nora), an e-repository of Singaporean literature launched in January 2005. She has spoken on creative writing, conducted workshop in schools and been a mentor in the Mentor Access Programme. Her current project is “MOVING WORDS” with SMRT/ NAC, a display of new and old Singaporean poems on the MRT (Mass Rapid Transit).

“What is exciting is a new purposefulness, an impatience with the opacity of the material world which the artist’s new-found powers strive to penetrate. And flashes of a new brilliance are evident, illuminating felicitous syntheses of image and idea. To take a walk through this collection is to participate in the artist’s discovery of her evolving potential, in a way instructive to those who, like the poet, believe there are poems out there inscribed in every landscape and waiting to be uncovered.” Lee Tzu Pheng, from the Intro to *fifty three/zero three*. (2004)


This collection of 29 poems takes inspiration from a variety of landscapes spanning England, Cambodia, Malaysia, Paris and of course, Singapore. One of the poems in this collection, “Coffee” was adapted into a short film and was featured on Mediacorp’s Arts Channel in 2004.

GENRE / CATEGORY OF BOOK

Poetry

LANGUAGE

English

DISTRIBUTOR / PUBLISHER

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website

http://trulymadlee.blogspot.com

GENRE / CATEGORY OF BOOK

Poetry

LANGUAGE

English

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http://trulymadlee.blogspot.com
Lee Tzu Pheng

An award-winning poet, Lee Tzu Pheng graduated from and taught in what is now the National University of Singapore until her retirement in 2001. She has published four volumes of poetry: Prospect of a Drowning (1980), which won the 1982 National Book Development Council of Singapore Award for Poetry; Against the Next Wave (1988) and The Brink of an Amen (1991) which both won the 1992 NBDCS Award for Poetry, and Lambada by Galilee and Other Surprises (1997). Lee received the Cultural Medallion for Literature in 1985 and the Southeast Asia Write Award in 1987. In 1996, she received both the Gabriela Mistral Award from the Republic of Chile and the Montblanc-NUS Centre for the Arts Literary Award for services to literature. Her poetry has been set to music for choral performance. She is known for her work in mentoring younger writers.

David Leo

David Leo graduated in English from the National University of Singapore and taught secondary school for five years before pursuing an aviation career. He received the 1993 Publishers Prize for Fiction for Ah, the Fragrance of Durians (1993), the 1994 National Book Development Council Commendation Award for The Sins of the Fathers (1993) and the 1995 Singapore Literature Prize Commendation Award for Wives, Lovers & Other Women (1995). His short stories have been adapted for television in the award-winning The Singapore Short Story Project, as well as for the stage. News At Nine (2003), a collection of short stories, is a secondary school text. His poems have been published in journals and anthologies like Singa: Literature and the Arts in Singapore, No Other City – the Ethos Anthology of Urban Poetry (2000), Love Gathers All – The Philippines-Singapore Anthology of Love Poetry (2002), Rhythms – A Singaporean Anthology of Millennial Poetry (2000), and man/born/free – Writings on the Human Spirit from Singapore (2011). Leo is a freelance writer on a variety of subjects.

Leong Liew Geok

Born in Penang, Malaysia, Leong Liew Geok received her early education there. A graduate of La Trobe University and the University of Adelaide, Australia, she has graduate degrees in Modern English and American Literature from the University of Leicester, England, and George Washington University, US. She taught in the Department of English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore from 1981 till 2002. Leong has two collections of poetry, Love is Not Enough (1991) and Women without Men (2000). She edited More than Half the Sky: Creative Writings by Thirty Singaporean Women (1998). Her poems have appeared in anthologies from Singapore and abroad. She has published articles on the Literature of the Pacific War in Malaya and Singapore, Singaporean Literature in English, and contributed many entries in these areas to various encyclopedias, most recently, The Encyclopedia of Twentieth Century Fiction (Wiley-Blackwell, 2010). She is married, with three children.

“...the quirky tale of Mary Ann, the meticulous and doting housekeeper for the White Rabbit, as she continues the tale... This is a terrific look at a great classic. The energetic, action-packed illustrations complement the story in Disney-cartoon style, making for a great read for all ages.”

Sonny Liew

Malaysian-born Sonny Liew read philosophy at Clare College, Cambridge. He is an Eisner-nominated comic artist based in Singapore. His first foray into comic illustration was with “Frankie and Poo” which appeared in The New Paper in 1995. Subsequently, he studied illustration at the Rhode Island School of Design. His work includes Wonderland (2009), My Faith in Frankie (a collaboration with Mike Carey and Marc Hempel) for DC Vertigo (2004), Regents (DC Minx, 2007) and the comic adaptation of Jane Austen’s Sense and Sensibility (Marvel Comics, 2010). He spearheaded Liquid City, an Eisner-nominated, multi-volume comics anthology featuring creators from Southeast Asia, for Image Comics (2008–Present). His Malinky Robot series was a Xeric grant recipient and winner of the Best Science Fiction Album award at the Utopiales SF Festival in Nantes (2009). Liew received the National Arts Council’s Young Artist Award in 2010.

“Malinky-Robot is the real deal, the kind of book that should go just on the must-buy list, but on the must-buy-for-friends list...[It] reads like something you’ve known all your life and also are seeing for the first time... a story of gentle tragedy, a near-future sci-fi comic with heart, a buddy story with an impressive supporting cast. The design is brilliant, and the storytelling is resonant in all the best ways.” Wendy Holler, Newsarama, August 2011

...droll and urbane... a rare piece of literature that’s been inspired by another yet deserves its own prideful place on the bookshelf.” Publishers Weekly, March 2009
Catherine Lim

Malaysian-born Catherine Lim is Singapore’s most prolific writer of English fiction, with more than 19 books - short stories, supernatural tales, novels, reflective prose, poems and satirical pieces - to her name. Her work deals largely with the east-west divide, Asian culture, in particular Chinese culture, women’s issues and those concerning Singapore’s culture, history and politics. Lim’s O Singapore! Stories in Celebration (1989) received the 1990 Commendation Award for Fiction from the National Book Development Council of Singapore. Lim received the Southeast Asia Write Award in 1999 and was conferred an Honorary Doctorate in 2000 by Murdoch University, Australia. She was made a Chevalier de L’Ordre des Arts et Des Lettres by the French government in 2003, and appointed Ambassador for the Hans Christian Andersen Foundation, Copenhagen, for 2005. Many of Lim’s works are studied in local and foreign schools and universities. Several have been translated into other languages. Her novella A Leap of Love (2003) and novel The Bondmaid (1995) were made into films. Lim has written numerous articles on contemporary and cultural issues, and regularly posts online critiques on politics in Singapore.

Emily Lim

Emily Lim was a corporate director of business development for Raffles Holdings before she was diagnosed in 1999 with Spasmodic Dysphonia, a rare voice disorder. She took a sabbatical, during which she decided to become a writer with her own publishing company. Her books have been inspired by her own struggles with her condition, from which she has since recovered. Lim is the first writer outside North America to win three IPPY (Independent Book Publisher) Awards: for her first book, Prince Bear and Pauper Bear (2007; Bronze Medalist, 2008), Just Teddy (2008; Bronze Medalist, 2009), and Bunny Finds The Right Stuff (2007; Silver Medalist, 2010). Lim was also the first writer in Southeast Asia to be a Moonbeam Gold Medalist in 2009 for The Tale of Rusty Horse (2008). Her books have been turned into cartoon animation for television, iPhone and iPad and Moo-o interactive e-book formats.

Ed’s rave: A lonely, poorly made toy bear finally finds an owner, and helps a chewed-up bear escape a sorry fate. Lovely story about hope, selflessness, finding a soul mate…And the illustrations do justice to the words.”

Simply Her, Jan 2008, p. 138

“A simple story can make your spirit soar and children will for sure remember Rusty Horse who found joy in making someone else happy. Lots of feel-good elements – love, hope, selflessness, finding a soul mate…And the illustrations do justice to the words.”

Lifestyle, Aug 2008, p. 46

The Catherine Lim Collection (2008)
Consisting of an early novel [The Serpent’s Tooth (1982)] and three short story collections [They Do Return—But Gently Lead Them Back (1983), O Singapore! Stories in Celebration (1989) and The Woman’s Book of Superladies (1993)], the collection may be seen as a narrative chronicle of a society in transit, one where multiethnic characters struggle with their identities as the past and the present intersect, mingle and clash.

Miss Seethah in the World (2010)
Set against the backdrop of modern-day Singapore, the novel ultimately examines, with wit, wry irony and warm understanding, the unchanging quandaries of the human condition, when love and sex, religion and politics, tradition and modernity, can all come together in an uneasy mix, to show human nature at its most depressing and its most inspiring.

The Tale of Rusty Horse (2008)
Rusty Horse, an old forgotten rocking horse, longs to be a favourite with everyone. An old fairy grants his wish but he has to choose between popularity or the friendship of a child. Rusty finally learns that real magic lies within his power to choose what truly matters to him.

Prince Bear & Pauper Bear (2007)
In this story of love and second chances, Pauper Bear, a teddy without a mouth, longs to be loved, whilst Prince Bear loves himself. Their paths take different turns and when they finally meet again, the two bears experience love and friendship with new perspectives.

The Catherine Lim Collection

The Tale of Rusty Horse

Prince Bear & Pauper Bear

Miss Seethah in the World

The Catherine Lim Collection (2008)

The Tale of Rusty Horse (2008)

Prince Bear & Pauper Bear (2007)

Catherine Lim

Emily Lim

GENRE / CATEGORY OF BOOK
Fiction

LANGUAGE
English

DISTRIBUTOR / PUBLISHER
Marshall Cavendish

GENRE / CATEGORY OF BOOK
Children’s Literature

LANGUAGE
English

DISTRIBUTOR / PUBLISHER
Mustard Seed Books

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Discover the world through fiction

Jeffrey Lim

Though a lawyer by profession, Jeffrey Lim is a storyteller at heart. Singapore is his home, but the world is his canvas. Lim has always lived in more than one world, living in Singapore and other places, in the corporate world and imaginary landscapes. He has two collections of short fiction, *Faith & Lies* (1999) and *The Coffin That Wouldn’t Bury* (2008). They are anthologies of speculative fiction, from stories of horror to mythology, from fantasy to parallel realities. He has published short stories in various anthologies, and teaches young writers techniques of creative writing.

With this new collection, Lim has added to his earlier impressive debut *Faith & Lies* and his stature as a writer with impressive imaginative powers.”

Prof Ronald Klein, Dept of English Studies, Hiroshima Jogakuin University, Japan

Suchen Christine Lim


*Stories of the Chinese Overseas* (2005), a non-fictional work, is published in US as *Hua Song: Stories Of The Chinese Diaspora* (2005). Lim’s short story, “The Morning Alter”, was filmed for television as part of the Singapore Short Story Project. She was featured in the Edinburgh International Book Festival (2009). A Fulbright Fellow in the University of Iowa’s International Writing Program (1996), she has been writer-in-residence in Western Australia, Scotland, South Korea, the Philippines, and has conducted writing workshops for the Arvon Foundation in the United Kingdom. She co-scripted and was featured in “Writing The City” (2010-2011), filmed for the British Council in Singapore. Lim is a Visiting Fellow in Creative Writing at Nanyang Technological University (2011).
Aaron Maniam

Aaron Maniam graduated with First Class honours in Philosophy, Politics and Economics from Somerville College, Oxford, and has an MA in International and Development Economics from Yale University. His debut collection, *Morning at Memory’s Border* (2005), was shortlisted for the Singapore Literature Prize in 2007. In 2003, he won First Prize in the Golden Point Award for English poetry. His poems have been featured in youth anthologies; the online journals *Stylus* and *Softblow*; *Over There: Poems from Singapore and Australia* (2008), *From the Window of This Epoch* (2009), a collection of Singaporean and Malaysian poetry; and *&WORDS: Poems Singapore and Beyond* (2010). He was one of 50 poets in *Fifty on 50* (2009), a collection which marked Singapore’s 50th anniversary of internal self-government. He is currently the youngest member on the Arts and Culture Strategic Review Steering Committee for the Ministry of Information, Communication and the Arts, and a Council Member for the English Language Institute of Singapore. An alumnus of the Creative Arts Programme (CAP), he now mentors young writers under CAP and the National Arts Council’s Mentor Access Programme.

Chris Mooney-Singh


“After Octavio Paz, Mooney-Singh is the only poet who writes about the paradoxes of Indian landscape with great passion.”

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**Aaron Maniam**

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**Chris Mooney-Singh**

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**GENRE / CATEGORY OF BOOK**

Poetry

**LANGUAGE**

English

**AWARDS**

Shortlisted, Singapore Literature Prize (2007)
First Prize, Golden Point Award (English Poetry; 2003)

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English

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**GENRE / CATEGORY OF BOOK**

Poetry

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Chandran Nair

Chandran Nair was educated at Raffles Institution and the University of Singapore (MSc, Marine Biology). He is the author of Once the Horsemen and Other Poems (1972) and After the Hard Hours, This Rain (1975), Poems and Lyrics of the Last Lord Li (with Koh Ho Ping, 1975) as well as Reaching for Stones (2010). He won the New Nation Short Story prize in 1973 with “Leta”, was founder/President of the Society of Singapore Writers (1976), and edited Singapore Writing (1977) and Short Stories from Asia and Africa (1977). He is a signatory of the Asian Writers Declaration which states the objectives, rights and responsibilities of writers in the national and ASEAN contexts. After a career as a publisher in Singapore, he joined UNESCO in 1981 as a book development expert and has worked in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and Europe. Now retired, he lives in France.

“... even from a purely sociological point of view, one sees through his imagery all the varied influences on this Malaysian/Singaporean Indian, and watches as the influences struggle to form, not a ‘Revolving Man’, but a real person... It is very interesting reading... but even more, it is so forcefully well-written.” Nalama Jenstad, reviewing Once the Horsemen and Other Poems (1972), Singapore Book World, Vol 3 (1972)

“We are worried about the poet’s development, we search for those unhealthy signs that indicate a falling into the clichéd and routine and we expect a richer, mellower mood. If we are inclined to such unhealthy thoughts, Chandran Nair’s new volume, After the Hard Hours This Rain, sets our minds at ease. Our poet is as artlessly tough as ever.” Ban Kah Choon, New Nation, 3 Jan 1976

http://www.chandrannair.tk

Ng Yi-Sheng

Ng Yi-Sheng is a full-time writer in multiple genres, including poetry, fiction, drama, non-fiction and journalism. In 2008, he became the youngest writer ever to win the Singapore Literature Prize for last boy (2006). He is an active presence in the Singapore arts community, both as artist and commentator. He hosts the quarterly artists’ presentation series ROJAK, and has officially blogged for the Singapore Biennale, the Singapore Arts Festival and the National Art Gallery.


http://lastboy.blogspot.com
O Thiam Chin

O Thiam Chin turned to writing in 2005, after studying mechatronics and working in telecommunications, media and marketing for a few years, then obtaining a degree in English Language and Literature from the Singapore Institute of Management. He is the author of three collections of short stories, Free-Falling Man [2006], Never Been Better[2009], and Under The Sun [2010]. His short stories have been featured in Asian Literary Review, Kyoto Journal, The Jakarta Post, The New Straits Times, Cha: An Asian Literary Journal, The International Literary Quarterly, QLRS, Karavan, Asia Writes, World Literature Today and in a number of anthologies. Never Been Better was longlisted for the 2010 Frank O’Connor Short Story Award. His fourth book, The Rest of Your Life and Everything That Comes With It, has just been published.

“O’s keen and honest surprise, reveal and subtle and extreme flaw and foibles, evoke the strange and complex presence to the critical mass of urban literature now fully emergent from Singapore. His poems, at once recognizably national and international in reach, offer a fresh edgy energy to this tradition.” Prof Shirley Geek-Lin Lim

Alvin Pang

Alvin Pang is a poet, writer, editor, anthologist, translator and literary entrepreneur who has been featured in major festivals, anthologies and journals around the world and translated into over a dozen languages. Named Singapore’s Young Artist of the Year for Literature in 2005, he received the Singapore Youth Award in 2007 for Arts and Culture, as well as the 2008 Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Foundation Education Award. A Fellow of the University of Iowa’s International Writing Program in 2002, his many publications include City of Rain [2003] and Tumasik: Contemporary Writing from Singapore [2009], which he edited. A former teacher, journalist and new media director, he is the editor of an internationally circulated public policy journal, Ethos. He also directs The Literary Centre - a non-profit initiative promoting interdisciplinary capacity, multicultural communication and positive social change.

“...a voice unhurried, confident, and capable of carrying diverse humors...surprising us with glimpses of contemporary experience that affirm yet mock, celebrate and unsettle. His poetry adds a rich and complex presence to the critical mass of urban literature now fully emergent from Singapore. His poems, at once recognizably national and international in reach, offer a fresh edgy energy to this tradition.” Prof Shirley Geek-Lin Lim

...direct, funny, heartbreaking, bossy, generous, and beautiful, full of paradoxes, logic, tantalizing illogic.” Elizabeth McCracken

City of Rain [2003]

Fifty-one poems. Hailed as ‘direct, funny, heartbreaking, bossy, generous, and beautiful, full of paradoxes, logic, tantalizing illogic’, this tour de force spans lyrical insight and relentless po-mo wit as it explores the heartground and ‘soulliness’ beneath the poet’s island city homeland, charting the true landmarks of 21st century life and love.
David Seow

David Seow is the author of several well-received books for children, including *The Sam, Sebbie and Di-Di-Di series* [12 books; 1998 - 2000] which feature his niece and nephews as the main characters, *Alexander’s Adventure Machine* [2002], *The Littlest Emperor* [2004] and *Monkey: The Classic Chinese Adventure Tale* [2005]. In 2005, he was invited to be a judge for the Media Development Authority’s First Time Writers and Illustrators Initiative. Seow has served on the executive committee of the Society for Reading and Literacy (SRL) and was an active member of Wordwrights, SRL’s special interest group for aspiring children’s book authors. He is a member of the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators. His latest books, *There’s Soup on My Fly* [2010] and *Blow A Kiss* (2010), are published by Bonnie Books.

“A colourful read.”

Tang Mei Ling, Singapore’s Child, April 2010, p 52

“The creative plot makes this a very funny read.”

Young Parents Magazine, online review


Haresh Sharma

Haresh Sharma has been full-time Resident Playwright of The Necessary Stage since 1990. He has written more than 70 plays, which have been staged in more than 15 cities. He has a BA from the National University of Singapore and an MA in Playwriting from the University of Birmingham, where he studied in 1994 on a Shell-NAC Scholarship. His play, “Off Centre”, was selected by the Ministry of Education as a Literature text for “N” and “O” Levels, and republished by The Necessary Stage in 2006.

*Interlogue: Studies in Singapore Literature, Vol. 6* [2008] is an extensive investigation by David Birch of Sharma’s work over the past 20 years. He won *The Straits Times Life! Theatre Award* for Best Original Script on three consecutive occasions: for “Fundamentally Happy” in 2007, “Good People” in 2008 and “Gemuk Girls” in 2009. These plays are published together by The Necessary Stage in *Trilogy* [2010]. Sharma recently became the first non-American recipient of the Goldberg Master Playwright Award given by New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts.

“Off Centre” marks a new maturity in Singapore theatre, addressing an audience prepared to be challenged.”

Hannah Pandan, *The Straits Times*, 3 Sep 1993

“... a beautifully crafted play which will engage you on multiple levels: cognitively, emotionally and possibly even spiritually.”

Kenneth Kwok, reviewing “Good People”, *Flying Inkpot*, 7 Nov 2007

**GENRE / CATEGORY OF BOOK**

Children’s Literature

**LANGUAGE**

English

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**GENRE / CATEGORY OF BOOK**

Drama

**LANGUAGE**

English

**DISTRIBUTOR / PUBLISHER**

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**GENRE / CATEGORY OF BOOK**

Drama

**LANGUAGE**

English

**DISTRIBUTOR / PUBLISHER**

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**GENRE / CATEGORY OF BOOK**

Children’s Literature

**LANGUAGE**

English

**DISTRIBUTOR / PUBLISHER**

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**ISBN**

978-981-08-2493-8
Daren Shiau

Daren Shiau is a fiction-writer, poet and lawyer in private practice. He has been described by The Arts Magazine as “among the most exciting of the post-1965 generation of writers”. Heartland (1999), which was cited by the Lonely Planet travel guide as the “definitive Singapore novel”, received the Singapore Literature Prize Commendation Award in 1998. An author of four books including Peninsular: Archipelagos and Other Islands (2000) and Velouria (2007), his short stories and poems have been translated into several languages and anthologised in Italy, Germany and Australia. The National Arts Council’s Young Artist Award Recipient in 2002, Shiau has been invited to read in New York, Boston, London and Sydney. He enjoys black coffee and listening to 70s punk rock.

