

INTERCULTURAL THEATRE INSTITUTE PRESENTS



THE  
PECULIAR TRALA

14-16 MAR 2019  
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DRAMA CENTRE  
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# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Do I remember the first time I learnt to walk? The first time I made a sound, or spoke a word, and the first time I cried or laughed?

When was the first time I jumped across an obstacle and experienced a breakthrough in myself? And when have I experienced a similar sensation recently?

When was the last time I journeyed by myself alone? Do I remember the details of my stream of thoughts and changing emotions on that journey?

How often do I converse with my 'self'? Have I forgotten to play, and have I stopped seeing and interacting with other selves?

*The Peculiar Tra La* is an attempt to visit, converse with and investigate these concerns through a collective 'free-play', games, riddles, memories, stories and dreams.

We invite you to journey with us, 'tra la' – 'between the...' as in Italian, a 'melody', or 'farewell', 'gaiety' as in English, or 'liberated' as in Sanskrit – allowing your emotions to be transformed, be it joy, hope, curiosity, grief, fear, disappointment, will, reason or compassion for your 'self'.

Along the way, we are irresistibly attracted to questions and challenges of performative concerns – researching and revealing solutions between traditions and self, craft and spontaneity, while devising this piece of work together with ITI's 2019 graduating cohort, Ranice our dramaturg, Dorothy our designer, Natalie our production manager, and Zizi our stage manager. My deep gratitude goes to each and all of them.

I am more than grateful for the precious invitation from Beto and Sasitharan to work with the students, and I sincerely thank all ITI faculty and administrative staff for their patience, trust and persistent support throughout this creative journey.

Looking back, this journey may seem stormy, uncertain, swift, joyous ... but it all pointed to the unknown and surprise of 'tra la' that you are about to encounter in the theatre.

I wish you a very special journey of your own, and I salute each of you who grants your 'self' time for this experience today.

**Ang Gey Pin**  
Director

**ITI students work as a professional company in their third year, and undertake ticketed public performances. These Final Year Productions are an integral part of the ITI curriculum.**

Upcoming 2019 productions  
Final Year Production #2 (title TBC)  
5 - 7 September  
Directed by Koh Wan Ching

*Orestes 2.0* by Charles Mee  
7 - 9 November  
Directed by Phillip Zarrilli

# CREDITS

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**Director**

Ang Gey Pin

**Dramaturg**

Ranice Tay

**Production Designer**

Dorothy Png

**Cast**

Earnest Hope Tinambacan, Jalal Albaroudi,  
Jin Chen, Regina Toon, Ted Nudgent Fernandez Tac-an,  
Theresa Wee-Yenko, Tysha Khan, Vignesh Singh,  
Wendy Toh, Nour el Houda Essafi (a.k.a. Yiseong)

**Production Manager**

Natalie Lim

**Stage Manager**

Hau Guei Sze (Zizi)



# CAST



## EARNEST HOPE TINAMBACAN

Email: e.hopetinambacan@gmail.com

Earnest Hope Tinambacan is a theatre actor, director, playwright and singer-songwriter based in Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental, Philippines. He started his theatre journey at the age of 12 as a member of the LIYAB cultural group in Misamis Occidental. As a student at Silliman University, he performed in university musical productions such as *The King and I* and *Man of La Mancha*. He is also a senior member and former president of Youth Advocates Through Theater Arts (YATTA), with whom he has acted in plays all around the Philippines, including *Aaah Bakus!*, performed at PETA Theater in Quezon City. He has also written plays for YATTA, including *Isla Tawak*, performed at the Asian Youth Theatre Festival 2018 in Singapore.

Hope has performed in devised play *ArmMUT* in Stuttgart, Germany, award-winning play *In My Father's House* directed by acclaimed Filipino director Amiel Leonardia, and *Heaven As The Sea (An Ulahingan Story)* directed by ITI alumna Denise Aguilar. He has directed several plays, including the musical *Scharon Mani*, *The Vagina Monologues* and *The VManologues*. In 2018, Hope was a collaborator-actor in Kolab Mindanao and Kolab2 Theatre Devising Workshop and Performance organised by La Salle University, Ozamiz City, in partnership with ITI.

