

## **ARTS CREATION FUND**

The Arts Creation Fund (ACF) was launched by the National Arts Council (NAC) in 2008 as part of the third phase of the Renaissance City Plan. The ACF is aimed at growing Singapore's trove of original, high-quality performing, visual, and literary art works which bear influences from Singapore and Asia, and encourage artists to challenge artistic frontiers and raise the profile of Singapore arts on the national and international stage. Designed as an initiative to seed quality proposals in their germination phase, the ACF is open to practising artists who are Singapore Citizens or Singapore Permanent Residents. Proposals will be evaluated based on their artistic merit, their contribution to the legacy of the local arts scene, and applicants' demonstration of sound financial and project management abilities. Successful applicants are eligible for up to \$50,000 in grant support. The grant quantum may vary depending on the scale and complexity of the proposal.

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### **About the Projects**

#### ***Performing Arts***

#### **Joyce Beetuan Koh, Gilbert Nouno (tbc), Arco Renz, Khiew Huey Chian - On The String**

The artistic intention of the project is to inquire and investigate the possibility to systematically 'musicalise' the String Theory through multi-disciplinary processes, culminating into a live performance-spectacle by musicians and dancers and an interactive installation. String Theory suggests that particles in the universe are composed of loops of vibrating strings. What would these particles sound like? What would the harmonic colours be if the vibrations of the strings are changed if they are composed of loops of vibrating strings? The realisation of the idea should take the form of an artistic, performable and interactive real-time environment (computational model-system), using strings of acoustic instruments, *guqin* and cello, and titanium strings of an oversized harp-like installation, and dynamic intervention (human movements) as basics to musicalise the String Theory.

#### **Jean Tay and Wee Li Lin - Cold Comfort (Tentative title)**

Four elderly women in a hospice find themselves haunted by visions of the Japanese Occupation. But are they on the brink of dementia, or is the past reaching out to reclaim them? *Cold Comfort* is a theatrical exploration of their final days, integrated with video images to highlight the distortionary power of their memories.

#### **Kuo Jian Hong, Wu Xi, Eric Ng, Lim Kok Pang (a.k.a Xiao Han) - Liao Zhai Rocks!**

*Liao Zhai Rocks!* is a rock musical inspired by *Liao Zhai Zhi Yi*, a famous classic collection of almost five hundred supernatural tales. The musical follows the trial and tribulations of a scholar on his journey to the imperial exams. His life takes a mysterious turn when he falls in love with a captivating fox vixen. One encounter leads to another,

and the life of the scholar gradually becomes inextricably tangled with the gods, spirits and bogeymen of the supernatural world.

### **Choy Ka Fai - The Lang Fang Chronicle**

*The Lang Fang Chronicle* project is inspired by investigations into the histories of the Lang Fang Republic (1777 – 1884). Established by the Hakka Chinese in West Kalimantan, the Republic lasted for 107 years before it disintegrated into nothing but a legend to its living descendents. The project looks at the concept of 'insignificant histories', and its obscurity parallels the history of Singapore. This research-based work will culminate into a series of visual art, theatre and film presentations.

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### ***Traditional Arts (Chinese Opera)***

#### **Dr Chua Soo Pong - Plague Fighter Dr Wu Lien Teh (A Huangmei Opera )**

An original full-length Huangmei Opera epic based on a historical figure in Malayan medical history during the 1910s depicting the story of Dr Wu Lien Teh, the first Malayan-born Chinese to graduate from the Cambridge University of England. A humanist, healer and hero, he was an advocate against the opium trade and contributed much to advancing social reforms. He was famed for fighting the widespread plague of pneumonia worldwide, battling the outbreak in the face of rising death tolls and poor working conditions.

#### **Leslie Wong Sze Ying - The Golden Sabre (A Cantonese Opera)**

An original full-length work depicting the story of Yang Ba Jie, a woman warrior of the Yang family entering the enemy state of Liao to recover her family heirloom, a golden sabre left behind by her late father. This is the first full-length Cantonese Opera version of a famous episode in the Chinese legend "Heroes of the Yang Family" with elements of other dialect operas incorporated such as Beijing Opera's percussion music and martial arts skills into a Cantonese Opera work as base.

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### ***Visual Arts***

#### **Ho Tzu Nyen – The Zarathustra Project**

This is a creation of a Singaporean version of the mythical story of Zarathustra, a figure in ancient Persian literature and philosophy. Developmental process involves a series of intensive lectures for art students on continental philosophy, followed by practical workshops through which students will work with multidisciplinary professionals on a filmic adaptation of Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. The project (film, videographic and photographic documentation) will be presented at the Asia Pacific Triennial, Australia, in Dec 2009. The artist is also proposing to showcase the project at ICAS LASALLE in Jan 2010.

### **Heman Chong – A Thousand Interiors and Other Stories**

This will be a photographic visual essay concerned with moments of absolute stillness in the everyday of the landscape of publicly accessible interior spaces in Singapore. The project involves a discursive dialogue between the ideas behind photography, architecture and the performance of everyday life, to suggest a relationship between remembering (through photographing) and experiencing (through walking). An installation will house the 999 photographic prints (the installation will define itself as the final public interior in physical space, becoming the 1,000th interior). A book will also be published detailing specific routes and personal stories of each space. The project will be in the form of an exhibition and book; the latter will be distributed in major bookstores.