Velouria (2007)

Velouria is Singapore’s first collection of microfiction [in English]. This seminal collection of microfiction, which is brief and immediate in style, is the author’s reaction to being defined for many years by Heartland, a dense award-winning novel covering several histories.

Peninsular: Archipelagos and Other Islands (2000)

Peninsular is built around the inescapable motif of islands and archipelagos. The collection redeems its “explores identity and existence through notions of fragments, fragmentation and the fragility of wholeness.” [back cover]

Desmond Sim

Desmond Sim is a short story writer, poet and playwright. “The Nose” won the National Short Story Competition in 1990. His volume of poetry, Places Where I’ve Been (1994) received the Singapore Literature Prize Merit Award in 1993. He has also won several top prizes in the Shell-NUS Playwriting competitions. “Autumn Tomyum” was Play of the Year in the 2002 The Strait Times Life! Theatre Awards. Sim’s plays have been produced by TheatreWorks, Singapore Repertory Theatre, Wild Rice and ACTION! Theatre. Abroad, they have been performed by Actors’ Theatre of Louisville and the KL [Kuala Lumpur] Performing Arts Centre. In “The Swimming Instructor” (2007), Sim works around a love triangle of friendship and sexuality with characteristic wit. He collaborated with Malaysian writer Nandang Abdul Rahman to produce a series of short plays, “Food, Sex and Death” (2011) for the Causeway Exchange (between Malaysia and Singapore) in Kuala Lumpur. He co-wrote the screenplay for the Thai film, “Beautiful Boxer” (2005), with its director, Ekachai Uekrongtham. Together with Dennis Chew, he co-wrote the screenplay for “The Wedding Game”, a Singapore/Malaysia romantic comedy (2009). Sim currently works as a lecturer and consultant by day, and a playwright and painter by night.

Places Where I’ve Been (1994)

A collection of 46 poems about the sense of place, real and figurative journeys drawn from or inspired by the writers’ travel and personal experiences.
Kirpal Singh

Kirpal Singh began writing while in school and has been publishing since 1970, when he brought out Singapore Pot-Pourri, a collection of essays, poems, plays and short stories. His poetry has been described as honest, direct and cutting-edge. He has read and performed at arts festivals in Edinburgh, Toronto, York, Adelaide and Austin, Texas. Catwalking and the Games We Play (1998) is regarded as his best book of poetry to date. “Monologue”, a story first published in 2000, has been widely anthologised. The publication of Thinking Hats and Coloured Turbans: Creativity Across Cultures (2004) has made him an international “creativity” guru. He is currently Director of the Wee Kim Wee Centre, Singapore Management University.

Genre / Category of Book
Poetry

Language
English

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Tan Hwee Hwee

Tan Hwee Hwee read English Literature at the University of East Anglia, where she graduated with First Class Honours. She has a Master’s in English Studies (1500-1660) from the University of Oxford, and an MFA in Creative Writing from New York University where she went on a New York Times Foundation Fellowship (1997 – 2000). She published her first novel, Foreign Bodies (1997), at the age of 22. Her second novel, Mammon Inc (2001), won the 2004 Singapore Literature Prize. Tan has received awards from the National Arts Council, the National University of Singapore, the New York Times Foundation and the British Broadcasting Corporation. She received the Young Artist Award for Literature from the National Arts Council in 2003.

“A milestone...Foreign Bodies, a fictional exploration of child abuse, is the first Singaporean novel to win critical acclaim in Britain and the U.S.”

The Wall Street Journal, front page

“This remarkable novel transforms itself into a serious addition... Her words pepper your brains like a barrage of bullets, stunning their targets with perceptive precision.”

The List

Genre / Category of Book
Fiction

Language
English

Distributor / Publisher
Michael Joseph (Penguin)

Michael Joseph Group

Micheal Joseph (Penguin)

Distributor / Publisher
Penguin Ltd

80 Strand
London WC2R SRC
Tel: (020) 70103000
Fax: (020) 7010 6709
Email: adultrights

Enquiries@penguin.co.uk

ISBN
0-140-26704-2

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Chiah Deng wants to land her dream job as an Adapter for Mammon Inc, a job where she will teach executives how to adjust to new cultures. To pass the test, she has to teach her Chinese sister how to be white and her English friend how to be Chinese.

Mei receives a phone call from jail from her English friend Andy. Andy has been arrested for masterminding a multi-million dollar international gambling syndicate. He owes he’s been framed and this leaves Mei two weeks to prove his innocence.

Genre / Category of Book
Non-Fiction

Language
English

Distributor / Publisher
Pearson Education South Asia Pte Ltd
23/25 First Lok Yang Road
Singapore 429733
Tel: (65) 6319 9388
Fax: (65) 6265 1033
Email: longman.enquiry@pearson.com.sg

ISBN
013-102-533-3

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Mei receives a phone call from jail from her English friend Andy. Andy has been arrested for masterminding a multi-million dollar international gambling syndicate. He owes he’s been framed and this leaves Mei two weeks to prove his innocence.
Tan Mei Ching has a Master of Fine Arts in English - Creative Writing from the University of Washington. Her novel, Beyond the Village Gate (1994), received a Commendation Award in the 1992 Singapore Literature Prize (SLP). Her short story collection, Crossing Distance (1995), received a Merit Award in the 1994 SLP and a Commendation in the National Book Development Council of Singapore Book Awards (1996). Her short stories won first prizes in the US and her play, “Water Ghosts”, won First Prize in the NUS-Shell Short Play Competition (1992). Her plays have been staged as well as published. Her short stories are included in More Than Half the Sky: Creative Writings by Thirty Singaporean Women (1998), Asian Women’s Writings (2009), Singapore Literature in English: An Anthology (2008), and Telltale: 11 Stories (2010). In 1997, she received the National Arts Council of Singapore’s Young Artist Award for Literature. A travel narrative, Towards the Blue: Adventures of A City Wimp, was published in 2007.

Paul Tan

A former journalist who has held positions in marketing and communications in the Singapore Tourism Board, Paul Tan has published three volumes of poetry. The first two, Curious Roads (1994) and Driving into Rain (1998) won the Commendation and Merit Awards at the Singapore Literature Prize in 1993 and 1997 respectively. His third volume, First Meeting of Hands, was published in 2006. His poetry, fiction and journalistic writing have appeared in various anthologies, newspapers, magazines and literary websites such as QLRS.com. He is currently a Director at the National Arts Council, in charge of the literary arts and the annual Singapore Writers Festival.

Beyond the Village Gate (1994; repr. 2012)

Myths of the mountains and their spirits pervade stories of Shi Ying’s mysterious origins. Abandoned to die but saved by a villager, Shi Ying is named the “lost child.” She befriends a village outcast with whom she feels a strange bond, and begins her journey of growth and self-discovery.

Towards the Blue: Adventures of A City Wimp (2007)

Exploring Native American and Nordic folklore of the Canadian Rockies and Maritime provinces, and the natural history of the inhabitants, the author and her fiancé tread through millennia-old soil and kayak with the very real personalities of water, wind, sun and the Atlantic thunderstorm—all in search of Adventure.

First Meeting of Hands (2006)

Thirty-nine poems, described as “eminently readable” by poet and critic, Aaron Lee. From whimsical pieces on animals to poignant realisation about fellow human beings and pointed commentary on the Singapore psyche, it is a slender volume to be slowly savoured one tender poem at a time.

Driving into Rain (1998)

Fifty-nine poems which explore the complex feelings and ambiguities fraught in domestic life, family and the notion of home. Elsewhere, changing landscapes and travel become the focus, with quiet observations belying larger questions of place and identity.

GENRE / CATEGORY OF BOOK

Poetry

LANGUAGE

English

AWARDS

Merit Award, Singapore Literature Prize (1997)

DISTRIBUTOR / PUBLISHER

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[an imprint of media exodus LLP]

Woodlands Central Branch

Post Office

P O Box 192

Singapore 917310

Tel: (65) 9873 0874

Email: firstfruits@okos@gmail.com

ISBN

981-05-6310-8
**Tan Tarn How**

Tan Tarn How graduated from Peterhouse, Cambridge in 1982 with a BA Hons., Natural Science Tripos, after which he took a Diploma in Education in Singapore. He has worked as a schoolteacher, journalist for The Straits Times, Head Scriptwriter for the Television Corporation of Singapore (now MediaCorp) and mentor to young dramatists in Theatreworks’ Writers’ Lab. He is currently a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Policy Studies. Tan is an award-winning playwright, six of whose plays are collected in *Six Plays* (2011). His “Undercover” (1994), part farce, part political thriller, was joint-winner of the National Book Development Council of Singapore Drama Award in 1996. “The First Emperor’s Last Days” (1998) which was staged for the Singapore Arts Festival, went on to win Hong Kong’s Best 10 Productions of the Year Award. “Six of the Best” (1996) was inspired by the furore caused by the caning of the American teenager Michael Fay for vandalism in 1993. “Machine” was adapted for television in 2005. After a hiatus of ten years, Tan returned to the stage with “Fear of Writing” (2011), a play with an all-woman cast that deals with the political underpinnings of writer’s block in a Singaporean context.

“…the most important thing about Tan Tarn How’s play (“The Lady of Soul and her Ultimate ‘S’ Machine”) is its marking of a watershed in Singapore theatre; it is arguably the first English play to present the country critically and artistically, without hiding behind coy allegory.”

Hannah Pandian, The Straits Times

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**Eddie Tay**

Eddie Tay was born and educated in Singapore. He is an assistant professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, where he teaches courses on creative writing and poetry. He is also the reviews editor of *Cha: An Asian Literary Journal*, an online journal (www.asiancha.com) based in Hong Kong. He has authored three collections of poetry: *Remnants* (2000), *A Lover’s Soliloquy* (2005) and *The Mental Life of Cities* (2010). The first two collections include free translations of Tang Dynasty poetry as well as Tay’s original poems. The most recent volume, consisting of bilingual poems, is a meditation on writing and city life in Hong Kong, where he has lived since late 2003, and Singapore. *Colony, Nation and Globalisation: Not at Home in Singaporean and Malaysian Literature* (2011) is a scholarly study of the literature in the two countries.

“...his poems are economical, full of evocative detail, and both ironic and impassioned at one and the same time. I read them over and over again.”


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**The Mental Life of Cities**

The 28 poems here are a meditation on writing and the modern city. The title poem consists of 20 sequences, 11 of which are bilingual. Of the other 27 poems, four are bilingual. The rest are completely in English. The poems have been inspired by the ways in which the English and Chinese languages intertwine and take root in the Asian cities of Hong Kong and Singapore.

“Fenollosa and Pound would have loved what Tay does….The self-consciousness of many of these poems may be a kind of rebellious apologia, suggesting that poetry and individualism in Tay’s locality are radical. The title poem attests a will to actualization.”


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**A Lover’s Soliloquy**

The voices are varied in this collection of 26 poems. In the title poem comprising fifteen sequences, the voice of a dead lover haunts his beloved. In another section of the book, the themes and imagery of the love poetry of the Tang Dynasty poet Li Shang-yin are recast in Tay’s modern voice.
Jean Tay

Jean Tay graduated with a double degree in creative writing and economics from Brown University, USA. Her plays have been performed in Singapore, US, UK, and Italy. They include “Water from the Well” (1998), “The Knot” (1999), “Plunge” (2000), “Everything but the Brain” (2005) and “Boom” (2008). She also wrote the musicals, “The Admiral’s Odyssey” (2005), and “Man of Letters” (2006). In 2000, “The Knot” was awarded First Prize in ACTION! Theatre’s 10-minute Play Competition. Tay has been nominated three times for Best Original Script for The Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards; she won for “Everything but the Brain” in 2006. “Boom” is currently an “O” and “N” Level literature text for secondary school students. In short fiction, she was awarded First and Third prizes for the Golden Point Short Story Award in 1995 and 2001 for “Journey” and “Woman in Bed” respectively.

“Jean’s adroit handling of themes, from the origins of genius to gene heritage and the tyranny of Time, makes Everything but the Brain one of the best of things seen on stage here in a while.”
Clara Chaw, The Straits Times Life! (Review), 1 Feb 2005

“Chock-full of goodness and a heavy dose of humour.”
Tara Tan, The Straits Times Life! (Review), 23 Sep 2008

Simon Tay

A renowned lawyer, political adviser and environmental policy expert, Simon Tay teaches international law at the National University of Singapore, and is Chairman of the Singapore Institute of International Affairs. He has published in leading law and academic journals, and appears regularly in international and regional media. His latest non-fiction book, Asia Alone: The Dangerous Post Crisis Divide From America (2010), was reviewed in The Economist, The Financial Times and Newsweek.

In 1995, he received the Young Artist Award from the National Arts Council. His book of stories, Stand Alone (1991), was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Prize. It was Highly Commended in 1992 by the National Book Development Council of Singapore, as was his collection of poems, 5 (1985) in 1986. His novel, City of Small Blessings (2009), was awarded the Singapore Literature Prize in 2010. Alien Asian (1997) is a collection of essays about his experiences living and working in America. Tay’s short stories and poems have been adapted for television and theatre, and included in the Penguin Anthology of Literature from Malaysia and Singapore (2002). His story, “My Cousin Tim”, was translated into Chinese, Tamil and Malay for the National Library Board’s READ! Singapore 2009.

“A milestone in Singapore literature.”
Clara Chaw, The Straits Times Life! (Review), 30 Sep 2009

City of Small Blessings (2009)

A Singaporean retires, migrates and then returns. But, he slowly finds, there is no simple return to the place called home. Once a well-known public figure who contributed to the country, he is now outside the rush of workdays, on the fringes of the city he barely recognizes, distanced from his wife and son, even as he loves them. A layered and nuanced narrative about the tragedies and blessings of Singapore.

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Verena Tay

Verena Tay has spent more than 20 years acting, directing and writing for English-language theatre in Singapore. She created various solo and collaborative performances, often based on original, self-written material while an Associate Artist with The Substation (2002 to 2009). Recent plays that have been staged include “Right & Left” (2010), “Bumiputra Cina” (2009), “Imperfect Family Recipes” (2008), “The Lunar Interviews” (2008) and “The Car” (2006), which won ACTION! Theatre’s Theatre Idols Competition in 2005. Her published works include In the Company of Heroes: Selected Plays (2004) and In the Company of Women: Selected Plays (2004) and In the Company of Women: Selected Plays (2004) and In the Company of Women: Selected Plays (2004). An Honorary Fellow of the University of Iowa’s International Writing Program (2007), Verena is currently working on a collection of short stories and her first novel. Besides writing and performing in theatre, Verena is also an engaging storyteller and an experienced voice and storytelling coach.

Claire Tham

At the age of seventeen, Claire Tham won two second prizes in the 1984 National Short Story Writing Competition for “Homecoming” and “Fascist Rock.” Her debut collection, Fascist Rock: Stories of Rebellion (1990), secured the National Book Development Council of Singapore Commendation Award (Fiction) in 1992. Saving the Rainforest and Other Stories (1993) won a Highly Commended Award (Fiction) from NBDCS in 1995. She collected two Golden Point Awards, in 1999 and 2001, for her stories, “The Gunpowder Trail” and “Driving Sideways.” She has written one novel, Skimming (1999), “Lee” (from Fascist Rock), was adapted for television on MediaCorp’s “Alter Asians”, while the title story from Tham’s third collection, The Gunpowder Trail and Other Stories (2003), has been adapted for the stage. The Claire Tham Collection (2010) compiles stories from the three published collections. Tham read Law at Oxford. She is a partner at a law firm in Singapore.
Edwin Thumboo


&WORDS: Poems Singapore and Beyond (2010) which he edited, places Singapore’s poems within an international context. He has won numerous awards for his poetry and services to literature. They include The National Book Development Council of Singapore Award for Poetry in English (1978, 1980 and 1994) for Gods Can Die, Ulysses by the Merlion and A Third Map respectively, the Southeast Asia Write Award (1979), the Cultural Medallion (1980), the ASEAN Cultural and Communication Award in Literature (1987), the Public Service Star and Bar (1981, 1991), the Raja Rao Award (2002), and the Meritorious Service Medal (2006). He has held visiting professorships at universities in the US, UK, Australia, Austria, Hong Kong and Malaysia.

Still Travelling (2008)

Forty-eight poems located in specific places in Singapore as well as abroad, and including secular and Biblical pieces, intimate ones addressed to family and friends, and public ones on buildings and institutions. The poet’s voice is confident and authoritative.

Bring the Sun (2008)

A selection of poems from the four earlier volumes, now out of print, to show the evolution of a poetic style and the broadening of poetic interest as well as the enlargement of themes.

Toh Hsien Min

Toh Hsien Min has published three collections of poetry, Iambus (1994), The Enclosure of Love (2001) and Means To An End (2008), which was shortlisted for the 2010 Singapore Literature Prize. His work has been published in periodicals such as Acumen, London Magazine, the London Review of Books, Poetry Salzburg Review and Staple, as well as anthologies such as W.W. Norton’s Language for a New Century: Contemporary Poetry from the Middle East, Asia, and Beyond (2008), and Over There: Poems from Singapore and Australia (2008). He has read at the Edinburgh International Book Festival (2003), the Ars Interpres Poetry Festival in Sweden (2007), and the Festival franco-anglais de poésie in France (2008). Toh is the founding editor of the Quarterly Literary Review Singapore (www.qtrs.com), the oldest continuously running online literary journal in Singapore. He went to Oxford in 1996 on a Shell-NAC Scholarship for the Arts. He received the Young Artist Award from the National Arts Council in 2010. Toh works in the financial services sector.

These thoughtful and intelligent musings on the unreliability of memory are a pleasure to read. Their conversational tone belies the complexity of ideas explored by Toh Hsien Min in this collection; ideas revolving around what can and cannot be recalled from the past.

Jessie Wee

With her very first series, *The Adventures of Mooty* (1980), written for her two sons, Jessie Wee came to be recognized as a “pioneer in Singapore’s creative writing scene for children.” Her experience as a teacher fuelled her conviction that “children in Singapore need stories they can identify with, stories they can call their own.” She has written 30 books, ranging from picture story books such as *A Home in the Sky* (1992), *A Friend in Need* (1992) and the Five Little Kittens series, to books for older children which include *Grandpa’s Remedy* (1990) and *Supercat* (2003). Her books are imbued with warmth and humour and reflect a sensitive understanding of children. Three of her books have won awards from the National Book Development Council of Singapore: *The Adventures of Mooty*, *Boo!* (Highly Commended; 1982), *Supercat* (Highly Commended, 1984) and *Grandpa’s Remedy* (Commended; 1990). Five of her books were commissioned by British Publishers and two by American Express International Incorporated. *Tresures of the Heart* (2009), a collection of Christian articles from a personal perspective, is her first book for adults.

“[With] a clear agenda of wanting to write a Singapore literature for children, Wee’s stories are infused with local colour…” Lily Tay Mei Ling, “Singapore Revisited: A Study of Landscapes through Children’s Literature”, *Hons Thesis (1994/95)* for Dept of Geography, National University of Singapore, p 20

Serene Wee

Serene Wee has a B. Soc. Sc. Hons. from the University of Singapore and two postgraduate teaching diplomas. She is Chairman of the National Book Development Council of Singapore, President of The Society for Reading & Literacy, and a member of the Steering and Selection Committees for English book selection for the National Library Board’s READ! Singapore. She was a judge for the First Time Writers & Illustrators Initiative in 2007 and 2008, organized by the Media Development Authority. Her poem, “Beauty & Music”, won the Editor’s Choice Award for Outstanding Achievement in Poetry (The National Library of Poetry, USA, 1998). She has written for and edited 16 books of short stories for children and young adults. Her most recent work is *Present* (2009).

“This is a heart-warming tale about a boy and his family, with a sprinkling of real magic.” Ken Spillman, *Present*, p 3

“This story successfully weaves traditional culture and the life of a 12 year old Malay boy… The novel shows that sharing can lead to something magical while selfishness leads to something rather dark and unfortunate.” Michele Leong, Vancouver, Canada  

[http://elict.commontown.net]
Cyril Wong

Cyril Wong is the author of nine published collections of poetry, beginning with Squatting Quietly (2000). He won the National Arts Council’s Young Artist Award for Literature in 2005, and the Singapore Literature Prize in 2006 for his fourth collection, Unmarked Treasure (2004). Wong founded the online poetry journal, Softblow in 2004. He has also written short fiction, collected in Let Me Tell You Something About That Night: Strange Tales (2009). Wong’s most recent volume of poetry is Satori Blues (2011). He is currently based at The Substation, Singapore’s first independent arts centre.

