

ANNEX B - ABOUT THE YOUNG ARTIST AWARD (YAA)

The Young Artist Award was introduced in 1992 to encourage the development of artistic talent in Singapore. It is conferred by the Minister for Culture, Community and Youth, and administered by the National Arts Council. The Award is accorded to artists aged 35 years and below at the point of nomination who have shown promise of artistic excellence and leadership in the fields of literary arts, performing arts, visual arts and film. As of 2021, 169 artists would have been conferred the Young Artist Award.

Young Artist Award nominees are assessed upon the extent to which they have achieved or demonstrated all of the following:

- A strong body of work that gives evidence of a clear artistic vision and the potential for continued excellence
- Significant contribution and positive impact in shaping their field of practice and Singapore's artistic development, with the potential to play a greater leadership role
- Ability to be an inspiration and role model to other artists in Singapore and overseas

Recipients of the Award will be eligible for a grant of \$20,000, which supports their artistic development and pursuits within two years after they receive the Young Artist Award.

RECIPIENTS OF THE 2021 YOUNG ARTIST AWARD

Charlie Lim (Age, 33) – Singer-Songwriter and Producer



Charlie Lim (b. 1988) is a singer-songwriter and producer who has grown into one of Singapore's more prominent voices in contemporary pop music over the last 10 years. Charlie was exposed to music from an early age, singing and playing the piano for church and school bands. Moving to Australia when he was 15, he topped the state of Victoria for music performance during his final year of college. He began writing and recording his own original songs during National Service and released his first Extended Play (EP) in 2011.

Since then, his work has garnered more than 20 million streams on digital platforms to date, as well as clinching two #1 spots on the iTunes Singapore album charts for his albums *TIME/SPACE* (2015) and *CHECK-HOOK* (2018). He was also awarded COMPASS Young Songwriter of the Year (2017) and Youth Music Awards' Indie/Alternative Artist of the Year (2021).

Charlie has performed at prominent live stages across the region, including Urbanscapes (Kuala Lumpur, 2012), Clockenflap (Hong Kong, 2012), Java Jazz Festival (Jakarta, 2016), Summer Sonic (Tokyo, 2018), Bigsound (Brisbane, 2018) and Wanderland Festival (Manila, 2019). He has also collaborated and performed with international artists such as Khalil Fong, Kimbra, Kan Sano, Miho Fukuhara, BIBI, Taku Takahashi and Clara Benin.

Charlie has played a central role in writing and producing for several initiatives on a national level, and is best known for his updated version of 1987's *We Are Singapore*, which he was commissioned to write and co-produce for 2018's National Day Parade (NDP). His prelude for *We Are Singapore* was then developed into a full song, *Room at the Table* (2020), which was the opening item for 2020's NDP. He also co-wrote and produced *Breathing City* (2021)

for 2021's NDP as well as 2 theme songs for the 2015 Southeast Asian Games and performed the closing song *Still* (2015) at the National Stadium.

Charlie has been a mentor to younger artists for several music programs (SHINE Youth Festival, The Great Singapore Replay, *SCAPE Invasion) and is currently Music Director of Indiego, a new internet radio station focused on being a platform for local artists.

Chitra Poornima Sathish (Age, 35) – Carnatic Musician



Chitra Poornima Sathish (b. 1986), is a Carnatic musician who is deeply passionate about igniting a love for the arts in the young and to make the learning of Carnatic music more joyful and meaningful for them. Her artistic experiences sculpt her vision and inspire her to create music rooted in traditional values, and yet is constantly evolving.

Chitra's journey began when she was a student at the Temple of Fine Arts (TFA) Singapore, where she is now a teacher and valuable contributor to the institution's performances as well as academic and community endeavours. At TFA, Chitra's labour of love has been curating the Shantanjali Festival of Arts (SFA), from crafting the overall festival line-up to coordinating with artists and organising workshops. Since its inception in 2014, and completing four successful years, SFA has brought together diverse Singaporean artists and arts groups, providing them a space for collaboration, dialogue and exchange.

