

Esplanade would like to thank our Partner
and Sponsor for their generous support of the arts

Esplanade Partner



BMW Asia Pte Ltd

Corporate Patron



L. C. H. (S) Pte Ltd

The Esplanade Co Ltd is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and registered under the Charities Act.
©The Esplanade Co Ltd 2012. All information correct at time of printing.

Esplanade is a proud member of



Association of Asia Pacific Performing Art Centres
www.aappac.net

UFN-199205206G

CROSSINGS

BY THE NECESSARY STAGE [SINGAPORE] AND TRAFIK [CROATIA]

Esplanade Presents
the studios
05 JUL - 15 SEP 2012

IN COLLABORATION WITH ESPLANADE -
THEATRES ON THE BAY AS PART OF

16 - 18 AUG, THU - SAT, 8 PM
18 & 19 AUG, SAT & SUN, 3 PM

Another **Esplanade Presents** Programme

CEO'S MESSAGE

Through time immemorial, mankind has been obsessed with the search for truth. Yet today, even as technology advances faster than we can ever keep up, and despite the many ground-breaking discoveries in science, truth in all aspects of our lives still seem to elude us even as we continue to gain insights and learn new facts about this world that we live in.

This search for truth in the arts may also often be characterized by an exchange of philosophies, methodologies, information and emotions, between collaborating artists, and between the artists and the audiences.

As Esplanade celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, *The Studios* honours truth by embarking on an inquiry of truth with two seasons of contemporary and experimental theatre productions that explore and interrogate.

In this second season of *The Studios*, titled *eXchanges*, we explore the myriad kind of creative energies that are multiplied when artists come together in collaborative pursuit of truth(s).

Be it the truth(s) that can be found in the pain of mediocrity, the truth behind larger-than-life personas, the truth of whether two different cities can ever be similar, the age-old question of "what is life all about" or the truth of whether there is a perfect play for a perfect audience, we are glad that you have chosen to embark on this journey with us and with the artists.

May we all uncover new ways of seeing through the many exchanges that are about to take place in *The Studios* this season.



Benson Puaah
Chief Executive Officer
The Esplanade Co Ltd

Our Vision

Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay is a performing arts centre for everyone.

We will be internationally recognised for our creativity and sense of adventure.

We will set exceptional standards of service that will position us as a world leader.

Our Mission

To entertain, engage, educate and inspire.

BOARD MEMBERS

Mrs Theresa Foo (Chairman)

Mr Benson Puaah (Chief Executive Officer)

Mr Patrick Ang

Dr Beh Swan Gin

Mr Peter Chay

Mr Patrick Daniel

Mr Lee Tzu Yang

Mrs Clara Lim-Tan

Mrs Christine Ong

Mr Ramlee Bin Buang

Ms Saw Phaik Hwa

RADM(NS) Sim Gim Guan

Mr Andreas Sohmen-Pao

Mrs Mildred Tan

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

CROSSINGS: THE POSSIBILITIES OF CONFLUENCE

Facebook is a place to express and discuss different views, but often many people don't want to negotiate and/or dialogue. Instead, they just cling on to their views. It's a space I look to for clues on how human beings interact without being policed. How do we navigate differences and manage discourse, especially when we do not agree?

At a recent dinner, I casually brought up the challenges we face when building communities or attempting to bridge two institutions. A friend commented that it was adorable/admirable to have people who have been at it for years to still believe in these goals.

One wonders if there is a lack of communication skills, or if insufficient time is invested in robust dialogue/debate. Or is it just a mere strong-headed will to hang on to beliefs because we need to claim some form of autonomy, to have a sense of ownership over our lives since many areas in contemporary reality have been owned by corporations and the state?

That conundrum has again become a preoccupation for me since I embarked on *Crossings*, a project with TRAFIK, our Croatian collaborators: to see our way of life through the lenses of another culture. As usual, the journey began with simplistic binaries: communalism versus individualism; preparation and planning versus spontaneous improvisations; anarchy versus structure. There are obvious pros and cons to all these stereotypes, and how rich it has been for us to explore and explode them.