“(Cyril’s) is an art that works simply from a personal plane, and from within such a plane we have some of the most sensitive, articulate probings into the nature of one’s self that have never been seen before in all of contemporary Singaporean verse.”

‘Writing, almost speaking, in riddles and opposites, Wong teases us out of our complacencies and directlogues our thinking along the long, hard route to self-awareness. Hence ‘Blues’. Hence the extraordinary attempt to seduce the reader into somnambulance-via-rhythmic, rhymic language, the language of meditative poetry.”

Eleanor Wong

Eleanor Wong made her theatrical debut with “Peter’s Passionate Pursuit” (1986), joint First-Prize winner in the National University of Singapore-Shell Short Play Competition. She is best known for her trilogy, Invitation to Treat (2005), which explores lesbianism, female sexuality and gender politics. Two of the plays, “Mergers & Accusations” (1993), and “Wills & Secession” (1995) were reprised with the third, “Jointly & Severably”, when the entire trilogy was staged in 2003. “Mergers” won the National Book Development Council of Singapore Award [Drama] in 1996. Wong’s plays often deal with controversial subjects. “The Joust” (1991) explores the transition from totalitarianism to democracy, while “The Campaign to Confer the Public Service Star on JBJ” (2006, restaged 2007) is a political satire. Wong has also written poems: she contributed 12 to y grec (2005), a collection co-authored with Madeleine Lee, and recently published Life – Science (2010), 22 poems accompanied by Chinese translations by Enoch Ng and Caleb Kiu.

Wong is Director of the Legal Writing Programme at the Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore.

“She is that versatile auteur who partakes of the best features of Singapore’s young but recognisable dramatic tradition. She excels with her fine ear for registering pitch and voice and wisely confines her characters and their liaisons to a milieu with which she is familiar.” Dr K K Seet, Afterword, The Eleanor Wong Trilogy

The Eleanor Wong Trilogy (2005)

Comprising “Mergers & Accusations”, “Wills & Secession” and “Jointly & Severably”, the trilogy explores personal identity, love and friendship, family and kinship, religious faith, the inextricable connection between the personal and political, and the dialectics of centre and margin.

Invitation To Treat: The Eleanor Wong Trilogy (2005)

A play which boldly harnesses the power of history and allusion to investigate the relationships between the individual, the state, and society. A pointed, yet hilarious, satire on the paranoia surrounding political and civic discourse and action, Campaign illuminates the challenges and dilemmas facing a society on the threshold of a supposedly new age.

The Campaign to Confer the Public Service Star on JBJ (2007)

A play which boldly harnesses the power of history and allusion to investigate the relationships between the individual, the state, and society. A pointed, yet hilarious, satire on the paranoia surrounding political and civic discourse and action, Campaign illuminates the challenges and dilemmas facing a society on the threshold of a supposedly new age.
Robert Yeo

Robert Yeo is a poet, playwright, novelist, essayist and recently, librettist. He has staged plays, edited anthologies of Singaporean writing for general reading and for schools, and written essays on cultural policy. In 1978, he went to the International Writing Program, University of Iowa. One of the pioneers of Singaporean drama in English, Yeo chaired two committees on theatre from the late 70s to early 90s, and was awarded the Public Service Medal in 1991 for “services to drama.” His political plays, “Are You There, Singapore?” (1974), “One Year Back Home” (1980) and “Changi” (1997), collected in The Singapore Trilogy (2001), have been described as “seminal plays” in Singaporean theatre. “Kannagi”, his short chamber libretto, with music by John Sharpley, was performed in the Sri Mariamman Temple (2010). Routes: A Singaporean Memoir, 1940 - 1975, was published in 2011, and the libretto/ opera entitled “Fences” he co-wrote with John Sharpley, is scheduled for production in Singapore in August, 2012.

“This timely trilogy dramatises the politics of nationhood with intelligence, honesty and courage.”

Leong Liew Geok, The Straits Times, July 14, 2001

“Brilliant play on freedom in fetters.”

Gerald Chuah, New Straits Times, 24 September 2003, on the staging of “Changi” in Kuala Lumpur and Penang

Yeow Kai Chai

Yeow Kai Chai has two poetry collections, Pretend I’m Not Here (2006), and Secret Manta (2001), which was adapted from an entry shortlisted for the 1999 Singapore Literature Prize. He has a Master’s degree in English Literature from the National University of Singapore (NUS) where he took First Prize in Poetry and Third Prize in Creative Prose for two consecutive years (1990; 1991) in the annual Creative Writing Competition organised by the NUS Literary Society. His writing has appeared in international journals including Arc Interprets and in an anthology like W.W. Norton’s Language for a New Century: Contemporary Poetry from the Middle East, Asia, and Beyond (2008). He co-edited with Edwin Thumboo Reflecting On The Merlion: An Anthology Of Poems (2009). A music critic and former deputy editor of Life!, The Straits Times, he is currently the English section editor of MyPaper, Singapore’s first and only bilingual freesheet. He also edits the short-story section of the online journal, Quarterly Literary Review Singapore (www.qlrs.com).

“Inhabited by colourful characters and accompanied by a discordant soundtrack, the book’s modernist universe is revealed through shifting identities and points of narration... from a ‘Golden Tamarind’ and a ‘meerkat standing erect on a tree stump’ to a ‘fly on the house’.”


“Yeow Kai Chai’s poetry is void of any pretension to centrality or deference to roots made irrelevant in unevenly Westernised Singapore.”

Dr Gwee Li Sui, “The New Poetry of Singapore”; Sharing Borders: Studies In Contemporary Singaporean-Malaysian Literature II (2009), p 248

Yeow Kai Chai's poetry is void of any pretension to centrality or deference to roots made irrelevant in unevenly Westernised Singapore.
Chay Yew


Yong Shu Hoong

Yong Shu Hoong has published four books of poetry: Isaac (1997), dowhile (2002), Frottage (2005), which won the Singapore Literature Prize in 2006 together with Cyril Wong’s Unmarked Treasure, and From Within the Marrow (2010). Yong’s poems have been included in literary journals like Asia Literary Review (Hong Kong) and Ars Interpres [Sweden], as well as an anthology like Language for a New Century: Contemporary Poetry from the Middle East, Asia and Beyond (2008). His freelance journalistic writings have also appeared in My Paper, The Straits Times and South China Morning Post. Aside from organising readings in Singapore, including the monthly subTEXT readings held from 2001 to 2008, he has been invited to read at literary festivals and events in Malaysia, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Australia, England, Ireland, Denmark, Sweden and the United States.

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Fortissimo (2005)

Forty-five poems where the poet lets the edge of poetry mark his personalised impressions of Australia. Do not expect a collection that seeks to challenge a long-time resident’s familiarity with the terrain and local cultures. His are etchings borne from an outsider’s clarity of observation and oftentimes, reflections sparked by a traveller’s remembrance.

GENRE / CATEGORY OF BOOK
Poetry

DISTRIBUTOR / PUBLISHER
firstfruits publications

AWARDS
Singapore Literature Prize (2004)

ISBN
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Ovidia Yu uses humour and storytelling to address the changing roles and identities of women in Singapore and the world. She believes that without entertainment, there can be no engagement. Yu has written prize-winning short stories, novels and over 30 plays, including “The Woman in a Tree on the Hill” (1993) the only Singaporean play to win an Edinburgh Fringe First, and “Hitting (On) Women” (2007) which won The Straits Times Life! Theatre Award for Best Original Script that year. Ovidia Yu: Eight Plays (2011) is her first collection. In her crime novel, Miss Moorthy Investigates (1989, rev. 2012), a schoolteacher becomes detective. Yu, who attended the University of Iowa’s International Writing Program (1990/1991) on a Fulbright Scholarship, received the National Arts Council’s Young Artist Award (Drama and Fiction) and the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) Singapore Foundation Award in 1996, and the Singapore Youth Award (Arts and Culture) in 1997. She is currently writing a mystery novel set in 1920s Singapore, supported by the NAC Arts Creation Fund.
Chew Kok Chang (周国灿) (Zhou Can [周粲])

Chew Kok Chang has a Master’s Degree in Chinese Literature from the National University of Singapore. He was previously an Inspector of Schools in the Ministry of Education and a lecturer at the National Institute of Education. He received the National Book Development Council of Singapore Award for Children’s Literature in 1976 for 写给孩子们的诗 (Poems for Children; 1974) and its Poetry Award in 1980 for 捕萤人 [The Firefly Catcher; 1979]. His publications include 16 poetry collections; 19 collections of essays; four travel journals; eight collections of short fiction; seven theoretical discussions on Chinese Literature; three selections of mixed published works; and 11 books for young readers. He received the Cultural Medallion for Literature from the National Arts Council in 1990.

The colours of contemporary life are expressed in the fourteen stories in this debut collection. They focus on diverse themes: religion, Asian cultural values which have been eroded by modern globalisation, love, and the sacrifices one has to make in life.

Highly imaginative as well as philosophical, the 103 poems address nature and life from different perspectives—those of philosophy, life and death, and the insights afforded by travel.
Chia Hwee Pheng (谢惠平)
(Xi Ni Er [希尼尔])

Chia Hwee Pheng, who writes under his pen name Xi Ni Er (希尼尔), received the National Book Development Council of Singapore Book Award in 1990 for his volume of poetry, 锻炼岁月 (Kidnapping Times; 1989), and again in 1994 for his collection of mini-fiction, 生命难以承受的重 (The Unbearable Heaviness of Life; 1992). He was awarded the 2008 Singapore Literature Prize for Xi Ni Er’s Fiction (2007), the Cultural Medallion in 2008, and the Southeast Asia Write Award in 2009. He has published three volumes of poetry, including 轻信莫疑 (Credulity Stretched; 2001), and four collections of mini-fiction, including 认真面具 (The Earnest Mask; 1999). He is currently the President of the Singapore Association of Writers, and Chief Editor of the biannual journal, 新华文学 (Singapore Chinese Literature).

“The author is a master craftsman in the experimentation of mini-fiction writing. Each work is a further expansion of the threshold of the art form. Besides being celebrated by readers for his keen observations, his stories astutely chronicle both the light moments as well as the difficult times in the forty years of nation building. His works are like colourful mosaics that form the fabric of the Singaporean collective consciousness.” READ! Singapore Programme Committee (2005)

“The diversified expression of this collection is reflected in the effective use of metaphor and symbolism. Dr H K Koh comments that the poet has expressed “the calm inner feeling and thought, objectively and implicitly through the poetic skill, and integrated with the fiction style of magical realism... It sketches out the romantic spirit and sincere image of the poet.” Shi Ming, from Literary Section (2001) of Lianhe Zaobao.

Translator by the author

Chia Joo Ming (谢裕民)

A graduate in Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Engineering of Singapore Technical Institute in 1979, Chia Joo Ming is the Assistant Editor of the Lianhe Zaobao Fukan Desk [联合早报副刊]. An award-winning writer, his novel 归去来兮 (Return; 1989) was made into a television drama series in 1999. He received the National Arts Council’s Young Artist Award [Literature] in 1993. In 1995, he spent two months at the International Writing Program of the University of Iowa as an invited participant. 世说新语 [New Words for Worlidy Tales; 1994], a collection of short stories, won the 2006 National Book Development Council of Singapore Book Award for Fiction. Another collection, 重构南洋图像 [Reconstructing Nanyang; 2005] won the 2006 Singapore Literature Prize. He has two other collections, 谢裕民短篇小说选 [Chia Joo Ming’s Short Stories; 2008] and m40 (2009), which won the Singapore Literature Prize in 2010.
Chow Teck Seng  
(周德成)

Also known as Zhou Decheng (周德成), Chow Teck Seng specializes in modern Chinese poetry, although he writes prose and short stories as well. He has a Master’s degree in Chinese Studies from the National University of Singapore and currently teaches in the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University. His poem, “寻找一座组屋的导游” [“In Search of an HDB Flat Tour Guide”], won the 2005 Tertiary Literary Award for Poetry from the National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University. Another poem, “我和你” [“The Story of You and Me”], won the 2009 Golden Point Award for Poetry. He is an Executive Committee member of the Singapore Association of Writers. His poems and short stories have appeared in the Chinese press like Lianhe Zaobao and in various anthologies.

Chua Chee Lay  
(蔡志礼)

A third-generation Singaporean, Chua Chee Lay is a Chinese linguist, educational technology researcher and an award-winning poet. 月是一盏传统的灯 [Traditional Moon; 1992] won the 1994 National Book Development Council of Singapore Award for Poetry. He is currently the Chair of the Writer-in-Residence Programme, a national creative writing programme for students; a Mentor for the Creative Arts Programme (CAP) organised by the Ministry of Education Gifted Education Branch, and the President of the Society for the Promotion of Young Writers. He chairs the Selection Committee for the Singapore Literature Prize (Chinese Section). He is Chief Editor of several books and series, including 花园城市与水的神话:新加坡选 [Garden City and the Myth of Water: Selected Works of Singaporean Writers; 2010] and 青春文选:驻校作家计划学生作品集 [Journey of Our Young: Selected Works of the Creative Writing Programme], published since 2009.
**Koh Hock Kiat**  
(许福吉)

An Associate Professor in the School of Humanities and Social Science, Nanyang Technological University, Koh Hock Kiat is also the Director of its Confucius Institute. He is the Vice-President of the Singapore Association of Writers and Advisor to The International Journal of Study on Modern Chinese Literature in East Asia. With over 20 years of teaching experience in the Chinese language, Koh is actively engaged in promoting Chinese language, literacy and cultural appreciation in Singapore and the region. He received the Golden Lion Award [金狮奖] from Lianhe Zaobao in 1993 for “绿色的宁静” [Silent Green], the Singapore Federation of Chinese Clan Associations’ Literary Prose Award [全国散文创作奖] in 1991 for “茶与人生” [Tea Life], and the Singapore Teachers’ Writing Award [新加坡教师写作奖] in 1992.

**Lee Guan Poon**  
(Nan Zi [南子])

Lee Guan Poon received his Bachelor’s degree in Chemistry from Nanyang University in 1969 and his Master’s degree in Chinese Language and Literature from Nanjing University in 2004. Nan Zi is one of the pioneers of modern Singaporean literature. He started writing modern poetry in the 60s and is an accomplished poet with a unique style. Besides poetry, Nan Zi also writes prose, short stories, essays and literary critiques. He has 14 published works, including 南子文集 [Collected Works of Nan Zi; 1995]. His poetry collections are as follows: 夜的断面 [Cross Section of the Night; 1970], 苹果定律 [Law of The Apple; 1981], 生物钟 [The Biological Clock; 1994], 南子短诗选 [Selected Poems of Nan Zi; 2002] and 打击乐器 [Percussion Instruments; 2010]. His collections of essays include 南子小品 [Essays by Nan Zi; 1980], 八方风雨 [Storms from All Directions; 1985] and 南子杂文 [Nan Zi’s Assorted Works; 1995]. Short story collections include 年岁的齿痕 [The Indentation of Age; 1987] and 鸟之记 [Chronicle of A Startled Bird; 1997]. His works have been published in two anthologies: 五月现代诗选 [A Collection of Modern Poetry by the May Poetry Society; 1989] and 佛教新诗选 [A Collection of New Buddhist Poems; 1990].
Lee Seng Chan (李承璋) (Huai Ying [怀鹰])

A second-generation Singaporean of Fujian ancestry, Lee Seng Chan is an established author of 23 books which include novels, short stories, poetry, prose and literary criticism. The awards he has received include a Commendation Award from the National Book Development Council of Singapore in 1990 for **The Maple Leaves of the Tropics** ([The Maple Leaves of the Tropics; 1990]), the Golden Point Award for short stories in 1994, 1995, 1996, and the Arts Creation Fund from the National Arts Council in 2009 to write a novel, “山路弯弯” (“Winding Mountain Path”).

Lee was the chief editor for various Chinese publications such as **青年文艺** (Youth Literature), **新加坡文艺** (Singapore Literature), **新城小小说** (Singapore Junior Short Stories) and **新加坡作家** (Singapore Junior Writers), and the online portal of the Chinese daily, Lianhe Zaobao ([www.zaobao.com.sg](http://www.zaobao.com.sg)).

A former television drama scriptwriter, he was part of the scriptwriting team for well-received television series such as “缘尽今生” (“Chronicle of Life”) and “济公活佛” (“Legend of the Crazy Monk”). He is a full-time writer and an active member of both the Singapore Association of Writers and the Singapore Literature Society.

“The Crescent Moon Arises is Huai Ying’s fourth collection of short stories, presenting a total of 90 of his works, alongside seven critical essays. These short stories vary greatly in their subject matter, showcasing the writer’s fantastical imagination and multi-faceted writing techniques.” Fr back cover; transl by Kenny Ong

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Lew Poo Chan (刘宝珍) (Dan Ying [淡莹])

Malaysian-born Lew Poo Chan graduated from National Taiwan University, and received her M.A. from the University of Wisconsin. She has taught at the University of California (Santa Barbara), Nanyang University and the National University of Singapore. She has published five volumes of poetry. Her poems have been translated into English for various anthologies like **Twentieth-Century Chinese Women’s Poetry: An Anthology (2009)**, and **Memories and Desires: A Poetic History of Singapore (1998)**. Her poetry has been recognized by the many awards she has received.

They include two National Book Development Council of Singapore Poetry Awards for **太极诗谱 (Poems of Taiji)** in 1980, and **上岁月 (Time Passing through My Hair)** in 1994; the Southeast Asia Write Award (1995), the Cultural Medallion (1996), and the NUS-Montblanc Literary Award (1998).

"Dan Ying is noted for her styles of subtlety and gracefulness because she can write well both heroic verse and express the genuine woman’s feeling with all its intimacy, delicacy, and immediacy. " Li Yuanluo, “After Reading ‘The Great Conqueror of Chu’ and ‘Inside, Outside of an Umbrella’ by Dan Ying, a Singaporean Woman Poet”, Masterpiece Appreciation Magazine (Shanxi, China): Vol 39 (1995), p31 Transl by Wong Yoon Wah

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Liang Wern Fook

Liang Wern Fook is a writer, musician, educator and researcher in Chinese literature and pedagogy. He obtained a doctorate in Chinese Studies from Nanyang Technological University in 1999 and graduated with top results in both the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Department of Chinese Studies, National University of Singapore in 1988. He was voted “Most Popular Writer” by Singapore students in a 1990 poll organised by Lianhe Zaobao, the Chinese daily. He has written over 200 musical compositions and songs, some of which have been sung by Mandopop stars, and published over 15 books. His collections of essays, [A Song For You] (2006); poetry, [In Fact I am in Love with Time] (1989); and short stories, [The 21 Dreams of Liang Wern Fook] (1992) chronicle the changes in feeling and expression brought about by peer pressure and the added complexity of life in a post-modern society. Liang’s work “bridges music and literature in the Singapore arts scene” (Kuo Pao Kun). He received the National Arts Council’s “bridges music and literature in the Singapore arts scene” award in 2010. He is currently an Associate Professor (Adjunct) in the Division of Chinese, Nanyang Technological University, and the Language Director for Xue Er You Language Centre.

Liew Kwee Lan

Liew Kwee Lan was a scriptwriter and storyplanter at MediaCorp Singapore for over 20 years, during which time she wrote more than 60 television drama series with a team of writers. Many, like “Carnation” (“Dream Come True”) and “福满人间” (“Wok of Life”), were nominated for and received Star Awards. The current Vice-President of the Singapore Association of Writers, Vice-Secretary of the World Chinese Mini-Fiction Research Association, and member of the Overseas Chinese Women Writers Association, she has published five books covering various genres. 婚姻同志 [Comrades in Marriage, 1990] is a continuous short story, i.e., written by four people in continuity. 钢琴的琴键 [Revival, 1998] and 艾禺微型小说 [Ai Yu’s Mini-Fiction, 2004] are two collections of mini-fiction, while 妈妈的玻璃鞋 [Mum’s Glass Shoe, 1998] and 镜子里的秘密 [The Secret in the Mirror, 2006] are stories for children. Ai Yu is currently a freelance writer.
Denon Lim Denan (林得楠)

Denon Lim Denan started writing poetry as a teenager. Subsequently, a submission of eight poems won him Second Prize in the Golden Point Award in 2001. In 2003, he won First Prize in the Golden Point Award with seven poems. He has published many collections of poetry, including Poems in Dreams (2005), which was shortlisted for the Singapore Literature Prize in 2006, Prince of Happiness (2003) and Toy Kingdom (2004). He wrote 世界上最美丽的女人 [The Most Beautiful Woman in the World; 2011]. Lim was news editor for Lianhe Zaobao from 1984 to 1994. He is currently the Executive Director and Chief Editor of Lingzi Media Pte Ltd, a leading Chinese publishing house in Singapore.