Composing music for dance is Chitra's passion and a craft she has been honing consistently. She has created original music, co-composed or collaborated with both local and international artists, such as *Agathi* (2017) by Apsaras Arts Dance Company, and *I am Ravana* (2019), choreographed by artist Mavin Khoo for Akram Khan Company. She has also performed extensively in prestigious venues worldwide including The Esplanade, Singapore, The Music Academy and Mylapore Fine Arts Club, Chennai, Shanmukhananda Hall, Mumbai, and Sadler's Wells, London.

Chitra completed her Master in Education (Music) at the National Institute of Education (NIE) in 2021. She has been invited by NIE to teach Indian Classical music to graduate students. These opportunities are valuable to Chitra, allowing her to have a dialogue with music educators from varying backgrounds. This has helped deepen her inquiry into how she can contribute to Carnatic music education in Singapore.

Upon completing her graduation in Carnatic Music from TFA in 2001, Chitra was conferred the title "*Ghaanavinodhini*". Armed with the National Arts Council (NAC) Arts Scholarship in 2009, Chitra continued her training in India. She is the recipient of the Musiri Subramania Iyer Award for her performance at Sri Krishna Gana Sabha's Music Festival in Chennai in 2012.

Han Xuemei (Age, 34) – Theatre Practitioner



Han Xuemei (b. 1987) believes in socially engaged practice, and imagines the arts as an integral ingredient for beauty and hope in society. As a theatre practitioner, she designs multi-disciplinary experiences for creativity, disruption of routines and deconstruction of paradigms. She works with youths and communities, explores participatory practices, and experiments with visual media and spatial design.

Xuemei's foray into local theatre in 2008 with ARTivate, the youth wing of Drama Box where she participated in ARTivate's projects as crew, stage manager, performer, facilitator, designer and co-director while juggling her studies, and subsequently, her full-time job as a trailer editor.

In 2012, she became a resident artist with Drama Box, and since then, she has conceptualised, directed, designed and facilitated projects for youths and communities, including *40 Strokes* (2013) and *IgnorLAND of its Loss* (2016). Her directorial debut *40 Strokes* was featured at the Forum Theatre Exchange in Taipei. Her recent explorations, *MISSING: The City of Lost Things* (2018), *The Gift* (2018), and *FLOWERS* (2019), engage the audience in visceral and personal ways. *MISSING* was also nominated for Best Multimedia at the 2019 Straits Times LIFE! Theatre Awards.

Xuemei believes in the importance of youth engagement and regularly teaches workshops and mentors youths. She conceptualised *The Young Can Change The World* as part of *SCENES: Forum Theatre* (2015), and mentored participants in their creation of forum theatre plays. Her practice has also expanded to include curation and has co-curated *TBC: Workshopping the Future* (2020) that was presented by Taipei Performing Arts Center as well as Drama Box's quinquennial festival *SCENES: Participatory Practices* (2020). Additionally, Xuemei has regularly been selected to participate in regional and international platforms,



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including currently being part of the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore (NTU CCA) Artist Residency.

Norhaizad Adam (Age, 34) – Dance Artist



Norhaizad Adam (b. 1987) is a dance artist. He performs and choreographs for unconventional community spaces, galleries and theatres. Central to his practice is considering the performativity of the everyday rituals and the ways that accessing tradition can be a form of wisdom for living in the dynamics of global modernity. His work talks about morality and behaviourism in Malay culture.

Norhaizad has spent his growing up years in Singapore as a dancer under the tutelage of Mr Azmi Juhari at Azpirasi. Through Malay dance, he began examining how individuals navigate complex issues of identity. As a self-taught artist, he believes in supporting the research and creation process, connecting dance and arts communities. This is evident in his rigorous participation in local, regional and international residencies, such as Dance Nucleus in Singapore (2018) and Asia Discovers Asia Meeting in Taipei (2018, 2019). He believes in advancing his professional career by harnessing dialogue and unlearning choreography. He has presented his work in Venice, Melbourne, Taipei, Paris, Vienna, Solo, Cyprus and notable events in Singapore such as da:ns festival, Singapore International Festival of the Arts (SIFA) and Singapore Writers Festival.

Belon is one of his accomplished works that was seeded as part of the ATLAS residency programme at ImPulsTanz – Vienna International Dance Festival 2015. It has since been performed at The Substation in Singapore 2016, NuArt Sculpture Park in Bandung 2018, presented as a programme of Floating Utopias at ArtScience Late in Singapore 2019, and Mapping Melbourne in 2019.

