PRESS RELEASE

If We Dream: Delving into the legacy of our cultural pioneers

NUS Arts Festival 2018: Tickets are now on sale

Singapore, Monday, 16 July 2018 —

Who are our dreamers? What are their dreams? When do dreams become reality?

For two weeks this September, NUS Centre For the Arts will invoke the dreams of Singapore’s cultural pioneers with If We Dream: NUS Arts Festival 2018 through dance, music, theatre, film, exhibition and open dialogue. Local and international artists, thought leaders from across the campus and the very best student performers will come together to explore the achievements of our predecessors and question whether the challenge for the next generation is to realise the dreams of their forebears or to forge a new path.

“This year’s Festival harkens back to those who have come before us and their accomplishments, great and small, and it explores how the impulse for creative expression runs through generations,” says Festival Director, Mary Loh. “The fundamental question ‘What does our generation dream of?’ propels our student artists and their collaborators into deeper personal engagements through the lenses of various disciplines. We are pleased to present authentic voices that emerge from reimagining the possibilities and the perils of dreaming.”
Inspired by Goh Poh Seng’s *If We Dream Too Long* written in the same year as the formation of the University’s first arts group in 1968, the Festival this year also marks a milestone for NUS Centre For the Arts, which celebrates its 25th anniversary of impacting and enriching life on campus through active engagement in the arts.

*If We Dream*: NUS Arts Festival 2018 runs from 7 to 23 September.

**Schedule of events**

Show details are included as Annex 1. Additional events, performances and discussion panels will be progressively updated on [www.nusartsfestival.com](http://www.nusartsfestival.com) over the coming weeks.

**Ticketing**

Ticketing and registration is now open via [www.nusartsfestival.com](http://www.nusartsfestival.com)

Ticketed events start at just $15 for full time students and $25 for the public. Special pricing options are also available for school groups.

Free events for the festival include the *Critical Conversations* discussion series and exclusive screenings of award-winning Asian films.

Visit [www.nusartsfestival.com](http://www.nusartsfestival.com) for more information.

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**About NUS Centre For the Arts (CFA)**

NUS Centre For the Arts is a vibrant space for the appreciation of the arts and nurturing of the creative and inquiring spirit. We support student engagement with the arts and the integration of the arts into the life of the University.

CFA includes the NUS Museum, NUS Baba House and a Talent and Development arm that oversees 22 student arts excellence groups. Through our myriad of programmes, practices, exhibitions, workshops and outreach, such as NUS Arts Festival and the ExxonMobil...
Campus Concerts, we enrich the university experience and contribute to the building of knowledge and transformation of students.

We also manage facilities such as the University Cultural Centre, with its 1700-seat Hall and 425-seat Theatre, and rehearsal spaces in Runme Shaw CFA Studios and University Town.

For more information, visit cfa.nus.edu.sg

About National University of Singapore (NUS)

A leading global university centred in Asia, the National University of Singapore is Singapore’s flagship university, which offers a global approach to education and research, with a focus on Asian perspectives and expertise.

NUS has 17 faculties and schools across three campuses. Its transformative education includes a broad-based curriculum underscored by multidisciplinary courses and cross-faculty enrichment. Over 38,000 students from 100 countries enrich the community with their diverse social and cultural perspectives. NUS also strives to create a supportive and innovative environment to promote creative enterprise within its community.

NUS takes an integrated and multidisciplinary approach to research, working with partners from industry, government and academia, to address crucial and complex issues relevant to Asia and the world. Researchers in NUS’ Schools and Faculties, 30 university-level research institutes and centres, and Research Centres of Excellence cover a wide range of themes including: energy, environmental and urban sustainability; treatment and prevention of diseases common among Asians; active ageing; advanced materials; risk management and resilience of financial systems. The University’s latest research focus is to use data science, operations research and cybersecurity to support Singapore’s Smart Nation initiative.