Lim Hung Chang (林汉精)

Lim Hung Chang is both a writer and a junior college teacher. From 1992 to 1998, he served on the Executive Committee of the Singapore Association of Writers; and from 1998 to 2000, was its Vice-President. While holding office for altogether eight years, Lim not only co-edited a quarterly publication of short stories with three colleagues, but also served as Chief Editor of two magazines devoted to children’s literature: 玩火虫 [Firefly] and 萤火虫 [Lark]. Together with a group of young writers, he initiated the publication of two editions of 后来 [Afterwards], a literary magazine. To date, Lim himself has published a total of nine fictional and non-fictional works. They include 猫的运动会 [The Fate of the Feline; 1991], 往山中走去 [Journeying into the Mountains; 1992], 被追逐的滋味 [Reflections of One Sought After; 2000], and 数字拼凑人生 [Life in Numbers; 2003].

"Through lyrical and emotive prose, the author offers brand new allegories, criticisms and observations about society and the various dimensions of human nature."
Prof Yue Hengjun, The Caged Heart, p 3. Transl by Peh Li Qi

"... the author presents an attractive mode of living that is defined primarily by freedom, and in doing so, not only offers the reader a way of dealing with the fragmentation of modern life, but also showcases the vibrancy of Chinese culture."
Liaw Pei Kien (刘碧娟) (Liu Su [流苏])

Liaw Pei Kien has an Honours degree in Chinese Studies from the National University of Singapore and an MA from Nanyang Technological University. She taught in a junior college, worked as a Specialist writer in the Curriculum Development Institute of Singapore, and from 1994 to 2000, was a Curriculum Specialist in the Curriculum Planning and Development Division, Ministry of Education. She was a lecturer in Chinese Language at the National Institute of Education from 2001-June 2011. She is presently a doctoral student in literary studies at Nanyang Technological University. She has published six collections of essays: 人生是花 [Flowers Are Life; 1991], 真心如我 [As Sincere As Myself; 1994], 解读幸福的地图 [Deciphering the Map of Happiness; 1999], 流苏散文选集 [A Collection of Liu Su’s Prose; 2002], 旷日情书 [Letter of Desolation; 2003], 流苏卷 [Selected Writings of Liu Su; 2009], and 鬼迷心窍 [Love-Obsessed; 1996], a collection of short fiction and mini-fiction.

Low Swee Kim, Henry (刘瑞金)

Henry Low Swee Kim is currently teaching Chinese Language at Tampines Junior College. He has a Master’s degree in Chinese Studies from the National University of Singapore. His first volume of poetry, 若是有情 [Love Hypothesis; 1994], was followed by 用一种回忆拼凑叫神话 [Myths Recollected from Memoir Fragments; 1996]. In 1999, he received the National Arts Council’s Young Artist Award (Literature). 众山围绕 [Surrounded by the Mountains], his first collection of essays, was published in 2001. Low is a committee member of the Singapore Association of Writers and the editor of a number of publications, including 新华文学 [Singapore Chinese Literature], a half-yearly literary periodical.
Neo Choon Hong (梁春芳) (Liang Yue [梁钺])

Neo Choon Hong was an Assistant Director with the Ministry of Education and a Senior Lecturer in Chinese Language at the National Institute of Education. His first book of poetry, 茶如是说 [So Says Tea; 1984], won the National Book Development Council of Singapore Book Award in 1986. He went on to publish three more volumes: 浮生三变 [Three Vicissitudes in Life; 1997]; 梁钺短诗选 [Selected Verses By Liang Yue; 2002; a bilingual edition, with English translations by 许志培等 [Xu Zhipei et al.]; and 你的名字 [Thy Name; 2011]. His research publication, 文学的方向与脚印 [The Direction and Footprints of Literature; 2009] presents studies on modern Chinese poetry in post-war Singapore, and on 子夜 [Midnight], a novel by 茅盾 [Mao Dun]. Neo’s poems are widely anthologised. “鱼尾狮” [‘The Merlion’], his most well known poem, is frequently cited in local and regional research publications.

...the poet has shown considerable skill in writing in modern style... This collection about personal friends, loved ones, the circumstances of life and man’s response to nature is impressively put across in the new style.” Selection Panel, NBDCS Book Awards (1986)

“The poet shows no interest in praising or describing the materialistic culture of modern society. With his profound insights into life and his unique feelings, the poet has painted a modern cityscape filled with colours of sorrow.” Guo Hufen, 新马华文文学的现代与当代 [The Modern and the Contemporary in Singapore’s Chinese Literature; 2002], p 175. Transl by Liang Xinyi

Ng How Wee (黄浩威)

A graduate in Chinese Language and Literature from Peking University, Ng How Wee had an early interest in drama. He collaborated with Alfian Sa’at on the multilingual play “逃亡” [‘Fugitives’; 2003]. His absurdist play 禁事不可考 [‘Strange Fruit: Forbidden Access’; 2004], was followed by “欲望岛屿” [‘Pulau’], which was staged twice (2005, 2006) and nominated for The Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards [Best Original Script]. His book, 如果岛国, 一个游人 [If on an Island, a Wanderer; 2004], an exchange of letters co-authored with Quah Sy Ren, was adapted into the play, “A Stranger at Home”, by Drama Box for the 2006 Singapore Arts Festival. He has published a collection of essays, 查无此城 [No Such City; 2007] and one of poetry, 冰封赤道 [Glacial Equator; 2009]. Currently, he is doing a doctorate on Mainland Chinese film and television drama at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London.

“How Wee writes like a magician— his words are his props, and his magic is like a theatre performance, full of wonderful and intriguing surprises.” Quah Sy Ren, NTU Professor and Writer; fr back cover. transl by the author

“How Wee’s writings are deeply thought-provoking and poetic. He fills the reader with imagination and nostalgia.” - Royston Tan, filmmaker; fr back cover

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Pan Cheng Lui (潘正镭)

A graduate of Nanyang University, Pan Cheng Lui is currently Editor of Shin Min Daily News. To date, he has published five volumes of poetry, two collections of essays, a collection of interviews and several literary anthologies which he edited. 告诉阳光 (Tell It to the Sun; 1982) won the 1984 National Book Development Council of Singapore Award for Poetry. His short story, 沉船记 (Shipwreck), garnered the Golden Lion Award in 1979. Pan has moved across linguistic boundaries many times, to collaborate with composers, dancers and the Singapore Chinese Orchestra, testing and pushing the boundaries of various art forms.

Quah Sy Ren (柯思仁)

Quah Sy Ren is a playwright and essayist. Plays written by him include 适度的梦 (Ample Blues; 1989; co-written with Tan Ing How); 刺客、乩童、按摩女郎 (The Assassin, the Medium and the Masseuse; 1991; co-written with Tan Ing How); 市中隐者 (Invisibility; 1996); 骨骨 (Boner; 2002); 独在家乡为异客 (A Stranger at Home; 2006); and 舞国女皇 (I Am Queen; 2008; co-written with Liu Xiaoyi). As a published essayist, he has five collections under his name, including 梦树观星 (Dreaming and Gazing; 1996); 如果岛国, 一个离人 (If on an Island, a Wanderer; 2004; co-written with Ng How Wee); and 思维边界 (At the Edge of Thoughts; 2008). His plays and essays have been translated into English. He is currently an Associate Professor in the Division of Chinese at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Nanyang Technological University.

A graduate of Nanyang University, Pan Cheng Lui is currently Editor of Shin Min Daily News. To date, he has published five volumes of poetry, two collections of essays, a collection of interviews and several literary anthologies which he edited. 告诉阳光 (Tell It to the Sun; 1982) won the 1984 National Book Development Council of Singapore Award for Poetry. His short story, 沉船记 (Shipwreck), garnered the Golden Lion Award in 1979. Pan has moved across linguistic boundaries many times, to collaborate with composers, dancers and the Singapore Chinese Orchestra, testing and pushing the boundaries of various art forms.
Quek Yong Siu

Writer, poet, music composer and conductor, Quek Yong Siu is the President of the Association of Composers (Singapore), a committee member of the Singapore Writers Association, the May Poetry Society, the Bukit Timah Literary Club and a member of the National Arts Council Advisory Panel. His volumes of poetry include 掌纹 [Palm Lines; 1983], 筷子的故事 [The Story of Chopsticks; 1989] which was Highly Commended in the 1990 National Book Development Council of Singapore Awards, 月光小乐曲 [Moonlight Serenade; 1992] and 郭永秀短诗选 [Selected Short Poems of Quek Yong Siu; 2002], 郭永秀短自选集—筷子、镜子及月光 [Selected Poems of Quek Yong Siu; 2010], and 郭永秀创作歌曲集一—杨桃结果漫山岗 [Collection of Songs 1: Harvest Time; 2011]. His essays are collected in 交错之恋 [The Romance of Gecko; 1989] and music commentaries in 乐韵 [Remnant Rhyme; 2002]. In 2003, he received the Artistic Excellence Award from COMPASS (Composers and Authors Society of Singapore) for his contributions to music. 

“He has the power of observation, deep conscience, and also the third eye - poet's eye. The presentation of images often gives people a sudden surprise.” Xie Qing

“Quek Yong Siu’s work has the most contemporary feel... From the language to the theme, from the skills to the thought and content, all are in Singapore style.” Dr Wong Yoon Wah

Soon Ai Ling

Soon Ai Ling graduated from Nanyang University in 1971 with a Bachelor’s Degree in Chinese Language and Literature. She has a Diploma in Education from the National University of Singapore and a Doctorate in Chinese Literature from the University of Hong Kong. She is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Asian Languages and Culture, National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University. Her many books include a short story collection, 晶晶杨柳风 [The Green Willow; 1988, 4th printing, 1997] an essay collection, 水晶集 [Crystal Compilation; 1990] and a collection of stories, [Allegorical Tales; 1990]. 碧螺十里香 [The Fragrance of Green Tea; 1985], won both the Golden Lion Award [金狮奖] and the National Book Development Council of Singapore Book Award in 1988 and 1989 respectively. 班布曲 [Song of Ban Bu] took second prize in the first Taiwan Overseas Chinese Magazine Literature Awards (1989). Soon's novel 玲珑 [Exquisite; 1994], won the award for the Best Overseas Chinese Fiction organized by Shanghai 博客杂志 [Meng Ya magazine] in the same year. Soon received the Southeast Asia Write Award in 2004.

Genre / Category of Book: Fiction
Language: Chinese
Awards: Title story won the Singapore Golden Lion Award (1988)
NBDCS Book Award (1989) for collection

Soon Ai Ling (孙爱玲)

人也女也 (2007) [Men and Women: A Collection Of Short Stories]
The book is divided into two parts; one for stories of men and the other of women. The stories are a reflection on mankind's humanity and are set in places the author is familiar with: Beijing, Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Singapore.

Genre / Category of Book: Fiction
Language: Chinese
Awards: Title story won the Singapore Golden Lion Award (1988)

Soon Ai Ling

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Tan Chee Lay (陈志锐)

An Assistant Professor of Chinese at Nanyang Technological University and the Deputy Executive Director of the Singapore Centre for Chinese Language, Tan Chee Lay has a doctorate in Oriental Studies from Cambridge. He has authored and edited almost 20 books. They include A Poetry Collection by Tan Chee Lay, 1999; 踏岸观我 (Looking at Myself from Across the Banks); 2000; 遗忘之地 (Where Swords are Forged); 2000; 老师的作业本 (Sir’s Homework); 2004; 黄色雨衣 (The Yellow Raincoat); 2006; 散文: 陈志锐卷 (Essays of Tan Chee Lay); 2009; and 剑桥诗学 (Cambridge Poetics; poetry, 2010). He received the Young Artist Award from the National Arts Council in 2004 and the Singapore Youth Award (Arts and Culture) from the National Youth Council in 2006.

"...his memory is more geographic than biographic: there is a sharp eye for details of shops, houses, food, games, and the minutiae of life...Although he travels widely, he always returns home. Indeed, many of the essays written in other cities can be understood as an attempt to experience the local all over the world..." James St André, “After reading ‘The Yellow Raincoat’”, The Yellow Raincoat, p 8

Tan Kee Yun (陈其昀)

Tan Kee Yun is currently a journalist for The New Paper. She was a commissioned columnist for Friday Weekly from 1998 to 2000. Her published works include the collection of essays, 稽查偶像 (Saving The Icon); 2006; and a short story collection, 7-Eleven狂想曲 (7-Eleven Fantasy); 2005. The latter was one of the books selected for the National Library Board’s READ! Singapore in 2005. Her second collection, 稽查偶像 (Saving The Icon), was published in 2006. A rock music buff, she blogs occasionally about her favourite genre, heavy metal, and composes her own songs.
Tan Swie Hian

A quadrilingual [Chinese, English, French, Malay] graduate of Nanyang University who majored in English Language and Literature, Tan Swie Hian was the driving force behind the Chinese Modernist literary movement launched by Leang Meng Kwang in 1967 on the Singapore / Malaysian literary scene. An author of 55 published titles in poetry, fiction, essays, and criticism, Tan has also translated literary works from the Western canon into Chinese, English and Chinese; he is the poet laureate of Singapore. An author of 55 published titles in poetry, fiction, essays, and criticism, Tan has also translated literary works from the Western canon into Chinese, English and Chinese; he is the poet laureate of Singapore. His poetry has been translated into 30 languages. The numerous national and international awards conferred on him include the Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (1978), the Cultural Medalion (1987), the Marin Sorescu International Poetry Prize (Romania; 1999), the Meritorious Service Medal (2003); an Honorary Doctor of Letters from Nanyang Technological University (2003); the World Economic Forum Crystal Award (Davos; 2003) and the Officier de l’Ordre National de la Legion d’Honneur (2006). Besides being an author, Tan is also a celebrated multi-disciplinary artist involved in painting, sculpture, calligraphy, photography, songwriting, printmaking, costume and set design, environmental and performance art, and seal engraving.

Tan Swie Hian gives us a collection of crystalline and mica sheets engraved with words. And these words and sentences are a summary of his condensed lyrical and philosophical insights. “Romanian poet Marin Sorescu, Tan Swie Hian Fables; English/French Ed, 1996; p III

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Teoh Hee La

Teoh Hee La is a senior correspondent with the Chinese newspaper 联合早报 (Lianhe Zaobao). She has won 12 prizes in short story competitions in the region. In 1990 and 1994, her novels 变调 (Change) and 大姑速写 [Sketches of Singapore Women] won the National Book Development Council of Singapore Book Awards. She was also awarded the Golden Lion Award [金狮奖] by Lianhe Zaobao in 1985, 1987, 1989 and 1991 for her short stories. She received the Southeast Asia Write Award in 2000. Teoh has nine published works of both fiction and non-fiction, including 镜花 (Flowers in the Mirror; 1994); 客答问 [Q&A with Outstanding Authors; 1994]; 掠过的风 [The Wind Blows; 1987] and 张曦娜卷 (Zhang Xi Na’s Prose: A Collection, 2009).

Teoh Hee La is a senior correspondent with the Chinese newspaper 联合早报 (Lianhe Zaobao). She has won 12 prizes in short story competitions in the region. In 1990 and 1994, her novels 变调 (Change) and 大姑速写 [Sketches of Singapore Women] won the National Book Development Council of Singapore Book Awards. She was also awarded the Golden Lion Award [金狮奖] by Lianhe Zaobao in 1985, 1987, 1989 and 1991 for her short stories. She received the Southeast Asia Write Award in 2000. Teoh has nine published works of both fiction and non-fiction, including 镜花 (Flowers in the Mirror; 1994); 客答问 [Q&A with Outstanding Authors; 1994]; 掠过的风 [The Wind Blows; 1987] and 张曦娜卷 (Zhang Xi Na’s Prose: A Collection, 2009).

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Tham Yew Chin (譚幼今) (You Jin [尤今])

You Jin has no fewer than 155 titles under her name: novels, essays, travelogues, collections of short stories, essays and articles published in Singapore, China and Taiwan. Such is her following in China that the You Jin Research Centre was set up in 2000 by Chongqing University. Funded by the University, the Centre carries out research on her works as well as on Chinese writers from Southeast Asia. In Singapore, her books are used as school texts. In the book "The Sad Water" (2002), her collection of short stories, was translated into Bahasa Indonesia in 2007. You Jin's novel "A Collection of You Jin’s Novels" (2008), comprising six of her novels, was a featured book for READ! Singapore (2009). She was the first recipient of the inaugural Singapore Chinese Literary Award (1991) from the Singapore Literature Society, as well as the Mont Blanc – NUS Centre for the Arts Literary Award (1996). She received the Cultural Medallion in 2009.

"You Jin shares lots of life experiences and philosophy with readers through the book. The recipes provided enhance the practical value of the book." Teoh Hwee La, "Merging Literature with Good Food", Lianhe Zaobao, 17 Feb 2009. Transil by the author


Ting Kheng Siong (郑景祥)

Ting Kheng Siong graduated from the National University of Singapore with a Bachelor’s Degree in Chinese Studies. His poems have been selected by the Ministry of Education as teaching materials. Ting has won several international writing awards, such as the 2001 World Chinese Literary Reports Writing Competition for "Forgets the Mountain Forgets" ("Investigation into the Alcohol Contents of a City"), the 2001 Lycos Asia Chinese Creative Writing Competition for his short story, "Father’s Distance", and the 2003 ASEAN Youth Short Story Writing Competition for "2288". Ting is currently the Vice-President of the Singapore Association of Writers. His published works include a volume of poetry, 三十三间 (Room for Thirty-three; 2004); a book of traditional riddles, 谜岛众生 (Beings from the Riddle Island; 2006); and a collection of essays, 忘了下山 (The Mountain Forgets, 2010), which was one of the texts selected for the National Library Board’s READ! Singapore (2010). He received the National Arts Council’s Young Artist Award for Literature in 2007.
Wang Wenxian
(王文献)

Wang Wenxian is a graduate of Nanjing University. She moved to Singapore in 1997. A secondary school Chinese teacher, she is the Secretary of the Singapore Writers Association, an appointed writer for the Ministry of Education Author-in-Residence Programme (驻校作家计划) and an Associate Writer of the Beijing College of Liberal Arts. Her articles have appeared in Chinese newspapers as well as in Singapore Chinese Literature, and various literary publications in China. She writes mostly young adult fiction, cultural criticism, and self-help articles. Her essays and articles are read and taught in schools. Her published work includes the short story collections, [First Love Clove; 2005], [Dreams on Wings; 2009], [Story of Iowa; 2009], [The Spreadable Secret; 2010], and a collection of essays, [Gentle Mercy; 2009].

Wee Tian Beng
(黄展鸣)

Wee Tian Beng is the writer/ self-taught artist of the [The Celestial Zone Series] (4 Series). He is the Founder of TCZ Studio and The Comics Society of Singapore. In 1993, with his manga, Astronautics, Wee became the first full-time Singaporean manga artist to break into the Taiwan and Hong Kong manga market. He is the first manga artist in Singapore to have his full manga series distributed worldwide. Such is the popularity of his manga that it has been translated into Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, English, French, Spanish, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Thai, Japanese and Korean. He has created more than 160 volumes of manga (and almost 100 merchandising products from them). Wee received the Asia Manga Prestigious Award at the Asian Manga Summit held in Seoul in 1997.
Wong Meng Voon (黄孟文)
(Weng Yi [孟毅])

Wong Meng Voon was an academic and a writer of fiction, with over 11 collections of short stories and mini-stories to his name. His books include 再見惠兰 (When I Met Hui Lan Again; 1969), Glimpses of the Past (Translated into English by the author himself, 1981; and into Tagalog by Rusti Caspio, 1989), and 黄孟文微型小说自选集 (Wong Meng Voon’s Mini-Stories; 2004). He has published thousands of essays and academic research papers, and compiled or edited several anthologies. His co-edited 新加坡华文文学史初稿 (The History of Singapore Chinese Literature; 2002) was the first, and still is, the only “literary history” of its kind in Singapore. Wong received the Translation Prize (1978) for the manuscript of Glimpses from the National Book Development Council of Singapore; the Cultural Medallion for Literature (1981); the Southeast Asia Write Award (1981); and the Lifetime Achievement Award for Mini-stories from China (2008). He was recently given another Lifetime Achievement Award [小小说创作终身成就奖, 2011] in Zhengzhou, China.

