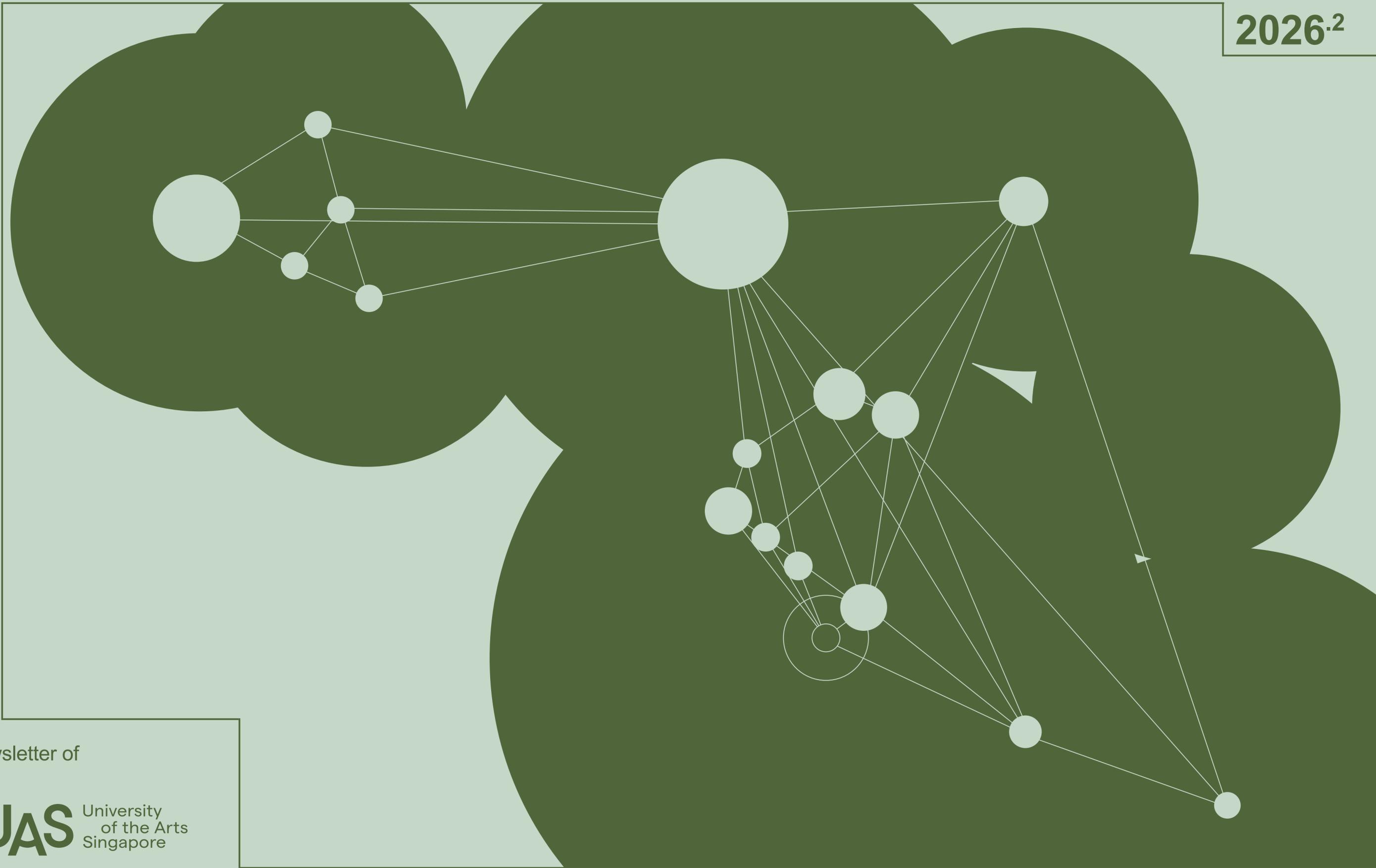


ARTS

2026²



A global engagement newsletter of



Foreword

01

Features

Study Abroad—*From Coast to City*, by Vanessa Girling ⁰²
 Alumni Profile—*Professor Chung Chen Sun: The Artist as a Cultural Philanthropist*, an interview with Dr Chung Yi by Michael Lee ⁰⁵
 Staff Profile—*Cycle and Convergences*, by Dr Laura Hayes ⁰⁹

02-11

News

Travels ¹²
 Showcases ¹⁵
 Workshops ¹⁶
 Dialogues ¹⁷
 Achievements ¹⁸⁻²¹
 Thought Leadership ²²⁻²³

12-23

Opportunities

Events ²⁴
 Residencies ²⁵
 Alumni Award Nominations ²⁵
 Giving Month ²⁵
 Contribute to this Newsletter ²⁵

24-25

Partners

26



Hazel Chan at Beijing 798 Art District, 2025. Photo courtesy of Hazel Chan.

Greetings from the Global Engagement team!

Internationalisation at NAFA refers not only to movement across borders, institutions or even disciplines but also to the depths of encounter and exchange that we experience along the way, through the relationships formed, voices heard, and knowledge co-created with one another.

In this issue, the stories show how global engagement is enacted daily in studios and theatres, classrooms and communities, field visits, and festivals. It is guided by our 4Cs: nurturing Craft mastery, instilling Care for Community, honing Cross-Cultural perspectives, and embracing the Courage to Create. Our students navigate new environments with curiosity, while our faculty, alumni, and community of artists extend their work through sustained international partnerships and outreach.

Anchored in Singapore and the rest of Southeast Asia, NAFA's approach to internationalisation positions the region at the centre of global artistic and educational conversations. Partnerships are prioritised for depth, reciprocity, and context over volume, and we value long-term commitment over short-term success.

The current issue also highlights how education, artistic practice, and research around the world are responding to shared concerns around sustainability, environmental issues, cultural heritage, community care, and wellbeing. This is a snapshot of the many interconnected efforts that NAFA is bringing forth as a university college, grounded in learning, practice, and inquiry.

Atlas is not only a documentation of the work to date but also an invitation to you to participate, to collaborate, to join us in shaping global engagement that deepens purpose and expands impact. We look forward to hearing from you at global@nafa.edu.sg.

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

From Coast to City: Discovering Biophilia Amid a Concrete Jungle

By Vanessa Girling



Vanessa Girling in Bangkama township, Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province, Thailand during her field study, 2025. Photo courtesy of Vanessa Girling.

When I left Byron Bay on Australia's east coast, the ocean was the last thing I saw: wide, unbroken, and deeply familiar. Midway through my architecture degree at Griffith University, I was awarded the Australian Federal Government's New Colombo Plan Scholarship. Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) was central to my scholarship proposal. I was drawn to Singapore as a dense, equatorial city that has had to negotiate nature not as an amenity, but as a necessity, and to NAFA for its rare focus on biophilic design within an urban Indo-Pacific context.

The shift from a quiet coastal town to one of the world's most carefully designed cities was initially confronting. Yet Singapore gradually revealed itself through everyday encounters. MRT journeys became moments of quiet observation, while hawker centres offered grounding rituals of shared space and routine familiarity. Rather than feeling like a departure from nature, it became an introduction to a different relationship with it, shaped by density and care.

Choosing to study BA (Hons) Biophilic Design was deliberate. The programme is grounded in the understanding that humans have an innate connection with nature, and that honouring this relationship within the built environment is one of the most critical challenges of our time.

With over thirteen years of experience working within the architecture and design industry, I have seen first-hand how contemporary spaces neglect both human and ecological needs. The programme provided a language and structure to these observations, offering practical ways to translate this understanding into spatially responsive design.



Vanessa Girling in Singapore, 2025. Photo courtesy of Vanessa Girling.



Michael Widya, Puan Nasya Airin, Zeng Zi Xuan, Vanessa Girling, and Brent Ethan Esguerra Nogrado, *Thrive Together* (2025) board. Image courtesy of Vanessa Girling.

My first semester situated these ideas within Singapore's urban context and highlighted the strength of multidisciplinary collaboration. Our studio focused on Bendemeer–Kallang Bahru, a neighbourhood shaped by rapid urbanisation and demographic change, where an ageing population increasingly outnumbers working adults.

