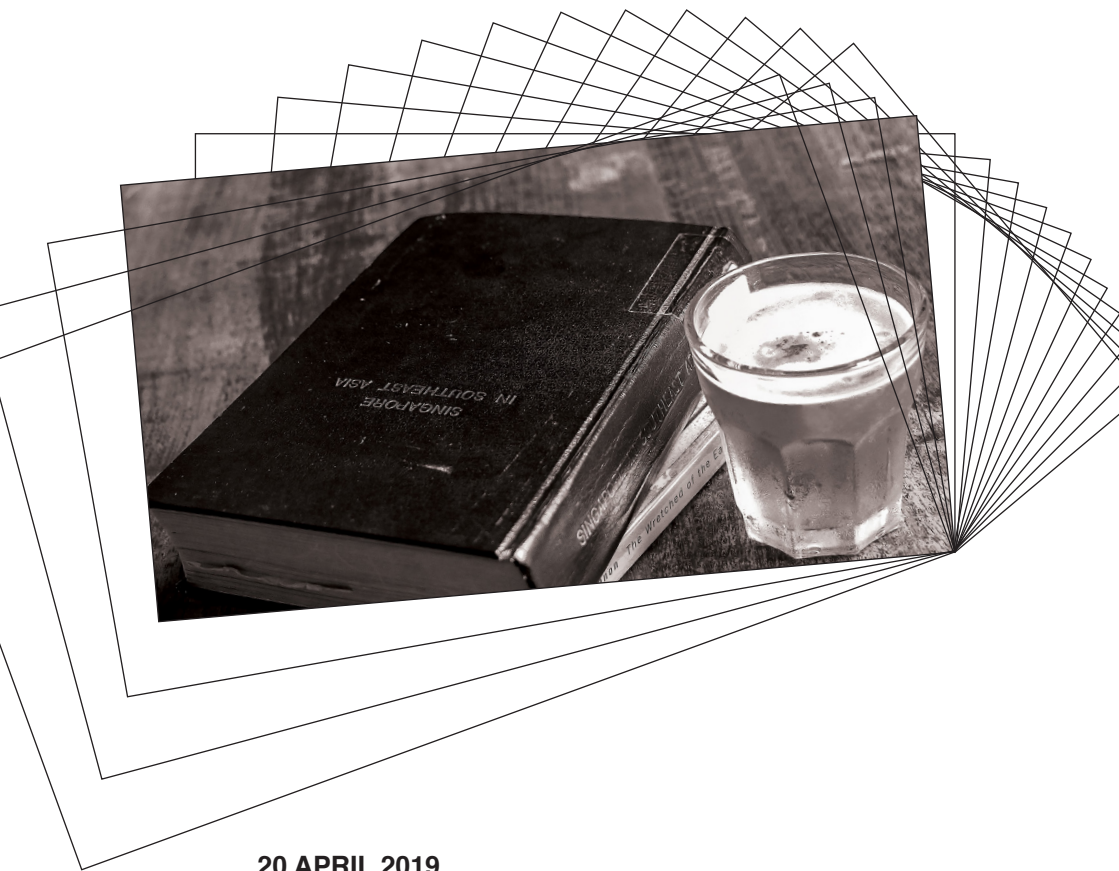


CENTRE 42 & NUS THEATRE STUDIES PRESENT

THE VAULT:
Gossip, Symphony
& Other Matters

**A TRIPLE BILL OF RESPONSES TO
ROBERT YEO'S *ONE YEAR BACK HOME***



20 APRIL 2019
CENTRE 42 BLACK BOX

CENTRE 42 is a non-profit theatre development space committed to the creation, documentation and promotion of texts and writings for the Singapore stage. The Centre incubates original writing for production development, provides space for artists and new work creation, and runs a functional archive documenting the histories and processes of Singapore theatre.

NUS THEATRE STUDIES THEATRE LAB (TS3103) is a practice-driven module that all final-year Theatre Studies Majors must read. Graduating students apply the knowledge they have acquired and present a creative work that is assured and dramaturgically sound. Most importantly, they must be able to demonstrate research intelligence via a theatrical presentation. The students are also tasked to document their creative processes for critical reflection, and build skills for recording and sharing their practices and experiences.