He has made outstanding contributions to the development and achievement of Chinese literature in Singapore. Yong Mei Mei, “On Wong Meng Voon’s Mini-Stories” [BA Dissertation for Singapore Inst of Management Univ], Fr abstract. Transl by the author.

Wong Yoon Wah
(王润华)

Malaysian-born Wong Yoon Wah was Professor and Head of the Department of Chinese Studies at the National University of Singapore before he retired in 2003. He joined Yuan Ze University [Taiwan] in 2003, serving as Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Head of Chinese Linguistics and Literature from 2003 to 2006, when he became Faculty Professor and Director of International Language and Culture. A veteran writer who has won many literary awards including the Southeast Asia Write Award (1984), the Cultural Medallion (1986), and the ASEAN Cultural Award for Literature (1993), Wong’s creative works are in prose and poetry. They include Beyond Symbols (1984), 植物滋味 (Taste of Durian; 2003), 热带雨林与殖民地 (Tropical Rainforest and British Colony; 1999), an English version, The New Village, is in press] and 文人山水诗集 [Cultural Landscape, 2005]. Wong is a scholar of Chinese literatures and comparative literature.

This verse collection offers stark, startling insights into the human situation through the poet’s identification with non-human objects….. In general, Beyond Symbols succeeds in representing Wong at his best - as a poet who merges into the plants he tries to capture, but eventually who is captured by them.” Isagani Cruz, “Poetry of Plants”, Asiaweek (17 May1986), p 57

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Wu Yeow Chong, Gabriel (吴耀宗)

Gabriel Wu Yeow Chong is an academic, poet and fiction writer. He has a Doctorate in Chinese Literature from the University of Washington in Seattle. Wu taught for a few years in the National University of Singapore before joining the City University of Hong Kong in 2006 as an assistant professor. He has published three collections of poems: 《心软》 (1988); 《半存在》 (A Half-Existence, 2008) and 《火般冷》 (Cold As Fire, 2002), which won the 2010 Singapore Literature Prize. He also has two collections of short stories and micro-fiction, 《人間秀氣》 (Delicacy, 1990) and 《乱想及其他》 (Runaway Thoughts, 2005), and 《过去的日子》 (Bygone Days, 2010).

A collection of poems written between 1995 and 2007 that are intensely lyrical, yet simultaneously calm in contemplating the shape and meaning of being. The poet questions what have been considered inevitable or contingent in daily life and human relations, and unveils the reality of logic and the absurdity of life as one inseparable unity.

Yang Koon Chan (叶昆灿) (Luo Ming [骆明])

Better known by his pen name of Luo Ming, Yap Koon Chan was the Principal of Catholic High School for 10 years. For the past 28 years, he has been President of the Singapore Literature Society. He founded the ASEAN Literature Camp in 1988 to promote ASEAN Literature, and set up inter-cultural exchange programmes with China to promote Chinese Singaporean Literature. In recognition of his contributions, Yap has received awards from Thailand and the Philippines, and an Intercultural Literature Relations Award from the Beijing TV and Broadcasting station. He has published altogether 23 works, primarily essays, travelogues and critiques. They include 东南亚——另一片华文文学天空 (Southeast Asia Critiques, 1999), 文化传承—教育杂谭 (Cultural Heritage, 2001), essays on education; 骆明散文选 (Selected Essays by Luo Ming, 2003), 火般冷 (Cold As Fire, 2002), and TENDER HEART (1995) and 半存在 (A Half-Existence, 2008), which won the 2010 Singapore Literature Prize. He has received various awards, including First Prize in the 1994 ASEAN Youth Literary Awards and the Young Artist Award (1998) from the National Arts Council.

The deepest impression of Luo Ming’s ‘My Journey’ is that his writing style is very compact, which is unlike other authors who are very long-winded in writing travelogues.” Xiao Ziyun, Luo Ming’s Thesis of Findings (2007), p 221. Transl by Yap Lee Yee

“In the past few years, we have a writer-cum-researcher, Mr. Luo Ming, who has done a lot of research work on Southeast Asia. His works are also very worth reading and must not be missed.” Zhuang Zhongqing, Thesis of Findings (2007), p 185. Transl by Yap Lee Yee
Yeng Pway Ngon

Yeng Pway Ngon is a poet, novelist, playwright and critic who has published 25 books: five novels, two collections of short stories, three volumes of poetry, two collections of stage plays, 11 volumes of essays and a collection of social critiques and literary critiques. He received the Cultural Medallion for Literature in 2003. His novels, Mei de wo zao de er san shi zhi shi (2002) and Me and Myself (2006) won the National Book Development Council of Singapore Book Award in 1988, and the Singapore Literature Prize in 2004 respectively.

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Yeng Pway Ngon
(英培安)

Of Manchurian descent, Zou Lu was born and grew up in Liaoning Province in Yunnan, China, and presently lives in Singapore. In 2006, she published Time, a Beautiful River, her first collection of poems. Zou has since written nearly 300 articles, amounting to close to 30 million words, and been published in Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, Vietnam and Indonesia. These articles range from poetry to essays and travel diaries. One of the founding members of Singapore’s only Chinese literary website, 随笔南洋网 (www.sgwritings.com), Zou is currently Assistant Curator of the Pioneers’ Memorial Hall set up by the Tan Kah Kee Foundation.

Zou Lu
(邹璐)

Time, a Beautiful River
(2006)

A compilation of articles and interviews published from 2007 to 2008, with a particular focus on issues surrounding society, history, literature, life and living. The articles incorporate the perspectives of a new immigrant on life in contemporary Singapore.

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Abdul Ghani Bin Abdul Hamid

Versatile and prolific, Abdul Ghani bin Abdul Hamid is a poet, painter, playwright, short-story writer, biographer, essayist, reviewer and art critic. He wrote the 25 episode radio drama, "Sejambak Ragam Hayat" ["A Bouquet of Ways of Life"; 1992] and has published two novelettes—

Delima Merah di Jari Manis [Ruby on Ring Finger; 1977] and Desa Ini Hatiku [The Village is in my Heart; 1985]; four volumes of poetry—Jalinan Rasa [A Weave of Feelings; 1964], Mata dan Hati [Eyes and Heart; 1972], Malay and English poems; Breezes (1978), English poems; Nota [Notes; 1988]; and three volumes of new and selected poems—Fragmen 40 [40 Fragments; 1995]; Tawajuh [Focussing Oneself on God; 1997]; and Ombak Terbang Tinggi [The Waves Fly High; 2003]. He held five solo exhibitions of his works between 1972 and 1980 and has exhibited in Singapore and abroad. Among his awards are the Anugerah Tun Seri Lanang (1997) from the Malay Language Council; the Southeast Asia Write Award (1998); the Cultural Medallion (1999), and the Gold Medal from the Federation of Art Societies (2003).

"Abdul Ghani Hamid is Singapore’s most outstanding Malay poet-artist to date... This book is evidence of his ability in bringing together as one, the two genres of art and poetry that has never been previously produced by a Malay artist in Singapore." Dr Masuri Bin Salikun, Singapore’s Laureate & President, Asas’ 50 (Transl fr Malay; back cover, Petikan Rasa)

Petikan Rasa: Extracts of Feelings; A Collection of Poems and Paintings (2005)

Fifty Malay poems with English translations by Isa Kamari, Mohamed Pitchay Ghani bin Abdul Aziz Mohd Agos Atan, Rasiah Halil and the poet himself. Fifty paintings and photographs by the poet accompany the poetry.

Aku Bukan Penyair (2008)
(I am not a Poet)

A collection of 57 poems written between 2003 and 2007, and addressing various themes and issues, a major one being Malay and Singaporean identity. The poet also shows his concern for the erosion of Malay values and culture today.
Abdul Manaf Bin Abdul Kadir (Manaf Hamzah)

Abdul Manaf works in a private company dealing in health products. He wrote his first novel, *Dedau Hijau di Angin Lalu* [Leaves in the Passing Wind; 1987; repr. 2002; 2007] at 22. It has been translated into Indonesian (2009). *Anggerik Di Tangkai Mawar* [An Orchid in the Stalk of a Rose; 2004] was followed by *Aylana* (2005), which won the 2007 Majlis Bahasa Melayu Singapura [Singapore Malay Language Council] Literature Prize [2007]. It will be translated into English. *Sekeras Waja, Selembut Sutera* [Hard as Steel, Soft as Silk; 2007] was shortlisted for the Malay category of the 2008 Singapore Literature Prize. *Dalam Kehangatan Dakapan Senja* [In the Embrace of Twilight, 2009] was also shortlisted for the Malay Category of the 2010 Singapore Literature Prize. He has published five children’s books in the Fantasy Adventures series: *Pelangi Biru* [Blue Rainbow; 2002], *Taman Rasidah Utama* [The First Rasidah Garden; 2002], *Si Mata Kencana* [A Golden Eye, 2002], *Seruling Perak* [Silver Flute; 2008] and *Dewi Air Mata* [The Tears of a Goddess; 2008].

Abdul Wahab Bin Hamzah

Abdul Wahab Bin Hamzah was born in Pulau Damar Laut. He graduated from the National University of Jakarta in 1985 with a Degree in Language and Malay Literature, and earned an Advanced Diploma in Education from Nanyang Technological University in 1992. He has been writing short fiction and poetry since 1979. “Hidup Satu Persinggahan” [“Life is a Transition”] won the Hadiah Penghargaan (Appreciation Award) in the 1982 Short Story Competition organised by the then Ministry of Culture. “Ajal” [“Time to Die”] won Second Prize in the competition the following year. His other works have been published in the daily, *Berita Minggu*, and in anthologies like *Temenasik* and *Pertemuan Kedua* [Second Meeting; 1995]. He won the Malay Language Council’s Hadiah Penghargaan Anugerah Persuratan [Commemoration Award for Literature] in 2001 and 2003 for the collections of short fiction, *Igau* [Ravings; 1999] and *Tuhan Masih Sayang* [God Still Loves; 2002], which was nominated for the 2004 Singapore Literature Prize. A third collection of short fiction, *Berlalu Sudah Dukanya* [The Sadness is Gone] was published in 2005. A new collection, *Dekit-Dekit Perjalanan* [Ticking of Life] is forthcoming. Several of his short stories have been translated into Chinese.
Ahmad Ja’affar Bin Munasip

Ahmad Ja’affar Bin Munasip began his literary journey in 1985 with the poem, “Kisah Ombak” (“Wave”). However, he is better known for his short fiction. His debut collection, Dari Kepingan-Kepingan Mimpi [From Pieces of Dreams; 2006], was shortlisted for the 2007 Singapore Malay Literary Awards. A recent short story, “Jago, yang Terlupa dan di Lupakan” [“Jago, who Forgot and is Forgotten”], won the Singapore Malay Literary Award (2009). His works use experimental techniques as a means of satire. They have appeared in anthologies like Salam Dari Amira [Greetings from Amira; 1993], Kita Musafir dalam Daerah Ini [We are Travellers in the Area; 2000], and Anak Bumi [Child of the Earth; 2003]. A second collection of short stories, Jago, yang Terlupa dan di Lupakan [“Jago, who Forgot and is Forgotten”; 2011], has just been published.

Aidli ‘Alin’ Mosbit

Aidli ‘Alin’ Mosbit graduated with a degree in Drama from Queensland University of Technology in 1998. An actor, director and playwright, she won Commendation Prizes from the Malay Language Council of Singapore for her plays “Kosovo” [1993] and “… Dan Tiga Dara Terbang Ke Bulan” [“ … And Three Virgins Fly to the Moon”; 1996] in 1995 and 1997 respectively. She received the Young Artist Award for Theatre from the National Arts Council in 2008 and the Anugerah Tokoh Muda–Kesusasteraan (Teater) from PENAMAS (the Mohammad Ariff Ahmad Foundation) for her contributions to Malay Literature in Singapore. In 2003, with Noor Effendy Ibrahim and Alfian Sa’at, Aidli published two of her plays, “… Dan Tiga Dara Terbang Ke Bulan” and “Ikan Cantik” [“Beautiful Fishes”] in Bisik [Whisper; 2003] an anthology of plays. She is currently working on Cantik [Beautiful], a collection of eight of her plays, for publication. Aidli was Editor of Manja, a Malay monthly magazine published by MediaCorp Pte Ltd. Since July 2010, she has been the Section Head of the Performing Arts Department in the School of Design and Media at the Institute of Technical Education.
Almahdi Al Haj Ibrahim (Nadiputra)

More popularly known by his pen name, Nadiputra has more than 300 stage, radio and television plays and poems to his name. He was a Customs Officer from 1966 until 1982, and a producer, director and scriptwriter for the Singapore Broadcasting Corporation (now MediaCorp) from 1983 until 2000. In 1985, he founded Theatre Nadi for children. He received the Cultural Medallion for Drama in 1986. "Puncak" ("The Peak") won the Anugerah Persuratan for Best Theatre Script in 1988. Recently, he wrote and directed "Culik" ("Kidnapped") and "Satu" ("One"), a double bill staged by Theatre 2000 (which he founded in 1996) in May 2011. Nadiputra is Managing Director of Nadivation, a private production house. His many activities include conducting children’s drama workshops, being instructor and leader of Theatre 2000 in MAEC (Malay Activities Executive Committee), Tampines West Community Club, and Drama Instructor for PACT, the Performing Arts Centre run by the Singapore Prison Services for inmates. He is currently writing in secondary schools and writes children's stories for magazines. Several of his works have been translated into English and Chinese.

Anuar Othman

Anuar Othman writes short stories, novels, poems, plays for radio and television, literary essays and song lyrics. He is the author of eleven books. He was a fellow of the Iowa International Writing Program in 2000 and is a member of the Singapore Writers Centre of the National Book Development Council of Singapore. Anuar won the Anugerah Persuratan Award in 2007 for his essay, “Mampukah Kita Lahirkan Sasterawan seperti Naquib Mahfouz?” (“Can We Produce a Man of Letters Like Naquib Mahfouz?”), and again in 2011 for “Penulisn bukan Kerja Cuba-cuba” (“Writing is not for the Uncommitted”). He won the Golden Point Award for his short story “Hashimoto-san” in 1997; and for Poetry [five poems] in 2001. Among his works are Kisah di Bukit Cermin [Tales at Bukit Cermin; 2005; repr. 2006, 2007; English translation forthcoming], and Mencari Shangri-La [In Search of Shangri-La; 2009]. Tenggelamnya Kapal Prince of Wales [The Sinking of the Prince of Wales] is due for release at the end of 2011. He teaches creative writing in secondary schools and writes children’s stories for magazines. Several of his works have been translated into English and Chinese.
Basiran Haji Hamzah

Basiran Haji Hamzah was born in Selangor, Malaysia, and received his early education there. He continued his education in Singapore where he has lived since 1960. He began writing short stories in the mid 60s before trying his hand at poetry in the late 70s. He also wrote 10 plays for television in the late 80s. Basiran’s poems have appeared in Berita Minggu, and his short stories in anthologies like Kehilangan [Loss; 1985], Temasik (1987) and Cerpen-cerpen Nusantara Mutakhir [Stories from a Modern Archipelago;1991]. He has published three novels: Hsiao Fey – Aisyah (2002); Mentari Petang [Evening Sun; 2002] and Diai Seorang Perempuan [Diary of a Girl; 2010].

Djamal Tukimin

Poet, playwright, essayist, literary critic, activist and archivist, Djamal Tukimin was one of the founders of Grup Gelorasa, which promoted experimentation with, and appreciation of, modern Malay poetry in the late 60s and early 70s. His plays include “O” (1975), “Di Persimpangan” [At the Junction”; 1977] and “Saekor Kerbau Legam Di Dalam Mimpi Sang Pengerom Tomtom” [“A Pitch Black Buffalo in the Dream of Prince Tomtom”; 1994]. He has published two novels; three volumes of poetry are in press. Mencari Hang Tuah Yang Hilang di Kota New York [Looking for Hang Tuah, Lost in New York City; 2011] comprises three short stories. Among his published theatre and literary criticism are Arus Teater Singapura [The Survival of Theatre in Singapore; 2007], Sejarah Tidak Pernah Luka Kita Yang Berduka [History Has Never Wounded Us Who Are Sad; 2008], essays on Malay literature; Menjembati Kata Hayat dan Makna [The Relationship between the Life of Words and Meaning; 2011] and Pantun Melayu: Sejarah Perkembangan Pemikiran Dalam Menjana Tamadun Melayu di Singapura Modern [The Malay Pantun: A History of its Intellectual Development in Malay Civilization in Modern Singapore; 2011]. Djamal is compiling an archive of Malay writers in Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines. In 2007, he was conferred the Anugerah Tun Seri Lanang by Majlis Bahasa Melayu Singapura. He is a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of the Malay World and Civilisation (ATMA), National University of Malaysia.

SEJARAH TIDAK PERNAH LUKA KITA YANG BERDUDA [HISTORY HAS NEVER WOUNDED US WHO ARE SAD]

A collection of critical essays on the state of Malay literature after the separation of Singapore from Malaysia in 1965. The history and landscape of Malay literature from the early 1970s are discussed. Critiques of Malay poetry, philosophy and Islamic literature are included.

Buku 1

Pak Kasran, the protagonist, is a former soldier who unsuccessfully fought the Dutch colonists. In the 1930s, after his wife becomes a casualty of war, he and his daughter decide to leave Yogyakarta for Singapore in search of happiness and peace of mind. However, his quest is thwarted in Kampung Tempo where he settles, because another kind of war awaits him, the result of a radical difference in psychological and religious mindset between him and the villagers.

Imam: Buku 1 [The Leader; Book 1]

Pak Kasran the protagonist, is a former soldier who unsuccessfully fought the Dutch colonists. In the 1930s, after his wife becomes a casualty of war, he and his daughter decide to leave Yogyakarta for Singapore in search of happiness and peace of mind. However, his quest is thwarted in Kampung Tempo where he settles, because another kind of war awaits him, the result of a radical difference in psychological and religious mindset between him and the villagers.

Imam: Buku 1 [The Leader; Book 1]
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| 117 |
Isa Kamari

Isa Kamari has written eight novels in Malay: Satu Bumi, (One Earth, 1998), Kiswah (The Drape of Kaabah, 2002), Tawassul (Intercession, 2002), Menara (The Tower, 2002), AtlasNama Cinta (In the Name of Love, 2006), Memeluk Gerhana (Embrace The Eclipse, 2007), Rawat (Swamp; 2009) and Duka Tuan Bertahka (Throne of Sorrows, 2011). Three of his novels have been translated into English: One Earth (Satu Bumi) in 2008, Intercession (Tawassul) in 2010 and Nadra (Atlas Nama Cinta) in 2009. He has also published two collections of poems, Sumur Usia (Well of Time, 1993) and Munajat Sukma (Soul Devotion, 2003); a collection of short stories, Celupan (1994, and a collection of theatre scripts, Pintu (Door, 2009). Isa also writes song lyrics and scripts for television drama serials and documentaries. Isa was conferred the Southeast Asia Write Award (2006), the Cultural Medallion (2007) and the Anugerah Tun Seri Lanang (2009).

"Incredible impact! Intercession describes our anxiety and concern over our reliance on Islamic history without thinking about and assessing it deeply. While reading it, it becomes clearer, more profound, more captivating, more disturbing." A Samad Said (Ir back cover; transl by the author)

"Isla Kamari weaves the history of the founding of Singapore in the 19th century in a narrative that is bold, imaginative and provocative. This novel offers a new feel and insight into the plight of Malays today." (Fr back cover)

Ishak Bin Abdul Latiff

Ishak Bin Abdul Latiff was a secondary school Malay Language teacher for 20 years before joining the Faculty of Mother Tongue Languages, SOTA (School of the Arts) in 2008. In 2007, he received the inaugural Guru Ariff Budiman Teacher Award which recognises the contributions of Malay language teachers in the teaching and learning of Malay. Ishak has published short stories and written plays and radio and television scripts. His first script, "Aku” ["Me"], was judged best script in Festival Teater Remaja [Youth Theatre Festival] in 1983. He was one of the writers for “Anak Metropolitan”, awarded Best Drama in Malay television in Pesta Perdana 2001. His stories, “AOD@eternity.com” and “Nirmala”, clinched first and third prizes respectively in the 2001 and 2005 Golden Point Award competition. In 2003, “Romie & Julie” and “Nadi Ke Nadi” ["Nadi to Nadi"] won first and third prizes in another writing competition, Sayembara Penulisan Novel Watan dan Cerpen. Ishak has published three collections of short fiction: Saga – Antologi Cerpen Ishak Latiff[Saga – Short Stories of Ishak Latiff, 2006], winner of the 2007 Anugerah Persuratan [Malay Literary Award], Rona – Antologi Cerpen Ishak Latiff [Colours: Short Stories of Ishak Latiff, 2008], and HP(2011).

