

**THE SUBSTATION LTD**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
*FY 2021/2022*

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# 1. MESSAGE FROM THE SUBSTATION'S CHAIRPERSON

Re-imagining The Substation without its 45 Armenian Street building is something no one thought they would ever have to do.

We've been lucky to be given a second chance despite the many challenges faced. We remain humble as we continue to grow and learn. The generosity and passion of the community, new board members and staff have allowed us this opportunity to redefine an iconic Singapore arts organization. For that, we are grateful.

Our goals in the last year remained modest because of the additional difficulties brought on by the pandemic. During this time, we huddled together to present smaller shows - collaborations, online programmes and our anniversary arts festival, SeptFest. We were lucky to be working with artists who brought with them strength and vision. It was also necessary for us to fundraise through a couple of online fundraising/donation drives. We worked with a slate of very generous and talented artists, tested new formats and forged new, exciting partnerships. For all this, we are grateful.

We draw inspiration and strength from our heritage - thankful for the contribution and support of the arts community. The arts landscape in Singapore and the world is changing quickly in ways some of us could not have anticipated. The impact of the pandemic has left many of us still feeling its hardship. It is an important time for us all. In addition to programming, we are focused on creating new avenues of support for The Substation so we can continue to do the work that we love.

Our hope is to build a Substation that has the capacity to grow its regional partnerships, while championing our homegrown artists. We are small but we bring passion, dedication, hard work and hope into our work every day. For the days we have had and the days ahead, we are grateful.

*Wahyuni Hadi*  
September 2022

## 2. ABOUT US

The Substation was founded in 1990 by the late dramatist Kuo Pao Kun. The Substation offers a unique, multi-disciplinary curation of Singapore contemporary independent art. In the last 31 years, through its incubation programmes, annual arts festival, SeptFest, and education workshops, The Substation has developed the practices of many Singaporean artists we know today. The Substation is committed to discovering new talent, the spirit of experimentation, the value of diversity, and the development of artistic practices.

### 2.1 Company overview

The Substation was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee on 26th September 1995. It was registered under the Charities Act on 5th December 1995.

UEN:	199056857R
Registered address:	138 Robinson Road #25-03 Singapore 068906
Charity registration:	1138
IPC status:	Valid from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
Board of Directors:	The Board of Directors as of 12 August 2021 <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Hadi Wahyuni Adiputri</li><li>2) Cyril Wong Yit Mun</li><li>3) Jean-Louis François Morisot</li><li>4) Michelle Chang-Wanlass</li><li>5) Tan Kuan Ho, Bryan</li><li>6) Ng Hock Sun, Joe</li></ol>
Advisors to the Board:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Kok Heng Leun</li><li>2) Raka Maitra</li><li>3) Audrey Wong</li></ol>
Company Secretary:	KC Corporate Solutions
Banker:	DBS Bank Limited
Auditor:	Prudential PAC (appointed in July 2013)

## 2.2 Contact information

The Substation (registered mailing address)  
138 Robinson Road  
#25-03 Singapore 068906

Website: [www.substation.org](http://www.substation.org)  
email: [admin@substation.org](mailto:admin@substation.org)

## 2.3 Artistic mission and activities

To be an inclusive and unprejudiced space for every artist in Singapore; a leading incubator of experimental, multidisciplinary and socially-engaged art forms; and a longstanding facilitator of critical conversations across diverse audiences and communities in the region. Our vision is to build a community of artists and audience beyond our shores, connected through the process of art-making and dialogue.

### Activities

A huge shift for The Substation since July 2021 when the Company began a new chapter operating without a physical space. Dynamics changed and the team reviewed our roles in this ever-changing landscape.

With The Substation's rich and long standing history as Singapore's first independent contemporary art space, The Substation will continue with its vision to support and provide a platform to showcase a diverse range of practices of various disciplines through our key programmes.

**SeptFest** – This is The Substation's most diverse and celebrated annual event that showcases works of various disciplines. A new theme will be set for the coming year with a host of works that have yet to be presented.

**Artist-in-Residence** – This will be a newly crafted programme set to open up opportunities for local artists to work and live in a studio outside of Singapore. The Substation is working towards establishing a network of collaboratives in the Southeast Asian region where local artists will be based for a period of time to create a series of new works to be exhibited in the art space of the host country and in Singapore. We had this in various forms including our Associate Artist programme. This will evolve in 2023.

As opposed to how The Substation operated in the past, The Substation's new programmes hope to build longer and stronger working experiences with artists, opening up and creating new avenues for artists to expand and explore the multitude of possibilities through the network of collaboratives in the region. Through the Residency programme, The Substation's goal is to work towards extending an artist exchange programme in the coming years.