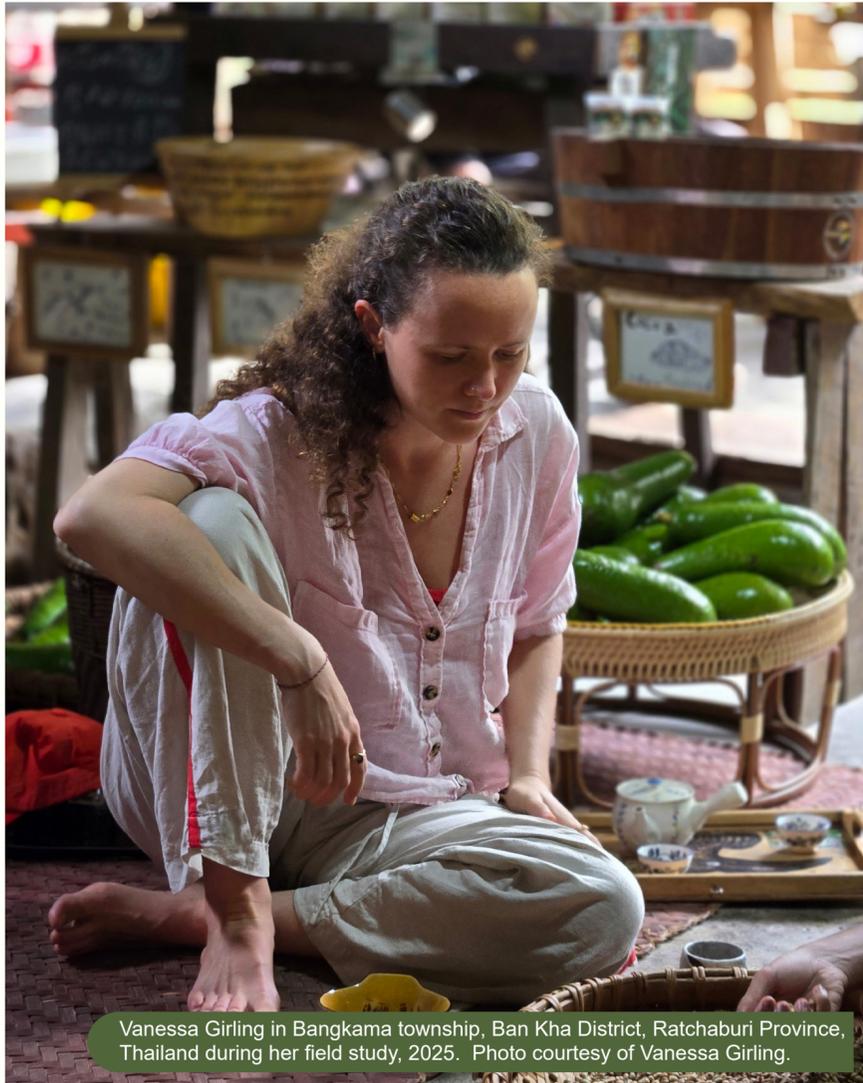
Through my team's project *Thrive Together*, we explored how biophilic strategies could reframe narratives of ageing and productivity, responding to social and demographic shifts while fostering dignity, connection, and wellbeing. The project examined how access to natural systems is associated with reduced stress, improved mood, enhanced cognitive ability, and increased productivity, particularly within intergenerational communities.

The project was developed collaboratively with Michael Widya, Puan Nasya Airin, Zeng Zi Xuan, and Brent Ethan Esguerra Nogrado.

Thrive Together received two awards at the Singapore Institute of Landscape Architects Student Design Awards 2025, conferred by the Singapore Institute of Landscape Architects in partnership with NAFA: LEN-TIL Award – Bronze for Outstanding Contextual Analysis & Investigation, and the Bronze Award for Social Impact Through Design.

Features

Study Abroad



Vanessa Girling in Bangkama township, Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province, Thailand during her field study, 2025. Photo courtesy of Vanessa Girling.

In my second semester, collaboration deepened during a field study in Bangkama township, a small Pwo Karen village located within a UNESCO World Heritage site in Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province, Thailand. Living and conducting field studies with the local community informed the design of a cultural agroforestry farm stay known as Gui Nho. Here, Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) was encountered as lived practice rather than theory.

Among the Pwo Karen, this was evident in rotational farming practices that allow forest regeneration, seasonal building methods, and agricultural planning guided by biodiversity. Architecture emerged as something that participates in natural cycles rather than resisting them.

For my final project, I worked with fellow student Puan Nasya Airin to redesign the agroforestry farm stay for the village chief. Regenerative strategies were embedded throughout, including water, energy, and agricultural systems informed by TEK, reinforcing a closed-loop relationship between land, construction, and stewardship. Conceived as both accommodation and education, the farm stay enables visitors to learn directly from the Pwo Karen community, allowing culture, ecology, and livelihood to be sustained.



Puan Nasya Airin and Vanessa Girling, architectural model of Pwo Karen agroforestry farm stay. Photo courtesy of Vanessa Girling.



I leave Singapore with deep gratitude for the education, the collaborators, and the perspectives this year has offered me. Studying in one of the world's most carefully constructed cities revealed a welcome irony: it was here, amid density and design precision, that my understanding of nature and our responsibility to it became most refined. Design, like nature itself, is relational. When approached with care, humility, and awareness, it has the capacity to cultivate balance between people, place, and the living systems that hold us. ■



Puan Nasya Airin and Vanessa Girling beside their architectural model, 2025. Photo courtesy of Vanessa Girling.

Vanessa Girling is an Australian architectural designer with over thirteen years of professional experience and the first Study Abroad student to spend a full year at NAFA. She is also a meditation teacher and avid surfer, exploring biophilic and regenerative design through the integration of Traditional Ecological Knowledge, environmental psychology, and a deep understanding of place.

Professor Chung Chen Sun: The Artist as a Cultural Philanthropist

An interview with Dr Chung Yi by Michael Lee

The late Professor Chung Chen Sun (b. 1935–d. 2024, Malaysia) was an internationally acclaimed artist and educator dedicated to expanding access to art education and enriching communities. Against the backdrop of Singapore's and Malaysia's independence, he played a pioneering role in modernising Chinese ink painting and art education, believing that culture and art could help shape national identity.

His legacy is most visible in the institutions he founded: the Malaysia Institute of Art (1967) and MSC International College (Media, Art, and Design) (2000), as well as joint ventures in China such as the International Modern Art and Design Colleges at Yunnan University and Inner Mongolia Normal University (1994), and the Chen Sun International Modern Art and Design College (2000). Through these institutions, he empowered generations of students from underserved backgrounds to pursue careers in the arts.

His enduring commitment to cultural philanthropy and educational reform earned him NAFA's first posthumous conferment of the Distinguished Alumni Award 2025, alongside numerous international honours.

In this interview, his daughter Dr. Chung Yi, an artist, art historian, and researcher, reflects on his life and legacy to offer personal insights into the man behind his public achievements.



Chung Chen Sun, *Harmony* 《和气》, 137 × 68 cm, Chinese ink on paper, 2013. Private Collection.



Chung Chen Sun, *Uphold Righteousness in the World and Follow the Path of Virtue for All* 《立天下之正位、行天下之大道》, 135 × 68 cm, Chinese ink on paper, 1986. Private Collection.

How did Prof Chung Chen Sun's influences shape his signature art style?

My father began with Chen Wen Hsi and Cheong Soo Pieng, who grounded him in brush-ink discipline and the experimental Nanyang spirit. Germany's Bauhaus later broadened his belief that art and design could help build a nation. In his later years, classical Chinese philosophy such as the I-Ching, Taiji, and yin-yang theories guided him towards expressing spirit over form.

His belief was: "Painting must capture the spirit, not just the form" (传神不传形). He insisted that ink painting could evolve, but never abandon the brush-ink lineage.



His iconic work *One Life in a Few Masterstrokes* 《一生只数笔》 exemplifies his aesthetic philosophy: that with a few strokes, one can express a lifetime of artistic wisdom, strength, and insight.

When he painted indigenous peoples, he expressed their humanity, purity, innocence, and simple joy. When he painted rounded figures, he was expressing inclusivity: "a big belly accommodates all things" (有容乃大).

Chung Chen Sun, *A Life in a Few Masterstrokes* 《一生只数笔》, 89 x 97 cm, Chinese ink on rice paper, 2004. Private Collection.

Who influenced his art education?



For art education, the strongest influence on my father was Lim Hak Tai, founding principal of NAFA, where my father studied Art Education.

Lim spoke often about Cai Yuanpei, the president of Peking University (1917–1927), who championed "freedom of thought" and "aesthetic education replacing religion" (以美育代宗教). That gave my father a strong conviction that art education must cultivate independent thinking.

Another important influence was Liu Haisu, who founded the Shanghai Academy of Art at just 19 years old. My father always said this inspired him: "If Liu Haisu could start an art academy so young, why couldn't I?" That boldness led him to return to Malaysia after graduation to found MIA. Liu Haisu also introduced life drawing in China.

My father became the first in Malaysia to introduce nude drawing in an art academy setting: initially behind closed doors, but nonetheless a significant milestone.

Chung Chen Sun, *Indian Lady (Mother and Child)*, 136 x 65 cm, Chinese ink on rice paper, 1975. Private Collection.

What was his teaching style?

He allowed complete freedom. He never wanted students to imitate him. He believed: "If you follow me, you will die creatively." He guided each individually according to personality and strengths. He required students to read, think, and evolve. He wanted them to become thinkers, not craftsmen.

He accepted only four formal disciples (Goh Ah Ang from Malaysia, Chen Yong Mo from Taiwan, and Wubin and Chen Manzhi from China), chosen first for character. He never wanted them to paint like him; that would have meant failure.

So today each has their own style, though they understand his philosophy deeply. He didn't want any successor to his art style. He said students must surpass their teacher. I myself chose not to paint with ink because having watched him since young, my strokes would automatically imitate his. Instead, I use woodcut, the hardest tool to carve the softest lines, the opposite of his method. His disciples all have distinct styles, which is exactly what he hoped for.

What challenges did he face in founding MIA?

The journey was very similar to NAFA's early struggles. My father worked as a secondary school art teacher and used his salary to fund MIA. My mother supported him fully; we lived next door to the school and cooked for students. His artist-friends volunteered to teach.

The first batch in 1967 had only 14 students: exactly the same number that NAFA started with! At MIA's height, out of the population of over 3,000 students, 2,800 received full or partial scholarships. He also subsidised students' medical needs and living costs.

All teachers' children studied for free, but his own children paid full fees. He and my mother lived simply so others could have an education.



