

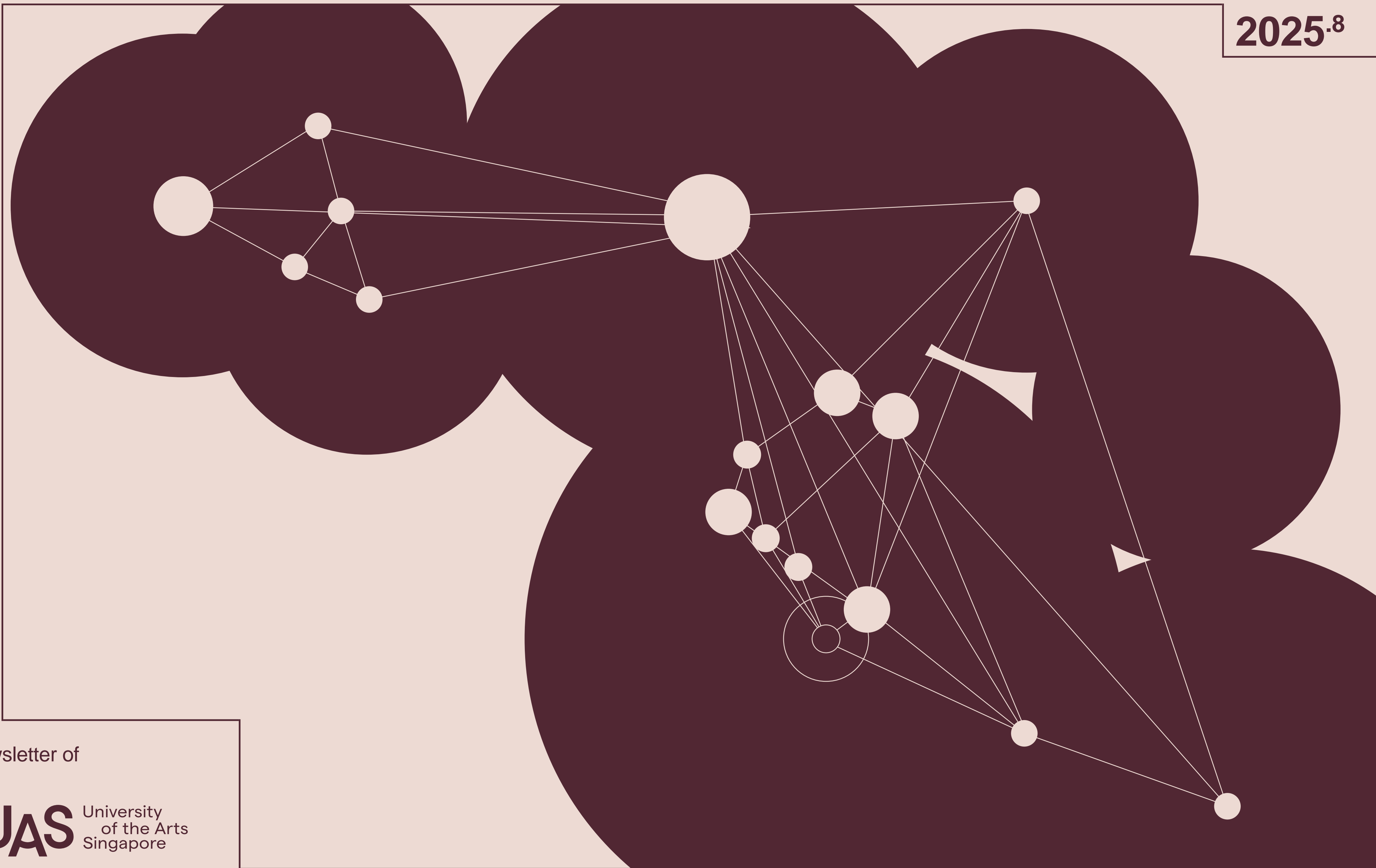
SHOW

A global engagement newsletter of

NAFA
Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts

UAS University
of the Arts
Singapore

2025^{.8}



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Foreword

Hello from the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA)
Global Engagement team!

In our hyperconnected yet polarised world, global education is more critical than ever. It builds the cultural intelligence, critical thinking, curiosity and empathy that our students need to thrive. Mutual understanding and collaboration across disciplines and borders are essential for tackling shared complex challenges.



Hazel Chan in Malacca, Malaysia

At NAFA, global education is not just about overseas travel; it is happening every day right here on campus. With over 40% of our student community coming from across Southeast Asia and other parts of Asia, and a vibrant mix of visiting students, scholars, maestros and artists, our campus is a living classroom for global engagement. While our Global Engagement team was formally established only last year, international partnerships and engagements have always been deeply embedded in NAFA's DNA. This commitment dates back to our founding years, with the visit of artist Xu Beihong in 1939, just a year after NAFA's inception. His visit set the tone for decades of meaningful global exchange.

This inaugural issue of our newsletter exemplifies the theme of connections across cultures, communities, and disciplines. From a student bonding with peers and finding lessons in nature, to a colleague bridging East and West, and an artist building new networks, each feature story reflects the many ways we reach across differences to foster understanding and make new works.

We invite all those with the courage to create to join us in our mission to inspire learning and growth through the arts. We look forward to deepening existing ties and making new connections with you. Reach us at global@nafa.edu.sg. ■

Hazel Chan
Director, Strategic Development & Global Engagement
Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts

Beyond the Classroom: Expo 2025 Osaka

By Caleb Immanuel

I joined the trip out of curiosity and a desire for something different. I’ve always dreamed of visiting Japan ever since I was young. So, when I found out that NAFA’s Faculty of Art & Design organised a study trip to Osaka, I was filled with excitement and determination to go. Japan has always intrigued me, not just for its beautiful scenery and delicious food, but also for its rich culture and deep-rooted traditions.



The Grand Ring at Expo 2025 Osaka

Features

Study Trip

The highlight of our visit, Expo 2025 Osaka, is a global event that brings together countries from all over the world to share ideas, technology, and culture. The Expo's scale and creativity are awe-inspiring. One of the standout features is the Grand Ring: a massive, circular wooden structure that wraps around the venue. What really impressed me was how it isn't just a beautiful architectural piece, but also a functional design that helps cool the environment. The wooden beams provide shade, while the structure lets air circulate naturally, making the walkways underneath more pleasant despite the summer heat. It serves as a great example of how thoughtful design can improve comfort and sustainability at the same time.

We had time to explore the area surrounding the Expo, which turned out to be a golden opportunity! My friends and I made a list of nearby places to explore and local street food to try.

Working with our teachers to coordinate everything was surprisingly fun. We got to see a more relaxed, human side of them outside the classroom. The same went for our classmates: people I barely spoke to before we became travel buddies. Through shared experiences of getting lost, trying new things, laughing together, we built connections and created memories I'll truly cherish.

One moment that really stood out was wearing a yukata, a traditional Japanese summer garment. At first, it felt unusual wearing something so historical in a world that moves so fast. Yukata used to be everyday wear, but now it's often worn just for photos or by tourists on holiday. It honestly felt strange, perhaps because I've never felt grounded in my own cultural roots, so stepping into another was both fascinating and unsettling. Yet, in that moment, walking slowly through the old streets, I felt connected to something older and more peaceful. It reminded me to pause, to be present, something we often forget in our fast-paced lives.



