

ANNEX 1

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Contemporary Chinese Theatres

The BA (Hons) in Contemporary Chinese Theatres will be the first bachelor's programme in Asia to produce versatile thespians with cultural and artistic awareness in the understanding of the history, cultures, and languages of modern-day Chinese theatres. Students will gain an excellent balance of theoretical and practical training, to create compelling original works that respond empathically and professionally to industry demands of Chinese theatre. Through this enriching three-year-programme, students will emerge as theatre experts, ready for diverse professional roles in Singapore and the Southeast Asian region's performing arts industry with creative, technical, research, administrative or policy-related capabilities. The degree is open for enrolment in October 2023, with its first semester starting in August 2024.

NAFA's new bachelor's degree programmes are designed to spearhead a creative movement that is defining Southeast Asia and beyond. Marked with the unique Southeast Asia identity and paired with a forward-thinking curriculum and experienced faculty, students will experience a holistic transformational journey which inculcates in-depth knowledge and future-ready competencies.

Through industry collaborations with leading international organisations and institutions, the academy provides students with international exposure and diverse opportunities for growth, endowing students with a global outlook to become leading changemakers in their fields of expertise.

Legend According to Lao Jiu

Directed by Danny Yung (Hong Kong)

Performed by Choy Yu Tin Martin (Hong Kong), Chuk Yin Man (Hong Kong)

Duration: 20 minutes

About the play

To mark the anniversary of Kuo Pao Kun's passing, Danny Yung created the theatrical piece named, Legend According to Lao Jiu. The pioneer of Singapore theatre, Kuo Pao Kun was known for his classic, Lao Jiu, which is about a child in Singapore and his journey of searching and identifying himself.

Mak Yong is a traditional performing art that was banned in Malaysia. In recent years, casinos have been legalised in Singapore. Cantonese Naamyam is a traditional oral performance in Hong Kong and neighbouring areas. Interspersing these unrelated elements, Danny Yung's Legend According to Lao Jiu features three stories which form a dialogue with the story of Lao Jiu as a tribute to remember Kuo Pao Kun.

About Danny Yung

An experimental art pioneer, the founding member cum Co-Artistic Director of Zuni Icosahedron, Chairperson of the Hong Kong Institute of Contemporary Culture and Convener of the Chinese Creative Industries Forum. In the past 40 years, he has been deeply involved in multifarious fields of the arts, mainly, theatre, cartoon, film and video, visual art and installation.

In 2008, with Tears of Barren Hill he garnered the Music Theatre NOW Award given by the UNESCO's International Theatre Institute. In 2009, Yung was bestowed the Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany in recognition of his contributions in the arts and cultural exchange between Germany and Hong Kong. In 2013, Yung was awarded the Respectable Person of the Year in Shenzhen and Hong Kong Lifestyle Award by Southern Metropolitan Daily. In 2014, Yung was awarded the Fukuoka Prize – Arts and Culture Prize.

Tao of Water

Directed by Mathias Woo (Hong Kong)

Performed by Liu Chun Kin (Beijing/Hong Kong), David Yeung (Hong Kong)

Duration: 20 minutes

About the play

Adapting the AI generated voice and images of Kung Fu star Bruce Lee's motto about water in a 20-minute theater experience, Mathias explained, "‘Best to be like water’ talks about the infiltrability of water. Western thinking is about the comparison of absoluteness, but the Tao Te Ching is about the comparison of relativeness."

"The performance fuses existing stage technical setup and new art-tech development of gaming software and hardware for experimentation to present "relativeness". It incorporates various sounds and forms of water. Many logics in the Tao Te Ching can be the ways that guide our thoughts and behaviour. Beauty coexists with ugliness; expensiveness coexists with non-expensiveness. I think this is very special." Mathias explained.

About Mathias Woo

Woo joined Zuni in 1988 and is currently its Co-Artistic Director cum Executive Director. As a scriptwriter, director, producer and curator, he has created more than 60 theatre works which have been performed around the world. Woo's theatre works explore subjects as wide-range as literature, history, architecture, religion, current political affairs. Woo is well-known for his Multimedia Music Theatre Series, and ingenious blending of theatrical space, text, video images and cutting-edge multimedia technology. His pioneering works in the Multimedia Architecture Music Theatre have set up a new paradigm for theatrical experience in Hong Kong. In 2009, Woo curated "Architecture is Art Festival", the first of its kind in Hong Kong that explored the artistic potential of architecture with different art forms.

Woo was awarded the DFA Merit Award in 2012 and the Arts and Cultural Figure of the Year in Shenzhen and Hong Kong Lifestyle Award by Southern Metropolitan Daily in 2013 respectively.