Chung Chen Sun, *Heroic Conference*, 122 x 200 cm, Chinese ink on rice paper, 1974. Collection of National Art Gallery Malaysia.

Why did multicultural solidarity matter so much to him?

It came from the environment, not politics. Malacca's multicultural landscape shaped his worldview: mosques, temples, and churches coexisting. He never viewed cultures separately. In the 1970s, he organised multi-ethnic artist gatherings: Chinese, Malay, and Indian artists all together, which was unheard of then.

A famous painting of a group of tigers, donated to the National Art Gallery in Kuala Lumpur, commemorated one such gathering: Chinese text translated into Jawi and mounted below the artwork. It symbolised unity.

He also led cultural associations, raised funds for community development, and used art to support healthcare and education for students. He saw his artworks as currencies: helping those in need.

**How did his ideals shape his work and how he lived?
What was the vision for his artist village about?**

My father believed art was a way of life and a path to peace. His vision was a shared society where art, education, community, economy, and wellness coexisted without profit-driven compromise.

He lived his life teaching that wealth should be returned to society, and that life should be lived artfully. Though always busy, people genuinely wanted to help him because he helped so many.

I worked closely beside him as his secretary and learned leadership, care, and responsibility through his example. His dream may not be realised physically, but he painted it, expressed it, and left that vision to us.



Chung Chen Sun, *Artist Village* 《东方人艺术村》, approximately 100 × 200 cm, Chinese ink on rice paper, 2000. Private Collection.

What kept him going?

My father lived by his principles. His life motto, written in his self-portrait, was: “Stand upright in the world; walk the great way.”
《立天下之正位，行天下之大道》

He always walked the righteous path and taught us that our purpose is to give back to society.

In 2007, we donated over a thousand artworks and antiques to establish the Chung Chen Sun Art Museum in Yunnan: fulfilling his wish of Chinese culture returning to China. We continue to donate his artworks to public museums rather than sell them.

His art was never a commodity; it was a legacy to be shared.

I consider myself very fortunate to be his daughter. He was not just a great artist and educator: he was a great human being. ■



Dr Chung Yi with her father, Prof Chung Chen Sun, outside Chung Chen Sun Art Museum in Yunnan University of Finance and Economics, 2011. Photo courtesy of Dr Chung Yi.

Dr Chung Yi left a successful science career to become a pioneering Malaysian art historian. She dedicates her life to documenting Malaysian Chinese art, preserving her father's legacy, and advancing art education. She currently serves as the Director and Professor of the Research Institute of Southeast Asia Arts & Culture (Yunnan University of Finance and Economics), and Director of Chung Chen Sun Art Museum (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia).

This interview was conducted in Mandarin Chinese and translated into English by Michael Lee.

Cycles and Convergences

By Dr Laura Hayes

Last year, while performing *no there there* in the studio theatre at NAFA, I felt a sense of coming full circle. It drew together several strands in my life: my artistic practice as a theatre-maker, my PhD research, and twelve years of teaching at NAFA.

With the support of NAFA's Special Projects Awards, *Autopoetics*—an international, Singapore-based theatre collective I co-founded—performed *no there there* in the same space where I teach and direct students. The project brought my external professional work into NAFA's teaching space, aligning my creative and academic worlds in a moment of convergence.



Chelsea Crothers and Dr Laura Hayes in *no there there* (2024) by Autopoetics. Photo by Crispian Chan.

Another strand emerged through casting my former student Natalie Linn Titus, whom I taught during both her diploma and degree studies at NAFA, in *no there there*. Watching her work as a student, I was impressed by Natalie's intelligence, diligence, and talent. It felt cyclical to move from teacher and student to becoming collaborators in the same theatre space.

Natalie played Charlie, a patient caught between two worlds: the reality of being stuck in hospital receiving treatment, and the world of social media she uses to distract herself from her boredom.

To escape, she is drawn under the spell of internet influencers and gurus who offer her insights into their worlds. Charlie invents the Instagram character 'Cha Cha', who becomes a social media star by pretending that she already is one.

no there there also formed part of my PhD research into the relationship between devised theatre-making and playwriting. Devising is often seen as theatre-making that begins without an existing playtext, but my research challenges this understanding.



Dr Laura Hayes speaking at Arts & Design Practice Research Exchange (ADPRex) 2025. Photo by Filmingo Pte Ltd.



Dr Laura Hayes in *Provenance* (2018) by Autopoetics, performed at Drama Centre Black Box. Photo by Jacob Paint.

I explore expanded approaches to playwriting that combine standard playtext content (for example, characters and a narrative arc), with provocations more typical of devising, such as pictures, videos, and objects. As my research proposes a new playwriting format, I found it necessary to assess my ideas through my own practice, making practice research a core methodology.

Practice research uses artistic practice to answer research questions, much like a scientist conducts experiments to test a hypothesis. This approach is also central to my administrative work at NAFA, where I support and manage platforms that advance arts and design practice research. Through these initiatives, NAFA positions itself as a regional leader by providing artist-scholars with dedicated spaces to share their work and critically reflect on how practice informs inquiry.

Those who engage in practice research—and who, like me, use artistic practice to generate knowledge—move fluidly among roles: artist, maker, thinker, teacher, and student. These shifting identities support one another and are fundamental to the work of artist-educators. In performances such as *no there there* in NAFA's studio theatre, these threads converge: theatre-maker, teacher, collaborator, administrator, student, and researcher come together in a single site of practice and reflection.

Features

Staff Profile

Boundaries dissolved, and the cycle of learning, making, and sharing came full circle. The studio theatre at NAFA, as both classroom and stage, embodies this ongoing cycle. Here, practice and research, mentorship and collaboration, continually weave together, shaping not only my journey, but also NAFA's evolving identity as a centre for artistic inquiry and exchange. ■

Dr Laura Hayes is a theatre-maker and educator. Her research explores creative interventions in playwriting and she is often inspired by her past training at the École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq. As a playwright, her work has been staged by Wild Rice, Autopoetics, produced by Centre 42 for the Singapore Night Festival, and published in Scriptum: Creative Writing Research Journal. Her theatre collective, Autopoetics, makes work in Singapore. She currently serves as Assoc Dean (Practice Research), Research Division at NAFA.



Visiting Students



UCLA students and Professor Robert McCann at NAFA, 2025. Photo by Assoc Prof Michael KB Tan.

On 9 July, the Research Division hosted Professor Robert McCann from **University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)**, and students in the UCLA Travel Study: Global Studies – Business Leadership, Communication, and Culture programme. Ye Shufang, Dr Hoe Su Fern, and Assoc Prof Michael KB Tan shared about their journey into the arts and cultural development through an informal conversation session.

Two BA Art Design students from the School of Future Design (SFD), **Beijing Normal University (BNU)** joined NAFA's BA (Hons) Design Practice Year 2 students that took place from 11 August to 7 December. Two MFA Design Education students (also from SFD, BNU) joined the Faculty of Art & Design from 4 to 31 August for a short residency as part of their learning.

Visits by students from other institutions:

- **Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA)**, Perth, Australia
- **Tainan National University of the Arts (TNNUA)**, Tainan, Taiwan
- **Haesung International School**, Seoul, South Korea
- **New Taipei Municipal Fuhe Junior High School**, Taipei, Taiwan
- **Shimizu Minami High School**, Shizuoka, Japan

Visiting Delegations

National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts (NACTA), Beijing, China, co-presented a collaborative performance with NAFA students from Chinese Instrumental Studies on 4 September at the Lee Foundation Theatre.

Ravi S Rajan, President of the **California Institute of the Arts (CalArts)**, visited NAFA for a discussion on fostering collaboration between the two institutions on 24 October.

NAFA welcomed **Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design (MOME)** faculty Prof Püspök Balázs (MA Programme Coordinator and Acting Vice Rector) and András Hünfalvi (Lecturer, Mobility Design Specialisation) on 15 October to explore potential collaborations.

NAFA hosted formal and informal visits by various international delegations:

- **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)**, Indore, India
- **RMIT University**, Melbourne, Australia
- **Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts**, Helsinki, Finland
- **National Taiwan University of the Arts (NTUA)**, Taipei, Taiwan
- **Maharakham University**, Maha Sarakham, Thailand
- **National University of Tainan (NUTN)**, Tainan, Taiwan
- **University of the Arts London (UAL)**, London, UK
- **Royal College of Art (RCA)**, London, UK
- **Manhattan School of Music**, New York, United States
- **King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT)**, Bangkok, Thailand



MOME faculty András Hünfalvi (4th from left) and Prof Püspök Balázs (center) with NAFA faculty and staff, 2025. Photo courtesy of NAFA.

Overseas Learning Experiences

20 BA (Hons) Biophilic Design Year 3 students, led by Park Hye Young from the School of 3D Design, visited **King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi**, Bangkok, Thailand from 17–29 August.

Central Conservatory of Music, Beijing, welcomed NAFA students from BMus Year 4 and Master of Performance Year 2 in Chinese Instrumental Studies for International Placement from 16 October to 28 November.

NAFA diploma students went on credit-bearing Overseas Immersion Programmes (OIPs):

- School of Theatre to **ISI Yogyakarta**, Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2–19 Jul)
- School of Design & Media to Shanghai, China (7–21 Dec) and Thailand (7–26 Dec)

Other students embarked on study trips:

- BA (Hons) Contemporary Chinese Theatre Year 3 students went to **Hong Kong Cultural Centre**, Hong Kong (14 Sep–5 Oct).
- School of 3D Design and School of Design & Media had 28 students travel to Seoul, South Korea for **Seoul Design Festival 2025**.