*Hope is a recipient of the U.S.-ASEAN Scholarship and a beneficiary of the Möbius Fund, which provides loans for actor-students.*



## JALAL ALBAROUDI

Email: jalalalbaroudi@gmail.com

Jalal Albaroudi is an actor and theatremaker from Damascus. He started his journey in 2009 with an experimental theatre group, and went on to train in the Stanislavsky method for two years, but was unable to finish the programme due to the situation in his home country.

In 2012, Jalal started his journey as an independent artist creating his own work. He later joined Tajroubah theatre collective and performed in several shows, most recently *Dreams* in 2016 in Damascus. He has collaborated on devised works with dancers, musicians and artists from different disciplines.

Jalal has also worked in film and TV across Syria, Lebanon and Turkey, and has taught drama in youth drama schools and refugee camps. He is part of White Flux short film company, and has performed in several films, including *One Day Calendar*, which won Best Foreign Language Movie at Sciacca Film Festival in Italy.

In 2016, Jalal moved to Kuala Lumpur, where he was involved in workshops and theatre laboratories until he found his way to ITI.

Jalal is currently researching artists in exile, and has an upcoming project with other exiled artists.

*Jalal is a recipient of a scholarship sponsored by a private philanthropist, and a beneficiary of the Möbius Fund.*



## JIN CHEN

Email: seagin7@gmail.com

Jin is a theatre director and actor. She initially studied e-commerce at South China University of Technology while also participating in theatre workshops and performing in local productions, such as site-specific work *Body Space in Yangjiang* by Li Ning, and physical theatre piece *The Wind* by Jiangnan Liguó at Beijing Fringe Festival. She also co-founded Yooxi-Yooxi Arts Festival in her hometown, Yangjiang.

Jin holds an MA in Creative Practice and Direction from Guildford School of Acting (GSA), University of Surrey, UK, where she directed *I Never Get Dressed Till After Dark on Sundays* by Tennessee Williams, under the guidance of her mentor Terrie Fender, the former head of GSA. There, she combined her interest in physical theatre and contemporary dance with an exploration of text.

After returning to China's theatre scene, Jin realised her experience in Europe had largely shaped her view of theatre, while she knew less about Asian theatre. She therefore decided to join ITI to explore communication, understanding and creation in theatre in a time of interculturalism.

*Jin is a beneficiary of the Möbius Fund.*



## REGINA TOON

Email: reginatoon@hotmail.com

Regina is a Singaporean performer who has been performing since she was a child. She acts, dances, sings, writes and plays multiple musical instruments. Prior to her training in ITI, she trained at East 15 Acting School (UK), Natanakairali (India), Shanghai Theatre Academy (China) and the International Noh Institute (Japan).

Regina also trained in classical ballet at the Royal Academy of Dance and in singing at the Lee Wei Song School of Music. She has published a book of poetry, *Coordinates*.

Regina's travels have shaped her and her perspective on theatre, art and most importantly, on living. She is grateful that she is able to constantly rediscover herself and the world, through theatre.

*Regina is a recipient of the ITI-William Teo Scholarship, the Tan Chay Bing Education Fund Scholarship and the ITI Scholarship, and is a beneficiary of the Möbius Fund.*



## THERESA WEE-YENKO

Email: [teresaweeyenko@gmail.com](mailto:teresaweeyenko@gmail.com)

Theresa is a member of Emergency Shelter in Singapore. She is currently working on *Off Stage 2.0* (Emergency Shelter), *The Silly Little Girl and the Funny Old Tree* (Young People's Performing Arts Ensemble, directed by Ang Gey Pin), and *Encounters of Dance and Music in Instant Composition* (Dance Nucleus).

Stage credits include *Off Stage* (Emergency Shelter, 2018), *Uproot* (The Theatre Practice Lab, 2016), *Let's Get Back Together* (Red Pill Productions, 2014) and *Romeo and Juliet* (Toy Factory, 2014).