The best impact moments happened when our opinions and responses to issues fracture amongst ourselves from the same country or culture. The cracks make it possible for us to escape types and allow moments of cross-cultural connectivity. A line from Hareesh Sharma's *Don't Know, Don't Care*, about a teenager learning to care for his terminally ill grandfather, comes to mind:

Son: [to audience]

How do we care? We know how to text. We know how to Skype.

We know how to chat on facebook.

Our communication has increased... but our relationships haven't.

With such adventurous settings that constantly stimulate our creative nerves, we often find ourselves on a bridge in the process of engaging difference. Such instances are rare and by no means easy when encountered. They have brought us out of our comfort zones, especially so with this project as we have been working with more new artists from varied disciplines.

I continue to dream of meeting points or meeting moments. How do we come to a confluence? At Singapore kampongs in the 1960s, there used to be a common tap area which many women would visit in the mornings to do their washing. Women from different social and ethnic backgrounds would gather to interact. In today's global village, where meetings and interactions are done with so much ease on cyber highways, are there more conflictual moments? Or are we working out new ways to cross paths and see the other person's viewpoint, then look back at ourselves? Or have we become dull and less self-reflexive?

The truth is that life can be pretty simple, yet human beings remain complex where our own needs are concerned, and reductive with the needs of those different from ourselves. How can that gap be bridged? One life, many crossings.

We should dream and listen to our hearts more.

Happy Crossings!

Alvin Tan

Founder & Artistic Director
The Necessary Stage

eXchanges YOUR TRUTH AND MINE, MULTIPLIED

The truths we hold shape our existence — from our personal truths to the universal truths around us. Each sheds a different light on how we see ourselves, and how we interact with the world. And while our search for them is often done alone, new perspectives and paths may yet be illuminated if we have help along the way.

eXchanges signifies the multiplication of creative energies of artists in collaborative pursuit of the truth. In this second season of *The Studios*, as these artists bring their personal truths in the area of new knowledge and experiences, we invite you to join them in uncovering new ways of seeing through theatre.

SYNOPSIS

HOW DO WE CONNECT WITH ONE ANOTHER WHILST ACKNOWLEDGING AND APPRECIATING OUR DIFFERENCES?

A woman who is a victim of a social scandal proves her fidelity by passing a test. Yet, her society does not believe her. She is excited by her husband who is dedicated to serving his people and so has to listen to their discernment to remain in power. Will she sacrifice for the larger good and suffer the unjust allegation to be with her husband or will she walk?

Based on Asian myths, *Crossings* take us on a journey of the transformation of the self - how one deals with the seduction of being imprisoned and how freedom opens us to meaningless pain.

THE COLLECTIVE COMPRISES:

Chuang Xiu'er Performer
Sharda Harrison Performer
Bani Haykal Sound artist
Vincent Lim Set Designer
Edvin Liverić Performer
Loo Zihan Multimedia Artist

Josip Maršić Composer
Haresh Sharma Script Editor
Najib Soiman Performer
Alvin Tan Director
Žak Valenta Performer

Photo Credit: Tan Ngap Heng

BIOGRAPHIES

TRAFIK (TRANSITIVE - FICTION THEATRE)

The work of this collective of authors and performers is, by many accounts, very unique within the context of Croatian independent theatre and dates its beginnings back to 1998 and their site-specific performance, *The Walker*. This work determined their thematic objectives as well as artistically expression, within which TRAFIK (Transitive-Fiction Theatre) has developed to date - always related to questions of identity of the individual lost on the margins of time and space.

Through its performances such as *DancEurope*, *Picture Show*, *Beaufort Scale*, *Greetings from The Adriatic*, *Gramatika*, *Embodiment*, *Destination TRAFIK: Deer*, *Diva*, *Armada* and *Pacificika*, TRAFIK continues to move the boundaries between different performative forms. After a decade of works which has had a significant impact on the Rijeka, and from there onto the Croatian performing scene, it is interesting to note that the identity they are constructing is even less visible and even more marginalised.

TRAFIK has performed at almost all Croatian Theatre Festivals and abroad (Czech Republic, Italy, Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Singapore, Germany), and has also received several awards.

www.trafik.hr

CHUANG XIU'ER PERFORMER

Chuang Xiu'er graduated from the National University of Singapore with a B.A. in Theatre Studies (2003) and the National Institute of Singapore with a M.Ed. in Drama (2011). In the past, she has taught full-time at Ministry of Education and was an adjunct drama lecturer in Singapore Polytechnic. Xiu'er has performed in Papermonkey Theatre's Dragon Dance and stage-managed The Necessary Stage's past productions. She is excited and privileged to be acting in her first supporting role with TNS.