Late night chats with fellow student travellers



Jan Matejko's *Blind Veit Stoss with his Granddaughter* (1865) at "Young Poland – Polish Art 1890-1918", The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto



Dressed in a Yutaka in Shinsaibashi district, Osaka

Features

Study Trip

Beyond Osaka, visiting Nara was another meaningful experience. Deer freely roam the city, and I was struck by their calm and graceful presence, even amidst crowds of tourists, with the occasional one trying to nibble on my butt for a snack. I learned that in Shinto belief, deer are considered sacred messengers of the gods, and their quiet presence symbolises peace, gentleness, and spiritual balance. Watching them reminded me of the strength in stillness and the power of quiet moments.

One thing that truly struck me was the contrast between the majestic deer with large antlers and the graceful fawns skipping through the park, both surrounded by eager tourists. I noticed an elderly deer hidden in a quiet corner, too weak to rise and seek food. Feeling saddened by its appearance, I decided to feed it. However, I also understood that life is full of cycles of growth and decay, and nothing remains constant. Japan, a place steeped in tradition, is also constantly evolving and striving for improvement.

This trip was more than just sightseeing; it was about connecting with people, culture, and myself. I returned not only with souvenirs but also with stories, friendships, and a deeper appreciation for the delicate balance between past and present. ■

Caleb Immanuel is an aspiring artist with a deep concern for mental health and spirituality. Through painting and performance art, he seeks to evoke empathy in his audience. Prior to this study trip, he completed his second year and will be entering his final year of the Diploma in Fine Art programme at NAFA.

NAFA offers travel subsidies to students participating in approved overseas programmes and study trips, helping to defray expenses and make international experiences accessible to more students. These subsidies are generously supported by our donors and the NAFA Education Fund. To contribute, please contact us at givetonafa@nafa.edu.sg.



Nara Park

Creative Passports: Dayn Ng

By Michael Lee

Singaporean sound artist and composer Dayn Ng moves fluidly between music production, sound design, and installation art. After completing his diploma and bachelor's degree studies at NAFA, Dayn pursued a Master in Music Production, Technology, and Innovation at Berklee College of Music in Valencia, Spain, supported by a postgraduate scholarship from Singapore's National Arts Council. Now Programme Leader (Digital Innovation) at NAFA's Faculty of Performing Arts, Dayn teaches music technology and champions interdisciplinary collaboration.

His works blend art and technology through sound and interactivity, exploring memory, culture, and sensory experience. Notable art projects include audiovisual art installation, *Rainbow for Tomorrow* and *Luxonus* at the Centro del Carmen de Cultura Contemporánea in Valencia (Spain), *Walk with Me* (Singapore Night Festival 2023) and *find 米, 找 mi* (2024). In addition to his work in composition and production, Dayn has designed music and sound for productions at leading global institutions, including the Central Academy of Drama (Beijing) and the Beijing Film Academy. As Composer-in-Residence with MUSA Music Collective, he contributes to a YouTube channel with almost 63,000 subscribers and 10 million views.

In this Q&A, Dayn shares insights into his global education, teaching philosophy, and the role of tradition, collaboration, and curiosity in shaping meaningful artistic practice.



Portrait of Dayn Ng taken by Tan Su-Hui, Sophy

What were your music education in London and Spain like, and how have they shaped your life and work? In what ways did your time at NAFA prepare you for studying overseas?

During my time in the NAFA-RCM (Royal College of Music) Bachelor of Music (Honours) (BMus) programme, the eight-week international placement was an eye-opener. Almost every day, I spent hours composing in the RCM studios' music lab before hanging out with friends. My principal study lessons took place weekly at a cosy café near Ealing Broadway.

Initially, it felt odd to have lessons outside of school, but the setting turned out to be incredibly inspiring, especially with the guidance of my mentor, the British composer Kenneth Hesketh.



He offered a fresh perspective on my music, creating a safe and supportive space for me to explore and grow artistically. Most importantly, it was eye-opening to see how receptive the people in London are to art, and how welcoming they are toward artistic expression.

London's dynamic environment added to the experience, with its wide range of activities, from contemporary music performances to orchestral works and musicals. My classmates were equally inspiring, some were immersed in the studios, while others practiced diligently at their apartments. The overall atmosphere was one of encouragement and motivation, making it a truly transformative time for me.

The experience sparked my decision to pursue a master's degree. I took six years to carefully consider my options to ensure I chose the right programme. Spain turned out to be a fantastic place to do it—not only was it enriching academically, but it also gave me the chance to explore Europe, experience diverse cultures, and observe how people across countries engage with the arts.

One of the most valuable lessons I took away from NAFA was the importance of collaboration. As a music composition student, I participated in numerous theatre productions, which taught me the value of building creative networks. These experiences shaped my approach to creativity and prepared me for a career in the arts.

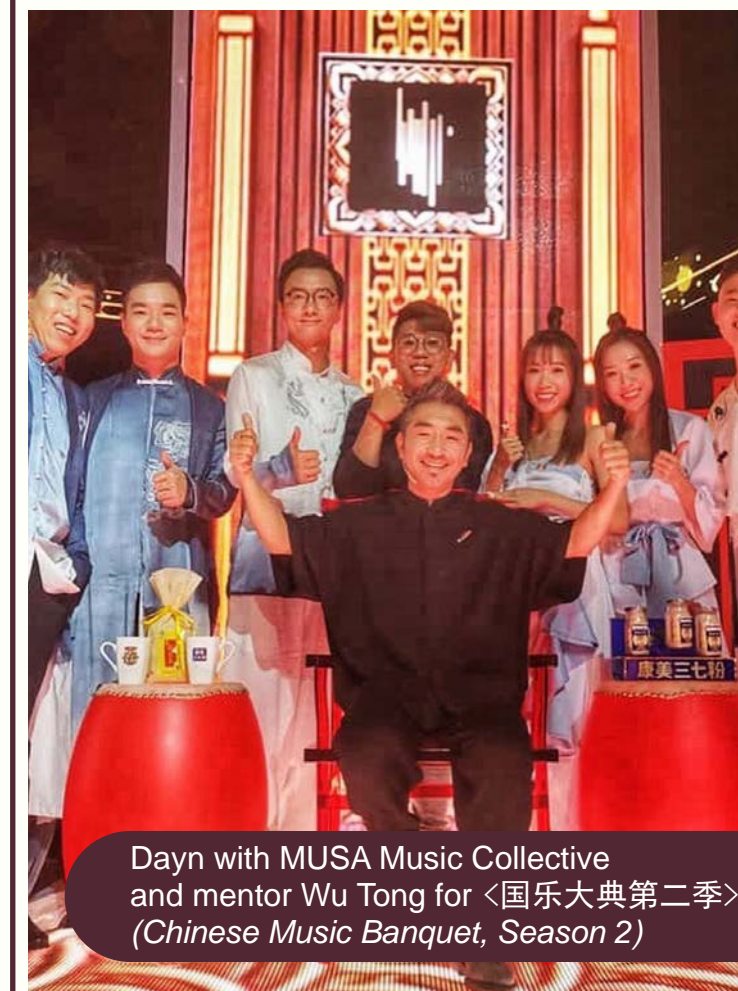
What draws you to tradition, and why does it matter in a modern city like Singapore? How do you honour its roots while keeping it relevant?