"Nicole Arletha, a Secondary One student, ... read ‘Six Hours’ four times because it was so mesmerising and full of mystery.” Berita Harian, 12 Oct 2009; written by Norini Mohd Nizan of Yio Chu Kang Secondary School. Transl by the author
Ismail Bin Wardi (Iswardy)

Ismail Bin Wardi started writing in 1971. He began his literary career with poetry before moving to fiction, and has written poems, novels, short stories, essays and book reviews. To date, he has published four collections of short fiction, Otak (Brain; 1992), Warna Seraut Majah (Colour of the Face; 1996), Senandung Orang Lama (The Rhythm of the Old; 2000) and Ombak Kosmopolitan (Cosmopolitan Wave; 2005). He has written two novels, Menjejak Arus (Going with the Flow; 1992), and Malam Merah (Red Night; 1995). His short story “Lembu” (“Cow”) was awarded the Anugerah Persuratan in 1999 by Majlis Bahasa Melayu Singapura; in 2001 the short story “Senandung Orang Lama”, won the same award. “Lembu” was one of the texts selected for READ! Singapore 2010. Another short story, “Otak”, was adapted for the stage by Theatre Artistic in 2006. In 2009, Ismail received the Riang Ria Writer’s Award, conferred by EDN Media Pte Ltd.

Johar Bin Buang

Johar Bin Buang has published in several genres since the early 1980s, but is most well known as a poet. His works have been translated into English, Chinese and Russian. His awards include the National Book Development Council of Singapore Book Award for Kisah Serorang Zahid (The Story of a Pious Person; 1994); the 1997 Islamic Poetry Prize (from Brunei Darussalam) for “Program Timur” (“Programme of the East”); the Darul Iman III Literature Award in 1999 [from the Government of Terengganu, Malaysia] for the manuscript, “Perahu” (“Sailboat”); the Golden Point Award [1999] for his short story, “Anak Bumi” (“Son of the Earth”); the Literature Prize [from the Malay Language Council of Singapore in 2007] for Perahu Melayu Di Lautan Khulzum [The Malay Sailboat in the Khulzum Sea; 2006]; the 2010 Singapore Literature Prize for Sampai Di Singgahsana Cinta [Arriving at the Throne of Love; 2009]. He received the Southeast Asia Write Award in 2010. Other collections of poetry are Dinding-Dinding Kaca [Glass Wall; 1997], Tujuhpuluhribu Hjаб [Seventy Thousand Veils; 2000]; Sahara [2003], Cinta Pohon Tamar [Love of the Date Palm; 2004]; Cahaya Di Negeri Ini [Light in This Country; 2005]. His poems have been anthologised in TUMASIK: Contemporary Writing from Singapore [2009], Fifty On 50 [2009] and &WORDS: Poems Singapore And Beyond [2010].
Mohamed Latiff Bin Mohamed

Mohamed Latiff Bin Mohamed is one of the most prolific writers who came after the first generation of writers in the Singapore Malay literary scene. His many accolades include the Montblanc-NUS Centre for the Arts Literary Award (1998); the Southeast Asia Write Award (2002); the Singapore Malay Language Council’s Tun Seri Lanang Award (2003); and the Singapore Literature Prize which he has won three times: in 2004, for his collection of poems, Bagiku Sepilah Sudah (For Me There’s Only Loneliness); 2002; in 2006, for the twenty-one short stories in Nostalgia Yang Hilang (The Lost Nostalgia); and in 2008, again for poetry, Bila Rama-Rama Patah Sayapnya (When the Butterfly Injures its Wings; 2007). To date, he has published five volumes of poetry, five novels and two collections of short stories. His works revolve around the life and struggles of the Malay community in post-independent Singapore. They also address the fundamental problems facing humanity, life and the meaning of life, and assess critically the historical aspects of humanity. Some of his works have been translated into Chinese, English, German and Korean. He is the Vice-President of Angkatan Sasterawan ‘50.

Muhammad Ariff Bin Ahmad (Mas)

Muhammad Ariff Bin Ahmad is a former teacher and lecturer. With more than 50 books to his name, including two written in Jawi, he is a prolific writer with an enviable wide range: poetry, short stories, books for children, essays on Malay culture and literature, school textbooks on learning Malay, articles for newspapers and magazines in Malaysia and Singapore, drama and documentary scripts for radio and television. He is one of the founders and leaders of Angkatan Sasterawan ‘50 (Asas ‘50), a Malay literary organisation that has played a significant role in developing Malay literature in Singapore and the region. His creative works include the novel, Siapa Sangka (No One Can Guess; 1958); Sembilan (Nine; 1963), a collection of 12 short stories; and Jangan Tak Ada (You Must Have Something; 1980), a volume of 80 poems. Published in 2004, Nilam (acronym for “nilai” [“value”], “islam”, “lunas” [“payment”], “adat” [“custom”] and “Melayu” [“Malays”]) is a book on Malay customs or practices in accordance with Muslim values. His many awards include three prestigious ones: the Cultural Medallion (1987), the Southeast Asia Write Award (1993) and the Anugerah Tun Seri Lanang (1993).
Muhammad Salihin Bin Sulaiman Jeem

Muhammad Salihin writes fiction, poetry, articles, lyrics, radio and television scripts, art and book reviews. In his short fiction, he loves the unconventional in treatment of subject and narrative technique. His poems have appeared in Berita Minggu and Majalah Perkahwinan [Wedding Magazine]. He was part of the writing team behind the award-winning Malay television drama, “1988 ... Segaris Sinar” [“1988 ... Constellation”] in 2008, when he also received the Anugerah PENAMAS for Young Writers from the Muhammad Ariff Ahmad Foundation. His short story collection, Anugerah Bulan Bonda [A Moon Gift for Mother; 2007], was shortlisted for the 2009 National Book Development Council of Singapore Book Awards. “Yang Mana Lama, Yang Mana Baru” [“Which is Old, Which is New”], received an Honourable Mention in the 1999 Golden Point Awards; another short story, “Fossil” [“Fossil”], placed third in the 2003 Golden Point Awards. Salihin has two novels in progress: Pejuang Kertas [Paper Warrior; forthcoming, 2011] and Menentang Arus [Against the Tide; forthcoming, 2012]. He is Editor of Majalah Perkahwinan.

“The stories collected here bring us to a world of largely fresh and relative beauty...Salihin is a writer who will not be happy with an average and conventional approach, but who will unearth a new and effective dimension.” Isa Raman (Recipient of the Southeast Asia Literary Prize [2009]), in his review of Muhammad Salihin’s short stories collection, Anugerah Bulan Bonda [A Moon Gift for Mother; 2007] in Berita Harian.

Noor Hasnah Adam

Noor Hasnah is a poet and short-story writer who also writes documentary and drama scripts for television, and draws for magazines and newspapers. She has co-authored two comic books, Gelak Khas [Special Laughter; 2002] and Gelak Khas II [Special Laughter II; 2004]. In fiction, Noor Hasnah received the Anugerah Sastera Cerpen – Remaja in 2001 for “Naluri” [“Instinct”]; the Anugerah Sastera Penghargaan (Cerpen) in 2003 for “Ini Cengkerang Kita” [“This is Our Shell”]; and the 2009 Anugerah Sastera Buku Cerpen for Kelarai [Knots; 2008]. “Cengkerang” was selected for the National Library Board’s READ! Singapore (2006). In 2001, she won Second Prize in the Golden Point Awards for her story, “Anak Harimau” [“Tiger Cub”] and in 2007, Second Prize in the same competition for a poetry submission. She received the Goh Chok Tong Youth Promise Award (Distinction) in 2008 for contributions in literature, education and her academic performance in the University of Malaya where she secured First Class Honours [Malay Studies]. In 2009, she received the Penulis Harapan Award from Majlis Bahasa Melayu Singapura. She recently completed “Satria Perjalanan” [“The Journey”], a novel on Moliano Loverhunder, a well-known Singaporean musician.

“The short stories of Noor Hasnah are satirical and full of wit and drama.” Dewani Abbas, Senior Journalist, Berita Harian (fr back cover, transl by the author)

The main elements in Mis3 Rasa are the courage and honesty of a woman’s voice: “Khalid Salah (transl by the author)
Rasiah Halil

Rasiah Halil is a poet, writer, translator, educator and trainer. Her first work, a poem, was published in 1972. Her works dwell largely on social and humanitarian issues, and include Pertubuhan Buku Catatan Seorang Gipsi [Conversations: Notebook of a Gypsy; 1988], Orang Liar [The Outsider; 1991], Sungei & Lautan [River & Ocean; 1995], Ayah Tidak Sayang Padaku Lagi [Father No Longer Loves Me; 2007] and Hikayat Sri Anggerik [The Chronicles of Sri Anggerik; 2007]. Since 1983, her works have received many Commendation and three Malay Literature Awards: for the poem, “Peristiwa” [“Incident”] in 1999, for the poem “Da'lang: Episod Tiga” [“Puppeteer: The Third Episode”] in 2001; and for her literary essay, “Nilai Penulis Berdasarkan Karya Bukan Kerjaya” [“Evaluate a Writer Based on His/Her Writings, Not His/Her Profession”] in 2009, from the Malay Language Council of Singapore. Under the pseudonym of “Sri Anggerik”, she wrote a fortnightly column (1998-2006) for the Malay newspaper, Berita Minggu, and a weekly literary column (2004-2009) for Berita Minggu with “Tun Fatimah” for pen name. She has taught in a few schools and three institutions of higher learning in Singapore and Brunei. Rasiah attended the University of Iowa’s International Writing Programme in 1995 on a Fulbright scholarship.

Rohani Bte Din

Born in Kampung Ara Kuda on the border of Kedah and Seberang Perai, Malaysia, Rohani Bte Din was educated at Sungei Dua Primary School and Dato' Onn Secondary School in Butterworth. She started writing after she became a grandmother in 1997. Her first novel, Dian Bonda [A Mother’s Diary; 1999], was followed by Dian Bonda II [A Mother’s Diary II; 2000]. Both books, drawing from her life, are envisaged as part of a continuing series. “Anugerah Buat Syamsiah” [“Award for Syamsiah”] won the 2001 Sayembara Novel Watan Competition (for unpublished novels) and was published in 2002, with a reprint in the same year.

In 2003, Rohani entered the same competition and came in second with “Sanggar Anugerah Istana Kami I & II” [“Villa of Blessings, Our Palace I & II”; 2004]. Her teenage novel Masih Ada Yang Sayang [There is Still Love; 2004], was inspired by a meeting with the students of Balestier Hill Secondary School which she visited in 2003. She was similarly inspired to write Ku Tunai Janji [I Fulfill the Promise; 2006] after meeting students from Balestier Hill and Mayflower secondary schools in 2004. She has also published a volume of poetry, Membilang Langkah [Counting the Steps; 2011].
Rohman Munasip

Rohman Munasip is a poet, short-story writer and essayist. His interest in Malay literature started as a hobby in 1975, which year also saw his first poem, “Jihad Kami” (“Our Struggle”). His engagement with literary activities came about through his involvement in the Toa Payoh Library’s Writers’ Corner. He reads his poetry at many literary events, and on radio and television shows. His short story “Suatu Ketika” (“Once Upon A Time”) and radio drama script “Titik Pertemuan” (“Meeting Point”) won respectively the 2001 and 2011 Anugerah Persuratan (Literary Prize) awarded by the Malay Language Council of Singapore. “Dari Stesen Ke Stesen” (“From Station to Station”) was runner-up in the 1993 Sayembara Sastera (Literary Competition). Three short stories were given the Hadiah Penghargaan [Appreciation Award] in the Anugerah Persuratan awards: “Masjid Sempurna” (“Ideal Mosque”; 1995), “Potret Diri Seorang Penyair” (“Self-Portrait of a Poet”; 1999); and “Kalau Cuaca Malam Panas Membara” (“The Very Warm Weather of the Night”; 2003). He has published a volume of poetry, two collections of short-stories and a collection of book reviews. They are Kerongcong Penyair [Songs of a Poet; 2003]; Sebuah Madrasah dan Suatu Percakapan [A Madrasah and A Dialogue; 2005], Secangkir Ceritera [A Cup of Stories; 2010], and Bicara Karya [Reviews of Works; 2005].

Sabri Buang

Sabri Buang is an artistic director, writer and director of theatre and television. He has won many awards, first in inter-school drama and youth theatre festivals, then in international theatre festivals including the 5th Fiesta Internacional Del Teatro San Martin De Caracas in Venezuela (2002), for his artistic and scenicographic works. He was invited by the UNESCO International Theatre Institute to showcase his works in festivals in Romania (2000-2001) and Athens (2002). In 2000, he created “Medea”, a collaborative project between Mosaic Youth Theatre in Detroit and Singapore’s LASALLE College of the Arts School of Drama. “Medea” was staged in both Detroit and Singapore. Sabri was the first Asian to Head the School of Drama at LASALLE College of the Arts, from 1999-2003. As Director [Director] (Scenography) from 2003-2005 in Istana Budaya, Kuala Lumpur’s National Theatre, he helmed many productions as Artistic Director, and worked with multicultural artistes. Sabri’s creative flair makes him sought after by various artistes and organisations. He has published one novel, Jeda (Pause; 2001) and is working on a collection of his theatrical and creative writings, scheduled for publication in 2012. He is currently the Artistic Director, Animal Presentations, Wildlife Reserves Singapore.

Saba Bung

Saba Bung is a poet, short-story writer and essayist. His interest in Malay literature started as a hobby in 1975, which year also saw his first poem, “Jihad Kami” (“Our Struggle”). His engagement with literary activities came about through his involvement in the Toa Payoh Library’s Writers’ Corner. He reads his poetry at many literary events, and on radio and television shows. His short story “Suatu Ketika” (“Once Upon A Time”) and radio drama script “Titik Pertemuan” (“Meeting Point”) won respectively the 2001 and 2011 Anugerah Persuratan (Literary Prize) awarded by the Malay Language Council of Singapore. “Dari Stesen Ke Stesen” (“From Station to Station”) was runner-up in the 1993 Sayembara Sastera (Literary Competition). Three short stories were given the Hadiah Penghargaan [Appreciation Award] in the Anugerah Persuratan awards: “Masjid Sempurna” (“Ideal Mosque”; 1995), “Potret Diri Seorang Penyair” (“Self-Portrait of a Poet”; 1999); and “Kalau Cuaca Malam Panas Membara” (“The Very Warm Weather of the Night”; 2003). He has published a volume of poetry, two collections of short-stories and a collection of book reviews. They are Kerongcong Penyair [Songs of a Poet; 2003]; Sebuah Madrasah dan Suatu Percakapan [A Madrasah and A Dialogue; 2005], Secangkir Ceritera [A Cup of Stories; 2010], and Bicara Karya [Reviews of Works; 2005].

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Jeda (2001; repr. 2006) [Pause]

‘The novel relates the struggles of a boy who, in trying to build a better life, leaves his village and aging mother in order to chase his own dreams. Originating from Solo in Java, he leaves his homeland with a friend. The story is full of complexities, suspense, struggles, sacrifices, melancholy, yet is witty as it narrates the life journey of a fisherman’s son, trying to make a living in Singapore. Despite the trials that he has to go through, with strong will and determination, he overcomes them all for the sake of his dreams.”

[With permission, fr. website of Pustaka Nasional; transl. by the Publisher]
Suratman Markasan

An educator, poet, fictionist and essayist, Suratman Markasan trained as a teacher at Sultan Idris Training College in Perak, then Malaya, from 1948-50. He was a primary schoolteacher in Singapore before going back to school and graduating from Nanyang University in 1971 with a degree in Malay and Indonesian Literature. He became a Specialist Inspector with the Ministry of Education in 1976 and was appointed its Assistant Director for Malay and Tamil Studies in 1980. In 1981, he became a lecturer at the Institute of Education, retiring as an Adjunct Lecturer in 1995. Suratman started writing poetry in 1954 and a few years later, ventured into fiction as well. His works include Perempuan Kerudung Hitam [The Woman with the Black Veil; short fiction, 1991]; Potret Isteri Yang Hilang [The Lost Portrait of a Wife; poetry, 1993]; Penghulu Yang Hilang Segala-galanya [The Headman who Lost Everything; fiction, 1998]; Kembali Kepada Al-Quran [Return to the Koran; short fiction, 2000]; Bangsa Melayu Singapura Dalam Transformasi Budayanya [Singaporean Malays in a Time of Cultural Change; essays, 2005]; Puisi Luka & Puisi Duka [Poems of Hurt and Poems of Sorrow; 2004]; and Puisi-puisi Perjalanan [Poems of Life; 2010]. He received the Southeast Asia Write Award (1989), the Mont Blanc-NUS Centre for the Arts Award (1997), the Tun Seri Lanang Literary Award (1999), Nusantara Literary Award (1999), and the Cultural Medallion (2011).
Born in Tamil Nadu, India, Naa Aandeappan has written three books. Bharathi’s View of Paanchali (1985) is a play based on the Mahabaratha; Rama the Victor (1993) is a dramatisation of the Ramayana, while Across the Ocean (2007) is an autobiography. He was Honorary Secretary of the Association of Singapore Tamil Writers in 1995, and has been Chairman of the Association since 2005.
Amallathasan

Malaysian-born Kavignaru Amallathasan is a poet eager to propagate patriotism and humanism among Singaporeans. An Advisor to the Association of Singapore Tamil Writers, he was its President from 1987 to 2005, and initiated the annual Thamizhavel Award for Tamil writers. In 2005, his lyric, “While saying Singapore”, won First Prize in the Tamil section of a songwriting competition for the four official languages and was sung at the 2006 National Day Parade. Amallathasan’s poems employ both an economy of style and rich suggestiveness.

Sixties on various subjects, including nature, society, love, the Tamil language and Singapore as a nation. The nature poems employ both an economy of style and a rich suggestiveness.

M Balakrishnan (Ma Elangkannan)

Ma Elangkannan is the pen name of M Balakrishnan, who has published five collections of short stories and three novels. His fiction has appeared in Tamil newspapers and magazines in Singapore, Malaysia and India. His works have been translated into English and Malay and broadcast on Radio Singapore. A short story has also been dramatised for television. Several of his books are used as school texts. Balakrishnan has won short story competitions at home and abroad. He was the first Tamil writer to receive the Southeast Asia Write Award in 1982.

He received the Thamizhavel Award in 1999 from the Association of Singapore Tamil Writers in recognition of his literary contributions. His novel, “Fish on Hook” (1989), was shortlisted for the 2006 Singapore Literature Prize.

He received the Thamizhavel Award in 1999 from the Association of Singapore Tamil Writers in recognition of his literary contributions. His novel, “Fish on Hook” (1989), was shortlisted for the 2006 Singapore Literature Prize. He received the Cultural Medallion from the National Arts Council in 2005. Balakrishnan depicts the Indian experience in cosmopolitan, multicultural Singapore through the lives of local Tamils from various social strata and historical periods, from the British colonial period to the Japanese Occupation and more recent times. He has, through stories which seek to highlight the plight of the working class, become a voice for the silent and disenfranchised.
Visvanatha Iyer

Ikkuvanam (Ikkuvanam)

Bīlānumputti yam ṣirīṇaḥ (இலவும்புத்தி யும் சிரினாக இக்குவனம்)

Born in India, V Ikkuvanam came to Singapore in 1952 and has been one of the most significant poets in Singapore’s Tamil literary scene over the past 40 years. He was a librarian at the University of Malaya (Singapore) for several years. He was Editor of Tamil Murasu and Tamil Malar, two Tamil dailies in Singapore. For more than 20 years, he was a translator and Tamil newsreader for Radio Malaysia and Radio Singapore. He has received numerous awards from organisations like the Singapore Tamil Literary Circle (Venba Chirpi; 1993), the London Tamil Society (Venba Venthan; 1994), the Sibbavaanandha Asraman Theni of India (Arutkavi Chelva; 2002), the Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society (Kala Ratna; 2008) and the Association of Singapore Tamil Writers. (Thamizhavel Award; 2009).