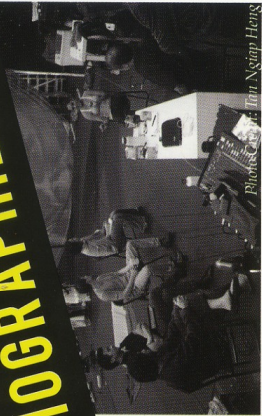


Photo Credit: Tan Ngap Heng

THE NECESSARY STAGE

Formed in 1987 by our current Artistic Director Alvin Tan, The Necessary Stage (TNS) is a non-profit theatre company with charity status. Our mission is to create challenging, indigenous and innovative theatre that touches the heart and mind. TNS is a recipient of the National Arts Council's 2 Year Major Grant, and is also the organiser and curator of the annual MI Singapore Fringe Festival.

For its Main Season, TNS produces an average of two plays a year at our black box and other venues. The plays are original, mostly devised pieces created in a collaborative process that is based on research, improvisation before scripting, and input from all members of the production. We are also committed to international exchange and networking between Singapore and other countries, through staging the company's plays abroad, inviting foreign works to be presented by the company in Singapore, through dialogues, workshops and training opportunities as well as creative collaborations leading to interdisciplinary productions. Our Theatre for Youth and Community branch actively engages young people, senior citizens and different communities in Singapore through workshops and process-based drama programmes that focus on personal development.

www.necessary.org

SHARDA HARRISON ✖ **PERFORMER**

Sharda Harrison graduated from LASALLE College of the Arts with a BA (Hons) degree in Acting in 2009. In 2008, she won the Best Actress Award at the annual Short + Sweet short play competition for her role in the play *How do you like me? How do you want me now?*

In 2009, she was invited by Elizabeth de Roza to collaborate on a reworked version of *Curry Devil at the Transit – Women on the Periphery* festival at Odin Teatret in Denmark. She has performed in *Conference of the Birds* for the 2010 Singapore Arts Festival, and has also appeared on screen, including hosting the children's programme *Oktolizee* and *Club Magic*.

BANI HAYKAL ✖ **SOUND ARTIST**

Bani Haykal writes and experiments with text/music. Presently an Associate Artist of The Substation, he is researching on narratives, music culture and development relevant to Singapore. His work with music includes being the vocalist and principle songwriter for b-quartet, a contributor to performance/music collective, mux and audio-visual performance group, OFFCUFF. He has read/presented works in several festivals including The Kuala Lumpur International Literary Festival, Singapore Arts Festival, Mosaic Music Festival and the M1 Singapore Fringe Festival.

VINCENT LIM ✖ **SET DESIGNER**

Vincent is the principal of Visual Text Architects, a firm that completed projects in Singapore, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Kuala Lumpur. Besides winning a Silver award in the SIA-ICI Colour Awards in 2002 and a Honorary Mention in - S3: Steel Space. Structure competition in 2007, Vincent was selected in 2010 as an up-and-coming architect for URA's 20 under 45 exhibition. In 2008, he was nominated for Best Set Design at the Life! Theatre Awards for *Good People*.

EDVIN LIVERIĆ BASSANI ✖ **PERFORMER**

Edvin Liverić Bassani is a performer, theatre director and producer who graduated from the Academy of Drama Arts in Zagreb. Between 1994 and 1995, he worked in The National Theatre in Varaždin. Thereafter in 1995, he worked in Zagreb Youth Theatre as an actor and later as a pedagogue on the Mouvement Chair on Academy of Drama Arts in Zagreb from 1998 to 2004. Founder and director of TRAFIK in Rijeka, Edvin was also Associate Artistic Director for the Croatian Institute for Movement and Dance and Dance Week Festival in Zagreb (1998-2005). Since 2004, he was also the Artistic Director for The Street Art Festival in Poreč. He has directed *Scenes from the Marrie Life* (I. Bergman), *Eva Braun* (S. Kolditz), *Game in a Backyard* (E. Mazya), *Dear Elena Sergeevna* (L. Razumovska), *Greetings from the Adriatic* and *Diva* (Trafiak), *Greetings from the Adriatic* and *de s'exprimer* (Coppi). He works as artistic assistant for movement in several opera and theatre Houses in Croatia and Slovenia. In 1995, Edvin was awarded with the Vladimir Nazor Award for the performance *Imago*.