There's so much to learn from culture and tradition—about life, wisdom, and history. These are things passed down by people who came before us, giving us insight into ourselves. It's not necessarily something to follow rigidly; rather, it's a form of knowledge that we can choose to shape and use in ways that benefit us.

Singapore is still a young nation, at just 60 years old. Much of its history before the 1800s is unclear, and even then, we're only looking at a little over 200 years. Compared to our neighbouring countries, we're still in our infancy, but that also gives us a unique opportunity to embrace experimentation while staying rooted.

Throughout the history of art and culture, it's constant innovation that drives progress. The ways we innovate may not always resonate with everyone, but without taking those steps forward, there's no room for change or improvement. By exposing more people to expressions that draw from tradition, we might spark curiosity or inspire them to rediscover their own culture more deeply.

At NAFA's School of Music, the availability of Western and Chinese instrumental resources offers students unique opportunities to explore and merge diverse musical traditions. This environment encourages experimentation and collaboration across genres and cultures.



My professional work with Chinese instruments spans compositions for Chinese orchestras, traditional woodwind ensembles, and MUSA Music Collective—a band I founded in my final year of the BMus programme. Each project is tailored to its specific context, with instrumentation, setup, and configuration shaped by the intended audience and purpose. Composing original works for secondary school orchestras differs significantly from writing for professional ensembles. The former requires accessibility and clarity, while the latter allows for greater technical and conceptual complexity. Writing for a contemporary woodwind ensemble that pushes the boundaries of tradition involves blending classical techniques with contemporary rhythms to craft a perspective both fresh and grounded.

MUSA Music Collective is my most personal outlet; it is an intimate collaboration among friends and peers. It's where I write music that speaks to our shared experiences, allowing us to create and perform in a way that feels both authentic and joyful.

How do you navigate the stakes and challenges of working with others, especially across international contexts?

I've come to realise that respecting cultures and making people feel comfortable are essential steps before any form of interaction or art-making can take place. I always strive to show respect to colleagues, professionals, and international counterparts. One of the most effective ways to do this is by presenting sincerity.

It's important to be confident, but also to acknowledge that we don't have all the answers. For example, performance centres or venues often operate differently from country to country. Even things like copyright laws, score rentals, or contracts can vary widely.

It's always a good idea to ask questions or approach things with humility, saying something like, "Could you please share how this works in your country?" Taking the time to understand their workflows, especially when collaborating with organisations abroad, not only builds mutual respect but also leads to smoother, more productive partnerships.



What's your teaching philosophy, and how does it shape your classroom approach? What do you emphasise most to your students?

I always remind my students to support one another's art, whether it's good or not, because support is essential. Constructive criticism comes next, but creating an encouraging and safe space for experimentation and failure is key. After graduation, society might not be as forgiving, so it's important to foster an environment where we uplift one another and work together.

Learning, especially when it comes to digital tools or technology, doesn't always come easy. But these are powerful tools that can help us improve and connect with audiences more effectively. The arts are increasingly interdisciplinary and collaborative, which makes this an exciting time to create. At the same time, it means we need to know how to work with others. As the saying goes, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."

What matters most, though, is experience, and a mindset I learned from a good friend: NTNK—Never Try, Never Know. Staying curious and approaching art with an open and sincere heart can lead to incredible discoveries and growth.

What are you currently working on, especially on the international front?

Right now, I'm moving into production for a dance performance with Dance Ensemble Singapore, scheduled for 27 September at Victoria Theatre. I'll be working with a choreographer from Vietnam and I'm really looking forward to it; it's going to be an exciting process.

On the international front, KYL/D (Kun-Yang Lin Dancers), a renowned dance company based in Philadelphia, will premiere a new dance choreography later this year. I am happy to be the music composer for this piece, contributing to their vision. ■

Energy, Networks and Resources

By Ang Siew Ching

I arrived at Cité Internationale des arts, late at night. The building had a dim glow. Tents pitched by migrants lined its marble porch. I signed in with the reception, and lugged my luggage three floors up, to my studio. During the induction programme the next day, a Cité personnel commented on the tents that disappeared in the day and appeared at night. She said something along the lines of: Paris is a city of contrasts, and Cité, in hosting these migrants, bears witness to this. The reception area was filled with new arrivals like myself, wide-eyed with varying degrees of jet lag. Holding a glass of wine, I scanned the room for someone to talk to, both curious and slightly overwhelmed.



Marketplace near Cité

Features
Residency Diary

I hustled about the studio. Pushed the two single beds together to make more space. Joined the two work tables together to create a sprawling work surface. A big, sturdy easel to put away. The kitchenette was modest but serviceable: an induction hob, a rice cooker, and some basic crockery. While the studio was provided for free, groceries in the Le Marais area were expensive. Weekend street markets were much more affordable and vibrant. The public transport monthly pass also cost quite a bit, and it wasn't pro-rated.

I thought about my residency plan. One of the spaces I planned to film at was closed for renovation until next month. I had to work on something else until then. I looked into other sites I could potentially film at and visited them to take photographs. While I ultimately did not find these sites suitable for further work, visiting them helped me sharpen my research focus. I purchased a 5-day researcher pass to the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and descended the vault on interminable escalators. The amount of books and audiovisual resources in the library was staggering.