**OutReach & Art Education** – Tapping on to the Artist-in-Residence programme, OutReach & Art Education aims to connect with the community and schools through a series of artists' talks and workshops. This year, we had this with our workshops by Farhan Idris and our guided artist's walks. Our aim is to shape this up with collaborators and partners for 2023.

## 3. LEADERSHIP

### 3.1 Board of Directors

#### **Hadi Wahyuni Adiputri**

*Board Chairperson, joined 30 March 2015*

Wahyuni is an arts manager and curator known for her promotion of Singapore cinema and the arts. She has served as Co-Director of Objectifs Centre for the Arts and Executive Director of Singapore International Film Festival. Her career began in the visual arts and she has since worked as Senior Programme Manager at The Substation and Commissioning Editor at Mediacorp TV12. Wahyuni was a Co-Producer of Anthony Chen's *Ilo Ilo* (winner of the Camera d'Or at the 66th Cannes Film Festival and winner of four Golden Horse Awards including Best Feature Film). Wahyuni is an Eisenhower Fellow and received the United Technologies Corporation Fellowship in 2016. In 2022, she was presented with the Professional Achievement Award by Ramkhamhaeng University's ASEAN Film Festival for outstanding contribution to ASEAN cinema.

#### **Jean-Louis François Morisot**

*Former Finance Committee Chair-appointed 5 December 2017, joined 17 January 2017*

Based in Singapore since 1994, Jean-Louis is co-founder and director of Fondation la Roche Jacquelin, a non-profit foundation for the promotion of Southeast Asian art in Europe. Chief operating officer and co-founder of Proa Partners Pte Ltd, an institutional long-only fund manager based in Singapore and investing in Asia ex-Japan equities.

Jean-Louis previously worked as a managing director, Global investment research, Goldman Sachs where he was responsible for transportation/infrastructure equity research in the Asia-Pacific region. B.A. McGill University (Montreal, Canada), postgraduate degrees (Maîtrise and DEA) in political philosophy from University of Paris, Sorbonne.

#### **Cyril Wong Yit Mun**

*Poet/Writer*

*Board Director, joined 12 August 2021*

Cyril Wong has been described by The Oxford Companion to Modern Poetry in English as Singapore's leading confessional poet, based mainly on "a barely submerged anxiety over the fragility of human connection and a relentless self-querying".

A past recipient of the National Arts Council's Young Artist Award and two Singapore Literature Prizes, he completed a doctoral degree in English Literature at the National University of Singapore in 2012. His poems have been translated into Bengali, Japanese, Italian, Turkish and German. His writings have also appeared in international magazines as well as anthologies by W. W. Norton and Everyman's Library. A featured poet at the Edinburgh International Book Festival, the Hong Kong International Literary Festival, the Sydney Writers' Festival, and the Singapore Writers' Festival, he founded Singapore's longest-running international poetry webjournal, SOFTBLOW. In other roles within the arts, he was a book and performing arts reviewer for The Straits Times.

**Joe Ng Hock Sun**

*Musician/Composer*

*Board Director, joined 1 October 2021*

After an extensive career in the music industry in the 90s and fame as singer-songwriter of seminal rock outfit, The Padres, Joe remains prominent in Singapore's independent music scene as a music composer, promoter of alternative rock shows and producer of bands. Joe has worked on film and TV projects such as *The Maid* (2005) and *Unlucky Plaza* (2016) and HBO's award-winning series *Invisible Stories* (2019). With his heart in the arts, he also takes on numerous theatre and art projects such as Liquid Love Sound Meridians, the art Installation by Ujika which was exhibited at MOCA Taipei (2020); and has collaborated with artists Joo Choon Lin, Joshua Yang and Ang Soo Koon on a number of multimedia art installations such as Pears and Exorcize Me. In 2021, he worked on the music and sound design for *The Bride Always Knocks Twice* by Theatre Practice under the direction of Kuo Jian Hong.

**Bryan Tan Kuan Ho**

*Playwright and Director*

*Board Director, joined 1 October 2021*

Bryan is a playwright and theatre director. He graduated from the National University of Singapore with a Bachelor of Laws degree in 1999, and is presently the regional privacy counsel of a biopharmaceutical solutions company. In TheatreWorks' 24-Hour Playwriting Competition, he won the First Prize in 2013 for *Strike*, the Second Prize in 2010 for *There Will Now Be A 15-Minute Interval*, and a Merit Prize in 1998 for *Snakeskin*. He also won the First Prize in the Hewlett-Packard / Action Theatre 10- Minute Play Contest in 1996 for *Lizard In The Loo*. In 2013, One Player Short Ensemble presented *WiFi Lovers* at the Guling Street Avant-Garde Theatre in Taipei. In 2007, TheatreWorks presented *The Last Theatre State* as part of 120. In 2004, Teater Ekamatra presented *Blissed*, and *Broomstick* as part of Istana 2000. He is a member of The Blue Statesmen, an independent collective of theatre artists. For their inaugural production, he conceived and directed *BluePrince*, which was presented by the collective and *The Substation* as part of SeptFest 2012 and the Kuo Pao Kun Festival 2012.



