

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**ART AND FAITH COLLIDE AT THE
M1 SINGAPORE FRINGE FESTIVAL 2012**

Singapore, 19 October 2011 – Explore the explosive relationship between art and faith as the **M1 Singapore Fringe Festival** returns for its eighth outing from **15 February to 26 February 2012**. Organised and curated by The Necessary Stage, the festival showcases Singapore and international works from artists of several genres, from dance and theatre to visual arts.

The 2012 edition of the M1 Singapore Fringe Festival will feature a wide variety of works that have never been shown in Singapore before, with eight works making their world premieres and four works their Asian premieres. The festival will also see a few returning faces from previous years such as Phillip Toledano from the UK and Htein Lin from Burma, together with Sean Tobin and Teater Ekamatra from Singapore.

M1 SINGAPORE FRINGE FESTIVAL 2012: ART AND FAITH

Art and faith have always had a contentious relationship. While art challenges norms through questions and critiques, faith relies on a confidence and belief in the tenets of the present day. As such, the freedom of expression as espoused by art is often in conflict with the notion of respecting differences that comes with faith. Through the works presented, the M1 Singapore Fringe Festival 2012 invites all to examine how art and faith can come together despite their seeming irreconcilability.

FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

The M1 Singapore Fringe Festival 2012 will feature 17 international and local works from 11 countries, including four Festival Highlights from Singapore, Hong Kong, Burma and Iraq.

Cane by local artist **Loo Zihan** is a re-enactment of the controversial 1993 performance art piece *Brother Cane*, which was originally performed by Singaporean artist Josef Ng.

Based on an eyewitness account, the performance seeks to honour the memory of *Brother Cane* and examine how performance art can be represented.

Van Huynh Company from the UK collaborates with the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts to present [*Black Square*], a stunning dance performance that invites the audience to get to know the performers on an intimate level. The performance is a depiction of society at large and the conflicts that can arise from being individualistic.

The third Festival Highlight, *The Triple Gem* by Burmese artist **Htein Lin**, explores immaterial concepts such as impermanence using material means. Through the use of religious items such as monks' robes and bowls, this art installation provides a space for viewers to reflect and contemplate.

Iraq is Flying by Iraqi photographer **Jamal Penjweny** juxtaposes the whimsical nature of jumping in front of the camera with the harsh reality of war-torn Iraq. Through this contrast of ideas, the work aims to focus on the lives and hopes of those in Iraq today.

FESTIVAL COMMISSIONS

The 2012 festival will showcase six works from local artists and groups, including five Festival Commissions. Alongside Loo Zihan's *Cane*, the other local commissions include works by Sean Tobin and Jason Wee, Teater Ekamatra, Eng Kai Er and Alecia Neo.

Making his return from the 2011 festival is **Sean Tobin**, who is collaborating with **Jason Wee** this time around for *Tongues*, a contemporary interdisciplinary work which explores the contrast, conflict and affinity between faith and sexuality. The play also features performers Nora Samosir, Faizal Muhammad, Walter Hanna and Serena Ho.

Teater Ekamatra also returns once more to the festival with the trilogy *Hantaran Buat Mangsa Lupa* (*Offerings for the Victims of Amnesia*). Comprising three plays inspired by the three main events leading to the establishment of Islam, *Hantaran* offers room for

questions to co-exist with faith. *Hantaran* will be performed by talented theatre and TV actors, Sani Hussin, Mastura Ahmad and newcomer Rian Asrudi

The world premiere of **Eng Kai Er's** *The Prayer* is a solo dance-theatre performance piece that challenges the very meaning of what it means to exist. The quest to find meaning results in a performance piece that is simultaneously dark, desperate and funny.

For visual arts, **Alecia Neo's** *Goddess of Mercy* explores how love and faith is dependent on each other to survive and how the fear of death motivates two different families to devote their time and energy to their pursuit of faith.

Not only will the M1 Singapore Fringe Festival 2012 continue being a platform for art that provokes and inspires, it will also seek to enlighten and exhilarate.

Get involved.

ABOUT THE NECESSARY STAGE

Formed in 1987 by current Artistic Director Alvin Tan, The Necessary Stage is a non-profit theatre company with charity status. Their mission is to create challenging, indigenous and innovative theatre that touches the heart and mind. The Necessary Stage has been identified as one of the Major Arts Companies by the National Arts Council. The Company is also the organiser and curator of the annual M1 Singapore Fringe Festival.

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FAST FACTS

Date: 15 February to 26 February 2012

No. of Works: 17 works from 11 countries

Live Performances: 11 works (28 ticketed performances)

Visual Arts: 6 works

Venues: Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay
National Museum of Singapore
The Substation
ION Orchard

Public Sales: From now to 26 February 2012

Official Website: www.singaporefringe.com

Ticket Prices: From \$19 (Excluding SISTIC fee)

Tickets are available now through SISTIC's hotline at 6348 5555, via the SISTIC website at www.sistic.com, at all SISTIC authorised agents islandwide & iNETS Mobile.

For further details on discounts, please log on to www.singaporefringe.com