For more information on NUS, please visit www.nus.edu.sg
Annex 1: Early show details

On the Shoulders of Giants (opening show)
NUS Dance Synergy
Friday, 7 September, UCC Hall

As we look towards the future, we ask the dreamers of the past and the present – have the dreams (or the ideals) changed? Perhaps, by understanding our giants, we can come to realise where we can, and want to be.

On the Shoulders of Giants is the premiere of a full length work inspired by Goh Poh Seng’s novel If We Dream Too Long and features 30 young dancers from NUS Dance Synergy under the creative direction of NAC Young Artist Award recipient (2017) Yarra Ileto, together with Albert Tiong and Goh Shou Yi.

Ode To Joy (closing show)
NUS Symphony Orchestra & the NUSChoir
Saturday, 22 September, UCC Hall

NUS Arts Festival 2018 climaxes with an uplifting performance of what is considered one of the most remarkable demonstrations of human achievement. Despite struggling with hearing loss, health issues and social isolation, Beethoven drew inspiration from the ode by German poet Schiller to create Ninth Symphony Ode To Joy, a triumphant anthem for the deepest yearning for freedom, unity and hope for humankind that has since been played to mark significant historical moments in our time.

Under the baton of Maestro Lim Soon Lee, NUS Symphony Orchestra and The NUSChoir, two outstanding youth music groups in Singapore who have received awards in international festivals and competitions, join forces with soloists Ee-Ping Yee, Jade Tan Shi Yun, Jonathan Tay and Valentin Lazrein in this musical milestone in celebration of CFA’s 25th Anniversary.
**Titian Naluri**

**NUS Ilsa Tari**

**Friday, 7 September, 8.00pm**  
**Saturday, 8 September, 7.30pm**  
**UCC Theatre**

Under the direction of its Resident Choreographer and Artistic Director Osman Abdul Hamid, NUS Ilsa Tari continues its investigation into the role of traditional Malay dance in strengthening identity and social cohesion in *Titian Naluri*, an evening of dazzling reinterpretations of Singapore Malay folk dance *Tari Perbendaharaan Singapur*. Dancers from NUS Ilsa Tari share the stage with Beztari (Nanyang Technological University), Indra Nila Kirana (Nanyang Polytechnic) and Itra Tari (Ngee Ann Polytechnic).

**past // present**

**Damon Chua & Wang Liansheng**

**Friday, 7 September, 8.00pm**  
**Saturday, 8 September, 7.30pm**  
**UCC Dance Studio**

Two writers, two time zones, two series of works from different periods of their careers.

Damon Chua is a New York-based playwright, poet, fiction writer and producer. Wang Liansheng is a Singaporean playwright and lawyer. In *past // present*, they showcase short works focusing on a male character's struggle with societal norms, from their past, and present.

Comprising two short plays from *Best Foot Forward* (first staged by ACTION Theatre in 1995), and *A Letter To _______* (first produced by The Theatre Practice in 2013) along with two new short plays - *Bonsai & Two Men Peeing - past // present* promises an intimate, thoughtful and emotional examination of the male identity across time, language and space.

*There will be a post-show dialogue after the 8 Sep performance.*
Empire of the Son
Tetsuro Shigematsu

Friday, 14 September, 7.30pm,
Saturday, 15 September, 3pm and 7.30pm
UCC Dance Studio

Empire of the Son is the story of two generations of broadcasters, and the radio silence between them. As father and son, Akira and Tetsuro shared the same profession as public radio broadcasters, for Japan and Canada respectively. Each of them had millions of listeners, but they never spoke with each other. When Akira’s health starts to falter, Tetsuro begins their last conversation. Based on a series of interviews, Empire of the Son combines live cinematography and miniatures to conjure entire worlds: from the ashes of Hiroshima to present-day Vancouver, marshalling the tiniest of objects to focus on life’s biggest questions.

This show is eligible for Tote Board Arts Grant subsidy.