**Michelle Chang-Wanlass**

*Managing Partner, Mocha Chai Laboratories*

*Board Director, joined 12 August 2021*

Michelle started her career in the arts as a Producer-Presenter of the National Arts Council's Passion Radio station promoting Singapore music, theatre and other art forms. Michelle spent over 20 years as a media executive as Business Development Director, Arts Central TV12, and Head of Content for English Audience Segment, MediaCorp, leading cross-platform teams - Radio, TV, OTT - to produce content. Her career also overlapped in the arts as Assistant Director, Marketing at the National Gallery; and Head of Marketing & Communications for NUS Centre for the Arts. As Managing Partner of Mocha Chai Laboratories (MCL), she pursues their commitment to Singapore and Asian media content and expanding their film & video content expertise. She is currently leading an international production for MCL commissioned by CJ Entertainment.

Michelle started painting in 2002 and exhibits with Blue Lotus Fine Art, having had 3 solo shows. Her paintings are featured in the children's book *A Blue Cat's Tale* (2008) by Sangeetha Madhavan.

### **3.2 Management team & staff**

**Ezzam Rahman**

*Artistic Director*

As a performance artist, Ezzam has performed extensively both regionally and internationally. He was awarded a joint winner of the Grand Prize for the President's Young Talents 2015 and the People's Choice Award by the Singapore Art Museum.

Also an educator, Ezzam was awarded the Goh Chok Tong Youth Promise Award by Yayasan Mendaki and the prestigious Young Artist Award by the National Arts Council in 2016. In 2021, he was awarded the Most Promising Award; photography category for PULSE Awards, Thailand.

**Yvonne Lee**

*Company Manager*

Yvonne joined The Substation in March 2022. One of the founding members of the now defunct independent non-profit art space, Plastique Kinetic Worms, she was also one of the three partners of SouthEast Asian Contemporary art gallery, Atelier Frank & Lee. Yvonne started her early years with the Singapore Art

Museum, private galleries and was a part-time lecturer at LASALLE College of the Arts.

Her responsibilities at The Substation include operations, HR, finance, governance and compliance, fundraising and sponsorship, PR and marketing as well as Board liaison.

### **Organisational structure**

The Substation has a flat hierarchical structure. All staff are accountable to or work with other staff. Below are the positions and brief description:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Scope of work</b>	<b>Reports to</b>
Artistic Director	Artistic direction, integrity, moral and civil position	Board
Company Manager	Financial performance, organisational management, corporate governance, communications, PR and marketing	Board
Accounts – Outsourced to KC Corporate Solutions	Accounting, Payroll, receipts – all financial applications	Company Manager

## 4. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

### 4.1 Year in brief

The Substation places at the forefront our annual multi-disciplinary arts festival SeptFest which also marks our anniversary. Having moved out of 45 Armenian Street's building, the new SeptFest saw us working with different venues and partners. We hope that this will create a robust synergy with different collaborators and creative partners. In addition to SeptFest, we plan to have outreach and online programmes that allow us to work with emerging artists and have regional collaborations. Working with online platforms for our programmes is a good way for us to reach out to new audiences. It is important for us to rebuild our relationships with the arts community, audiences, donors and supporters in this new form.

Our overall approach is to keep our costs manageable and focus our energy on fundraising through sponsorship, grants, fundraising campaigns/events and individual donations. We are planning a fundraising exhibition featuring works from multiple artists and support that with one online fundraising campaign that allows us to engage supporters who wish to donate smaller amounts. We also aim to organise an Adopt-The-Programme fundraising exercise based on SeptFest 2023. Through these activities, we hope to re-engage our supporters as well as reach out to new donors.

## 4.2 Programmes & activities

### i. Shore Seekers World by Ayer Ayer

1 April to 30 April 2021

Venue: The Substation and Shoreseekers

Website: <https://www.shoreseekers.world/>



#### Programme description:

This show was presented as a Virtual Reality Experience as part of The Substation's Associate Artist Programme 2020/21.