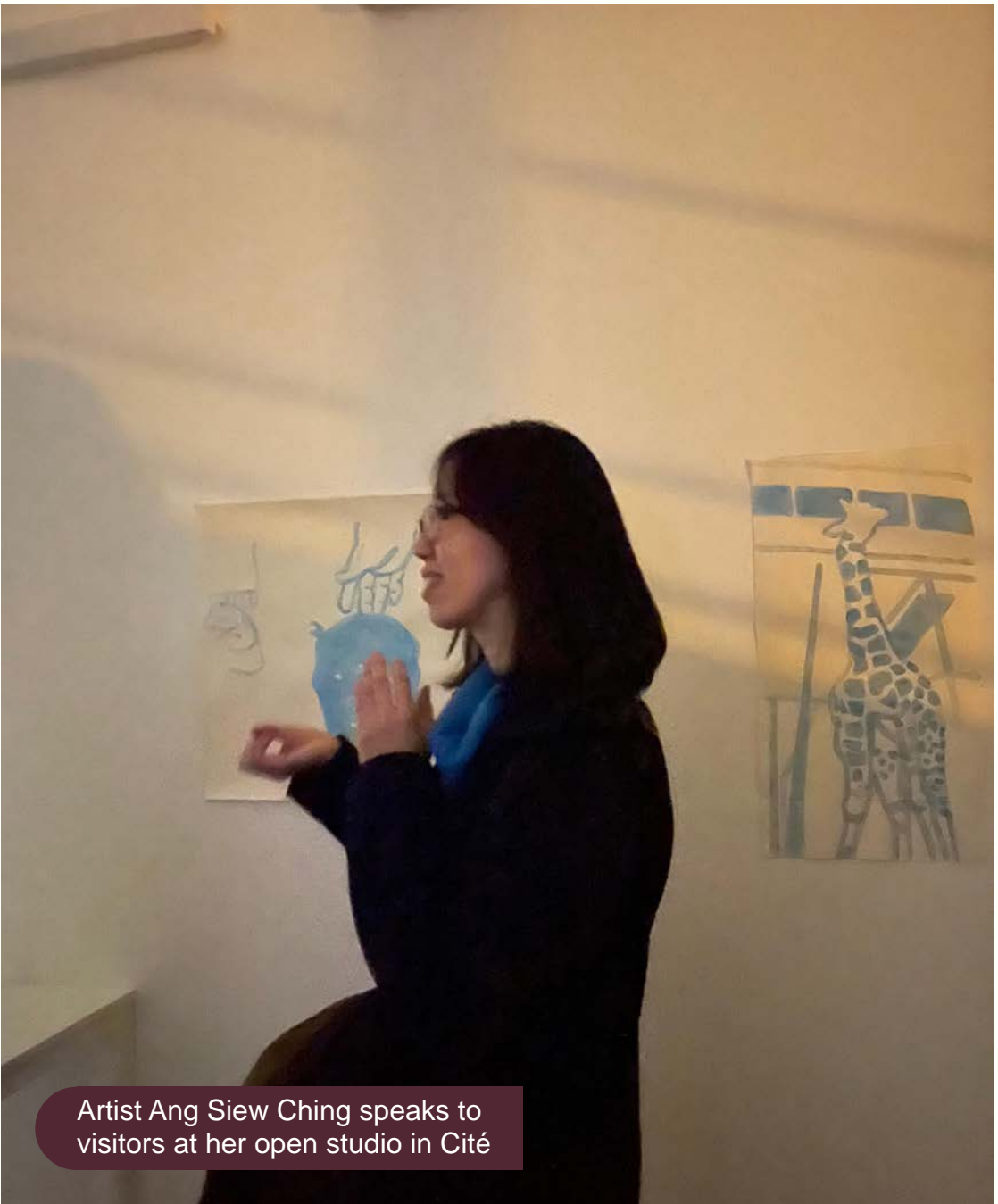


Lunar New Year festive gathering with new friends made at Cité



Fellow Cité resident, writer Annette at her open studio in Cité

Each month, Cité would release a programme of internal events: workshops, talks, excursions, and meetings with curators. The curator meeting slots I was interested in disappeared almost instantly, snapped up as soon as registration opened. It was competitive but understandable; everyone was here to make the most of their time. Instead, I reached out to two curators who agreed to visit my studio. They had distinct approaches. One of them shared a full account of his research in art history, while the other provided a wealth of references to contemporary artists exploring issues similar to mine.



Artist Ang Siew Ching speaks to visitors at her open studio in Cité

Features

Residency Diary

Every Wednesday, Cité transformed into a buzzing hub of creativity as selected artists opened their studios to the public. The admin team distributed maps marking each open studio. Artists and visitors alike wandered through the compound, drifting between exhibits, writings, performances, and conversations.

I took notes on the presenters and arranged follow-up visits for longer, more focused conversations. These visits were incredibly colourful.

There was a translator of Southeast Asian literary works who grew up during the atomic age, determined to do something meaningful with her life. A director who had just released his feature film and generously shared his working process. A novelist who wrote raunchy tales of social emancipation, inspired by her country's socio-political conditions. And a coder-turned-photographer who had escaped an oppressive regime, with a little dog and an even smaller suitcase.

Two months passed in a flash. There were always more exhibitions to see, more people to connect with, more connections to deepen, more resources to consult and more work to be done. A building full of artists and other guests; a city steeped in energy, cultural or otherwise. It was a dream come true for me, being with artists from all over the world to discuss our work and what art-making meant to each of us. And in those musings, we were confronted with the contradictory image of migrant tents on the shiny porch of the building. I was glad to have contributed some energy during those two months, and the residency, in turn, helped me build a network of cultural practitioners and supported my research with its vast resources. ■

Ang Siew Ching is a Singaporean visual artist currently based in Helsinki, Finland. She examines cultural notions of human, animal and infrastructure. She is especially interested in the relation between architecture and bodies. She works across the means of research, graphics and filmmaking, refracting these methods through each other. She was the residency artist of NAFA Studios @ Cité internationale des arts Residency Programme (CRP) for the Jan–Feb 2025 cycle. Her work can be found at <https://angsiewching.com/>



Exhibition view at Poush: "Rire sur un volcan (Laughing on a volcano)" curated by Clara Darrason, Andy Rankin, Mahsan Shams, Alice Loumeau and Valentin Bansac

International Exhibitions, Showcase and Installation

Performative Practices Lab 2025 was a performance art exhibition (17–18 Jan) that explored identity, place, and artistic relevance. Held at NAFA Fashion Gallery and online, it featured 30+ students and alumni from NAFA School of Fine Art with **Central Saint Martins** (CSM), University of the Arts London. *Watch a livestream recording [here](#).*

In 2024, *furnitureOrigins* marked 10 years of collaboration between NAFA and King Mongkut’s University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT) with an exhibition at NAFA featuring locally fabricated designs. It travelled to Bangkok’s Knowledge Exchange (12–21 Feb) during **Bangkok Design Week 2025**.

NAFA fashion graduates Lee Ning Xuan, Valencia and Yu Shan-Tung showcased their designs at the NEFFUL International Global Anniversary 2025 event held at **AsiaWorld-Expo** in Hong Kong (15 Mar).

BLOOMS, an immersive art-science installation, examines human-aquatic relationships through attentively listening to the phenomena of algal biocommunities and the shifting relationships they signal between human activity and aquatic ecosystems. The installation includes a multi-sensory VR experience, an orchestral soundscape, a live culture display with projections, and citizen science workshops. Together, they animate the microcosmic life of phytoplankton and make the invisible audible. Commissioned by the EU-sponsored S+T+ARTS Artist Residency ReSilence, *BLOOMS* was co-created by Dr Joyce Koh (Associate Dean, Interdisciplinary Arts & Technology and Sustainability Research, NAFA, UAS), Wendy Chua and Gustavo Maggio, in collaboration with Christian Stein and Object Space Agency, Sandric Leong and Team HABs at the Tropical Marine Science Institute. Presented at the **Tieranatomisches Theatre** in Berlin from 7 May to 28 June 2025, the exhibition opening featured a live music performance of "String on String," a new string quartet composition written for the installation. *Watch the trailer [here](#).*



BLOOMS, a multi-sensory art-science installation about algae blooms as signals of ecological imbalance. Photo by Andres Gatto