NAFA Delegations

From 27 to 31 August, Susan Yeung (Assoc Dean, School of Dance) joined the panel of adjudicators for the **Thailand Challenge Cup Dance Competition** in Bangkok, Thailand and awarded NAFA scholarships to the outstanding talents.

On 9 October, Dr Goh Toh Chai (Head of Composition, School of Music) conducted an improvisation class for students at the **National Tsing Hua University**, Taipei, Taiwan.

On 17 October, Sunny Wong (Head of Chinese Instrumental Studies, School of Music) presented a workshop for Erhu students at the **National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts** and delivered a sharing session at the 3rd **International Forum of Theatre Exchange and Cooperation**.

From 4 to 21 October, Dr Nellie Seng (Assoc Dean, School of Music) visited conservatoires and specialist music schools (including the **Royal College of Music** and the **Guildhall School of Music and Drama**) and conducted workshops and masterclasses at **The Purcell School**, **Chetham's School of Music**, the **Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM)**, and the **Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS)**.

Prof Kwok Kian Woon (Vice-Chancellor, University of the Arts Singapore), Susan Yeung (Assoc Dean, School of Dance), Dr Ernest Lim (Dean, Faculty of Performing Arts), Rei Poh (Assoc Dean, School of Theatre), Dr Nellie Seng, and Sunny Wong presented at the **New Development of Tertiary Arts Education Opportunities** on 4 October at the Studio Theatre, **Hong Kong Cultural Centre**, Hong Kong.

From 9 to 13 December, Dr Ang Gey Pin (Senior Lecturer, School of Theatre) led the **Sheng Hong Arts Institute (SHAI)** delegation to the 15th **Quanzhou International Nanyin Grand Concert Festival** in China and represented SHAI at the **Maritime Silk Road Cultural Fair**.

From 29 October to 1 November, Fadzli Jamil (Assoc Dean, School of 3D Design) conducted a design workshop at **Beijing Normal University**, Zhuhai, and met NAFA exchange students during his visit.

Lee Ming-Yen (Senior Lecturer, School of Music) delivered a talk at **National Tsing Hua University** titled "Music Making in the Chinese Periphery: Hong Kong Chinese Orchestras during the Cold War" on 27 December.



Sheng Hong Arts Institute delegation led by Dr Ang Gey Pin at the 15th Quanzhou International Nanyin Grand Concert Festival, China, 2025. Photo courtesy of NAFA School of Theatre.

Key Participations

Alumni Neo Ke Xin and Chew Shaw En participated in an international choreographic laboratory at the **Southeast Asian Choreolab 2025** held at Rimbun Dahan, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 4 to 13 July.

School of Dance students were invited to represent Singapore at the **Daegu International Dance Festival** held on 14 September at Daegu Dance Association.

Students from School of 3D Design supported the exhibition setup for **Poetic City of Gardens: Art Exhibition of the Classical Gardens of Suzhou**, held at the Singapore Botanic Gardens from November 2025 to January 2026.

On 10 July, Master of Performance student Wang Siyuan (Pipa) and alumnus Benjamin Boo (Percussion) performed as part of a Chinese Instrumental Ensemble with the **Hallé Orchestra** conducted by Wong Kah Chun at Bridgewater Hall, Manchester.

BA (Hons) Performance Making Year 3 student Trinity Goh Kia Kiang joined other selected NAFA and LASALLE dance students to perform at the **World Dance Education Exchange** organised by the Beijing Dance Academy, in Beijing on 24 October.

Lena Ching (Deputy Assoc Dean & Programme Lead, Diploma in Music, School of Music) conducted a piano masterclass as part of the closing celebration events of the 3rd **Singapore International Music Competition** (20 Dec).

On 25 July, Alicia Ung (Diploma in Dance Year 3 student) participated in the performance project *Echoes of Tomorrow* by Sebastian Zuber at the **b12 Workshop Festival**, Berlin, Germany.

Natalie Lin (Junior Dance Programme Leader, School of Young Talents) with students Zhang Zi Yi and Hillary Oon Kailin were invited by Malaysia's Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture to represent Singapore at the 47th **ASEAN Summit's Best of ASEAN Performing Arts (BoAPA)** in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, with the support of Singapore's National Arts Council held from 22–29 October.

MFA Fine Art Year 2 student Meng Fanbo represented NAFA at the **Global Student Forum 2025: The Flow of Tech Arts**, held during 5–6 September. He participated under the **2025 International Forum on Technology and Art Education – Science, Technology and Art in the Era of Global Governance**, organised by the **Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts**.



Junior Dance students Zhang Zi Yi and Hillary Oon Kailin performing at the 47th BoAPA in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 2025. Photo courtesy of NAFA Junior Dance.

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

	<i>Open Call</i>	<i>In partnership with UOB</i>
Jul–Aug 2025	Warren Khong & Fiona Koh	Pannaphan Yodmanee
Sep–Oct 2025	Terence Teo Chin Keong; Wang Fei	None
Nov–Dec 2025	Goh Aik Chuan & Mary Seah	None

International Exhibitions & Performances

Nourish to Flourish by BA (Hons) Biophilic Design students Bhone Pyae, Grace Chor, Jittakul Panthita, and Siti Nur Diyana was selected for the 11th **Landscape Architecture Student Graduation Exhibition & International Student Projects Exhibition**. The event took place at Taiwan's Songshan Cultural and Creative Park in August 2025, showcasing outstanding international student work.



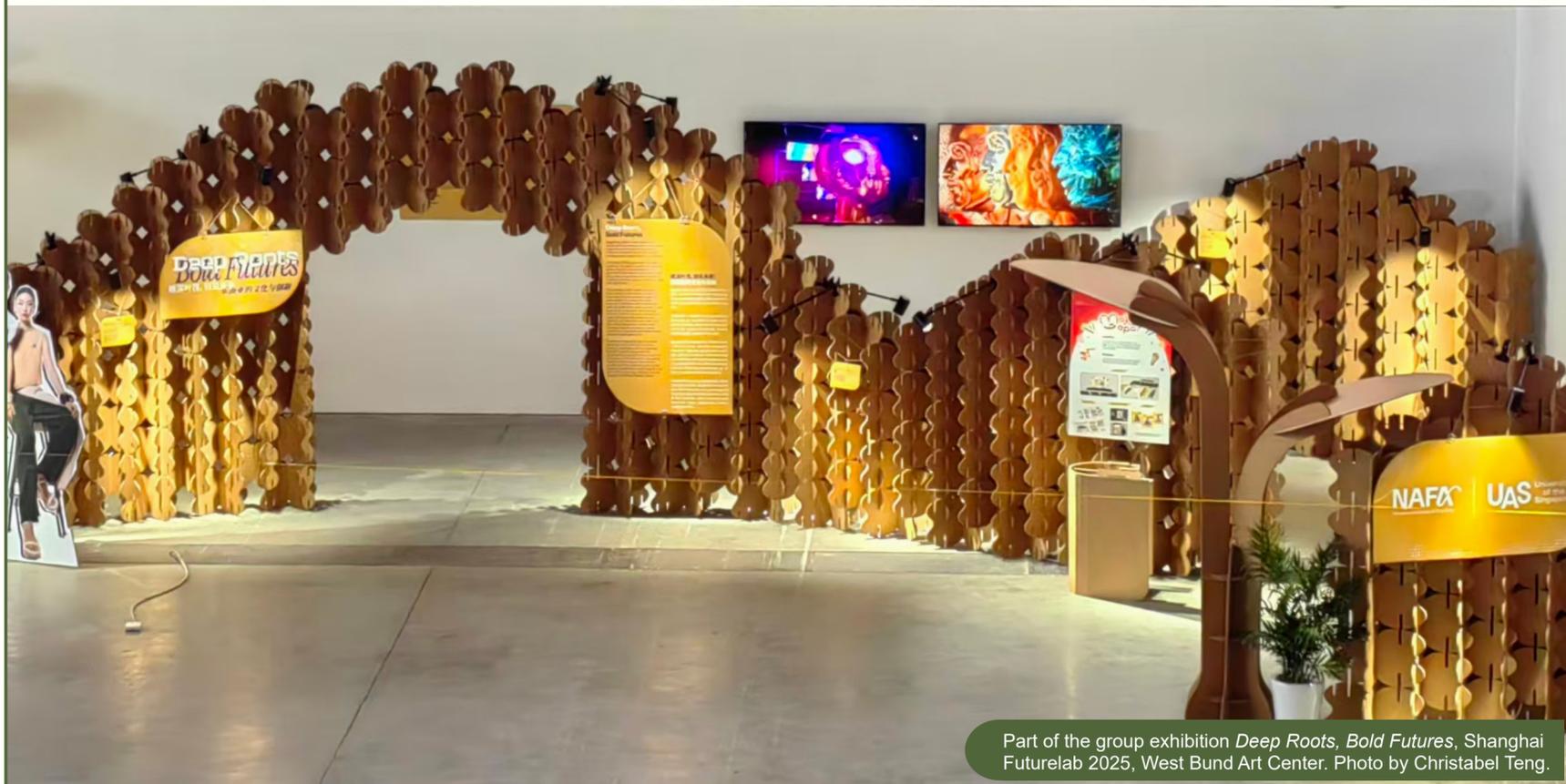
Wendy Chua, Dr Joyce Koh, and Gustavo Maggio, *BLOOMS* (2025). Photo courtesy of BASE Milano.