Created by ecologically-engaged art collective Ayer Ayer Project, Shore Seekers. World is an online 360 VR artwork that shares the experience of traversing the world of shore debris trash. Shore Seekers. World is a digital extension of the Shore Debris Table artwork created by Ayer Ayer Project in 2019. Shore Seekers is an opportunity to consider our relationship with plastics. Players, in assuming the role of debris collectors working their way across the Johor Straits, are prompted to develop a deeper understanding of the plastic pollution crisis, in its complexities and contradictions. Can we truly think of ourselves as detached from nature, at a time where microplastics have found their way into the air, our food and even our bodies? How do we make sense of the various scales at play – time, space and our sense of agency? Shore Seekers also draws upon the histories embedded in our coastlines. The Orange Laut, sea-faring indigenous peoples who first settled in the area, are deeply intertwined with that of the sea.

Their understanding of the marine world is layered with their beliefs and culture – this site was first recorded by their ancestors; the next spot is excellent for fishing; that area over there is inhabited by spirits, and should be crossed carefully.

Ernest Goh is the founder of Ayer Ayer, an ecologically-engaged art project that reaches out to communities through visual, experiential and participatory

artworks in art and science. In 2019, Ernest looked at the complications of ocean plastic pollution in Singapore. Ernest's work has been commissioned by and installed at the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum in Singapore, collected by the Multimedia Art Museum Moscow, and also resides in corporate, public and private collections.

Positive impact: ShoreSeekers.World is an online 360o VR adventure presented by ecologically minded art collective Ayer Ayer Project. When the COVID-19 pandemic shut down all public gatherings, the Shore Debris Table, Ayer Ayer Project's public facing participatory artwork where participants are invited to sit and remove microplastic fragments piece-by-piece in silence, had to cancel all its presentations. Shoreseekers.World was created as a digital extension of the Shore Debris Table artwork so that Ayer Ayer can continue to engage the public about the plastic pollution crisis. Part visual journey, part game, and part educational experience, the Shoreseekers.World invites players to explore two sites along the historical Johor Straits: Punggol, Singapore and Pendas in Johor, Malaysia. Connected by history and their shared predicament of plastic pollution, these real-life locations are not just an immersive backdrop, but also a stark reminder of the very real consequences of careless human practices.

Total audience engagement: 2,693      Non-ticketed outreach: 825

Artist's quote: "It is one of a number of community projects I have embarked on to help the public understand more about the environment. I spent my early childhood playing in the *longkangs* around the Siglap kampungs where my grandmother lived, and I continue to be fascinated by wildlife as an artist... Ayer Ayer Project is always searching for new and interesting ways to engage the public on environmental issues. With the COVID-19 pandemic, however, we have not been able to do so through *Shore Debris Table*, our in-person public participatory artwork where we invite participants to try their hand at removing small microplastic fragments from the shore debris.

To engage with people online, we came up with the idea of creating a digital version of *Shore Debris Table*. The creative team further developed it into a VR experience that gives participants the opportunity to travel to different locations beyond Singapore's shores and share stories about those locations." - Ernest Goh

## ii. Selfish Boxes by Lau Yu Tong

Dates: 7 April to 18 April 2021

Venue: The Substation Gallery, 45 Armenian Street, Singapore 179936



### Programme description:

Selfish Boxes is a solo exhibition by Singaporean artist Lai Yu Tong presented at The Substation as part of his year-long participation in the Associate Artist Programme 2020/21. The exhibition presents new works that contemplate car culture, death and art in the context of Singapore.

Lai Yu Tong is a Singaporean artist who works mainly with images. He studied at the School of the Arts and LASALLE College of the Arts. He has presented solo exhibitions DECK and Comma Space and has also presented his works at SAM 8Q, Institute of Contemporary Art Singapore, The Esplanade, The Arts House, ISLANDS, and The Substation. He also makes books and music, and briefly ran an experimental art space called —Tom in 2018.

Positive Impact: Selfish Boxes was Lai Yu Tong's third solo exhibition as part of his year-long participation in the Associate Artist Programme 2020. The artist uses history and his artwork to connect the past and present, and create curiosity. The artist is using his own way to communicate the importance of artmaking with the audience.