Paatheral Illamaran

பாதெரல் இல்லாமரன்

Born in Madras, India, Illamaran came to Singapore in 1956. He started writing in 1964, studying and reading Tamil and Tamil literature on his own. His poems have been published in newspapers in Singapore and Malaysia. He has contributed numerous poems to radio and television and has released two compact discs of devotional songs. To date, he has written more than five hundred poems. Many of these have been collected in [Honey Poems; 1981; 2002); [Moon; 1988], a volume intended for primary and secondary schools; [Thinking and Testing; 1990; 1997), a volume commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of Singapore’s independence; [Quake; 2002] and [Smashed Mirror; 2009].

“In 1981, it was said that Singapore poets aren’t giving importance to the growth of their nation in their poems. But in this book... Paatheral Illamaran has proven all wrong. He has shown that Singapore poets aren’t as ignorant as others think.” Transl extract fr article by Prof M. Sithambaram; Tamil Murasu (1982)
Indrajit Perumal Pillay

A television producer for the Tamil section of MediaCorp, Indrajit Perumal Pillay has been writing for the past 25 years. He has published two collections of poetry, "Breath of Spring; 1998), and "People Waiting for the Train; 2010"); two collections of short fiction, "He Came Home: 2001) and "Two New Faces; 2008); and a collection of essays, "Veetukku Vanthaar [He Came Home; 2001) and "Two New Faces; 2008) and a collection of essays, "Place, Word, Time; 2009), where he shares his thoughts on various social topics like Tamil culture, literature and the need for Tamil intellectuals to modernize their thinking. He writes for Uyirmmai [Uyirmmai.com] a Tamil internet weekly magazine from Chennai, and Thangameen [Thangameen.com] an internet monthly magazine from Singapore. He also writes short stories for various literary magazines.

"Indrajit undertakes the Herculean task of revealing the inner self of the modern man…This vicarious study of today’s man is told from a refreshingly new satirical perspective. ”

Manushya Puthiran, contemporary Indian poet

"Indrajit is capable of writing world class stories.”

Prapanchan, India’s Sahithya Academy award winner

K T M Iqbal

Iqbal has authored seven collections of poetry and written over two hundred children’s songs for Radio Singapore’s programme in the seventies to eighties, "Let us sing”. He has contributed poems, essays and short stories to the region’s leading newspapers and magazines. His poems "Morning”, "The Critic’s Hunt” and "Breath of Poetry” are included in Tamil texts for Singapore schools. Another poem, "Water”, was selected by the National Arts Council for display in MRT trains and for exhibition at EXPO 2000 in Hanover, Germany. English translations of his poems, by R Balachandran, appear in The Evening Number and Other Poems (2008). He was an associate editor of the anthologies, Rhythms (2000) and Fifty on 50 (2009). His awards include the Montblanc – NUS Centre for the Arts Literary Award (Tamil Category; 1996); the Thamizhavel Award (1999) from the Association of Singapore Tamil Writers; the Southeast Asia Write Award (2001) and the Kala Ratna [Gem of the Arts] Award from the Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society.

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Manushya Puthiran, contemporary Indian poet

"Indrajit is capable of writing world class stories.”

Prapanchan, India’s Sahithya Academy award winner

Indrajit Perumal Pillay

A television producer for the Tamil section of MediaCorp, Indrajit Perumal Pillay has been writing for the past 25 years. He has published two collections of poetry, "Breath of Spring; 1998), and "People Waiting for the Train; 2010"); two collections of short fiction, "He Came Home: 2001) and "Two New Faces; 2008); and a collection of essays, "Veetukku Vanthaar [He Came Home; 2001) and "Two New Faces; 2008) and a collection of essays, "Place, Word, Time; 2009), where he shares his thoughts on various social topics like Tamil culture, literature and the need for Tamil intellectuals to modernize their thinking. He writes for Uyirmmai [Uyirmmai.com] a Tamil internet weekly magazine from Chennai, and Thangameen [Thangameen.com] an internet monthly magazine from Singapore. He also writes short stories for various literary magazines.

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Prapanchan, India’s Sahithya Academy award winner
Jayanthi Sankar

Born in Madurai, the temple city of South India, Jayanthi Sankar has lived in Singapore since 1990. She has written articles for Singapore's daily, Tamil Murasu, as well as Tamil magazines in India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Switzerland and the United States. A prolific writer known for simple and realistic narration, she is known worldwide for fiction which uses Singapore as a backdrop and which deals with local issues. She has a genuine interest in other cultures, particularly Chinese language and culture. She has authored more than 20 books, including six collections of short fiction, four novels and a novelette collection. Her short story collection, "Back Seat" (2008), was shortlisted for the 2008 Singapore Literature Prize. Her many prizes and awards include the Thasi Ettum Literary Award (2009), Rakkya Sindaanai (2008) and Thiruppoor Arima Sakhthi Award (2007). Another short story collection, "Migration" (2008), was shortlisted for the 2010 Singapore Literature Prize.

"Jayanthi has brought out very well together the unique theme and the psychology of modern Indian Singaporeans. For the same reason, her Manappirigai is a novel worthy of attention."
R Venkatesh, in Thanrai- a North American Tamil magazine; April, 2009

"What is special about Jayanthi Sankar’s short stories is that they are written without presumption, but from natural inspiration. That is very clear when we read her fiction."
Fr the Foreword by R Muttulingam

K Kanagalatha (Latha)


The10storiesinthis collectiondepictthefemalestruggleforpeace andidentitywithinthemale-dominatedIndian community in Singapore.
Rama Kannabiran 

Rama Kannabiran is an essayist, short-story writer, novelist and schoolteacher. He has published four collections of short stories, including [Twenty-Five Years and Other Stories; 1980], which won the 1982 National Book Development Council of Singapore Award for Tamil Fiction; and the parable-novel [Pedestal of Power; 1992]. His short stories have been featured in 18 anthologies in Tamil, English, Chinese and Malay. He has conducted fiction-writing workshops for young writers, judged writing competitions and has been on the Advisory Panel of the National Arts Council since 2000. He represented Singapore at the Iowa International Writing Programme in 1998 and was an honorary Writing Fellow there. Kannabiran has received the Southeast Asia Write Award (1990), the Montblanc – NUS Centre for the Arts Literary Award (1997), the Cultural Medallion (1998) from the National Arts Council, the Thamizhavel Award (2004) from the Association of Singapore Tamil Writers, and the Bharatiyari and Bharathidasan Literary Award (2007) from the Tamil Language and Cultural Society.

P Krishnan

Krishnan is a short-story writer, playwright, poet and radio broadcaster. He has written some 40 short stories, 100 essays and poems, 360 plays for radio, television, the stage and for journals. He has translated Shakespeare, Byron and Keats, among others. Krishnan was the first writer to translate Shakespeare’s Macbeth into Tamil, which play was subsequently staged. One of the writers featured in the National Library’s Pioneer Gallery, Krishnan has published six books: [Puthumaithasan Stories; 1993], a short story collection which won the 1994 National Book Development Council of Singapore Commendation Award; [Dried Leaf] (1996), [Animal Farm] (2006), among the many awards he has received are the prestigious Thamizhavel Award (1998), the Southeast Asia Write Award (2005) and the Cultural Medallion (2008).

“Sarugu reveals the vibrancy of a language that has kept itself functionally alive and creatively exuberant.” Prama Nandakumar, The Hindu, May 12 2009, Chennai

“ ... the writer has written in elegant Tamil... The depiction of each scene, the structure, and clarity of feeling make for the outstanding qualities of the book.” Latha, To read good Tamil: Vilanggupanai”, Tamil Murasa, Sep 12 2010

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M K Narayanan

M K Narayanan joined the then Radio Television Singapore as a broadcaster in 1964, and rose through the ranks to head Olikalanjiyam 96.8, the Tamil Section, from 1981 to 1994. He has written and produced over a thousand radio, TV and stage plays, the most famous of which were the plays for the long-running series, *Mystery Theatre*. His serialized radio version of the Hindu epic *The Mahabharatham*, in 64 episodes, was extremely popular with the Tamil community. As a result, he was bestowed the Kalai Maamani (Supreme in the Arts) by 14 Indian cultural organizations in 1988. In the same year, the late Senior Minister, S. Rajaratnam, conferred on him the Kala Ratna (Gem of the Arts) for his contributions to the development of the Tamil language in Singapore. In 1990, he received the Golden Medallion Award from the Singapore Kerala Association, Singapore Ceylon Tamils Association and Singapore Malayalee Hindu Samajam. He was honoured by Global Arts and Talent with a Life-Time Achievement Award in 2010.

Murugathasan

Born in Tamil Nadu, India, Murugathasan started writing at the age of 13. To date, he has published 14 volumes of poetry. His first book, *Tribute to Lord Muruga* (1975), comprises songs in praise of Lord Muruga. His latest book is *Water and Fire* (2008), a selection of his poems. He received the Mont Blanc-NUS Centre for the Arts Literature Prize (1998), the Kavigar Sozhan Award in India (2009), and the Singapore Literature Prize (2010).

*The Union* is a work to feed the love and passion for the Tamil language to Tamilians.” Dr S Thinnappan, National University of Singapore

Murugathasan

One short story set in the early days of Singapore, is about a character who moves from India to Singapore, and the impact of events on his life and the lives of others. Interspersed within the short story are seventy poems, many of which draw on the prose narrative for their theme and subject.

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S P Panneerselvam

S P Panneerselvam is a Senior Broadcast Journalist, researcher, playwright, poet and writer of fiction. He has played a major role in writing and producing Tamil plays and short stories which document the lives of Singaporeans from different levels of society for radio. He has represented Singapore at a number of international seminars, most recently the International Tamil Meet in Coimbatore, India. Panneerselvam has given lectures in English and Tamil on Singapore Culture. He has received awards like Tamil Selvam [The Wealth of Tamils; 1995] from the Jurong Community Centre and an award (2007) by Boon Lay Community Centre in recognition of his contribution to the development of Tamil literature among the young; the Tiruvallivuar Award (2008) by the Tamil Language and Literature Society and the Kala Ratna [Gem of the Arts] by the Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society (2010). Panneerselvam is a member of the National Library Board’s READ! Singapore Steering Committee and is Vice-President of the Tamil Book Selection Committee.

Parvathy Poobalan

Parvathy Poobalan writes short stories, poetry and essays. Her works have appeared in Tamil Murasu, Tamil Malar and Tamil Nesan. She has published a collection of poems [Summer Flowers; 1997]. She received the Thamizhavel Award in 2010 from the Association of Singapore Tamil Writers.
J M Sali

J M Sali is a multiple award-winning poet, novelist, short-story writer, children’s writer, dramaturge and translator, with over 55 books to his name. He has made major contributions to Tamil literature in Singapore. He worked for 20 years as an editor for various Tamil language publications, including Singapore’s Tamil Muras and Chennai’s Ananda Vikatan Weekly and Mayan Youth Magazine. He came to Singapore in 1964 and worked for the (then) Singapore Broadcasting Corporation as a broadcast journalist in 1983. From 1987 – 1990, Sali was an advisor to the Tamil section of the literary journal, Singa. He has served on the editorial committee of Nadi, the Tamil language publication of the Jaffna Tamil Cultural Society in Singapore since 2004.

When Fasting (1994), a collection of 22 short stories, received the National Book Development Council of Singapore Book Award for Tamil Fiction in 1996. Other awards received include the Thamizhavel Award (2001) from the Association of Singapore Tamil Writers, the Kavimalai Award (2005) from the Kavimalai Poets Association (Singapore), and the Seera Award (2008) from the Chennai Kamban Kazhagam. Several of his short stories have been translated into English, Hindi, Urdu and Sinhalese.

“The author, whose modern writing in a Tamil weekly has become quite popular, has not succumbed to the ‘formula’ type of storytelling. In just 40 pages, the reader has the satisfaction of getting a crisp tale.” From a review in The Hindu [Chennai; 1976].

S S Sarma

Born in Pahang, Malaysia, S S Sarma was educated at King George V School in Seremban, Negri Sembilan. He was on the editorial staff of Tamil Muras and subsequently became editor of Indian Movie News in 1952, a position he held for 40 years. He continues to contribute to the periodical as a senior editor. He was also the author and publisher of Vel and Alai Osai, and managing editor of Singai Chudar. Sarma has directed 25 plays, including seven for the National Drama Festival in the 1980s. He has authored some twenty books.

For his promotion of Tamil drama and culture, Sarma received the Kala Ratna (Gem of the Arts) Award from the Tamil Nadu Parthasarathy International Academy in Chennai in 1987; in 2011, he received the Lifetime Achievement Award for Tamil Literature from the Chennai Kalai Magal Foundation.

“I congratulate the author for the strength and firmness with which he handled this marvelous theme... Dr. Sarma will inspire many scholars to undertake more and more studies in this unique area of academic pursuit.” Dr. G John Samuel, Director, Institute of Asian Studies, Chennai. (In the Foreword, Tamil Culture: Beyond the Horizon)

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Pon Sundararaju

Pon Sundararaju’s love for the Tamil language inspired him to be a writer at the age of 14. To date, he has written 40 plays for television and 30 plays for radio. He has also written numerous short stories and published two collections of short fiction. Well-received by the Indian community, his stories focus on issues challenging the Indian community. His latest publication, (Pon Sundararaju’s Selected Works; 2007) was highly commended by many in the Tamil literary field. His short stories and plays have won first and second prizes in various literary and creative competitions. For his contributions to the literary and creative field, he was given the prestigious Kalai Chemmal Award by the Singapore Indian Artistes Association, and the Thirukkural Award by the Singapore Tamil Language and Cultural Society in 2005. In 2007, he received the Pulamai Thendral Award from Tamil Nadu’s World Tamils Unity Society, in recognition of his literary talents and contributions.

Thangaraju s/o Muthu Veerasamy

M Thangaraju came to Malaya from Tamil Nadu at the age of three, subsequently settling in Singapore in 1959. A novelist, playwright, poet, essayist and scholar, he was a teacher of Tamil for more than 40 years. His love for the language and its literature, and passion for creating literary works have made him a prolific writer and well known literary figure in the Tamil community. His early works, mostly poems and short stories, were featured in the Tamil dailies, Tamil Murasu and Tamil Malar. In the early 60s and 70s, he scripted, directed and staged many plays. One of his notable contributions to the Tamil literary scene in Singapore was the Thamizhavel Dramatic Society which he founded in 1962 and successfully managed for more than forty years as Secretary. His works, which centre on self, family and community values, and reformative ideals, have been published in newspapers and magazines, and broadcast over the air. Since his first volume of poetry, [Jewels; 1985], he has published 22 books: poetry, short stories, plays and essays, and garnered several literary awards. One of the stories in [Fragrant Jasmine; 2001] was selected for the National Library Board’s READ! Singapore (2009).

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S Varathan

Born in Singapore, Varathan worked as a shipping assistant for 35 years. He started writing plays for radio, stage and television in 1953. In 1955, he founded the Rational Dramatic Troupe which staged plays in Malaysia and Singapore. In 1984, Varathan received the Cultural Medallion as well as the Kalai Chemmal, Avvai and Bharathiyar awards. He has published nine books, including critical essays and memoirs. He is married and has five children.

S Varathan

b 1934

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Established in 1983, Asiapac Books is Singapore's leading publisher of educational comics and illustrated books on Asian culture, including history, philosophy, health practices, art and literature. Featuring cartoons, comics and illustrations, Asiapac’s books are informative, compact and accessible.

books@jacaranda, LLP, was first set up 13 years ago in India as Jacaranda Publishing Pte Ltd and functions as a full service literary agency working with first-time writers as well as established ones to place manuscripts with reputable publishers. In 2008, the agency opened a branch in Singapore, and in 2010, the agency further expanded its operations with the opening of a branch in the United States. The agency specialises in writing from the Indian subcontinent, Singapore and Southeast Asia.

Candid Creation Publishing, Singapore’s English-Chinese bilingual publishing company, was founded in 1999 by Dr Phoon Kwee Hian. It provides a one-stop publishing service that takes individuals and organisations from idea to market. Its range of professional services includes conceptualisation, planning, project management, writing, translation, copyediting, design, illustration and layout, proof-reading, printing, distribution, sales and marketing. Candid Creation Publishing is discerning in the choice of authors it works with and the books it conceptualises and publishes. This is the reason why it has built a reputation for being the publisher of choice for many renowned personalities and esteemed organisations, through personal recommendations from satisfied clients.

Chuang Yi was established in 1990 as a publishing company specialising in manga (Japanese comic book) publications, catering to both Chinese and English readers. Over the years, Chuang Yi has successfully promoted “manga culture” in Singapore. The response to several of its flagship titles like Dragonball, Slam Dunk and Pokémon convinced the company that there was a significant demand in the local market for both manga and comics. Chuang Yi is the leading manga publisher in the region. It continues to explore new markets by securing licenses to distribute its manga comics to countries like Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand, Philippines and India. The company’s portfolio has also expanded to include the publication of comic-magazines (Mile Club, Disney’s Princess), the production and sale of collectable merchandise as well as other comic and manga-related products.

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Landmark Books is an independent Singaporean publisher specialising in high-quality illustrated books, Asian subjects and Singaporean literature. It was established in 1986 to give authors an alternative to publishing conglomerates. Having produced many titles of which it can be proud, among them award-winning books for both design and content, Landmark Books has come to be recognised for high-quality books in both test and design. In the process, it has gained a reputation not only for its niche areas of Singapore’s heritage and culture, but also for nurturing Singapore’s literary talent. Among its authors are Simon Tay, Adrian Tan, Toh Huien Min, Allan Say, Robert Yeo and Felix Cheung.

Since its launch nearly a decade ago, Epigram Books has established itself as an imprint for exquisitely designed and thought-provoking books. Epigram’s catalogue includes literary fiction, non-fiction, cookbooks, art and photography books, memoirs, children’s books, and coffee-table books.

firstfruits publications was founded in 1997 with the aim of promoting the literary arts in Singapore. It has won recognition as a literary press. In 2004, two of its poets, Cyril Wong and Yong Shu Hoong, won a joint awarding the Singapore Literature Prize (SLP). In 2008, the prize went to Ng Yi-Sheng, another firstfruits poet, and the youngest award-winner since the inception of the SLP. The publishing house organises events to showcase the role of books and reading in the community. Book launches are aimed at increasing public awareness of Singaporean writers. Other activities in schools, art museums, art galleries, and the theatre have sought to introduce the vital interrelations between the literary arts and other spheres of knowledge and creativity.

Flame Of The Forest has been entertaining readers since its beginnings in 1989. Russell Lee’s True Singapore Ghost Stories, its first title, started what became a publishing phenomenon. The series has sold over a million copies. Sales of another series, Mr Midnight by James Lee, have exceeded the two million mark. Always laced with an Asian flavour, Flame’s titles now reach an audience far beyond Singapore’s shores – from Southeast Asia to China, Japan and beyond. Despite its humble beginnings, Flame has grown from strength to strength. But true to its roots and its very soul, Flame Of The Forest continues to be “a people’s publisher.”

Global Publishing introduces readers to the perspectives and works of renowned scholars living in different parts of the world. It publishes commentaries and essays, including local publications, literature and biographies of renowned scientists and historians. The works are either in Chinese or bilingual (Chinese and English). Global Publishing has published more than 230 titles. It is a subsidiary of World Scientific Publishing Company.

Equatorial Wind Publishing House was established in December 1985. In April 1986, the inaugural issue of Equatorial Wind’s literary monthly was published. Publication of the literary monthly was eventually reduced to every four months. To date, 78 issues have been published. Covering a wide range of topics and genres, and even including a youth column which publishes the creative work of students, Equatorial Wind is widely read by the general public as well as teachers and students.

Flame Of The Forest has been entertaining readers since its beginnings in 1989. Russell Lee’s True Singapore Ghost Stories, its first title, started what became a publishing phenomenon. The series has sold over a million copies. Sales of another series, Mr Midnight by James Lee, have exceeded the two million mark. Always laced with an Asian flavour, Flame’s titles now reach an audience far beyond Singapore’s shores – from Southeast Asia to China, Japan and beyond. Despite its humble beginnings, Flame has grown from strength to strength. But true to its roots and its very soul, Flame Of The Forest continues to be “a people’s publisher.”
Monsoon Books is a trade publisher of English language literary and commercial fiction and narrative non-fiction with Southeast Asian themes, publishing under the “Monsoon” imprint. Among other books, Monsoon has published The Lies That Build a Marriage by Suchen Christine Lim, And the Rain my Drink by Han Suyin, Sold for Silver by Janet Lim, Indiscrete Memories by Edwin A. Brown, The Golden Chersonese by Isabella Bird, The Red Thread by Dawn Fanharn, and The Devil’s Garden by Nigel Barley. Monsoon has published short stories and poetry by many Singaporean writers including Felix Cheong, Chong Money-Singh, U Tham Ohn, Ng Yi-Sheng, Cyril Wong, Kirpal Singh and Robert Yeo.