Mentioned in our last issue, Dr Joyce Koh (Assoc Dean, School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Assoc Dean, Technology and Sustainability Research, Research Division) composed music for *BLOOMS*, an art-science immersive exhibition with VR and haptics. The exhibition premiered at Tieranatomisches Theatre in Berlin and was most recently presented at **FAROUT Festival** held at **BASE Milano**, Italy (9–26 Oct).

Alumna Yu Ning Liu performed in the UK theatre production *The Play That Goes Wrong*, staged at **Kwai Tsing Theatre** from 25–26 October and **Yuen Long Theatre** from 8–9 November in Hong Kong.



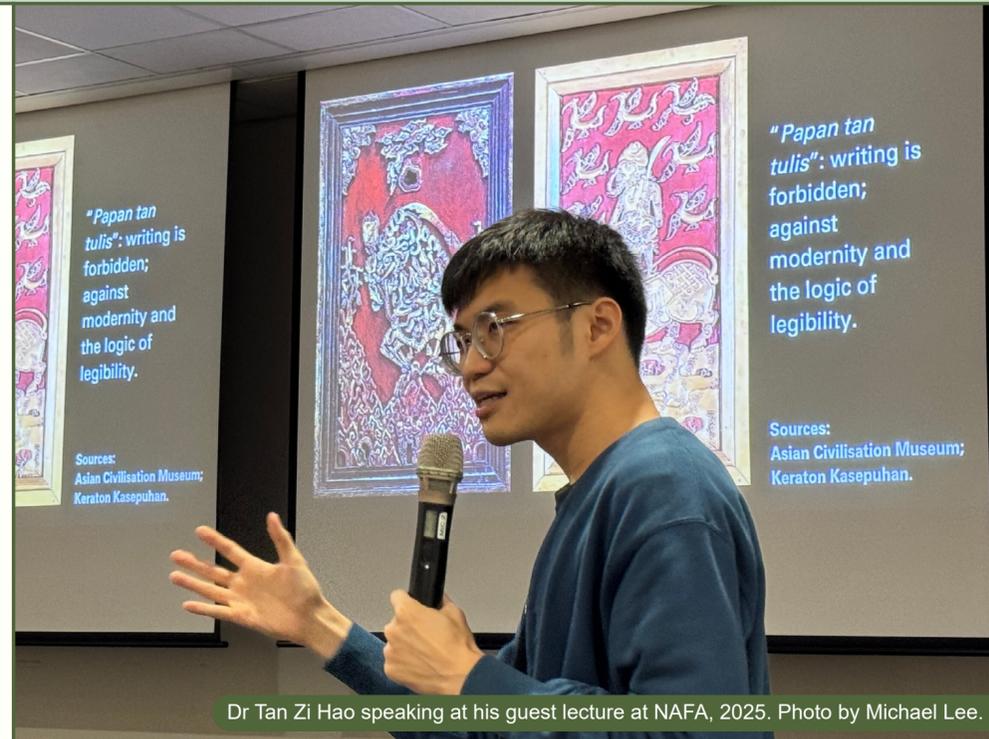
Alumna Yu Ning Liu in *The Play That Goes Wrong* (2025) by Chung Ying Theatre Company, Hong Kong. Photo courtesy of NAFA School of Theatre.



Part of the group exhibition *Deep Roots, Bold Futures*, Shanghai Futurelab 2025, West Bund Art Center. Photo by Christabel Teng.

The Faculty of Art and Design (FOAD), in collaboration with Special Projects Unit (SPU), participated in **Shanghai FutureLab 2025** with the group exhibition, *Deep Roots, Bold Futures*, held at West Bund Art Center from 31 October to 2 November. The exhibition showcased nine works by FOAD students, faculty, and alumni.

Workshops



Dr Tan Zi Hao speaking at his guest lecture at NAFA, 2025. Photo by Michael Lee.

On 17 September, Dr Tan Zi Hao (Senior Lecturer, **Universiti Malaya**) delivered a lecture and workshop, "The Written Word as Aesthetic Form: The Abecedarium of Scripting a Language," for the NAFA community. The sessions examined how scripts, often read as transparent, carry visual and political implications. The lecture explored the politics of language and script in translingual Malaya and Malaysia in the 19th and 20th centuries, followed by a workshop where participants engaged in speculative meaning-making using antiquated dictionaries and social media platforms as reference.

NAFA is an institutional partner in a **UNESCO** project on shared heritage, sponsored by **Temasek Foundation**, culminating in a two-day performing arts festival in Yogyakarta in October/November 2026. The festival will showcase collaborative performances, dialogues, and creative exchanges by young performing artists and students from Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia, reflecting shared cultural narratives developed through the project's training and mentorship phases. Joyce Teo (Assoc Dean, School of Arts Management) serves as Singapore's National Facilitator. To date, three engagements have been held: an online kick-off event (26 Sep 2025), a public webinar (27 Nov 2025), and an *in-person workshop in Yogyakarta* (12–13 Dec 2025).

On 22 July, students from the School of Dance participated in the *Soulful Steps II Ethnic Dance* masterclasses organised by Origins Culture & Arts in conjunction with a performance event held at The Esplanade.

In conjunction with the Interdisciplinary Arts Salon 2025 on 10 October, Jeannie Park (Executive Director of **Padepokan Seni Bagong Kussudiardja**, Yogyakarta, Indonesia) conducted a Classical Javanese workshop for Performance Making and Theatre students.

The **Chinese National Symphony Orchestra** (CNSO) conducted a masterclass and performance exchange at NAFA on 10 September, jointly organised with NAFA and the **China Cultural Centre** in Singapore. Led by Mr Yao Liang (Deputy Concertmaster and violinist) and Mr Meng Zhaohai (oboist), the sessions featured violin and oboe masterclasses using excerpts from Mozart's *Violin Concerto No. 5* and *Oboe Concerto in C major*, engaging NAFA School of Music students in focused repertoire-based learning.

Founder of **Tanoti Sdn Bhd**, Jacqueline Fong, held two workshops: Mini Rattan and Songket Weaving for Faculty of Art and Design (FOAD) students on 16 October.

Artist-in-Residence Darragh Morgan (violinist) and Mary Dullea (pianist) from the **Fidelio Trio** held multiple masterclasses, lectures, and improvisation workshops from 11–14 November for School of Music students.



CNSO masterclass led by Mr Yao Liang for NAFA School of Music students. Photo courtesy of China Cultural Centre in Singapore.

Research Café series by the Research Division

Assoc Prof Tan Meng-Chwan (Head, NUS String Theory Group, **National University of Singapore**) and Dr Joyce Koh (Assoc Dean, School of Interdisciplinary Arts, and Assoc Dean, Technology and Sustainability Research, Research Division) presented on string theory and musicalising string theory (22 Aug).

Dr Rebecca Kan (Assoc Dean, Degree Studies, Faculty of Performing Arts, and Assoc Dean, Curriculum & Pedagogy, Teaching & Learning Centre) presented on how we can reimagine arts education through research (27 Aug).

Dr Adrian Tan (Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Art & Design) presented "Excavating Memory: Artist-Run Spaces, Cultural Policy, and Sites of Exhibitionary Forms in Singapore (1976–1996)" (12 Sep).

Andrew James Mowatt (Programme Leader, English Drama, School of Theatre) presented "Shades in Time: An Ethnodrama" (21 Nov).

Prof Adam Ledger (Department of Drama and Theatre Arts, **University of Birmingham**) presented "The Islander: Practice Research, Place, and Knowing" in an online session (26 Nov).

Conferences

The third **Arts & Design Practice Research Exchange** (ADPRex, 6–7 Aug) drew 313 attendees, featured 53 presentations (including 19 by NAFA faculty and students), and welcomed three keynote speakers from top institutions. With 13 international universities represented, ADPRex offered twelve main panels and several new features: student panels, video essays, and a double-bill book launch. The edition's theme *Capturing Practice* encouraged presenters to explore how artists document and reflect on their creative processes.

The sixth edition of the **Southeast Asian (SEA) Arts Forum** was held from 7 and 8 August at various galleries in the NAFA campus, with exhibitions running from mid-July through August. The theme was *Imaginary Library: The Art of Embodied Chronicles*. A regional network of artists, scholars, and practitioners came together to explore the intricacies of archiving and expression of art practices in Southeast Asia. NAFA also partnered with **Silpakorn University**, Thailand, to launch two exhibitions that marked the first major artistic exchange between the two institutions. Attendees had the opportunity to explore a metaverse adventure game, mixed-reality, and virtual-reality installations.

Healing Arts Singapore (HASG) was launched with a week-long programme from 8 to 12 December as Asia's first national level arts and health initiative, co-led by NAFA under the leadership of Assoc Prof Michael KB Tan (Dean, Research and Knowledge Exchange). Developed with **NUS's Centre for Music and Health** and the **Jameel Arts & Health Lab** as part of the **World Health Organization**-supported global Healing Arts campaign, the week-long programme engaged over 600 participants to explore how the arts can be embedded within systems of care, featuring a symposium, stakeholder roundtables, and community performances.



Iranian artist Negar Tahsili presenting at ADPRex 2025. Photo by Filmingo Pte Ltd.

