



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 2024

Following 2023's successful run of *SIFA X: there is no future in nostalgia*, Centre 42 partners with the Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA) for a second year, to stage dramatised readings of new work. Over two weekends on 18 & 19 May and 31 May & 1 June, we showcase 6 new plays over 3 presentations.



As part of SIFA's **Tomorrow and Tomorrow** programme at the Stamford Arts Centre this year which sees 10 Singapore theatre companies presenting works-in-process/progress, Centre 42 features fresh works from its community of independent playwrights. Catch facilitated dramatised reading of two new plays by our two outgoing resident playwrights. In ***The Radicalisation of Mrs. Mary Lim-Rodrigues*** by **Michelle Tan**, the title character's well-intentioned interventions with a student lead to disastrous consequences that send Mary on an existential crisis. In the satirical ***Social Distancing Ambassadors*** by **Zulfadli Rashid (Big)**,

a middle-aged woman has a dramatic career shift when she loses her airline job as a result of the pandemic.

Today's news may be tomorrow's history but they also make for excellent speculation on what the headlines of the future might be. In a special edition of our popular **Headline Acts** series, 4 playwrights dream up their own headlines from the future, and write 15-minute dramatic pieces in response to them. Don't miss this one-night only affair on **1 June 2024**, featuring the fresh new works of **Nessa Anwar**, **sorin.scapes**, **Yu Xuan Tan** and **Siobhan Covey**.

Together, these presentations foreground the work of Centre 42's **New Writing Development Programmes**, and shed the spotlight on Centre 42's work with independent theatre makers, developing established voices and amplifying upcoming ones.

PROGRAMME INFO:

[1] A Work-In-Progress reading of "The Radicalisation of Mrs Mary Lim-Rodrigues" By Michelle Tan

Event Details:

Date & Time: 18 May, 2pm & 19 May, 3pm

Venue: Black Box @ Stamford Arts Centre

Ticketing Info: www.sifa.sg

Programme Info:

<https://www.centre42.sg/events/22888/a-work-in-progress-reading-of-the-radicalisation-of-mrs-mary-lim-rodriques-by-michelle-tan-sifa-2024/>

Synopsis

"Solidarity... is a radical posture."

- Paulo Freire

What does it take to change a system? Or before that, a person? Or before that, a belief?

This is a story about the most well-intentioned person you know, and about the moment they are confronted by the fine line between help and harm. It is a story about good people believing they are doing good things, about the way things are and have always been, about all the right ways to live, learn, and die.

This is a story about all that, until it isn't. Then it is a story about rupture, irreversible loss, and the question of what it takes to fix the things and people broken by all the good intentions in the world. Then it is a call for revolution.

Creative Team:

- Michelle Tan, Playwright
- Chen Ying Xuan, Director

- Juliet Chia, Dramaturg
- Actors: Serene Chen, Sindhura Kalidas

[2] A Work-In-Progress reading of “Social Distancing Ambassadors” By Zulfadli Rashid (Big)

Event Details:

Date & Time: 31 May, 7pm & 1 June, 4.30pm

Venue: Black Box @ Stamford Arts Centre

Ticketing Info: www.sifa.sg

Programme Info:

<https://www.centre42.sg/events/22889/a-work-in-progress-reading-of-social-distancing-ambassadors-by-zulfadli-rashid-big-sifa-2024/>

Synopsis

During the pandemic, Norah's career pause from the airline industry led her to embrace the role of a Social Distancing Ambassador, offering stability amidst her father's conspiracy theories. Teaming up with Brayden, they navigate pandemic challenges alongside Norah's father, Haji Razali, while forming unexpected bonds.

Experience their journey through this work-in-progress, "Social Distancing Ambassadors (SDA)" - a dramatic reading followed by an artist-audience dialogue.

Creative Team:

- Zulfadli Rashid (Big), Playwright
- Sean Tobin, Director
- Actors: Elnie S Mashari, Joe Jasmi, Andre Chong

[3] Headline Acts: Tomorrow's News

A late night short plays presentation

Event Details:

Date & Time: 1 June, 9.45pm

Venue: Black Box @ Stamford Arts Centre

Ticketing Info: www.sifa.sg

Programme Info:

<https://www.centre42.sg/events/22632/headline-acts-tomorrows-news-sifa-2024-edition/>

Description

In line with the festival theme, which explores various futures – known, unknowable, imminent, and already-here – we are inviting playwrights to dream up their own headlines from the future, and write pieces in response to them!

Headline Acts: Tomorrow's News is a fun and informal showcase of new short plays, open to writers of all experience levels wishing to respond to a given prompt. The public open call for playwrights to submit their play ideas and Headline titles ran from 20 February to 11 March 2024, and received 21 submissions!

sorin.scapes, **Yu Xuan Tan** and **Siobhan Covey** were selected from the Open Call, and will present their works alongside invited guest writer **Nessa Anwar** at a one-night only affair on 1 June 2024.