Total audience engagement: 2,693      Non-ticketed outreach: 825

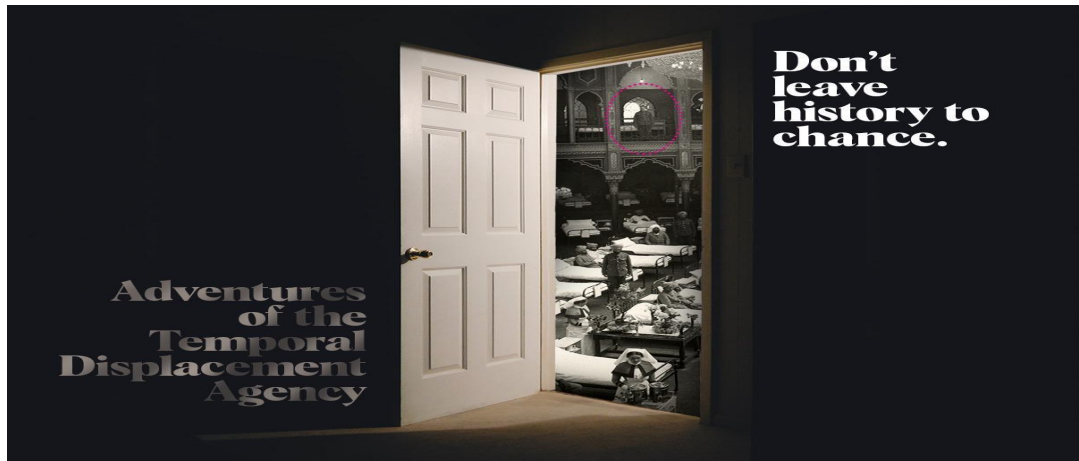
Artist's quote: "A recent discovery of a tiny bird figurine that measures no more than 2 cm long has now been declared the oldest work of art ever found in East Asia, dated to be at least 13,000 years old. The historic discovery proves that people made art in China as early as during the Stone Age, and that they liked birds." – *Lai Yu Tong*

### iii. Adventures of Temporal Displacement Agency

*An Immersive Theatre Experience*

Date: 10 April 2021 (experience), 11 April 2021 (exhibition)

Venue: The Substation Theatre, 45 Armenian Street, Singapore 179936



#### **Programme description:**

Adventures of the Temporal Displacement Agency (ATDA) is a mixed-reality and immersive role-playing experience where five participants play pre-written time travellers in an unfolding story. You travel back to a bunker in 1942 to decide if the fall of Singapore is necessary to ensure the birth of a nation.

For audiences more familiar with conventional theatre, ATDA forms an extension of the forum theatre format, with the introduction of a greater agency on the participant's part to take control over how the story plays out. Participants are expected to improvise with performers, creating a unique theatrical experience each time.

ATDA is a commission by The Substation as part of the programme's *Timelines*. It was presented as a one-day limited run to a small group of 9 player-participants at The Substation on 10 April 2021, and live-streamed on Twitch (Twitch.tv/VoidDeckGamesSG). A 360 virtual, as well as physical exhibition was also presented in the immersive set after the performance and broadcast.

It was presented by The Substation and Void Deck Games Singapore. Void Deck Games is an immersive participation design studio that focuses on immersive roleplaying. Void Deck Games are filmmaker Raihan Harun and designer Joanne Lim. They hope to transform Singapore's culture through play.

Positive impact: This programme allowed audiences to experience storytelling in a new way, creating a participatory experience and engaging with all senses. It helped The Substation reach new audiences, while supporting young artists in their vision to expand our storytelling experience.



Total audience engagement: 2,693      Non-ticketed outreach: 825

Review/ quote: "If it's one local company that knows how games can be used to tell great stories, it's Void Deck Games." – *Bakchormeeboy*

#### **iv. Mandala for The Substation**

Dates: 21-30 April 2021

Venue: The Substation Gallery, 45 Armenian Street, Singapore 179936



#### **Programme Description:**

Mandala for Substation is an exhibition by Tang Mun Kit, inspired by the Substation's uncertainty over its status, and the sense of loss in continuity from the original purpose of A Home for the Arts as expounded by founder Kuo Pao Kun.

The exhibition showcased 20 paintings and four huge floor installation using found objects, found carpet, paints, lightings to create a Mandala, which embody a visual image for viewers to "meditate/imagine/ ruminant" on the future of a new and intact Substation, an inclusive space that invites all art forms without prejudice and to create a new era of possibilities and cross fertilisation of disciplines. An artist tour was held on 21 April, 7-9pm.

Mandala for Substation is Tang Mun Kit's 19th Solo exhibition in his artistic journey. Tang Mun Kit graduated with BSc.(Hons) Mechanical Engineering from the University of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, U.K., before becoming a full-time artist in 1985. Tang's early projects and awards include More than 4...- Installation and Actions, Singapore Festival of Arts, 1988; Facing the Infinite Space, the Japan Foundation ASEAN Culture Centre Gallery, Tokyo, 1993; 7 Certificates of



Distinction and Commendation, UOB Painting of the Year Competitions, 1989-1991; two Special Awards Promising Artist in MCI Competition, 1989; First Prize, IBM Art Award, 1990. His work has been collected by Deutsche Bank AG, Singapore Art Museum, National Gallery Singapore, and various private collectors.