Theresa was previously part of The Theatre Practice Lab, Creative Edge (a division of I Theatre), and Singapore Repertory Theatre's Young Company.

*Theresa is a recipient of the ITI Scholarship and the Tan Chay Bing Education Fund Scholarship.*



## TED NUDGENT FERNANDEZ TAC-AN

Email: [tedtac.an@gmail.com](mailto:tedtac.an@gmail.com)

Ted is the Culture and Arts Director (on-leave) of La Salle University (LSU), Ozamiz City. While working as a high school Mathematics teacher, Ted was asked to teach performing arts at LSU's Senior High School, leading him to pursue practice-based theatre training at ITI.

As Associate Director of LSU Teatro Guindegan, Ted's roles include actor, choreographer, stage manager, production designer and director.

Ted was one of 12 theatre practitioners selected to devise *Likha-Lakbayan* for Tanghal National University and College Theater Festival, touring to five major cities in the Philippines. As a recipient of the Indonesian Arts and Culture Scholarship, he spent three months learning the arts and culture of Jogjakarta, Indonesia. In Singapore, he has worked with Chloe Chotrani, Kai Eng and Tang Sook Kuan in *w.r.i.s.t.*; Caroline Chin in *Waltz of the Flower* (ITI and Singapore Writers Festival); The Kaizen M.D. in *Lintas Nusantara* (Malay Culture Fest); and Teo Dawn, Isabelle Low and HF/DF in *Plastic Collection Unit* (Neon Lights Festival).

In the future, Ted hopes to continue collaborating with various practitioners alongside his teaching job. He also wants to develop artistic advocacy works for children, youth and the environment.

*Ted is a recipient of the Tan Chay Bing Education Fund Scholarship and a beneficiary of the Möbius Fund.*



## VIGNESH SINGH

Email: vigneshsingh1995@yahoo.com

Vignesh is a Singaporean actor, director and educator who has performed in Singapore and Malaysia.

His affair with the stage began in 2008 when he performed in *Rainbow's Ending* by Noel Grieg, produced by We Colour People Theatre & Company. Since then, Vignesh has worked with the likes of Toy Factory Productions, Teater Ekamatra, Singapore Repertory Theatre, Buds Theatre Company, Dark Matter Theatrics, Our Company and GroundZ-0.

Fascinated by theatre in unconventional spaces, Vignesh has performed in and directed shows in fields, by the sea and in trains. Inspired by his mentors, Vignesh is determined to continue seeking out and investigating alternative beliefs and logics in art and life.

Presently, Vignesh is a drama teacher to students at the Global Indian International School.

*Vignesh is a recipient of the ITI Scholarship and a grant recipient of the Trailblazer General Fund.*



## TYSHA KHAN

Email: tysha.khan@gmail.com

Tysha is a Singapore-based actor and writer. She has worked in productions by companies such as Teater Kami and UNSAID, often on topics that mean a lot to her, such as race relations or LGBT rights. Her most recent performance was in *Anak Melayu* (Teater Kami). Besides performing on stage, Tysha acts on screen, hosts, and has her own YouTube channel called Go Jerr. She is also a published poet, and has translated films and interviews.

Tysha's training at ITI has opened up new vistas in acting and performance: vocally, physically, and in the way she thinks about – and writes – theatre. She possesses a strong interest in voice work and aims to teach it one day.

As the first Malay-Muslim woman to graduate from ITI, Tysha hopes to create theatre that effectively captures the culture of her community. She also aims to keep making and performing work that explores different facets of identity and delves into societal issues.

*Tysha is a recipient of the ITI Scholarship and a beneficiary of the Möbius Fund. She is also a recipient of the Goh Chok Tong Youth Promise Award, a scholarship that is given to Malay/Muslim youths with the potential to be role models for the community.*



## WENDY TOH

Email: [zhuo.wendy@gmail.com](mailto:zhuo.wendy@gmail.com)

Wendy Toh is a Singapore-based performer whose numerous acting credits span both screen and theatre.