School of Thought

Directed by Liu Xiaoyi (Singapore/Hong Kong)

Performed by Didik Nini Thowok (Yogyakarta), Makoto Matsushima (Tokyo)

Duration: 20 minutes

About the play

School of Thought represents Liu Xiaoyi's reflections upon the realm of artistic education. Over the span of the past two decades, Liu Xiaoyi, through the exploration of artistic education, has ceaselessly pondered the interplay between creativity and education. This work stands as an exercise stemming from these contemplations.

Liu Xiaoyi has enlisted the collaboration of two seasoned performing artists, Didik and Matsushima, to jointly delve into the annals of the history of body training and the evolution of the stage. Through this lens, they embark on a discourse that extrapolates upon the prospective trajectory and evolution of Asian art education. The corporeal embodiments of contemporary dance and Javanese dance draw nigh on the stage, akin to phantasms, then recede; they brush against each other, yet hesitantly recoil from full contact... Their actions appear to reflect upon their own training history, while also casting their gaze toward the future of Asian cultural exchanges.

About Liu Xiaoyi

Xiaoyi is considered one of the most promising figures at the forefront of the experimental theatre scene and cultural exchange network in Asia. The artistic director of Emergency Stairs in Singapore and the artist-in-residence at Zuni Icosahedron in Hong Kong, Xiaoyi was involved in over 70 theatre productions as a curator, a director, a playwright, and an actor over the past two decades. He was the recipient of "Lee Kuan Yew Gold Medal" in 2010 and "Young Artist Award" by the National Arts Council of Singapore in 2016. In 2018, Xiaoyi started a new project, No More Theatre, to develop collaboration between digital technology and arts.

Xiaoyi has also been actively promoting dialogues and creation across cultural and geographical lines over the past decade. Since 2017, he curates the annual Southernmost Project which brings prominent and established traditional and contemporary artists from the

region together. Xiaoyi keeps a keen eye on the development of art talents in Singapore and the Asia Pacific region. He has started and helmed the Emergency Academy, which is designed as an incubation programme for promising young cultural leaders and has attracted a total of 36 artists from 16 cities in its two editions. In 2023, he was awarded the Patron of Heritage and the Arts Award by Nanyang Technological University.

About the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts



Established in 1938, the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) is Singapore's pioneer arts institution. The academy is known for its rigorous and high-quality curriculum, innovative and practitioners-led teaching approach, diverse artistic creations and community outreach. NAFA is part of the new University of the Arts Singapore (UAS). Supported by the government, UAS will open its doors for its first degree intake in 2024.

NAFA has nurtured 13 recipients of the Cultural Medallion--Singapore's highest accolade bestowed on art practitioners who have significantly impacted arts and culture. Another 15 alumni have been presented the Young Artist Award. Many of the academy's alumni have gone on to make their mark in the professional arts scene, clinching awards at prestigious international competitions such as Cannes Lions, Prix de la Photographie, Paris, Red Dot Design Awards, and Venice Biennale.

The academy offers full-time diploma, bachelor's and master's degree programmes across three faculties: Faculty of Art & Design comprising the School of Fine Art, School of 3D Design, School of Design & Media, as well as the School of Fashion Studies; Faculty of Performing Arts comprising School of Dance, School of Music, and School of Theatre; Faculty of Interdisciplinary Practices comprising School of Arts Management and School of Interdisciplinary Arts. Diploma programmes are aligned with the degree programmes offered in partnership with the Royal College of Music, London and University of the Arts London.



About Zuni Icosahedron

Founded in 1982, Zuni Icosahedron is a Hong Kong based international experimental theatre company and a non-profit charitable cultural organization. Zuni is one of the nine major professional performing arts companies in Hong Kong, and has made venue partner with the Hong Kong Cultural Centre since 2009. As a premier experimental theatre company, Zuni has produced more than 200 original productions of alternative theatre and multimedia performances, and been invited to more than 80 cities around the globe for cultural exchange and performances.

With the support of our members, and under the leadership of Co-Artistic Directors, Danny Yung and Mathias Woo, Zuni has been active in cross-cultural & cross-disciplinary experimentations, arts and technology, video, sound experimentation and installation arts, as well as in the areas of arts education, arts criticism, cultural policy research and international cultural exchange. Over the past two decades, Zuni has been undertaking the mission of preserving and developing Intangible Cultural Heritage (Performing Arts).

Main Sponsor



Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Singapore The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

Set up in 1995, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Singapore seeks to strengthen the bilateral relations between Hong Kong and three countries of ASEAN, namely Laos, Singapore and Vietnam, as well as India. We aim to promote closer economic and trade ties, understanding and co-operation, as well as to enhance cultural exchanges and people-to-people ties with the four countries under our purview. On the investment front, we provide information, support and assistance to corporations and individuals looking to start or expand their businesses in Hong Kong or in Mainland China via Hong Kong. A dedicated team has been set up to attract strategic enterprises and talents from overseas to Hong Kong. The regional desk of the Hong Kong Shipping Registry in our office also helps strengthen the presence of Hong Kong Flag and promote the Hong Kong Shipping Register in the region.