Maya Yatra
NUS Indian Dance

Saturday, 15 September, 7.30pm
UCC Theatre

Inspired by Maya Angelou and her poem Still I Rise, Maya Yatra (The Journey of Maya) follows the struggles and growth of a young woman in today’s modern yet essentially patriarchal society. Each stage of Maya’s life is paralleled by legendary female characters from Indian epics such as Mahabharata’s Shakuntala, Ramayana’s Sita and Silappatikaram’s Kannagi.

Under the direction of Artistic Director Santha Bhaskar, Maya Yatra is a poignant yet powerful portrayal of the resilience and immense strength of women across time, retold through the beautiful language of Bharatanatyam.

In celebration of its 40th anniversary, NUS Indian Dance presents this landmark production that celebrates womanhood in the predominantly female troupe’s history of achievements in Indian classical dance.
**Shut Up And Dance: Satori (悟り) - Through the Times**
*NUS Dance Blast!*

**Saturday, 15 September, 7.30pm and Sunday, 16 September, 7.30pm**
*UCC Hall*

In 1966, the Beatles performed their first and last concert at the Nippon Budokan arena in Tokyo, galvanising a generation of Japanese rock ‘n’ rollers.

Inspired by this rock ‘n’ roll culture and together with Japanese guest choreographer, Akanen Miyoshi, *Satori (悟り) – Through the Times* follows the journey of a girl with multiple identities: a granddaughter with a close relationship with her grandfather; a proud owner of a record shop; and an aspiring singer-songwriter obsessed with rock ‘n’ roll.

In a time when many settle for performing cover versions, how will she navigate through popular culture to find her own sound?

*Satori (悟り) – Through the Times* will be an exploration of individuality and aspirations through a creative dance narrative brought to you by members of NUS Dance Blast! under the direction of Patrick Loo.

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**Dream Lab**
*LabRats*

**Thursday, 20 September, 7.30pm, 8.30pm and Friday, 21 September, 7.30pm and 8.30pm**
*UCC Dance Studio*

Shakespeare wrote, “We are such stuff as dreams are made on”. Without dreams, we have no hope, and perhaps we have nothing.

*Dream Lab* by the LabRats is here in our hour of need! This experimental facility will help you rediscover the world of dreams.

*Dream Lab* is an interactive installation where the audience participates in the creative process, contributing words and ideas that are transformed into digital graphics, video, and electronic music, interspersed with evocative sounds and visuals, to draw out the dreams that lie inside all of us.
The Golden Record 2.0  
_NUS Stage, directed by Edith Podesta_

**Friday, 21 September, 7.30pm and  
Saturday, 22 September, 7.30pm  
UCC Theatre**

"In our time, we have sifted the sands of Mars, we have established a presence there, we have fulfilled a century of dreams!" - Carl Sagan

Inspired by the 40th anniversary of the 1977 NASA launch of Voyager I and II, the interstellar crafts that carried two 'Golden Records' deep into space. Part one of _The Golden Record_ (NUS Arts Festival 2017) opened this 'cultural Noah's Ark' and examined its interstellar contents in the new light of the 21st century.

_The Golden Record 2.0_ now shifts the focus: from the local to the universal. Given the chance to select the sounds, images and greetings that portray the diversity of life and culture on Earth, what message would Singaporeans choose to communicate with the universe? NUS Stage gathers these tokens of our world’s sights, "our science, our images, our music, our thoughts and our feelings" and presents this ambitious time capsule to a live audience before it is sent to the stars.

There will be a post-show dialogue following the 21 September performance.

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Da Capo XIII: The Magic of Music

_NUS Wind Symphony_

**Sunday, 23 September, 6.00pm  
Shaw Symphony Stage, Singapore Botanic Gardens**

The NUS Wind Symphony will perform much-loved tunes from Disney and Pixar at the Shaw Symphony Stage, Botanic Gardens, conducted by Francis Tan.

This is an evening specially dedicated to our NUS Centre For the Arts supporters and friends who have journeyed with us through the years. Relax and enjoy the evening as we continue our 25th Anniversary celebrations.