### **Zhao Renhui – The Centre for Landscape Appreciation**

The proposed project looks at alternative histories and futures for fictional landscapes in Singapore. Using existing landscapes in otherwise ignored/not publicly known places in Singapore, this project takes a look at the politics of imagining identities in different contexts, the marketing of tourist sites and our appreciation of local landscapes. This will culminate in an installation and photography exhibition as well as a website.

### **Kaylene Tan and Evan Tan – Ghost Walking**

A series of four audio walk experiences set in four MRT stations (historical districts such as Little India and Chinatown) along the Northeast Line to re-sensitise audiences to their own lives and environments and to address the impact of places characterised by sense of time, place, culture and belonging. This culminates in a website with a downloadable audio work as well as works by photographers and filmmakers about these four historic districts. Listeners will alight at stations and be guided by stories narrated over the programme. During the journey, they may be asked to view a video or photo downloaded from the website. The project may also manifest in other forms, e.g. exhibition, site-specific installation.

### **Tay Wei Leng – To Be Chinese**

Through the medium of photography and audio recordings, this project will explore issues of identity relating to the descendents of transnational Chinese migrants to Singapore and Malaysia. This will also be in the context of the rise of China as a global power and its influence on diasporic relations. The presentation will take the form of a photography and audio recordings exhibition.

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## ***Literary Arts***

### ***English Fiction / Poetry***

#### **Nanny Eliana Ismail - A Love of Broken Men**

Nanny Eliana's novel in English is an exploration of the chasm that a modern Malay Muslim woman has to bridge between her familial and religious obligations and her social and personal desires. The novel explores the relationships of a photojournalist from a strict, middle class Malay Muslim family.

#### **Chua Hak Lien Dave - The Beating**

The Beating is a novel in English about a man trying to come to terms with his abusive past after the death of his father. It is based on the SPH-NAC Golden Point Award winning short story *Father's Gifts*.

#### **Alvin Pang Khee Meng - Other Things: A New Volume of Prose Verse by Alvin Pang**

The fund will be used for the research, development and creation of a new volume of verse in English exploring the prose poem. This is a genre-bending literary form that has not been sufficiently developed in Singaporean poetry, and which could help bridge the divide between poetry and conventional prose fiction, overcoming stereotypes of what literary writing can do.

#### **Cheong Seng Fei Felix - Gone, Left: 12 Stories**

3,000 people are reported missing in Singapore yearly. 80 per cent are traced but about 90 people vanished without a trace. Felix Cheong's short stories in English will lift their inspiration from real-life cases of missing people. They do not document what happened or speculate what might have happened. Instead, each case provides the trigger for a story, grounded in reality but hints at the supernatural, the whimsical, the mystical and the mysterious.

#### **Lee Shao Jun Gwen - The Cost of Belief**

*The Cost of Belief* (working title), is a coming-of-age tale in English set in London and Tokyo. Megumi Taylor is a half-Asian girl whose world is turned upside down when she is introduced to "The Family". Consisting of a group of beautiful, mixed-race people who believe in exploiting their beauty and genetic advantage for profit, The Family sucks Megumi into their world of dirty money culminating in a downward spiral of death and destruction. The novel examines cross-cultural identities and the moral dilemma of science versus ethics.

#### **Adele Wong Hui Shan - A Tale of Greatness**

Adele Wong's biographical novel in English is based on the real life experiences of her grandparents who were both born into families of circus performers. The novel chronicles the rise and fall of one of the last circuses in Southeast Asia during a time of great change leading up to and after World War II. The themes of Asian family values,

womanhood, survival, love and war are explored against the backdrop of an almost forgotten history of entertainment and performance in Singapore and Malaya.

### ***Chinese Fiction / Poetry***

#### **Ng Kwang Cheng Enoch (黄广青) - Family Matters (家事)**

*Family Matters* will consist of a sequence of poems in Chinese that extends beyond the personal. It explores the sense of an historical identification among the different groups that make up the Chinese diaspora. The work aims to explore the question of "Chineseness" and its resonances beyond the physical and national entity of mainland China. It is concerned with cultural identity and the socio-historical and cultural background of the Chinese and the Chinese diaspora.

#### **Lee Chee Keng (李集庆) - Text Me (信我)**

*Text Me* (信我) is popular fiction in Chinese aimed at young Chinese language readers. A Singaporean in his early thirties arrives in Beijing in search of a new career, and accidentally starts a chain of SMS communication with a Chinese lady in Shenzhen. Gradually, he enters the world of a new generation of young urban Chinese. Popular, quick and personal modes of communication such as SMS, wall-to-wall, blogs will be used as a literary device to explore the quick pace and fast changing human relations in urban life.

#### **Lee Seng Chan (李承璋) Pen Name: Huai Ying (怀鹰) - Winding Mountain Path (山路弯弯)**

This novel in Chinese is set during the period after the Japanese have surrendered, when the British regain governance of Singapore and a state of Emergency is declared. It explores the different dilemmas and struggles faced by different generations, the pursuit of dreams in youth, the aspirations towards love and relationships.