Faculty of Art & Design	Thai designer Mann Craft spoke on the history and beauty of indigo dyeing (20 Jan).	Malaysia-born alumnus Ho Chung Kwang , curator of The Fluxus House, spoke on his journey from high-school dropout to fine art student to gallerist (22 Jan).	British designer Tom Dixon shared the philosophy and process behind projects such as his Fat Chair series with modular C-shaped backrests and his underwater “furniture factory”, where steel frames are submerged for barnacles to attach into furniture. Co-organised by XTRA and NAFA, the event (6 Mar) drew a full house of students from six local institutions, including Nanyang Polytechnic and Temasek Polytechnic. <i>Watch a video excerpt here.</i>
	Singapore sculptor Yeo Chee Kiong (alumnus and adjunct lecturer), spoke about his Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei commission, <i>Teleporting Juming</i> (12 Mar), and conducted 3D modelling and Twinmotion workshops (19 & 26 Mar). He was the 2024 recipient of NAFA’s Special Projects Award.	Dali-born Li Linshu (Millie) shared about traditional dyeing and pattern-making technology of ethnic minorities in southwest China (16 Apr).	Over 10 weeks (Feb–Apr), five pairs of graduate students from School of Fine Art and Royal College of Art (RCA) met online and offline for The Master Atelier Series to challenge conventional boundaries through collaborative research, innovative techniques, and critical dialogue—creating a vibrant space for transformative art and exchange.
Research Café series by the Research Division	Prof Nick Dunn from Lancaster University’s Imagination Lab spoke on <i>Design Research Futures</i> , exploring how design might address global challenges (6 Mar).	Dr Alex Neville from University of Edinburgh’s College of Art presented <i>Film as Practice Research</i> , touching on immigration, national identity, and home (22 Apr).	Dr Robert Dean from University of Lincoln shared <i>Perspectives on Social Prescribing</i> , discussing non-medical, creative approaches to mental health (7 May).



Tom Dixon during his design talk at NAFA

Visiting Students

Vanessa Girling, a Bachelor of Architectural Design student from **Griffith University, Queensland**, is spending 2025 on Study Abroad at NAFA's BA (Hons) Biophilic Design programme under a New Colombo Plan Scholarship.

Four winners of **Thailand's Challenge Cup Dance Competition** joined immersion programmes with NAFA's School of Dance (3–7 Feb & 10–14 Mar)

17 students and 3 faculty and staff members from **University of the Arts London (UAL)** visited NAFA (21–25 Apr) for a creative exchange, including a Southeast Asian arts workshop and cultural site visits, culminating in presentations themed "Our Singapore Story."

- Visits by other students:
- **ECNU Xiping Bilingual School**, Xiamen
 - **Mawar Sharon Christian School**, Surabaya
 - **Petra Senior High School**, Surabaya
 - **Shenzhen American International School**, Shenzhen



Visiting Artists, Designers and Curators

Joselina Cruz (Director and Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art & Design, Manila), offered one-on-one critiques to select MFA Fine Art candidates (17 Jan). She was in town to speak at the inaugural Tanoto Foundation Symposium.

Agnieszka Olwska-Guizzo (Founder, NeuroLandscape) introduced Biophilic Design degree students to neurourbanism during a two-day workshop (24–25 Feb), featuring m-EEG demos, a field visit to KPMG Wellness Garden, and hands-on exercises in therapeutic garden design and urban well-being.

Zuni Icosahedron (Hong Kong's experimental theatre company led by director Mathias Wu and his team) conducted a week-long (3–7 Mar) Arts Tech Residency, including lecture-demonstrations and hands-on workshops exploring immersive design, spatial audio, and Xiqu (Chinese Opera). Organised by the Research Division, the residency challenged traditional boundaries between art, tech, and storytelling.

Denise Campbell (Curator of Asian Ceramics at the Princesshof National Museum of Ceramics, Leeuwarden, the Netherlands), visited to learn about NAFA's ceramics programme (23 May). She was in town to speak at *The Future of Museums in Rapidly Changing Communities*, a symposium organised by National Heritage Board.



Faculty of Art & Design staff members at "Designing Immersive Experiences with Sound and Arts Tech" workshop, part of Arts Tech Residency by Zuni Icosahedron

Prof **Brian Hsu** (concert pianist, University of Oregon) delivered a lecture-recital and masterclasses focused on performance practice and interpretation (26 Mar–2 Apr).

Prof **Gerardo Gozzi** (Royal College of Music) led improvisation workshops and participated in curriculum development discussions with NAFA School of Music (21–25 Apr).

Isabella McGuire Mayes (British ballet artist) conducted a masterclass for School of Dance students (26 May).

NAFA's annual graduation dance showcase, *Crossings 2025*, featured choreography by international choreographers-in-residence:

- **Wu Yi San** (Taiwan)
- **Aditep Buanoi** (Thailand) with **Goh Shou Yi** (Singapore)
- **Etienne Ferrère** (France / Hong Kong)

Visiting Delegations

NAFA hosted formal and informal visits by various international delegations:

- **Advance HE**, London
- **Central Academy of Fine Arts**, Beijing
- **Chanthaburi College of Dramatic Arts**, Chanthaburi
- **Federation Equestre Internationale**, Paris
- **GMBB**, Kuala Lumpur
- **Ho Chi Minh School of Dance**, Ho Chi Minh City
- **Malaysian Institute of Art**, Kuala Lumpur
- **Nanjing University of the Arts**, Nanjing
- **Royal Holloway**, University of London
- **The Central Academy of Drama**, Beijing
- **The Hallé Orchestra**, Manchester
- **UNESCO Regional Office in Jakarta**, Jakarta



Crossings 2025, graduation showcase by School of Dance, with artistic direction by Susan Yeung

Overseas Learning Experiences

Royal College of Music welcomed 43 NAFA students from four degree programmes—Bachelor of Education (Hons) in Instrumental & Vocal Teaching, Bachelor of Music (Hons), Master of Composition, and Master of Performance—for seven weeks (20 Jan–8 Mar). This marked the first time Master's students were included in this annual international placement programme.

University of the Arts London received 156 NAFA students from three BA (Hons) programmes—Design Practice, Fine Art and Performance Making—for international placement between February and April.

Students went on credit-bearing Overseas Immersion Programmes (OIPs):

- School of Music to **Central Conservatory of Music**, Beijing (19 May–6 Jun)
- School of Arts Management to **Institut Seni Indonesia Surakarta** (29 Jun–13 Jul)

Other students embarked on study trips:

- Biophilic Design degree students visited five coastal sites around Bangkok, Thailand, in a study trip organised by **KMUTT's** Faculty of Landscape and Architecture (3–7 Mar).
- Faculty of Art & Design students visited **World Expo Osaka 2025**, Osaka (16–24 Jun).
- Diploma in Dance students went on a study trip to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, as part of a university exchange with **Universiti Malaya** (UM) and **Minzu University of Yunnan** (YMU), China (20 Jun–1 Jul).