Positive impact: The exhibition was the artist's 19<sup>th</sup> solo exhibition. He created a work that reflected his thoughts and feelings about The Substation and its journey. He was able to connect the community in a challenging time for the arts community, allowing a space for personal expression for an organization that has played an instrumental part in building the independent arts scene in Singapore.

Total audience engagement: 494

Artist's quote: "Mandala images for viewers to meditate/imagine/ruminate on what and how Substation will evolve into. On the future of a new and hopefully intact Substation, both physically and spiritually; on a Substation that can expand on what can be for all artforms without prejudice, towards a new era of possibilities and cross fertilisation of disciplines." - Tang Mun Kit

#### **v. Triune by Farhan Idris: Online Workshop and E-book Project**

Dates: 22-29 April 2021

Venue: Online



This was presented as part of The Substation's Associate Artist Programme 2020/21. The show relates to the form (three-in-one) known as "trinitarian ontology". Triune is Farhan's attempt to systematise his own art critique surrounding the discourses of experimentation and situationism; Russian

cosmism and also aesthetic and philosophical aspects of Hindu-Buddhist tantrism in the visual arts.

In Triune, Farhan formed art criticism essays that combined into an e-book project, supplemented by a public facing workshop for each of the three parts or what he calls a 'strand'.

### **STRAND 1 - Workshop #1**

Topic: Rethinking: Russian Cosmism and a Critique of the Anthropocene in Art Discourse

Date: 22 Apr 2021

Time: 08:00 PM - 09:30 PM

In this workshop, musings and critiques of Relationality in contemporary art discourse were shared alongside an esoteric short film screening introducing aesthetics and ideas of the philosophical & cultural movement known as Russian Cosmism.

### **STRAND 2 - Workshop #2**

Topic: Reorienting: Cooking, Experimentation and Performance

Date: 26 Apr 2021

Time: 08:00 PM - 09:30 PM

What are the possible connections between the use of food and cooking in the arts, and marginalised intersections of being? This session will look at culinary art experimentation via examples from contemporary art while participants get hands-on in discussing the dynamics around preparing, serving and consuming food- and their parallels to production and presentation in contemporary art sectors. Farhan is the co-founder and convenor of the critical humanities collective Bras Basah Open. He is a philosopher by training and has given talks in comparative philosophy internationally.

### **STRAND 3 - Workshop #3**

Topic: Re-envisioning: Philosophical Tantrism, Visuality & the Mandala

Date: 29 Apr 2021

Time: 08:00 PM - 09:30 PM

Aims and assumptions of future-vision discourse & post-Anthropocene envisioning in art scenes will be questioned and viewed in this session through perspectives from Tantrism, exploring the three Tantric aspects of Mandala (imagining), Mudra (the body) and Mantra (repetitive linguistic use). Through a segment of participative performance, participants will get to practice hand positions of the Mudras while learning about the meanings and symbolisms they embody.

**vi. SeptFest 2021: Alternative Voice(s)**

Dates: 16 September – 24 October 2021

Venue: The Substation website and social media - [www.substation.org](http://www.substation.org)



**Programme description:**

The Substation celebrates its 31st anniversary with SeptFest 2021. Under the theme *Alternative Voice(s)*, SeptFest 2021 features a combination of live dialogues with artists from Asia including Singapore, India and Malaysia, and the restaging of previous live performances as video documentation.

A fully digital programme, *Alternative Voice(s)* comprises two components – screening of four works that were presented previously at 45 Armenian Street; and *Sunday Morning Conversations*, a series of Facebook Live conversations with artists who give voice to alternative communities in their work and practice.

The festival was curated by The Substation Artistic Director, Raka Maitra.

**i. September — Documentation videos**

This series of selected full-length documentation videos from SeptFest 2020 was curated by The Substation Artistic Director, Raka Maitra and provided a rare look at these art gems. The videos were made available for viewing on The Substation's Facebook and Instagram pages.

17 September, Friday: Tea Leaves Glowing In The Wind by Tang Da Wu and Zai Tang

18 September, Saturday: Waltz of the Flower by Caroline Chin and Marvin Acero Ablao

24 September, Friday: NADA and ScRach Marcs

25 September, Saturday: Men with Pens by Subhas Nair and Yanni Chia

**ii. October — Sunday Morning Conversations**

Sunday Morning Conversations was a series of Facebook Live conversations with artists who gave voice to alternative communities in their work and practice. Each conversation invited a special guest to speak alongside an Associate Artist of The Substation's incubation programme, the Associate Artist Programme (AAP). They spoke about and shared their challenges and accomplishments while supporting alternative voices in the community.