New Initiatives

On 20 November, NAFA launched Singapore's first joint Bachelor of Music (Hons) degree in partnership with the **Royal College of Music** (RCM), London, England. This programme is a full 4-year undergraduate degree jointly developed and conferred by NAFA and RCM. Previously, NAFA and RCM collaborated on the Bachelor of Education (Hons) in Instrumental & Vocal Teaching, a two-year top-up degree programme. The new 4-year programme will see visiting RCM professors and International Placement opportunities at RCM and the Central Conservatory of Music (CCOM), Beijing.

On 23 December, **The Arts House Limited** (AHL) and NAFA signed an agreement to develop and present NAFA faculty-supervised student works across the Singapore International Festival of Arts from 2026 to 2028. The collaboration will see AHL and NAFA jointly identifying, developing, and presenting selected works—including performances, installations and participatory activations—led by the Faculty of Interdisciplinary Practices (FOIP) and the Faculty of Performing Arts (FOPA).



Left to right: James Williams (Director, Royal College of Music), Prof Kwok Kian Woon (Vice-Chancellor, University of the Arts Singapore), Mrs Tan-Soh Wai Lan (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University of the Arts Singapore, and President, NAFA) signing the joint degree partnership agreement. National Design Centre, 2025. Photo courtesy of NAFA School of Music.

Global Accolades

Two student teams from NAFA Faculty of Art & Design were amongst four winning teams from Singapore in the New Blood Awards category of the **D&AD (Design and Art Direction) Awards 2025**. The prize-giving ceremony was held on 2 July in London.

Wood Pencil Winners:

- *KMC Power Up* – Chang Kai-Ju (alumna) and Chang Kai-Chu (Year 2), both BA (Hons) Design Practice
- *Your World, Your Bank* – Barros Leao Nicole and Chua Ding Yang, both Diploma in Advertising students

Junior Art students Caedmon Ye and Gao Jia Jia won First Prize and Honourable Mention respectively in the International Section in the 25th **JQA International Environmental Children's Drawing Contest** organised by Japan Quality Assurance Organization (JQA) held on 7 July.

Dayn Ng (Programme Leader, Digital Innovation) won First Prize for 《共鸣》 (*Resonance*) at the **Llangollen International Music Eisteddfod**, Llangollen, Wales, UK, held on 9 July.

NAFA Faculty of Art & Design students won multiple awards at the 19th **China Creative Challenges Contest: Time-honoured Brand – China-Chic Trend Innovative Design Competition**. Organised by the East China University of Science and Technology, the competition finals held from 9–11 July featured a three-day intensive workshop where participants received mentorship and feedback from artists, designers, and technologists to further refine their concepts. Beatrice Sidik, Denise Louisa, Siti Syamilah bte Mohamad Shukur, Belle Ng Shu Yao, and Tan Hui Qi Zorean from the School of Design & Media clinched 1st Prizes under the MAX-AM category.

Global Accolades

On 9 September, NAFA received the **Asia-Pacific SABRE Award** in the Educational and Cultural Institutions category for its “InspoGAO” conversation series. [Watch an episode.](#)

6th Hengqin International Mozart Competition for Young Musicians (Zhuhai, China)

- Cathy Chen Xi (Violin, School of Young Talents)
 - 1st Prize (Group A) & Young Jury Prize

7th Magnolia International Music Festival

- Zhang Yawen (DipMus Year 2, guqin)
 - 2nd Prize, Professional Solo Youth Group

Indie Film Music Contest 2025

- Seem Jia Ang (BA Hons Year 4, Composition)
 - 1st Prize & 4th Prize

[Listen to it.](#)

Soh Ray Chel, BA (Hons) Design Practice Year 2, saw her six-piece collection showcased at **Lao Fashion Week** in 2024, placing her work on an international platform alongside designers from across the region. Her designs attracted attention from foreign designers and brand representatives, marking a major step in her journey from local student to emerging international fashion talent. She was recently featured on *The Straits Times* on 20 September to talk about her journey.

[Read her feature.](#)

New Talent Festival (Royal Academy of Music, London, UK)

- Brody Glenn-Kirwin (DipMus Year 2, Piano)
 - 1st Prize

Ars Nova International Piano Competition

- Valnetta Serafina Kwintarya (DipMus Year 3)
 - 2nd Prize (with 1st prize withheld)
- Huang Yaozu (DipMus Year 3)
 - Honourable Mention, Category C

Junior Dance students participated in the **International Arts Festival (IAF)** organised by Singapore Dance Alliance from 21 to 26 November. The department showcased their outstanding performances and won 36 awards including 11 Platinum, one Diamond, nine Champion, and seven Gold.



Soh Ray Chel on *The Straits Times*, 2025. Photo courtesy of *The Straits Times*.



Junior Dance students from School of Young Talents at IAF 2025. Photo courtesy of NAFA Junior Dance.

Commissions & Premieres

Alumnus Goi Ywei Chern (currently pursuing Doctor of Musical Arts at Guildhall School of Music and Drama) was commissioned by the **Guildhall School of Music and Drama**, London, UK, and premiered his original opera *Medusa* on 11 July. [Browse the programme booklet.](#)

Student Wong Cheow Cai (BMus Hons Year 3, Composition) was commissioned by New Meta Quartet to compose a new saxophone quartet entitled 《浮云·朝露》 (*Dewdrops*). The work premiered at the **World Saxophone Congress** from 26–31 July in Harbin, China.

Mandarin Drama alumna Qiao Yue premiered her performance in *Beautiful Life* 《美好的生活》 on 30 October at the **Beijing International Youth Theatre Festival 2025**.



Alumna Qiao Yue in *Beautiful Life* 《美好的生活》 at the Beijing International Youth Theatre Festival 2025. Photo by He Ming.

Successful Grant Applications



Visitors at *The Strange Archive*, Tanjong Pagar Distripark, curated by Dr Adrian Tan, 2026. Photo courtesy of Dr Adrian Tan.

National Arts Council:

- Dr Hoe Su Fern — "Towards Neighbourly Ties: A Scoping Study on Cultural Relations between Singapore and Southeast Asia"
- Michael Lee — "Spaces for Making: Sites, Conditions, and Resources of Sustainable Production"
- Dr Adrian Tan — "The Strange Archive"
- Assoc Prof Michael KB Tan — "Taking Pulse: Insights and Learnings from the Development of Arts and Health in Singapore"

Singapore Cancer Society:

- Assoc Prof Michael KB Tan — "Right to Work: Participatory Action Research Through Applied Theatre on Workplace Reintegration and Equity for Cancer Survivors"

Alumni Networking

On 1 August, the **University of the Arts London (UAL)** launched its inaugural Alumni Networking Evening at NAFA, bringing together over 80 alumni and guests. Co-hosted by NAFA and UAL, the event was graced by Prof Jane McFadyen, Provost of **Camberwell, Chelsea and Wimbledon Colleges of Arts and Executive Dean of Student Journey** at UAL, alongside Mrs Tan-Soh Wai Lan (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University of the Arts Singapore, and President, NAFA) and Assoc Prof Chong Keng Hua (Provost and Vice President, Academic). The evening featured Dr Lizzy Vadakel, Country Director of the **British Council Singapore**, who spoke on the UK Alumni Awards and the importance of transnational alumni engagement.

The Indonesia Alumni Chapter organised a gathering of NAFA alumni in Surabaya, featuring a talk, workshop, and showcase of alumni work during the **Universal Singapore and Malaysia Education Fair** on 10 and 11 August at The Westin Surabaya. In collaboration with the Outreach Team for International Student Recruitment (OTIS), the initiative aimed to introduce local students to opportunities in design. The talks and workshop attracted strong interest and were covered by local media, highlighting the Chapter's efforts to engage the community and share NAFA's creative work.

From left: Michelle Mandey, Airine Suryadinata, Jessica Nagalia Setiawan, Merry Indrawati Wahono, Febby Calista Sudargo, and Vivien Cindy Sianjaya. Alumni gathered at The Westin Surabaya, Indonesia, for *The Art of Work: Alumni Journeys Beyond the Canvas*, 2025. Photo courtesy of NAFA Alumni Relations Office.



NAFA Alumni Awards



Ms Low Sin Leng (NAFA Board Chairman) and Desmond Lee (Minister for Education, Singapore) presenting Kseniia Vokhmianina with the 2025 Young Alumni Medal. Photo courtesy of NAFA Alumni Relations Office.

NAFA conferred six alumni awards at this year's convocation ceremony. First presented in 2009, the NAFA Distinguished Alumni Award recognises established alumni who have achieved significant professional success or made meaningful community contributions, honouring their lifetime achievements, continued growth, and influence in the local and international arts sectors. The 2025 NAFA Distinguished Alumni Award recipients were:

- Lim Kay Hiong (b. 1947–d. 2025)
- Professor Chung Chen Sun (b. 1935–d. 2024)
- Oliver Chong Teck Seng (b. 1978–)

Inaugurated in 2025, the NAFA Young Alumni Medal honours alumni under 40 who show exceptional early-career promise, exemplifying artistic excellence, leadership, and strong community and professional commitment while maintaining close ties with their alma mater. The 2025 Young Alumni Medal recipients were:

- Kseniia Vokhmianina
- Goh Shou Yi
- Hubert Loi Xin Zhe

Conferences

Dr Laura Hayes (Assoc Dean , Practice Research, Research Division) presented “Playing with Gender” and Dr Adrian Tan (Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Art & Design) presented "Curating archives: OPEN END — Resonate, Re-read and Re-Trace The Substation Archive" at the **Asia-Pacific Artistic Research Network (APARN) Conference**, held from 1 to 3 July at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand.