LOO ZIHAN ✖ **MULTIMEDIA ARTIST**

Loo Zihan is a performance and moving-image artist. He received his MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He has had recent exhibitions and showings at NEXT / Art Chicago, Macau International Performance Art Festival and Defibrillator (Chicago). His moving-image works have been screened in various film festivals including AFI Fest (L.A.), Pusan International Film Festival, Newfest (New York City) and Frameline (San Francisco). He is the recipient of a James Nelson Raymond Fellowship from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

JOSIP MARŠIĆ ✖ **COMPOSER**

Josip Maršić is a musician, composer and sound designer/shaper, born in Rijeka in 1970. As a founding and collaborative member, he has

worked with few seminal ex-Yugoslavian and now Croatian experimental/pop/rock groups such as REGOCH, LET3 and GORI USSI WINNETOU. His discography includes around 50 recorded albums. As a composer, Josip has scored music and soundtracks for children's theatre, contemporary dance choreographies and theatre plays with various theatre organisations and groups. He also scored music for feature films and short movies as well as for art/video instalations and art performances.

HARESH SHARMA ✖ **SCRIPT EDITOR**

Hareesh is Resident Playwright of The Necessary Stage and co-Artistic Director of the annual M1 Singapore Fringe Festival. To date, he has written 100 plays. 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. In 2008, Ethos Books published *Intertogic: Studies in Singapore Literature, Vol. 6*, written by Prof David Birch and edited by A/P Kirpal Singh, which presented an extensive investigation of Hareesh's work over the past 20 years. A collection of Hareesh's plays have been translated into Mandarin and published by Global Publishing with the title 哈里斯·沙玛剧作选. Hareesh was awarded Best Original Script for *Fundamentally Happy, Good People* and *Gemuk Girls* during the 2007, 2008 and 2009 Life! Theatre Awards respectively. In 2010, the abovementioned plays were published by The Necessary Stage in the collection entitled *Trilogy*. Most recently in 2011, two collections of short plays by Hareesh entitled *Shorts I* and *Shorts II* have been published as well.

NAJIB SOIMAN ✖ **PERFORMER**

Najib Soiman is an arts educator, a theatre practitioner and a regular participant in Singapore Arts Festival as playwright, director and performer. He is active in the traditional musical scene and has performed in festivals overseas. He was the President of Teater Ekamatra from 2006-2007 and Artistic Director of Pangung ARTS from 2008-2009. In 2009, Najib won Best Actor at the 9th ST Life! Theatre Awards for his performance in *Gemuk Girls*.

ALVIN TAN ✖ **DIRECTOR**

Alvin is the Founder and Artistic Director of The Necessary Stage since 1987. He is also the co-Artistic Director of the annual international M1 Singapore Fringe Festival. One of the leading proponents of devising theatre in Singapore, Alvin has directed more than 60 plays which have been staged locally and at international festivals. He has been awarded a Fulbright Scholarship and served as a member of the curatorial panel for TransLab, an initiative created by the Australian Council for the Arts to promote intercultural theatre and performance. In 2010, Alvin was conferred the Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres by the French Ministry of Culture, in recognition of his significant contribution to the arts.

ŽAK VALENTA ✖ **PERFORMER**

Žak Valenta is a performer, physical theatre director and teacher. He graduated from the School of Physical Theater in London and MAPA Moving Academy for Performing Arts in Berlin. As one of the founding members of independent theater group TRAFIK, he co-authored and performed in award-winning *The Walker*, followed by *Beaufort's Scale*, *Dance Europe*, *Greetings from Adriatic* and *Pacificka*. He directed and performed TRAFIK's productions *Slideshow* and solo *Embodiment*. Žak has also performed for Karina Holla, Griff Theater, Posttheatre, Dance Center TALA, Exit Theater, Rijeka National Theater, Ljubljana Dance Theater, Company de Opera Seca, OOUR/Prostor+, Ex Teampore Grozňjan and National Museum Umag. Žak has received the highest award for theatre in Croatia "Vladimir Nazor" for *Imago* and at the "Naj Naj" Theater Festival for Children for *My Body*, together with Magdalena Lupi. Žak was nominated for Best Male Dancer at the Croatian National Theater Award in 2010.