3 October, Sunday, 10:30am – 11:30am: Conversation with Sankar Venkateswaran (India) and Grace Kalaiselvi (The Substation Associate Artist 2021-22)

10 October, Sunday, 10:30am – 11:30am: Conversation with Aida Redza (Penang) and Wendy Toh (The Substation Associate Artist 2021-22)

24 October, Sunday, 10:30am – 11:30am: Conversation with Raka Maitra (Singapore) and Fazley Elahi Rubel (Bangladesh)

31 October, Sunday, 10:30am – 11:30am: Conversation with Anomaa Rajakaruna (Sri Lanka) and Wendy Toh (The Substation Associate Artist 2021-22)

Positive impact: A combination of videos and social media live, this format allowed The Substation and the artists participating to continue to connect with audiences amidst the pandemic. Documentation videos of past SeptFest 2020 performances were posted on Facebook and Instagram with and Sunday Morning Conversations broadcast via Facebook Live. Sunday Morning Conversations gave voice to alternative communities in their work and practice. Each conversation invited a special guest to speak alongside an Associate Artist of The Substation's incubation programme, the Associate Artist Programme (AAP). They spoke and shared about their challenges and accomplishments while supporting alternative voices in the community.

Total audience engagement: 1,934

Curator's quote: "What we need more than anything is a 'home', a secure platform to take risks, where the 'small' and 'raw' 2 are still valued. This is where we come to the question of 'space'. Where do we move? In reference to Bell Hooks' Choosing the Margin as Space of Radical Openness – 'that at times home is nowhere, then the home is no longer one place, it is locations.' We are embarking on this journey of exploration. This is when we came up with Alternate Voice(s) as the theme for our 31st anniversary this month. Let us look back before we take a step forward. The community and the minds that The Substation nurtured and built over the years cannot be erased easily, and we

need to take the time to reflect, as it is this memory that will feed us, drive us forward and keep the spirit alive” – *Raka Maitra*

### **vii. you are obviously in the right place - An Artist's Journey**

- i. Artist: Artist and musician, Nadia Ali/ Venue: Orchard Road Vicinity /Dates: 25 & 26 March 2022
- ii. Artist: Arts educator, filmmaker, and author Wesley Leon Aroozoo/ Venue: Bugis Junction to Singapore Management University/ Dates: 2 & 3 April 2022
- iii. Artist: Artist Mary Bernadette Lee / Venue: East Coast Park/ Dates: 7 & 8 April 2022
- iv. Artist: Sabrina Sng / Venue: National Library Victoria Street - National Museum of Singapore - Fort Canning Park/ Dates: 16 & 17 April 2022



#### **Programme description:**

The 4 guided walks were an intimate experience for a small group, where the artists shared their art practice and how this city inspires them as art makers for 90 minutes. This was a rare opportunity for the audience to get to know and follow an artist as they brought them to different locations around the city, sharing key information on their work and experiences. The four artists shared their personal narratives, stories from the locations and there were hands-on activities as part of the programme.

Positive impact: The pandemic created a desire for us to engage with one another and with storytelling at the heart of these guided artist's walks, we wanted to build that connection with places and people through the eyes of these talented artists.

Total audience engagement: 61

Artist's quote: "As an independent artist, I am passionate to share the lesser known side of Singapore's diverse history with people. My novel 'The Punkhawala and the Prostitute' explores the lives of the Karayuki-sans (Japanese prostitutes) in 1800's Singapore which is relatively unknown to most Singaporeans. With The Substation's first Artist Walk, I am excited to share my research and guide participants to imagine what it was like in 1800's Singapore as we trace the footsteps of the Karayuki-sans as depicted in the novel." – *Wesley Leon Aroozoo*



## 4.3 Fundraising activities

### i. Objects of Affections

#### The Substation's Online Fundraiser

Dates: 1-20 March 2022

Platform: The Substation's social media platforms



#### Description:

20 Singaporean artists contributed artwork for The Substation's online fundraiser. The Substation unveiled one work each day through its social media. Various original artworks including sculptures, ceramics, paintings, tapestry and photography were featured online on The Substation's Instagram and Facebook page. Each artwork was made available with a donation of SGD500/-. This

fundraiser was made possible with the generosity of 20 Singaporean artists from multiple art disciplines. The 20 artists were Yeoh Wee Hwee, Xin Xiaochang, Dan Wong, Tang Li-Nah, Bridget Tay, Ezzam Rahman, Yen Phang, Dahlia Osman, Oscar Ng, Mary Bernadette Lee, Justin Lee, Vincent Leow, Sarah Lin, Smiha Kapoor, Sun Koh, Nhawfal Juma'at, Dylan Chan, Ahmad Abu Bakar, Ghazi Alqudicy, Wesley Leon Aroozoo.