A graduate (rightmost) of Nanjing University of the Arts (NUA) shares the concept and process of his final-year project with Michael Lee and Dayn Ng at NUA Museum, as part of the 10th NUA 520 Graduation Exhibition and Carnival

NAFA Delegations

In February, Michael Lee (Global Engagement Lead) travelled to Kuala Lumpur to connect with existing and potential partners, including

- **Dasein Academy of Art**
- **GMBB**
- **Ilham Gallery**
- **Malayan Institute of Art**
- **Multimedia University**
- **Rogue Art**
- **Taylor’s University**
- **The Back Room KL Gallery**
- **The One Academy**
- **The Zhongshan Building**
- **Universiti Teknologi MARA**
- **University of Malaya**

In June, Dr Tan Wee Hsin (Head of Strings) led 24 youth musicians to Penang for a music outreach with:

- **Children’s Protection Society**

In March, Dr Ernest Lim (Dean, Faculty of Performing Arts), Dr Nellie Seng (Associate Dean, School of Music), and Sunny Wong (Head, Chinese Instrumental Studies) visited the following institutions where the latter two conducted masterclasses for students in their respective instruments

- **Affiliated Middle School of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music**, Shanghai
- **Beijing Normal University**, Beijing
- **Shanghai Conservatory of Music**, Shanghai

In June, Dr Ernest Lim (Dean, Faculty of Performing Arts), Dr Nellie Seng (Associate Dean, School of Music) and Sunny Wong (Head of Chinese Instrumental Studies) visited:

- **Fuzhou No. 11 Middle School**, where Dr Jessica Chen (Head of Vocal Studies) conducted a masterclass
- **Fujian Preschool Education College**
- **Fujian Vocational College of Art**
- **Inner Mongolia Arts University**
- **Jilin University of the Arts**
- **Shandong University of Arts**

In April, Dr Bridget Tracy Tan (Senior Director, Institute of Southeast Asian Arts & Art Galleries) and Assoc Prof Michael Tan (Dean, Research & Knowledge Exchange) were invited to the **UCLA Centre of Southeast Asian Studies** in Los Angeles. Dr Tan gave a lecture on Southeast Asian art practice, and there were discussions led by Assoc Prof Tan on knowledge and scholarship exchange, fellowship opportunities and collaborative projects to develop the partnership.

In May, Michael Lee (Global Engagement Lead) and Dayn Ng (Programme Leader, Digital Innovation, Faculty of Performing Arts) were invited by **Nanjing University of the Arts** to attend their graduation showcase, *520*. They also had discussions with faculty members of the School of Design and School of Digital Arts.

In May, NAFA President Mrs Tan-Soh Wai Lan travelled with the University of the Arts Singapore (UAS) delegation to Hong Kong and Beijing where they visited

- Academy of Arts and Design, **Tsinghua University** (AADTHU)
- **Beijing Dance Academy** (BDA)
- **Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts** (HKAPA)
- School of Arts, **Peking University** (PKU)
- The School of Creative Media (SCM), **City University of Hong Kong** (CityUHK)
- The University Museum and Art Gallery (UMAG), **The University of Hong Kong** (HKU)

Residency Artists of NAFA Studios @ Cité internationale des arts in Paris

	<i>Open Call</i>	<i>In partnership with UOB</i>
Jan–Feb 2025	Ang Siew Ching (Finland/Singapore)	Chomrawi Suksom (Thailand)
Mar–Apr 2025	Koh Kai Ting & Aw Boon Xin (Malaysia/Singapore)	Muhammad Yakin (Indonesia)
May–Jun 2025	Lynn Lu (UK/Singapore)	Umibaizurah Binti Mahir Ismail (Malaysia)

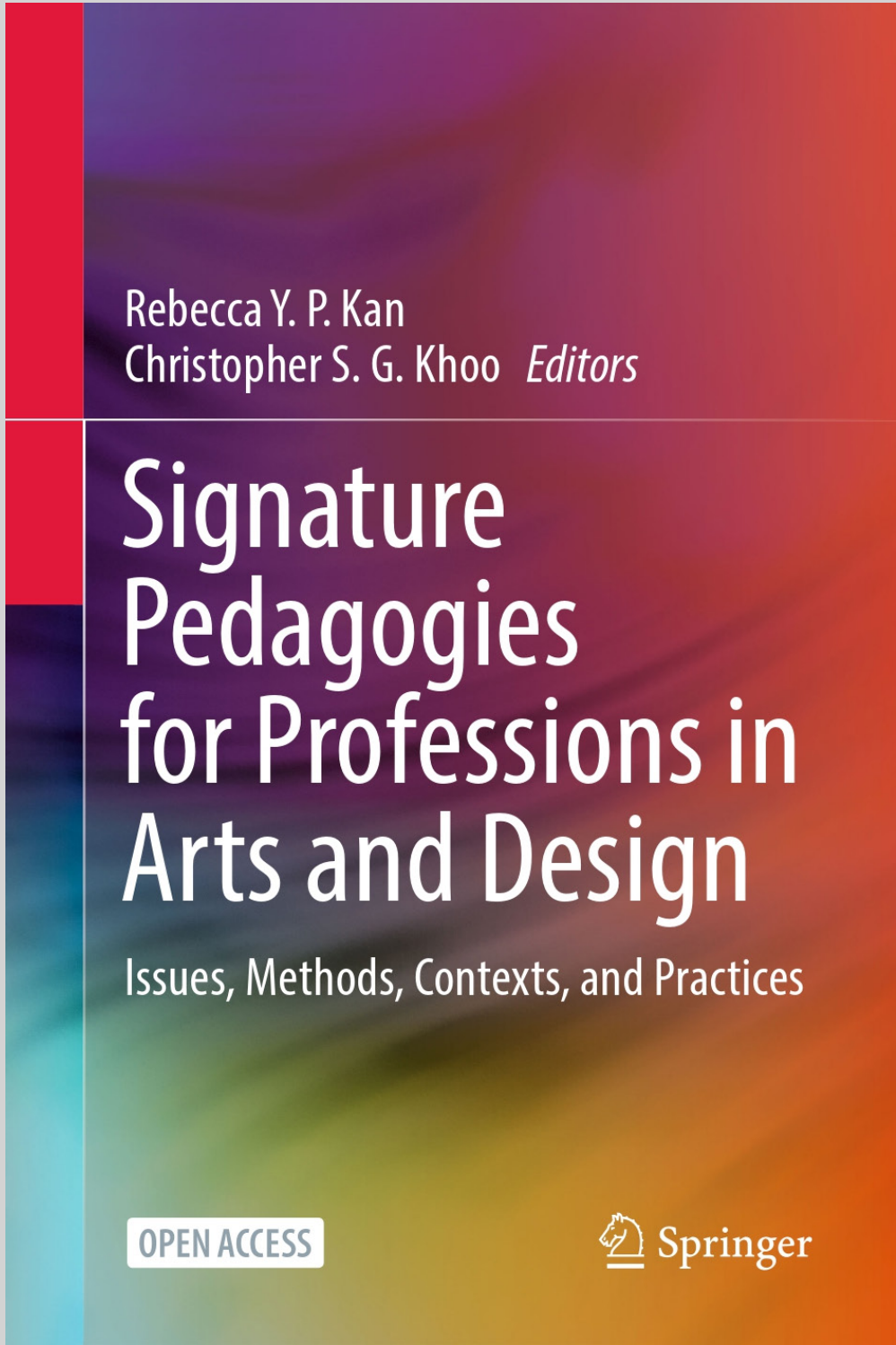
Research Publications

Assoc Prof Chong Keng Hua, Provost and Vice President (Academic), edited the anthology, **Data-Driven Smart Community Design Strategies for Fostering Inclusive and Resilient Neighbourhoods**, published by Routledge in 2025. *Read the editorial introduction [here](#).*

Assoc Prof Michael Tan (Dean, Research and Knowledge Exchange) is a co-author of “Reimagining Woodlands, a model village: A case study of participatory methods for exploring sustainable and equitable neighbourhoods”, published as conference proceeding in **Urban Futures—Cultural Pasts**. *Read it [here](#).*

Dr Rebecca Kan (Associate Dean, Curriculum and Pedagogy, Faculty of Performing Arts), contributed to several key publications.