CREDITS

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**AUDIENCE ADVISORY:
SOME COARSE LANGUAGE**

Gossip, *Symphony & Other Matters* is a triple bill of performance responses to Robert Yeo's *One Year Back Home* created by the graduating students of the National University of Singapore (NUS) Theatre Studies TS3101 Theatre Lab.

This is the first time Centre 42 and NUS Theatre Studies are collaborating on a Vault presentation. Centre 42's Vault methodology involves artists responding to older Singapore play-text. It is an opportunity to revisit Singapore theatre history and refresh it for a contemporary context. Past Vault presentations have taken on a myriad of formats, from performances, to lectures, and even installations. All Vault presentations are documented on centre42.sg.

With the Vault methodology, the Theatre Lab students engaged with the ideas, dramaturgy and theatricalities in *One Year Back Home*. They have devised performances which represent their research findings and their unique points of view on the original play.

About *One Year Back Home*

One Year Back Home is the second play in Robert Yeo's *The Singapore Trilogy*. Set in 1972, returning characters Hua, her brother Chye, and their mutual friend Fernandez, are back in Singapore after completing their studies in London. Hua has to contend with her dating life as a single mother, while Chye and Fernandez become political opponents contesting against each other in the elections.

Yeo wrote *One Year Back Home* in 1979 following the success of the first play *Are You There, Singapore?*. He then spent over a year trying to get a government permit to stage the play. *One Year Back Home* was eventually performed in November 1980 by the University of Singapore Society at the DBS Auditorium.

One Year Back Home is now lauded as a breakthrough moment in Singapore theatre history for its box office success and realistic portrayal of local politics and Singlish.

To find out more, visit centre42.sg/about-one-year-back-home.

On the process

In Weeks 1 and 2 of the semester, the 15 students conducted research on Robert Yeo's *One Year Back Home* and presented their findings. They also went through a series of workshops where they learnt to mobilise their bodies for the stage while responding to different kinds of stimuli and texts.

In Week 3, the students formed their groups and pitched ideas for their presentation. Once I endorsed their pitches, the groups spent the rest of the semester on devising, collaborating and activating their bodies for the stage, creating consecutive drafts of their final presentation.

Each group had six opportunities to present their drafts for comments, out of which two were formally assessed as works-in-progress. As dramaturg, I presented them with recommendations and also commented on the soundness and cogency of their artistic choices.

The students were constantly reminded that they were in full control of the artistic vision of their response. I also reiterated to the students that their presentations must fulfill the research demands of the module.

Each student was required to submit three monthly reflections. These reflections were not to report or record their reactions to the process, but opportunities for the students to step back and assess its impact on themselves as performers and researchers.

In Week 6, the students attended a documentation workshop conducted by Centre 42 to learn about documentation. In putting together their final presentations, they were introduced to a technical consultant who offered design and mise-en-scène suggestions and kept track of their progress.

What you see on the 20th of April is a result of 13 weeks of research, workshopping, brainstorming, drafting and re-drafting.

DR. ROBIN LOON
Dramaturg & Module Chair of TS13103 Theatre Lab



What Matters

Lisa Ang, the daughter of main character Ang Siew Hua, was just five years old in *One Year Back Home*. Now in her 50s, she is a single woman of mixed parentage who is in politics. *What Matters* charts Lisa's rise to prominence and the reactions of different cross-sections of the public.

ARTISTS' STATEMENT

Theatre is more than mere entertainment. The stage is also a space to explore issues within society and inspire much-needed conversation. Despite finding comfort within convention, we seek to use theatre as a means to explore the unfamiliar and break out of our personal boundaries. As growing creators, we are continuously learning from the collaborative process. Our goal in working together as an ensemble is to discover a form of dynamism and synergy that we hope will culminate in our final showcase.

DESAI SHIVANI JATIN has been performing since she was 9, but only realised she wanted to be an actor at 16. To her, theatre is about affecting change, an open mind, and an unwavering commitment to the process.

LEE SHEA SHAN MEGAN was first exposed to theatre at the age of 12 through ACT3 International. A Theatre Studies major and Psychology minor, Megan is interested in drama therapy and using drama in education.