Dr Laura Hayes presented “Joy as a Motor of Play in Theatre-Making” at the **Theatre and Performance Research Association (TaPRA) Conference**, held from 27 to 29 August at the University of Warwick, England.

Sabrina Long (Dean, Faculty of Art & Design) was invited as keynote speaker at the forum organised by **Chongqing Jiaotong University** on 9 November. The event aimed to establish an inland hub for digital and intelligent design education and develop an international brand in design education, bringing together experts and professionals from China and abroad to explore innovative developments in the field.

Assoc Prof Michael KB Tan presented “Sense and Sensibilities: Arts in Medicine – Opportunities and Imagination” and “Gestures of Care: Cultivating Caring Consciousness with Nurses Using Creative Movements” at the **Singapore Medical Humanities Conference 2025**, held from 17–18 October at Academia, Singapore General Hospital, Singapore. The conference also featured distinguished international speakers from leading institutions, offering global perspectives on medical humanities, healthcare narratives, and medical ethics.

Christabel Teng (Vice Dean, Faculty of Art & Design) presented at the **Livable Cities Conference 2025**, held from 9 to 11 July at the University of Lisbon in Lisbon, Portugal.

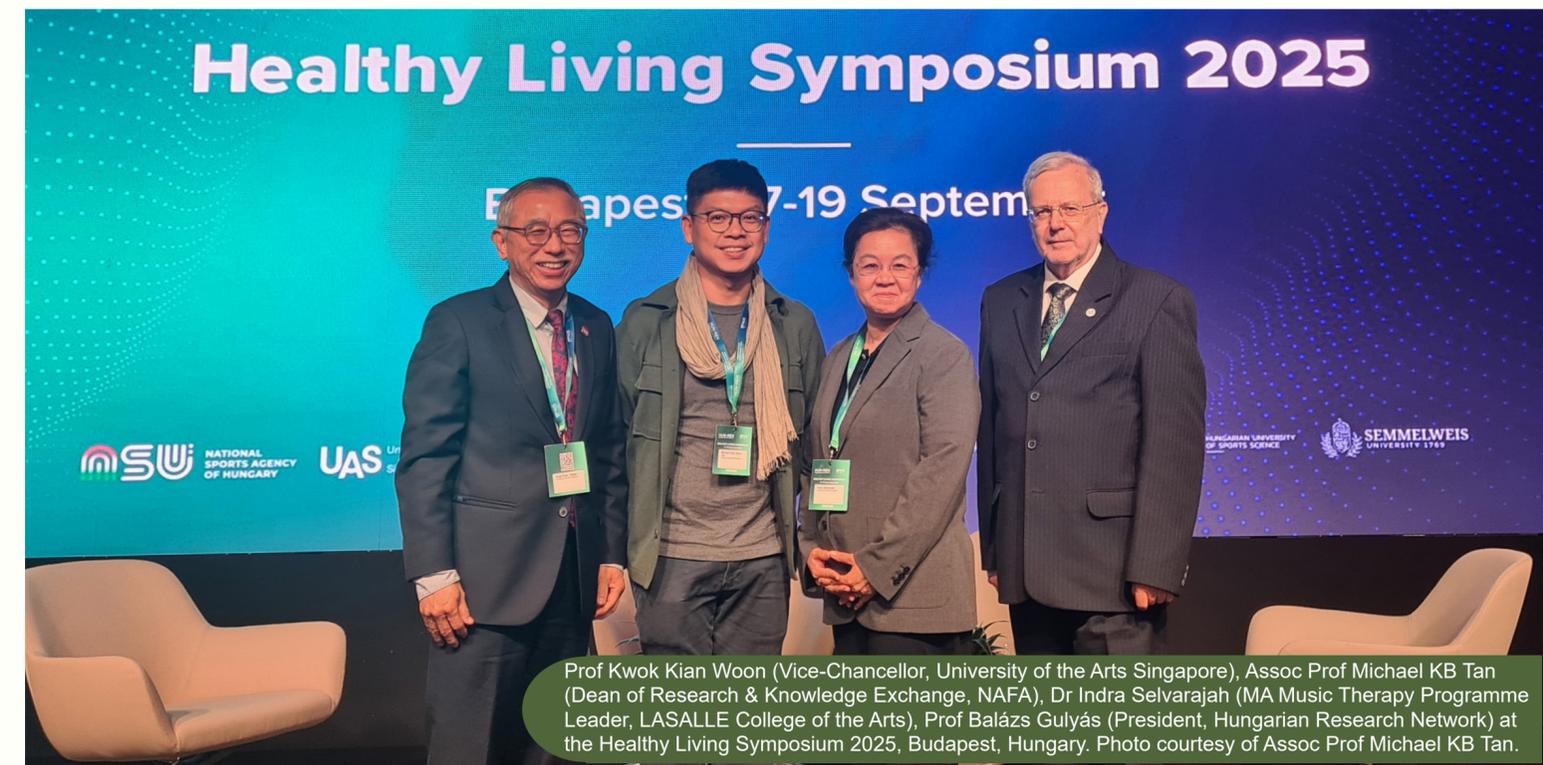
Assoc Prof Michael KB Tan (Dean, Research & Knowledge Exchange) presented “Art Participation as a Pathway to Non-communicable Disease Prevention and Longevity” at the **Healthy Living Symposium 2025**, held from 17 to 19 September in Budapest, Hungary.

On 3 August, Dr Caren Cariño (Dean, Faculty of Interdisciplinary Practice) served as a jury member at the **International Ballet Grand Prix (IBGP) 2025**.

On 22 September, Assoc Prof Michael KB Tan presented at **UNGA Healing Arts Week Research Symposium** in New York University Steinhardt, New York on the Arts and non-communicable diseases. [Read about it.](#)

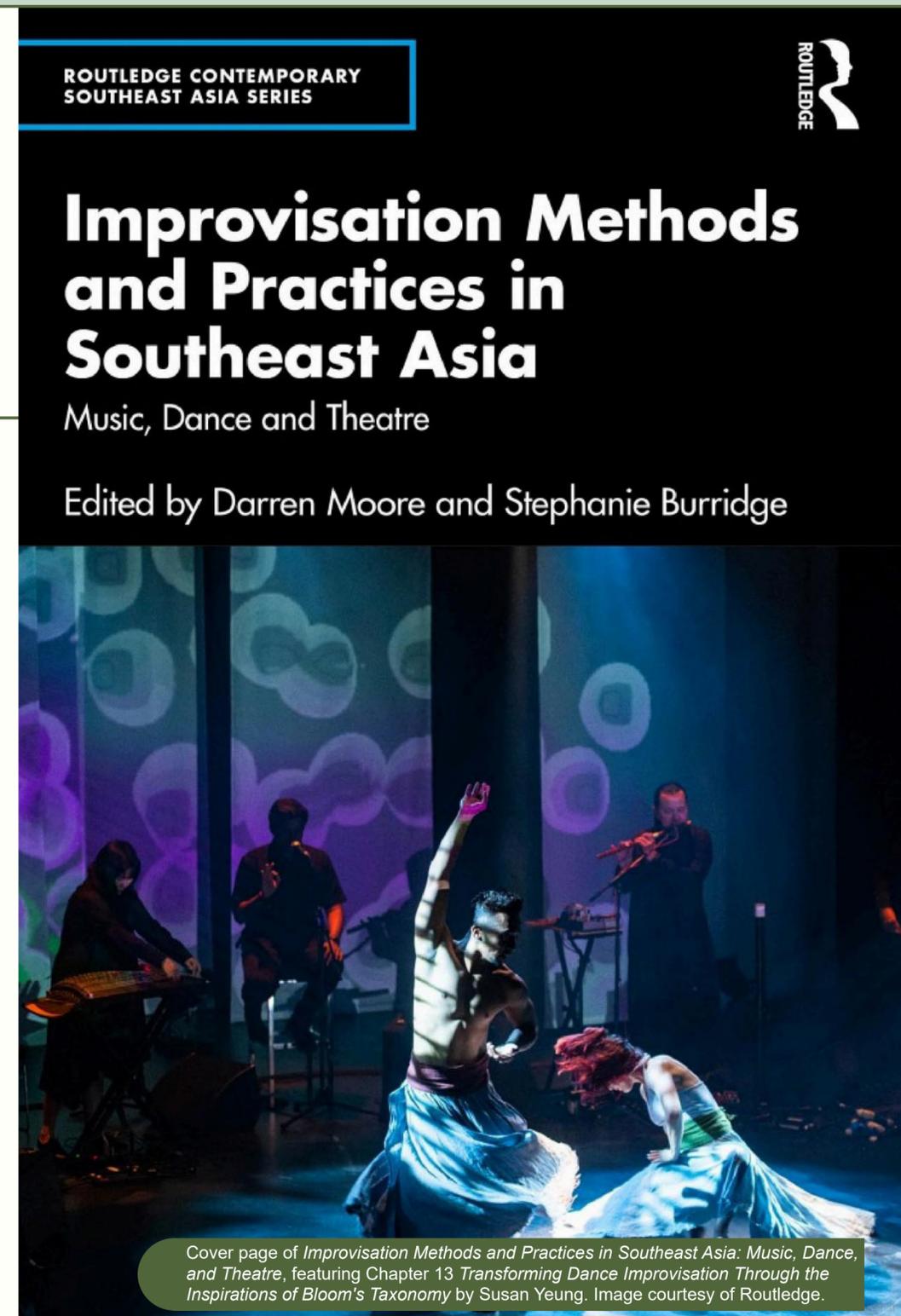
Dr Matt Chiu (Lecturer, Faculty of Art & Design), together with Assoc Prof Arlindo Silva (Singapore University of Technology and Design) and Assoc Prof Tamas Makany (Singapore Management University), presented “Quantifying the Double Diamond: AI-Driven Analysis of Design Thinking Patterns in University Classrooms” at the **International Design Engineering Technical Conferences and Computers and Information in Engineering (IDETC/CIE)**, held from 17 to 20 August in Anaheim, USA.