- Her sole-authored article, “*In the cleft of a rock: Experiences in the in-between space of learning among undergraduate arts and design students*”, was published in **Higher Education Research & Development** (*read it [here](#)*).
- She also co-authored
 1. The article “Affordances of an in-between space of learning to foster professionalism”, in **Studies in Higher Education** (*read it [here](#)*);
 2. The book chapter “Fostering a Pedagogy of Care through a Universal Design Framework for Music Learning in Singapore’s Early Childhood Education,” in **Inclusive Special Education: Research to Practice** by IntechOpen (*read it [here](#)*), and
 3. The study “Transversing to a peripheral space of professional learning: A case study of service learning in music at higher education,” published in **Arts Education and Sustainability in a Time of Crisis** (Vol. 4) (*read it [here](#)*).
- Finally, **Signature Pedagogies For Professions in Arts and Design**, co-edited by Dr Kan and Assoc Prof Christopher Khoo and published by Springer (*read the full book [here](#)*), included chapters by NAFA faculty members
 1. Alicia Joyce De Silva
 2. Choong Kheng Tan
 3. Dr Caren Carino
 4. Dr Eleanor Tan
 5. Grace Leong Yit Ming
 6. Georgette Yu
 7. Jeremy Wong
 8. Mei Lian Peh



Book cover of *Signature Pedagogies for Professions in Arts and Design* (2025), edited by Dr Kan and Prof Christopher Khoo and published by Springer

Research Presentations

Susan Yeung (Associate Dean, School of Dance) presented “Dance Education for the Future” at **World Dance Education Alliance Conference** held from 18 to 20 October 2024 in Beijing, China.

Dr Yu Wei Jie (Principal Teaching Fellow, School of Theatre) presented "Localised Fruition Across Time & Space: Hokkien Opera in/of Singapore" in **National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts Conference**, held on 25 Oct 2024 in Beijing, China.

Dr Bridget Tracy Tan (Senior Director, Institute of Southeast Asian Arts & Art Galleries) presented "The Transformative Effects of Consuming Data: The Experiences of Digital Art and Beyond" at the **Digital Arts and Design International Conference and Exhibition**, held from 28–29 Nov 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Dr Caren Carino (Dean, Faculty of Interdisciplinary Practices) presented "*INterSPACE: Navigating Tradition and Cultural Evolution*" at the **Asia Pacific Dance Festival Conference**, held from 30 May to 1 June at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (Honolulu, USA).

Professional Appointments & Scholarship

Grace Leong, Programme Leader (Academic Enhancement), Teaching & Learning Centre:

- Advisor, **Noise Performance House** (2025)
- Member of the Artistic Advisory Panel, **George Town Festival** (2024–2025)

Ang Chiat (Senior Lecturer, School of 3D Design):

- Juror, **iF Design Student Award 2025**, a Germany-based competition (Judging, 12–21 Mar)

Dr Goh Toh Chai (Head of Composition, School of Music):

- Clinician and Lecturer, 7th **Symposium on Choral Music** in Bandung, Indonesia (22–26 Jan)
- Adjudicator, The inaugural **Sarawak International Choral Festival** (13–15 Jun)

Lena Ching (Deputy Associate Dean, School of Music):

- Jury member, The 7th **Steinway Malaysia Youth Piano Competition** (4–13 Apr)

Assoc Prof Chong Keng Hua, Provost & Vice President (Academic):

- Visiting Scholar to **Georgia Institute of Technology** (Apr)

Dr Caren Carino (Dean, Faculty of Interdisciplinary Practices)

- Adjudicator and Speaker, **International Ballet Grand Prix** Finals and Conference

Oscar Ng (Head, Alumni Relations):


- Member, the UK Alumni Advisory Board spearheaded by **British Council** in Singapore. The board’s first quarterly meeting is scheduled to be in August 2025.



New Initiatives	<p>The new Art Research Scholar-in-Residence (ARSiR) programme fosters cross-disciplinary exchange to spark intellectual diversity and critical reflection on the creative and cultural industries’ role in society. During her residency (13 Jan–12 Jul) with NAFA’s Research Division, the programme’s first scholar-in-residence, Salty Ng, a leading socially engaged artist based in Portland and Singapore, conducted a scoping study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>The State of Socially Engaged Art Practice in Singapore: Perspectives, Practice and Capacity Development</i>			Teaching and Learning Centre (Curriculum and Pedagogy) welcomed Professor Kim Schildkamp (University of Twente , the Netherlands) in February to integrate Data Team™ in school intervention for educational improvement.
Global Accolades	<p>Petipa Prix International Ballet Competition (Yokohama, 2 Jan):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Junior Dance students Varcus Kang and Sophia Wang won first place in the Contemporary Duo (Age 15) category.Junior Dance student Leow Xin Yi Stephanie placed 5th in Ballet Solo (Age 15).	<p>Hong Kong International Youth Performance Arts (HKYPA) Competition 2025 (7–9 Feb):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Music diploma student Valnetta Serafina Kwintarya clinched 1st place in the Open Class.	<p>Hong Kong International Young Musicians Competition (14–19 Apr):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Music degree student Zhu Zunzun won 2nd prize in the 18–23 category.	
	<p>ASEAN Furniture Design Award 2025 (Bangkok, 2 Apr):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Raihan Syahmi, a Design Practice degree student at NAFA, was the overall winner at the inaugural edition for his <i>Heritage 60 Stool</i>—a sustainable reimagining of the classic kopitiam stool. <i>Read a media coverage here.</i>	<p>Hong Kong International Dance Competition (30 Apr–1 May):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Mdm Fang Yuan (Principal Mentor and Head of Junior Music) clinched four first prizes across Professional-Amateur categories.	<p>D&AD New Blood Award (London, 2 Jul):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Design Practice degree students Chang Kai Chu (Year 2) and Chang Kai-Ju (Year 3) won a Wood Pencil for their project <i>KMC Power Up</i>, responding to the Kraft Mac & Cheese brief. The siblings attended the awards ceremony in London, funded by NAFA Overseas Travel Grant.	