She has acted in award-winning films and regional television dramas such as HBO Asia's *Serangoon Road*. She is also a core member of Tapestry Playback Theatre, and has trained and worked with Jinen Butoh School under Atsushi Takenouchi.

Wendy also practises a wide range of fine art, creating abstract canvasses and thought-provoking mixed media installations.

After graduation, Wendy hopes to deepen her Butoh practice and further explore physical theatre.

*Wendy is a recipient of the ITI Scholarship and the Tan Chay Bing Education Fund Scholarship, and a beneficiary of the Möbius Fund.*



## NOUR EL HOUDA ESSAFI (A.K.A. YISEONG)

Email: [nour48houda@gmail.com](mailto:nour48houda@gmail.com)

At a young age, Nour el Houda a.k.a. Yiseong was selected into a specialised performing arts school in Paris, where she trained in classical ballet, violin and piano, performing onstage in an orchestra and a ballet ensemble (performances included *An American in Paris*, a ballet adaptation by His Majesty Norodom Sihamoni of Cambodia and *Madame Haïm*).

She later trained in performing art forms such as Cambodian Khmer dance, as well as Indian Kathak under Mrs Sharmila Sharma Guruji, and learned to play Taiko drums with Paris Taiko Ensemble.

Coming to ITI has been a life-changing decision that has enabled Yiseong to rediscover herself, her roots, and the definition of what an artist should be.

*Yiseong is a beneficiary of the Möbius Fund.*





WHEN WAS THE LAST



TIME YOU FELT JOY?



# CREATIVE TEAM

## ANG GEY PIN

### Director

Ang Gey Pin, a Singaporean theatre practitioner, teaches and performs internationally. Under her direction, Sourcing Within promotes collaborations and workshops of interdisciplinary research with practitioners and scholars. Her approach in physical and vocal work is deeply connected to unearthing one's organic responses and memories. Her works are featured in scholarly journals and books dedicated to intercultural theatre and anthropology. She obtained her PhD in Drama by Practice-as-Research from the University of Kent.

## RANICE TAY

### Dramaturg

Performer and writer Ranice Tay describes herself as "a voyager of the rushing wilderness within". Her journey has led her to work with various organisations and independent artists: *Benches* (Poetry Festival Singapore); *Hana* (NUS Theatre Studies); *Diaries, Marking Time and Other Preoccupations* (NUS Museum Exhibition by Yeo Shih Yun); *Temporarily Mine* (ExxonMobile Campus Concerts); *In Search of Salt* (Passerby Projects); *Leaves* (Passerby Projects); *FLICKER* (Make Space). She has received training in traditional Balinese dance with Eka Suwara Santi, with whom she continues to work and perform, and will be performing this April in *Silly Little Girl and the Funny Old Tree* 《傻姑娘与怪老树》 (Young People's Performing Arts Ensemble).

Ranice holds the Centre for the Arts Performing and Visual Arts Scholarship from the National University of Singapore, where she is pursuing her undergraduate honours in Theatre Studies. Her thesis research reflects a

bone-sunk wonder on the becoming body – a body in the process of embodiment.

Selected written works include: *Yellow* (AESOP x Singapore Writers Festival), *Hands* (Metaphors Be With You), *This Is For The Ones Who Were Loved Too Much* (DINK @ Blu Jaz).

## DOROTHY PNG

### Production Designer

A lighting designer by profession since 1994, Dorothy is a highly experienced and much sought-after designer for most of Singapore's theatre companies. She also collaborates with independent artists for their own performances, with a passion for creative experimentation. Her range of work spans across theatre, contemporary dance, ballet, opera, musical, site-specific works, outdoor productions and music concerts.