Norhaizad's key contribution is as Artistic Director of P7:1SMA, a dance performance company that radically shifts the perspective of Malay dance through intimate and innovative performance experiences. As a proactive mentor, he sees value in mentorship of emerging

choreographers and contributes in programmes organized by *SCAPE and School of the Arts (SOTA).

Moving forward, Norhaizad desires to reimagine Malay dance and encourage critical discourse so as to make dance relevant to future generations.

Yeo Siew Hua (Age, 36) – Film Director and Writer



Yeo Siew Hua (b. 1985) is a writer-director of films and series, whose works explore the lesser known stories in society. He believes that the film medium offers a powerful experience and mirror for contemplating the construction of identities.

He graduated among the top of his cohort in Ngee Ann Polytechnic's School of Film and Media Studies, winning the Kodak Singapore Prize and Cathay Organisation Gold Medal in 2005. He graduated with a degree in Philosophy from the National University of Singapore in 2012.

His second fiction feature *A Land Imagined* (2018), about the plight of low-wage migrant workers in Singapore, won the Golden Leopard grand prize at the 71st Locarno Film Festival. It represented Singapore as an entry to the Academy Awards (Oscars) in 2020. The film also won Best Original Screenplay and Best Original Music Score at the pre-eminent 56th Golden Horse Awards in 2019. At home, it won Best Feature at the 29th Singapore International Film Festival in 2018, where he was honoured with the Leslie Ho Asian Film Talent Award in recognition of his contribution to cinema in Asia.

Extending beyond cinema networks, Siew Hua's films and visual art works have been presented at venues like the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York; the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Taipei; the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid; the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art (NTU CCA), Singapore, the City Museum of Ljubljana (MGML), and at the Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA).

Siew Hua is a member of 13 Little Pictures, a Singapore film collective, which organises film labs and workshops around Southeast Asia. The group also produced and distributed his first feature film *In The House of Straw* (2009) and his feature documentary *The Obs: A Singapore*

Story (2014). He is member of the Asia Pacific Screen Academy (APSA) and was awarded the APSA Young Cinema Award in 2018. He was also part of the artist group soft/Wall/studs, where he programmed documentary films in conversation with contemporary arts practice.

As an educator, Siew Hua has taught at various institutions, including the School of the Arts (SOTA), LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore Polytechnic and his alma mater, Ngee Ann Polytechnic.

Zen Teh Shi Wei (Age, 33) – Environmental Artist and Educator



Zen Teh Shi Wei (b. 1988) is a visual artist who works primarily with film photography.

Her practice explores photography as an expanded field, where the camera is used for image-making as well as exploring concepts of truths in combination with material and sculptural applications that reflects contemporary urban realities. She collaborates with experts from different fields to engage with the community and to reflect upon how artists function in society. For instance, the *After Monument series* (2019) drove collaboration across disciplines — with a local geologist, a historian, an architect, an environmental group and residents from Bandung, Indonesia. Their investigation unearthed a web of problems, which necessitated efforts to bring together thinkers and collaborators across different fields.

Similarly, *Garden State Palimpsest* (2018) and *A Familiar Forest* (2021) were interdisciplinary collaborations that explore Singapore's urban topography and its evolving human-nature relations. These efforts gained recognition and were featured in media such as The Bangkok Post, The New York Style Magazine, TEMPO magazine, The Straits Times, Channel NewsAsia, in turn contributing to environmental advocacy locally and regionally.

This spirit of sharing echoes her involvement in the local art scene where she fosters collaborative interdisciplinarity and mentors younger artists. Studio Lalang is her not-for-profit initiative which brings artists of different disciplines together in sharing their practices.

In her teaching practice over 10 years, Zen nurtures young artists by leading and delivering interdisciplinary teaching initiatives and advocates for a holistic view of education. This challenges students' perception of subject-segregated learning and to use art as a medium to guide their exploration across disciplines.

Her efforts were highlighted when School of the Arts nominated her for Ministry of Education's Outstanding Youth in Education Award in 2019. Her belief in the ability of art in engaging human experiences and to critically think about the world continues to push her interdisciplinary practices, leading and shaping the synergistic potential of art, education, and research.