Raihan Syahmi, the overall winner at the inaugural ASEAN Furniture Design Award 2025 for his *Heritage 60 Stool*

<h1>Ongoing Exhibitions</h1>	<p><i>Streams of Change</i> (The Ngee Ann Kongsi Galleries 1 & 2, 16 Jul–17 Aug): Featuring six artist-educators from Silpakorn University’s Faculty of Decorative Arts, this exhibition uses the river system as a metaphor to explore the interconnectedness of ecological systems, human impact, and shifting internal and external landscapes.</p> <p><i>Sentient Beings, Virtual World: Revelations in Digital Ethnographies</i> (Lim Hak Tai Gallery, 22 Jul–24 Aug): This exhibition by Thai artist-educators Gomesh Karnchanapayap and Atithep Chaetnalao from the Faculty of Decorative Arts, Silpakorn University, blends digital storytelling, research, and interactive art to reimagine Thai heritage, identity, and spiritual traditions through immersive experiences.</p>	<div></div> <div>Supachai Areerungruang, <i>Dust and Endurance</i>, 2025, oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm, part of the exhibition "Streams of Change", The Ngee Ann Kongsi Galleries 1 & 2</div>
<h1>Upcoming Conferences and Exchanges</h1>	<p>Arts & Design Practice Research Exchange (ADPRex) (6 & 7 Aug): Southeast Asia’s first annual conference dedicated to practice research returns this year, bringing together artists and thinkers to explore how creative practice intersects with ‘capture’—through documentation, performance, technology, and memory—and how recording practices both reflect and shape artistic meaning and evolution. <i>Get more info here.</i></p> <p>UOB-NAFA Southeast Asian Arts Forum (7 & 8 Aug): The sixth edition of the Forum, themed <i>Imaginary Library: The Art of Embodied Chronicles</i>, explores how physical and digital archives shape memory, identity, and artistic practice in an AI-driven world. Highlights are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SEArch origin student exchange workshop (new feature)• SEArch Roundtable (second iteration)• Southeast Asia Masterclasses for BA (Hons) Design Practice, Biophilic Design, and Fine Art, in collaboration with Silpakorn University professors Gomesh Karnchanapayap and Supachai Areerungruang, with UOB residency participant and POY alumnus, Chomwari Suksom (exhibition spinoff) <p><i>Register for physical or online attendance here.</i></p>	<p>Interdisciplinary Arts Salon (10 Oct, 6–9pm): The Salon's third edition, <i>You Are Here. Now What?</i> features <i>Excavations</i>, an interdisciplinary spoken-word poetry performance, followed by the discussion <i>After the Dust</i>, which frames artistic practice as an act of digging and considers what we carry forward, what we leave behind, and how we might shape what comes next. <i>For enquiry on limited seats, email foip@nafa.edu.sg.</i></p> <p>Healing Arts Singapore (8–12 Dec): Asia’s first country-level Healing Arts activation is a week-long programme of research, interventions, and training to support health policy, co-led by NUS’s Centre for Music and Health; NAFA, University of the Arts Singapore, and the Jameel Arts & Health Lab with World Health Organization. <i>Register your interest to partner here.</i></p>

Residencies

NAFA invites Southeast Asian artists to apply for its NAFA Studios @ **Cité internationale des arts** Residency Programme (CRP), which supports artistic growth and global exchange in Paris for up to two months per artist or collective. The upcoming application deadlines for the Open Call programme are as follows:

Application deadline	Residency period
29 Aug 2025	Jan–Feb 2026
29 Oct 2025	Mar–Apr 2026
29 Dec 2025	May–Jun 2026
29 Feb 2026	Jul–Aug 2026
29 Apr 2026	Sep–Oct 2026
29 Jun 2026	Nov–Dec 2026

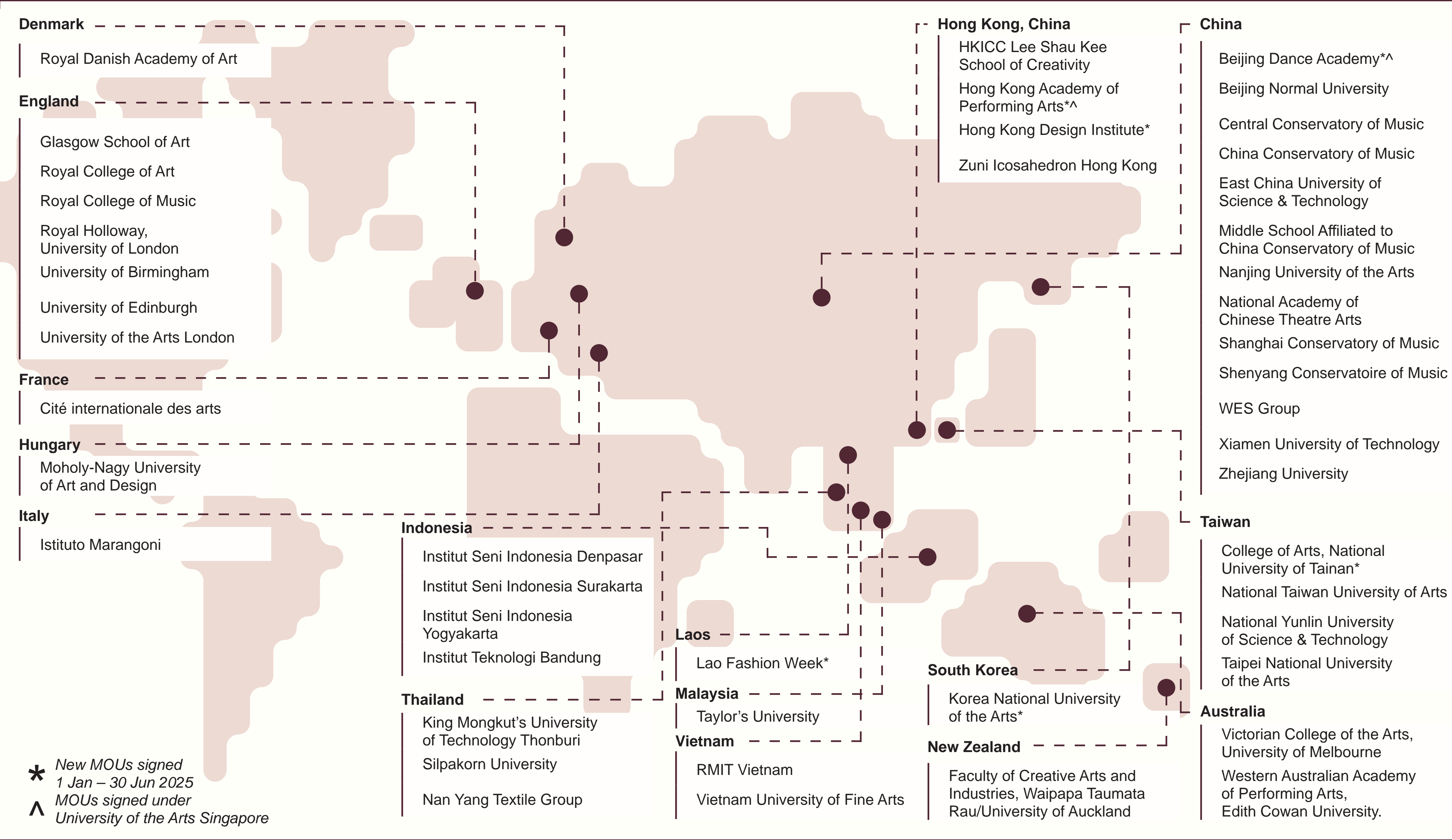
Get more details [here](#).

Alumni Relations

Overseas Alumni Series: To spotlight overseas alumni career journeys, NAFA's Alumni Relations Office launched the video series *Bridging Worlds—From NAFA to Home* on social media, with the first March 2025 feature profiling Indonesian alumna **Vivien Sianjaya** and the cross-border collaborations rooted in her NAFA connections. Watch the video [here](#), and email alumni@nafa.edu.sg to get in touch.



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