Some of her favourite past lighting designs are: *Wings of Resonance* (a traditional flute music performance, 2018); *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Singapore Lyric Opera, 2017); *Farewell: The Body in 16 Chapters* (by Drama Box for Macao Arts Festival 2013); *Language Of Their Own* 《男男自语》 (for Singapore Arts Festival 2012); *The Ma(r)king of Nanjing: 1937* (by Nelson Chia); *RAW: Empty.Interval* (a collaboration amongst good friends Lee Yongwei, Lim Chin Huat and Julius Foo); *Spellbound – Kit Chan Concert 2015* (at The Star).

Set design is her secondary field, and she does that as and when the occasion calls for it. Her most recent set designs were for *Wings of Resonance* (Victoria Theatre) and *Garden.Uprooted* (a collaboration between The Philharmonic Orchestra and dance company Arts Fission, at Esplanade Theatre).



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# ABOUT ITI

**INTERCULTURAL THEATRE INSTITUTE (ITI), based in Singapore, is a three-year, practice-based, professional actor training programme founded on a rigorous, intercultural learning methodology with a view to producing original, contemporary theatre.**

The school began as the Theatre Training & Research Programme (TTRP), founded in 2000 by renowned dramatist, Kuo Pao Kun (1939–2002), and current Director, T. Sasitharan – both Cultural Medallion recipients. It is shaped by Kuo Pao Kun’s vision of intercultural learning that draws from a matrix of traditional theatre systems and modern theatre-making.

ITI’s distinguished alumni include Peter Sau, recipient of the 2011 Young Artist Award and the Life! Theatre Awards; Yeo Yann Yann, winner of the 2013 “Best Supporting Actress” Award for her role in *Ilo Ilo* at the Golden Horse Awards, the Vladivostok International Film Festival, and the Asia-Pacific Film Festival; Felimon Blanco, recipient of the 2013 Most Outstanding Zambosurian Award (Philippines); and Sankar Venkateswaran, recipient of the Aditya Vikram Birla Kalakiran Puraskar (India), presented to young, contemporary artists for outstanding achievements.

Intercultural Theatre Institute is a recipient of the National Arts Council’s Major Grant for the period from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2021.



# SUPPORT ITI

ITI is an independent theatre school founded on the belief that theatre has little meaning if it is not connected to life and society. Through the years, ITI has developed critically and socially engaged artists who are capable of working across cultural, linguistic, social and national boundaries, and who have contributed meaningfully to their cultures and communities.

ITI is a registered charity and an approved Institution of Public Character (IPC); more than 60% of its income has to come from fundraising. Donations to ITI are eligible for **250% tax exemption** and dollar-to-dollar matching by the government's Cultural Matching Fund. Your donations will make a critical difference and support ITI in its seminal work.

## GIVE AT GIVING.SG/ITI

For more information, visit [iti.edu.sg/support](http://iti.edu.sg/support) or contact us at [admin@iti.edu.sg](mailto:admin@iti.edu.sg).

*"I was trained to be not only a good actor but also a better person. So to those who want to make a difference, please consider supporting the students in ITI and we will make this world a better place using the arts"*

~ Denise Mordeno Aguilar '14



**Peter Sau ('03, Singapore)** is the founder of Project Tandem, a training programme for disabled performing artists. He is also associate director and cast member of *And Suddenly I Disappear: The Singapore 'd' Monologues*, the first disability-led theatre project created between Singapore and the UK. Peter is a recipient of the 2011 Young Artist Award and the Best Actor Award at the 2015 Life Theatre Awards.



**Sankar Venkateswaran ('06, India)** is the founder and artistic director of Theatre Roots & Wings. He has set up a cultural space in Attappady, Kerala, where he works with the impoverished indigenous communities. Sankar is a recipient of the International Ibsen Scholarship 2013 and Aditya Vikram Birla Kalakiran Puraskar 2016.



**Denise Mordeno Aguilar ('14, Philippines)** is the artistic director of Pasundayag Community Arts and Assistant Secretary of the National Committee on Dramatic Arts in the Philippines. She is a recipient of the Lambago Art Award 2016, in recognition of her outstanding work as a theatre artist and her invaluable contribution to the development of arts and culture in Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines.

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