Here's a preview of the Headlines they have imagined for this future:

Nessa Anwar: "Singapore enforces 'income-bracket curfew' for male citizens and foreign workers, in an unprecedented move to curb mounting civil unrest."

Siobhan Covey: "Woman Indicted for Conspiracy to Commit Conspiracy to Subvert Police Surveillance."

Sorin.scapes: "Man found dead at heritage house; prime suspect is octopus."

Yu Xuan Tan: "Posters uncovered in a university bathroom hint at an undocumented revolution."

Hosted by **Irsyad Dawood** whose debut play *Kids, Gifts, COEs & Roast Duck* was the rib-hurting, sleeper hit of the 2023 edition, *Headline Acts: Tomorrow's News* promises to be a raucous end to *Tomorrow and Tomorrow*.

ARTIST BIOS:

Michelle Tan is a writer and drama educator. As a playwright her work has been produced by several local companies, including Cake Theatrical Productions and Singapore Repertory Theatre. Currently Michelle teaches in the theatre faculty at the School of the Arts. [Michelle was a Writer-in-Residence at Centre 42 in 2022.](#)

Zulfadli Rashid is a playwright, known for his thought-provoking and powerful works that explore the complexities of the human experience. Written in the Malay and English language, his body of work continues to grow and evolve. Born and raised in Singapore, Zulfadli was exposed to a diverse range of cultures and perspectives from a young age, which heavily influenced his writing. His works tackle a wide spectrum of topics, from personal struggles to societal issues, and are always marked by their emotional intensity and unflinching honesty. In addition to his work as a playwright, Zulfadli is also a dedicated educator and mentor, working with young minds to help them develop their craft and find their own creative voices. [Big was a Writer-in-Residence at Centre 42 in 2023.](#)

Nessa Anwar has written, acted, produced and directed for theatre, television and video. A journalist by day, Nessa first trained and worked as an actor. She graduated with a degree in Philosophy, and has studied playwriting, screenwriting and investigative writing. Her first full-length play, *Riders Know When It's Gonna Rain*, was staged under Checkpoint Theatre and WILD Rice, and her second full-length, *Rumah Dayak*, was the inaugural production of Rupa co.lab, a theatre collective which she co-founded. She is a founding member of playwright collective Main Tulis Group and a regular contributor to the Singapore Writers Festival in recent years.

Siobhan Covey is an emerging actor and writer who is passionate in creating diversified and multi-faceted works. She graduated from LASALLE College of the Arts in 2022 and uses the tools she gained there to continue devising and acting. She ardently believes that theatre and media should be used to cultivate new stories and to amplify previously unheard voices. She is working towards developing new works in theatre and eventually, film.

sorin.scapes is better known as shu or lsy, amongst other names. She is a storyteller, artist, community volunteer and serial-hobbyist. She writes, creates, documents, manages, reviews and advocates for theatre and the arts. Beyond theatre, sorin.scapes explores collage work on IG@washutape and enjoys making funny shushapes (dance). Selected credits include *The Utama Spaceship* - M1 Singapore Fringe Festival 2020, Centre 42's Citizen's Reviews (2019-2020) and notable affiliates include ArtsEquator, Artwave Studio, Spacebar Theatre and National University of Singapore (Theatre and Performance Studies).

Yu Xuan Tan is a budding Singaporean writer and poet. She has a Diploma in Performance with Distinction from LASALLE College of the Arts, where she had the opportunity to develop her acting and playwriting skills. After starting as a performer, she found an interest in playwriting and poetry, and had the opportunity to write for multiple school productions. In her free time, you can find her concocting wild fanfiction ideas and reluctantly enjoying nature.

Centre 42 is a non-profit arts organisation committed to the creation, documentation and promotion of text-based works for the Singapore stage. As a theatre development space and intermediary, we incubate original writings for the stage, support the development of artists and new works, and develop and maintain a functional archive documenting the histories and processes of Singapore theatre. Centre 42 is developed in collaboration with the National Arts Council (NAC), and officially opened in 2014. We are a charity with IPC status, and are currently supported by the NAC Major Company Grant for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026. Visit website and C42's Archive of SG Theatre [here](#).

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For public information about Centre 42's New Writing Development Programmes, please visit:
<https://www.centre42.sg/residencies/new-writing-development-overview/>

For information about Centre 42's programmes at the 2023 festival *SIFA X: there is no future in nostalgia*, please visit:
<https://www.centre42.sg/events/19800/sifa-x-there-is-no-future-in-nostalgia/>