VICTORIA OW SUE REY first studied theatre at CHIJ Katong Convent as an 'O' level subject. With a minor in social work, she is an aspiring applied theatre practitioner who uses theatre to empower individuals.

YEO DANA loved the attention of others as a child and spent many a family gathering making a fool of herself. This self-indulgence has developed into her love for performing that still holds true today.

CHEW HWEE CHEE is a dance graduate from School Of The Arts. Her love for acting brought her to Theatre Studies. "Romanticism handled with discipline" is a mindset she always embraces in her artistic endeavors.



Gossip GRLs

Gossip GRLs is a farce about the support staff of Grassroots Leaders (GRLs). The performance follows the misadventures of a new volunteer joining the chaotic and competitive world of grassroots leadership.

ARTISTS' STATEMENT

We, the Gossip GRLs of Theatre Lab'19, pledge ourselves as one over-the-top collective that loves experimenting (too much), regardless of censorship, parental disapproval, and lack of employment opportunities, to build an inclusive theatre community based on imagination and comedy so as to achieve critical social discourse, happiness and progress for our personal growth as artists.

CHERIE HO is interested in comedy, experimental works and exploring the self in performance, until she finds another sparkly thing to look at. She has been involved in various theatre projects, did some filmmaking at NYU, and prays (without religious affiliation) for her growth in theatre.

CHERMAINE CHAM is an aspiring actor and stage manager. She has been Stage Manager for *In The Twine* (2018) at the Singapore Writers Festival and Assistant Stage Manager for Checkpoint Theatre's *FRAGO* (2017). After graduation, she plans to travel and work freelance in theatre.

CHIMENE KHOO is a hardworking individual who is interested in filmmaking and theatre-making processes. She aspires to be a film editor. She was Assistant Director Intern in Giraffe Pictures' *Distance* (2016) alongside producer Lai Weijie.

MICHELLE SIMON HARIFF is a PVA scholar and a member of NUS Stage. She relishes in exploring diverse artistic interest — she will try anything once. Music, theatre, dance, art — there's nothing she won't get her grubby hands on.

TRICIA DING is an aspiring theatre practitioner. She was Stage Manager for *Hana* (2018) and Director and Supervisor of the 2018 Kent Ridge Hall Production, and is a playwright who refuses to stage any of her work. What Tricia lacks, Tricia makes up in enthusiasm for BTS and sleeping.

Symphony 404



Symphony 404 is a riff off the premise in *One Year Back Home* of old friends reuniting for a shared purpose. A reunion concert for their alma mater goes south when alumni members of a school band end up fighting with each other.

ARTISTS' STATEMENT

Stop and listen and you just might hear the music. *Symphony 404* is our way of using the sounds within and around us to explore the individual's place within a monolithic society. We wish for the music to help this process of self-discovery be a little less uncanny.

SAMUEL NG is an avid opera lover. Currently studying with world-renowned tenor Neil Rosenshein, he has performed several minor roles with the Music Academy International opera studio in shows such as *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, *Die Zauberflöte* and *Cendrillon*.

SHIM SAE EUN is a theatre student, filmmaker and musician. Be warned if you hit 'G' on the piano while she is around, she would instantly welcome you to a black parade.

LAU XUAN KAI aspires to make films that give voice to the hidden communities of the world. His film, *Dragging Heart*, received special mention and was showcased at NYU Spring 2018 Sight & Sound. He also enjoys performing with Bimbo, the name of his 'loud' and 'brainless' cello.

NATHANIEL AARON TAN writes, acts, directs, researches and class-participates proficiently to, in future, secure a good job, pay his taxes and indulge in more theatre. He has been part of *Becoming Graphic* (2017), NUS Stage's *The Golden Record* (2016) and *The City Remembers* (2018).

JEAN TAY is a theatre student, pianist, singer, illustrator, painter, costume fabricator and performer. She has nine years of choral training. She also owns the Familiars Creature Shop, where she designs and builds custom full-body creature costumes.

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THE VAULT

THE VAULT revisits and remembers Singapore works dating back to our early theatre years, refreshes them through the responses of artists and collaborators, and retells them in a contemporary manner.

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