Dr Caren Cariño was invited by the **UNESCO** Office in Jakarta to deliver the introductory presentation “Performing Southeast Asia Intercultural Collaboration as Shared Heritage” at the online launch of the Temasek Foundation-funded “Embracing Shared Heritage Through Performing Art” on 25 September.



Prof Kwok Kian Woon (Vice-Chancellor, University of the Arts Singapore), Assoc Prof Michael KB Tan (Dean of Research & Knowledge Exchange, NAFA), Dr Indra Selvarajah (MA Music Therapy Programme Leader, LASALLE College of the Arts), Prof Balázs Gulyás (President, Hungarian Research Network) at the Healthy Living Symposium 2025, Budapest, Hungary. Photo courtesy of Assoc Prof Michael KB Tan.

<h2>Publications</h2>	<p>Dr Adrian Tan (Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Art & Design) published “Intersection of Publicness, Practice and Pedagogy: Five Days at NAFA (1982), Five Days in Museum (1987), and A Sculpture Seminar 1 (1991)” in <i>Southeast of Now</i>, Vol. 9, No.1, March 2025.</p>	<p>Susan Yeung (Assoc Dean, School of Dance) published the book chapter “Transforming Dance Improvisation Through the Inspirations of Bloom’s Taxonomy” in <i>Improvisation Methods and Practices in Southeast Asia: Music, Dance, and Theatre</i>, edited by S. Burrige and D. Moore, published by Routledge in 2025.</p>
<h2>Professional Appointments</h2>	<p>Susan Yeung:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjudicator, Thailand Challenge Cup Dance Competition, Bangkok, Thailand <p>Sunny Wong (Head of Chinese Instrumental Studies, School of Music):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguished Expert on Cultural Exchange, National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts, Beijing, China 	<p>Joyce Teo (Assoc Dean, School of Arts Management):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Facilitator, <i>Embracing Shared Heritage Through Performing Arts</i>, a UNESCO initiative conducted across various locations from 2025 to 2026. <p>Yarra Ilete (Senior Lecturer, School of Dance):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjudicator, International Arts Festival in Manila, Philippines
	<p>Dr Hoe Su Fern (Principal Research Fellow, Research & Knowledge Exchange):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Research Consultant, Review of the Strategic Plan for Culture and Arts (2016–2025) and the Development of a New Work Plan for Culture and Arts (2025–2035) at ASEAN Headquarters, Jakarta, Indonesia <p>Dr Caren Cariño (Dean, Faculty of Interdisciplinary Practice):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjudicator & Speaker, International Ballet Grand Prix Finals & Conference 	



Opportunities

Ongoing Events

The Ideas Festival (various locations, 26 Feb–30 Mar 2026): Through a joint month-long showcase of exploring the theme *Reimagining Resilience: Flourishing in a Changing World*, NAFA and other institutions present six events spanning three thematic categories that focus on different aspects of resilience. [Find out more and register.](#)

What Materials Remember, What They Become (The Ngee Ann Kongsi Galleries Window Showcase, 8 Jan–28 Jun 2026): A selection of works from the NAFA Collection featuring NAFA alumni and Vietnamese social enterprise Vun Art Co-operative. This showcase focuses on different materials in art making and how they convey history and memory.

Upcoming Events

Arts & Design Practice Research Exchange and Asia Pacific Artistic Research Network (ADPRex x APARN) (27–29 Jul 2026): This year, ADPRex will be held in conjunction with APARN at NAFA Studio Theatre and Lee Foundation Theatre. Centred on the theme *Who Speaks? Authorship, Authority, and Authenticity*, the conference invites artists, researchers, and thinkers to explore questions of authorship, voice, and agency through artistic and practice research. The programme will feature presentations, performances, and practice-based contributions, fostering critical dialogue and exchange across disciplines within the Asia-Pacific region. [Submit a proposal by 1 March 2026.](#) [Register to attend.](#)

University of the Arts Singapore Career Fair & Open House: The UAS Career Fair 2026 (open to current UAS students and 2025 graduates, 3–5 Mar 2026) and Open House @ UAS 2026 (open to public, 7 Mar) will both be held at the National Design Centre.

White Space (Lim Hak Tai Gallery, 3–29 Mar 2026): This exhibition by Southeast Asian artists will centre on themes of history and humanity that respond to social concerns, social changes, and environmental issues in contemporary societies.



Residencies

NAFA invites Singapore and 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: [Find out more.](#)

Application deadline	Residency period
28 Feb 2026	Jul–Aug 2026
29 Apr 2026	Sep–Oct 2026
29 Jun 2026	Nov–Dec 2026
3 Aug 2026	Jan–Feb 2027
3 Oct 2026	Mar–Apr 2027

All dates accurate at time of publishing.



Cité internationale des arts

Alumni Award Nominations

Nominations for 2026 NAFA Distinguished Alumni Award and Young Alumni Medal will run from 6 March to 17 April 2026. A maximum of three award recipients will be selected for each category. Everyone is welcome to nominate alumni who have made outstanding contributions to the arts, culture, and creative industries. [Nominate an alumni member.](#)

Contribute to this Newsletter

We invite members of the NAFA community to contribute to the August 2026 edition of our newsletter. This is an opportunity to share your work, ideas, and initiatives with a broad interdisciplinary audience across education, practice, and research. Suggested topics include but are not limited to:

- Reflections on practice, pedagogy, or collaboration
- Student trips, exchanges, or overseas learning experiences
- Recent or upcoming research projects, publications, or presentations
- Creative works, exhibitions, performances, or participatory initiatives

Contributions should highlight how the work engages with global contexts, partners, or perspectives. If you have an idea but are unsure about format or suitability, feel free to get in touch at global@nafa.edu.sg by 31 May 2026—we'd be happy to discuss it with you. We look forward to featuring the diverse voices and work of our community in upcoming issues.

Giving Month

March 2026 is our second NAFA Giving Month, an annual fundraising campaign that commemorates the founding month of the academy and to provide vital financial aid for students in need. In 2025, over S\$70,000 was raised and provided 30 bursaries to diploma and degree students. Join our community in providing 19 Merit Awards for deserving students this year. With a donation of \$50 and above, receive a commemorative Wearable Art Series pin and enjoy 2.5x tax deduction. Together, we grow. [Donate now.](#)

partners

Denmark

- Royal Danish Academy of Art

England

- Bath Spa University*^
- Kingston University*
- Glasgow School of Art
- Royal College of Art
- Royal College of Music
- Royal Holloway, University of London
- University of Birmingham
- University of Edinburgh
- University of the Arts London

France

- Cité internationale des arts

Hungary

- Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design*

Italy

- Istituto Marangoni

Indonesia

- Institut Teknologi Bandung*
- Institut Seni Indonesia Denpasar
- Institut Seni Indonesia Surakarta
- Institut Seni Indonesia Yogyakarta

Thailand

- King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi
- Silpakorn University
- Nan Yang Textile Group

Laos

- Lao Fashion Week

Malaysia

- Taylor's University

Vietnam

- RMIT Vietnam
- Vietnam University of Fine Arts

Hong Kong, China

- City University of Hong Kong*^
- HKICC Lee Shau Kee School of Creativity
- Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts^
- Hong Kong Design Institute
- Zuni Icosahedron Hong Kong

South Korea

- Korea National University of the Arts

Australia

- Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne
- Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, Edith Cowan University

China

- Beijing Dance Academy^
- Beijing Normal University
- Central Conservatory of Music
- China Conservatory of Music
- East China University of Science & Technology
- Middle School Affiliated to China Conservatory of Music
- Nanjing University of the Arts
- National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts
- Shanghai Conservatory of Music
- Shenyang Conservatoire of Music
- Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts*
- Tsinghua University Academy of Arts and Design *^
- WES Group
- Xiamen University of Technology
- Zhejiang University

Taiwan

- College of Arts, National University of Tainan
- National Taiwan University of Arts
- National Yunlin University of Science & Technology
- Taipei National University of the Arts

New Zealand

- Faculty of Creative Arts and Industries, Waipapa Taumata Rau/University of Auckland

Legend:

- * New MOUs signed 1 Jul – 31 Dec 2025
- ^ MOUs signed via University of the Arts Singapore

Hazel Chan Editorial Advisor

Michael Lee Creative Director & Copyeditor

Alethea Yam Copywriter & Layout Artist

Oh Jun Wei Designer

Dr Chung Yi, Vanessa Girling, Dr Laura Hayes Text Contributors

Elena Riacara Proofreader

Raven Lee Admin Support

Simon Chua IT Support

Atlas is published twice yearly by
Strategic Development & Global Engagement Division
Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts
University of the Arts Singapore
80 Bencoolen Street, Singapore 189655



To find out more, visit
www.nafa.edu.sg/experience/global-engagement

To connect, email
global@nafa.edu.sg