QUESTIONS WITH THE ARTISTS

WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST IMPACTFUL ASPECT TO COME OUT OF THIS COLLABORATION, AND WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST CHALLENGING?

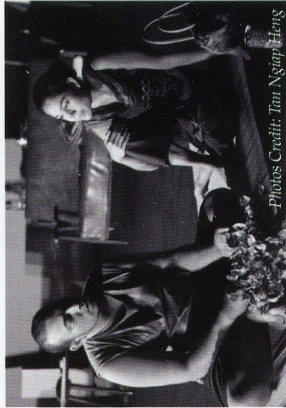
Alvin Tan:

To see our way of life through the lens of another culture is always a significant moment of any international collaboration. For *Crossings*, the impact on me – one that has lasted till today – is communalism versus individualism, preparation versus spontaneity, anarchy versus structure. There are pros and cons to all these binary stereotypes, and we are most fortunate to be able to explore and explode them. The impact is therefore our ability to claim these opportunities made available to us when we engage in such adventurous settings that constantly stimulate our creative nerves. *Crossings'* most challenging aspect is that it has brought us out of our comfort zone as we're working with more new artists from varied disciplines.



Edvin Liverić:

In the 15 years of TRAFIK's existence, this is the most complex project we have been involved in and created in collaboration. Apart from the issue of collaborating over long distance, there is also the aspect of two disparate theatrical aesthetics and poetics, which we have to "marry" to the satisfaction of both parties. That challenge is actually the greatest wealth resulting from this collaboration, and it was a unique experience from which we have learned a lot.



Photos Credit: Tan Ngap Heng

WHAT IS THE ONE TRUTH IN LIFE THAT YOU THINK EVERYONE SHOULD SUBSCRIBE TO?

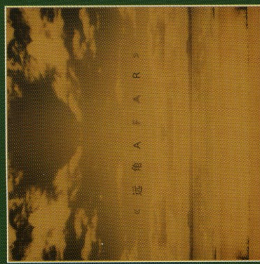
Alvin Tan:

The truth is that life is simple and human beings cannot resist complicating it. People should dream and listen to their hearts more.

Edvin Liverić:

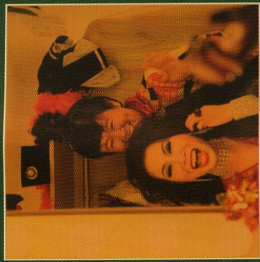
For me that is – HONESTY, honesty not only towards our environment and our society, but also towards ourselves. The world that we live has become so false and affected that is difficult to perceive the "real reality".

DON'T MISS THESE OTHER SHOWS AS PART OF THE STUDIOS



《远角》 AFAR
戎劇盒 Drama Box
Singapore

23-25 AUG, THU-SAT, 8PM



THE PERFECTION OF 10
Sean Tobin
Singapore

13-15 SEP, THU - SAT, 8PM
15 SEP, SAT, 3PM

All performances held at Esplanade Theatre Studio.

WORKSHOP

THE HISTORY OF SINGAPORE
(AS TOLD BY ME)

Sean Tobin

18 AUG, SAT, 10AM.

Esplanade Rehearsal Studio,

\$14 (\$10 concession for *The Studios* 2012 ticket holders)

BOOK NOW

For more information, please visit:

www.thestudios.com.sg

Tickets: \$25
(Package of 4: \$80)

Concessions for students: \$10

Concessions for NSF and senior citizens: \$16

All secondary schools, JCs, ITEs and CIs may use the Tote Board Arts Grant to subsidise up to 50% of all the programmes in *The Studios*.

Tickets from Esplanade Box Office and SISTIC's authorised agents. SISTIC hotline: 6348 5555. Group bookings of 20 or more: 6828 8389. A SISTIC booking fee applies to each ticket. Latecomers will only be admitted at suitable breaks, if any. No admission for infants-in-arms and children below six years old. Tickets are required for all patrons.