Monsoon is part of the Pan Asia Publishing Pte Ltd family, which in turn is part of the Penguin Books group. Monsoon Books also works closely with the Association of Comic Artists (Singapore). It also sources for talent from around the region.

Thiam Chin, Ng Yi-Sheng, Cyril Wong, Kirpal Singh and Robert Yeo.

NOE is an independent proprietorship which focuses on intellectual property suitable for comics, manga, graphic novels, animation and games. NOE published internationally, Singapore’s first ever all-colour USA format comicbook, Get Carter! It produced Singapore’s first and only 100% independent 3D edutainment short movie for The National Kidney Foundation, “K-Buddy”, which appeared throughout local schools and on television. NOE works as a publishing partner with the Association of Comic Artists (Singapore). It also sources for talent from around the region.

Set up in 1989, Pagesetters is a design and publishing house. It publishes under the imprint of Ethis Books, Ethos with History and Ethos with Children. Notable writers who have published under the Ethos imprint include Edenith Thumbor, Chandran Nair, Allan Sai, Dave Chua, Aaron Lee, David Leo, Suchen Christine Lim, Jeffrey Lim, Alvin Pang, Wena Poon and Daren Shiau. Ethos has also co-published anthologies with publishers in the Philippines, Australia, India and Italy, Heartland, by Daren Shiau, No Other City: The Ethos Anthology of Urban Poetry, edited by Aaron Lee and Alvin Pang, and Telltale: 11 Stories, edited by Gwee Li Sui, are literature texts in schools.

Established in 1984, PAPPL is a publisher of illustrated children’s story books and educational teaching aids in English, Chinese and both. To date, PAPPL has produced the longest running bilingual “Happy Reader’s Series” in Singapore (almost 100 titles) which has proved to be popular with teachers, parents and children.

Penguin Books Singapore & Malaysia


Penguin Literary Agency is a new breed of literary agency and provides a unique literary interface between East and West. Based in Hong Kong and Beijing, Penguin agents travel regularly to the US, UK, Europe and Australia. The agency offers author representation in home markets, the sale of English language rights and translation rights worldwide, as well as sales of TV and film dramatisation rights. Its interest is in general fiction and non-fiction, photography books and graphic novels.

The company was incorporated in 1979 as a private limited exempt company. The first books were published in 1963. It has published Malay novels by young writers who are now prominent in the Malay literary scene in Singapore and Malaysia. It also publishes Malay translations of Arabic books for a non-Arabic reading audience. The madrasah school textbooks it first published in 1996 are still being used today. The principal activities of PN are in publishing quality books, distribution to retail outlets in Singapore, Brunei and Malaysia, type settings services in Arabic, Malay and English, and supplying to corporate customers.

In the market since 1998, Raji Publication is a supplier of educational materials and assessment books, as well as fiction and non-fiction books to the National Library Board, and libraries overseas. It provides library services to schools. It partners various organisations with similar interests in education.

Select Books is an independent book publisher, distributor and bookstore. Since its establishment in 1976, it has built up a comprehensive and in-depth collection of over 30,000 books and journals relating to the Asia region, and on a wide range of genres which include politics, the arts and literature. Select Books is an internationally recognized Asian book specialist, supplying many universities, museums and institutions. Select Books is also an established book distributor, representing local and overseas publishers, as well as an active publisher of quality books on Asia, on Asian themes and by Asian writers.
Strait Times Press

Strait Times Press is spearheaded by an award-winning team with more than 80 years of international publishing experience. In its pursuit of books of uncompromising quality and appeal, it has helped Singapore earn a place on the world map for publishing. It has a keen interest in developing new talent, and publishes a wide range of books for the general trade, including children’s fiction, travel, cookery, health and reference books. Strait Times Press is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Singapore Press Holdings Ltd. It offers a comprehensive range of services, including publishing and marketing consultancy, press publicity and media relations, project conceptualisation, manuscript editing, design and layout, picture research and supply, printing, binding and laminating services, delivery by sea or air to any part of the world, translation services, print brokering and the supervision and purchase of print and paper.

TCZ Studio Pte Ltd

Set up in 2001, TCZ Studio is Singapore’s first comics publisher. To encourage the growth of the local comics industry, TCZ Studio plans to publish the works of other comic artists. Through its online store, it hopes to promote its comics to more readers overseas. TCZ Studio is one of the most successful companies in Singapore in the publication of its own comic series. The team at TCZ Studio has captured a substantial market share of readers with its period epic comic series, The Celestial Zone. The series is also being distributed to other countries such as North America, Europe, Australia, and Southeast Asia through its website. The Celestial Zone has been published in Chinese and English and has been translated into French and Spanish. Besides publishing comic books, TCZ Studio produces merchandise developed from the comics and hopes to further develop the comic series in the areas of animation and computer gaming. It seeks collaboration with overseas or local partners.

The Youth Book Company

Youth Books was founded in 1955 by Mr Chan Meng Zhe at 363 North Bridge Road (the former Black Cat Books). Youth Books is a Chinese bookstore and publishing house. Since its establishment, it has focused on promoting and publishing Chinese language texts in Singapore, and offered a publishing platform for local writers. For half a century, Youth Books has published landmark Singaporean literature. Its authors range from established and renowned to promising writers. Though particularly known for specialising in Southeast Asian literature, Youth Books publishes a wide variety of books.

Organisations

Angkatan Sasterawan ’50

Founded in 1950, Angkatan Sasterawan ’50, or Asas ’50, is a leader in the Malay literary scene. It made radical changes to the Malay script and established institutions that have played iconic roles in the development of Malay language and literature in the region, such as Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (Malay Language and Literary Agency), the Malay Language Council of Malaysia-Brunei-Indonesia (MABRIM), and the Southeast Asia Literature Council (Masters). In Singapore, Asas ’50 initiated the first Malay Literature Prize and the Regional Writers Meet. It has undertaken innovative initiatives like the ‘Bibliotherapy Programme’ for juvenile offenders, the ‘Heartland Poet Programme’ and the ‘Malay Resource Innovation Portal’ in conjunction with national writing competitions (such as the Tomokai Novel Writing Competition, the White Dot Short Story and Poetry Writing Competition) and the Literary Awareness Movement, as well as through its workshops in libraries and schools. Asas ’50 continues to publish both fiction and non-fiction works for students and the writing community. It has produced a post-1945 Directory of Singaporean Malay Writers. It launched its inaugural International Writers Residency Programme in 2010, in collaboration with the National Arts Council.

The Association of Comic Artists (Singapore) (ACAS)

ACAS’ key focus is to arrange for the publishing of locally produced comics, manga and graphic novels. Since its formation in 2005, it has worked with many partners, including the Media Development Authority of Singapore and the National Arts Council of Singapore. To help defray the costs involved in comic production, ACAS conducts numerous courses and workshops in schools, tertiary institutions and in its own classrooms. It has served established institutions like the NUS High School of Mathematics and Science, Raffles Institution, Dunman High School and St. Joseph’s Institution. ACAS is instrumental in teaching both traditional and digital art, and has also branched out into the major areas of writing and conceptual thought.

The Association of Singapore Tamil Writers or தமிழ் எழுதியர் கூட்டம், was registered as a Society in 1976. It was formed to cater to the interests of Tamil writers as well as to nurture young writers in Singapore. ASTW now has more than 80 members, all of whom are writers or poets. The Executive Committee consists of eleven members. ASTW organises two major annual events. One is the Muthamzhth Vizha (Tamil Festival) in which a Singaporean writer is honoured with the Thamizhavel Award (including a prize of four to five gold sovereigns), and where students from kindergarten to tertiary level, as well as members of the public, participate in contests. Its other major event is Kannadasan Vizha, to commemorate the great Tamil Poet. ASTW also organises workshops in Creative Writing for students and the public, book launches, monthly poetry sessions, dialogue sessions with visiting foreign writers, and debates on social and literary topics. ASTW organised the World Tamil Writers’ Conference (2011), with support from the National Arts Council.

Comics Society (Singapore)

Founded in 2007, the society has the following objectives: to represent Singapore in the global comic industry, to promote and contribute comic culture in Singapore, to nurture and develop local comic talents and to create awareness in professional comic production.
Monsters Under the Bed Pte Ltd
Communication and the Arts
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Lim Ser Leng, President

The May Poetry Society or 新加坡五月诗社, is a group of established poets committed to the crafting of new poetic works. Formed in 1978, the society is devoted to the modern type of Chinese poetry in Singapore. Its members have published 24 volumes of poetry and a collection of critiques under the Society’s auspices thus far. It has also published 39 issues of May Poetry Journal, with poems and critiques from members and non-members. The Society’s influence on the writing style of Chinese poetry in Singapore has been the subject of scholarly research.

Formed in 2003, MDA is a statutory board that plays a vital role in transforming Singapore into a Trusted Global Capital for New Asia Media and spearheading initiatives that promote industry growth in these sectors: film, television, radio, publishing, music, games, animation and interactive digital media. At the same time, MDA formulates clear and consistent regulatory policies, based on these guiding principles: to protect core values and safeguard consumers’ interests, to foster a pro-business environment for industry players and to increase media choices for consumers.

MICA has for its mission the development of Singapore as a Global City for information, communications and the arts, in order to build a creative economy and a connected society with a Singaporean identity rooted in a multicultural heritage. It seeks to propel the creative economy through the development and promotion of the creative industries in the arts, design, media and infocomm technology sectors to create new economic value and jobs. It aims to forge a strong sense of community, national identity, rootedness and inclusion among Singaporeans, and to foster better understanding between the Government and its various stakeholders through effective public communications. MICA’s vision is to nurture and develop a Creative People, a Gracious Community and a Connected Singapore.

MUTB trains students to achieve higher literary proficiency and creative writing skills. Its methods combine the practices of accomplished writers with the natural creative intelligence of youth. The result is a holistic writing programme. MUTB also publishes 14:59, a monthly literary newspaper, and manages the Budding Writers League, which helps young writers discover their talent.

NBDCS is a non-profit institution founded in 1969. The Council’s objective is to establish and develop Singapore as the Asian centre for publishing and the literary arts. In pursuance of this objective, the Council works in partnership with Government agencies, private corporations and professional associations to organise a variety of conferences, festivals, workshops, talks and seminars related to storytelling, reading, writing and publishing. In addition, it presents the prestigious Singapore Literature Prize, the Heilig Anuar Children’s Book Award and the Scholastic Asian Book Award. NBDCS manages the Centre for Literary Arts and Publishing, and the Singapore Writers Centre.

NHB is a statutory board that actively champions the development of a vibrant cultural and heritage sector in Singapore. It makes heritage enriching, fun and accessible to all through exciting events like the iconic Singapore HeritageFest, International Museum Day, and Istana Art Event that engage diverse audiences. Further, NHB promotes public awareness and appreciation of Singapore’s heritage through educational, outreach and community programmes. It partners like-minded people in the private and public sectors and provides state-of-the-art archival and conservation services through the National Archives of Singapore, the Preservation Monuments Board and the Heritage Conservation Centre. The Board also operates seven leading museums and heritage interpretative centres: Asian Civilisations Museum, Memories at Old Ford Factory, National Museum of Singapore, Peranakan Museum, Reflections at Bukit Chandu, Singapore Art Museum and Singapore Philatelic Museum. It manages the Heritage Industry Incentive Programme (HIIP) to encourage the development of new and innovative heritage-inspired products and services. It seeks to seed new museum and heritage ventures, and assist private museums in upgrading their galleries and programmes.

The Screenwriters Association promotes the development of local screen content and provides a conduit to local and international producers as well as a support group for Singapore-based screenwriters. Formed in May 2000 in response to a perceived need to focus on screen content development and to fill a gap in the still-growing local film, television and multimedia industry, the Association works closely with the Singapore Film Commission. Its mission is to promote the craft of screenwriting as an important aspect of the screen production process. Members include independent producers, talented young filmmakers, students, and aspiring and professional writers. The Association’s objectives are to increase awareness of the paramount importance of the screenplay in any screen production so that the screen production “begins and ends with the script”, to establish and maintain collaborative relationships with all who are involved with screen productions, both locally and internationally, and to provide a learning environment for the cultivation of screenwriting skills by way of formal training and peer instruction.

The Singapore Association of Writers (SAW) or 新加坡作家协会, was formed in 1979. It has a long history and is the largest registered Chinese literary association in Singapore. It actively promotes creative works of literature and research in literary theory. It serves as an established network for writers in Singapore and provides a platform for accelerating the development of new talents with creative works of quality. It also seeks to establish links with writers, scholars and researchers from other countries, to help Singaporean literary products with characteristic Southeast Asian qualities gain recognition internationally.
Established in 1968, the SBPA currently has over 75 member publishers. SBPA promotes the interests of publishers in Singapore; it works with other associations to create and further literary awareness in Singapore and organises training courses to improve the technical qualifications of its members' staff. The SBPA provides a friendly community where Singapore-based publishers and related industry partners can pool their knowledge and experiences.

The Singapore Book Publishers Association (SBPA) is a non-profit society that was established in 1980. The Singapore Book Publishers Association is actively and continuously initiates new and creative publication and literary activities to promote and raise the standard of literary writing in Singapore. The Society aspires to promote the development of Chinese literature in Singapore and to unite all Singaporean writers through participation from both young and old writers. Its publications and activities are not only restricted to Singapore, but also include the international promotion of Singaporean Chinese literature. The Society brings out three annual publications, *Singapore Chinese Literature Magazine*, *Land of Encounters*, and *Singapore Chinese Literature Newspaper*.

Occupying the almost 200 year-old building that was the former Parliament House and Singapore’s first Court House, The Arts House, since its opening in 2004, has been offering its visitors a broad spectrum of activities ranging from contemporary arts and entertainment events to lifestyle options, while at the same time playing an active role in the development of the arts and the creative scene in Singapore. From 2011, The Arts House will focus on the development of the literary arts in Singapore, supporting and presenting programmes and events that aim to give visitors and audiences a wider and multi-disciplinary experience.

Incorporated in Singapore in 2003, The Literary Centre relies primarily on sponsorship, group resourcefulness and individual initiative for its activities and projects. It is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to literary development, arts community dialogue, multi-lingual communication and cultural exchange; promoting, supporting and serving literary, cultural, intellectual and social aspirations in Singapore, and functioning as a resource hub for literary and cultural practice around the world, with a special interest in Singapore. Its current Directors are literary pioneers Allen Pang and Kong Foon Hing.

The Tropical Literature & Arts Club (热带文学艺术俱乐部) was established in 1993 to promote Chinese literature in Singapore. Its mission includes encouraging literary dialogue and discussions on literary and related topics among members; developing Singaporean literature and the arts through publishing and editorial work, cultivating ties with international literary organisations and individuals through literary exchanges and dialogue. Key activities include organising literary programmes, photography, art and calligraphy exhibitions. In addition, the society produces a regular literary journal, and creative writing and literary research publications. The society also organises monthly sessions for literary discussions and book reading among the Chinese literary community.

WF was established in 2003 with the mission of contributing to and building the literary arts scene in Singapore. Word Forward, the trademark holders of Poetry Slam™ in Singapore, launched The National Youth Poetry Slam League in 2006, which now attracts over 60 teams annually. WF is registered as a training provider with the National Arts Council’s Arts in Education Programme. WF teams are regular mentors of the Creative Arts Programme and run workshops for the Gifted Branch of the Ministry of Education. WF also co-organises with the Writers Centre, Singapore, the annual Lit Up Singapore, Emerging Writers and Performers Festival. Other public events organized include a monthly Poetry Slam™ at Blu Jaz Café and Sound Up (Open Mic) at TAPAC (Telok Ayer Performing Arts Centre). WF has ventured into book publication, with Singaporean poets. Its first publication series in 2007 has now been incorporated into Red Wheelbarrow Books, a new publishing company which distributes Singapore's authors regionally, from India to Australia.
Ceriph

Ceriph is an independently run, quarterly publication. It seeks to share Singaporean creative work in the form of prose, poetry, social commentary, photography and visual art, without inhibition. The beginnings of this project were humble: while examining the local arts scene, the editor(s) found many outlets for artistic expression. However, most of these outlets concentrate on art or exclusively on one medium of expression over the other(s). Publications of local writing were even harder to come by, and catered mainly to professional and full-time writers. The editors have set out to provide that missing space: a space that is neither too formal nor flippant, that combines word and form. Ceriph exists to provide an informal space for experimental or developing writers and artists to express themselves, for works outside of awards and accolades, works that are created by ordinary observers with a pen and a voice.

Quarterly Literary Review Singapore (QLRS)

QLRS is the longest-running online literary journal of Singapore. Founded in 2001 by Toh Hsien Min and now into its tenth volume, the journal seeks to promote the literary arts in Singapore, to stimulate the feedback mechanisms in the literary scene, and to develop Singaporean writers to international standards by applying rigorous critical and editorial criteria, and serving as an arena for the interaction of Singaporean and international writing. QLRS is open to submissions from all.

SOFTBLOW Poetry Journal

SOFTBLOW Poetry Journal is a poetry website based in Singapore, which features contemporary poetry in English from across the globe. Founded in 2004 by Cyril Wong, it is now jointly edited by Gwee Li Sui, Eric Low, Jason Wee, Christopher Ujine Ong and Cyril Wong.
Literature – whether through the written or spoken word – is valuable as a medium of self-expression, as a canvas for our imagination and also of course, as a record of a community’s life to be passed down the generations. Its importance extends to the larger creative sphere and across different art forms, from theatre to dance and graphic novels. That is why the National Arts Council (NAC) has always supported the literary arts, and especially Singapore’s literature, through various initiatives, programmes and events. Its role in the larger cultural life of Singapore should not be underestimated and has much potential as the country matures.

Singapore’s literary arts scene has become more vibrant over the years and has flourished in Singapore’s four official languages - English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil. There are active literary associations in Singapore which play an important role in promoting writing, reading and publishing, as well as nurturing and grooming new writers in all four languages.

Singapore’s writers, some of whom have been published by major publishing houses, are now studied and appreciated internationally. The writers are also making their presence felt at international literary festivals such as the Hong Kong International Literary Festival, Edinburgh International Book Festival and Adelaide Writers’ Week, among others.

NAC administers financial assistance schemes and development tools to cultivate a sustainable environment and promote continuing education for the Singapore literary arts industry at all levels, from the promising amateur and emerging publisher, to the established writer or publishing company. NAC’s funding support operates through a comprehensive and holistic grants framework focusing on the creation and development of literary content, research, capability and talent development, organisational infrastructure support, publishing and translation, production and market development, and active presentation and promotion of the literary arts.
In addition to offering scholarships, NAC has also established the International Arts Residency Programme which supports the participation of Singaporean writers in overseas residency programmes as well as encouraging Singapore’s literary organisations and tertiary institutions to host inbound residency programmes conducted by established international writers for the Singaporean community.

One important event in the literary arts calendar is the Singapore Writers Festival, one of the few festivals in the world focusing on multi-lingual programming, with a strong emphasis on Singapore’s four official languages. The Festival, organised by NAC, brings together writers, academics and creative talents from Singapore and the world over, and features a variety of literary genres.

NAC also manages the biennial SPH-NAC Golden Point Award, Singapore’s premier creative writing competition for the short story and poetry. It aims to promote new creative writing and nurture potential literary talents by providing the opportunity for unpublished writers to be evaluated by a professional jury.

To raise the profile of the literary arts in schools and to promote reading and creative writing from young, NAC also works with partners to spearhead platforms that increase accessibility to literature and enhance linkages between the literary arts and other creative industries.

For more information on NAC’s grant schemes and initiatives, please visit the Council’s website at:
http://www.nac.gov.sg or email nac_literary_arts@nac.gov.sg

The National Arts Council of Singapore would like to thank its panel of advisors without whom this publication would not have been possible.

This publication is by no means an exhaustive documentation of all active and living writers in Singapore. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the translations into English from the original Chinese, Malay and Tamil. Wherever possible, the authors were consulted and their approval sought.

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