Beneficiaries: All proceeds raised go to support The Substation's programmes and workshops for artist development and arts education.

Amount raised: \$11,500

Fundraising expenses: \$125

Positive impact: The online fundraiser brought together the kind of multidisciplinary artists that The Substation has always supported. Doing it online helped The Substation fundraise during the pandemic and at the same time, connect with art supporters and artists. The works were exciting and so different from each other that it reminded us of the diversity in the arts that we have in Singapore that should be celebrated more often.

Artists' quotes:

"Art lovers should be excited to see a combination of young and established artists contributing artworks towards *Objects of Affections*, as a symbol of support towards The Substation and what it stands for. It is also a great opportunity to collect artists' works for a greater cause too!" – *Bridget Tay*

"This fundraising event reflects the ongoing relationship between art makers and The Substation, a community that is ever-willing, ever-giving and generous. This event is also an opportunity for art lovers and collectors to acquire original works by our local artists at an affordable price, hence it is great timing to continue or start your very own art collection!" - *Ezzam Rahman*

We would like to thank the following people for their generosity in supporting the Objects of Affection Online Fundraiser:

Elaine Yeoh Hong Ghee  
Celine Yeo Lay Ching  
Bryan Tan  
Kamini Ramachandran  
Rong Choy  
Patrice Chou  
Jemma Tan  
Michelle Chang  
Danny Yeo  
Juan Foo  
Clement Chua



Wahyuni Hadi  
Pure Chen Yichun  
Norsiah Pinard  
Edwin Chia  
Wesley Leon Aroozoo  
Ezzam Rahman  
Hoon Wee Ning

**ii. Adopt-A-Programme:  
you are obviously in the right place – An Artist’s Journey**  
Period of campaign: March to April 2022  
Platform: Giving.sg



**Description:**

This Adopt-A-Programme campaign helped The Substation raise funds to support its 2022 programme 'you are obviously in the right place - An Artist's Journey'.

'you are obviously in the right place - An Artist's Journey' was an intimate audience experience where an artist shares their art practices and how this city inspires them as art makers. The guided walks by 4 artists - Nadia Ali, Wesley Leon Aroozoo, Mary Bernadette Lee and Sabrina Sng - were an intimate experience for a small group, where the artists shared their art practice and how this city inspires them as art makers for 90 minutes. This was a rare opportunity for the audience to get to know and follow an artist as they brought them to

different locations around the city, sharing key information on their work and experiences. The four artists shared their personal narratives, stories from the locations and there were hands-on activities as part of the programme.

Donors of \$120 category and above were acknowledged as Programme Adopters on The Substation website. Donation categories were \$120/ \$150/ \$180/ \$210 or any amount of choice. Our goal was to raise \$4,000. At the end of the campaign, 22 donors contributed \$5,030.

Beneficiaries: This fundraiser was for the programme 'you are obviously in the right place - An Artist's Journey'.

Amount raised: 22 donors contributed \$5,030

Fundraising expenses: \$0

Positive impact: This online campaign allowed us to reach out to past supporters and new supporters. While we provided guidelines on amount, donors could choose to contribute any amount. Donors could see that their support directly impacted our programme and the participating artists.

Artist's quote:

"As an independent artist, I am passionate to share the lesser known side of Singapore's diverse history with people. My novel 'The Punkhawala and the Prostitute' explores the lives of the Karayuki-sans (Japanese prostitutes) in 1800's Singapore which is relatively unknown to most Singaporeans. With The Substation's first Artist Walk, I am excited to share my research and guide participants to imagine what it was like in 1800's Singapore as we trace the footsteps of the Karayuki-sans as depicted in the novel." – *Wesley Leon Aroozoo*

We would like to thank the following Adopt-the-Programme donors for their generosity:

<b><i>Donation amount</i></b>	<b><i>Donor</i></b>
\$540	Yvonne Li
\$500	Gimz Alex Lee Siang Meng Jean-Louis Morisot
\$300	Christina Liew
\$210	Peter Ung Chong Huat Dr Sanjay C Kuttan Dr Marlene Teo

\$180	Vicki Heng Veerasekaran s/o Arumugam
\$150	Sandra Seah Harris Jahim Karen Wai Paolo Jean Ty Yip Yew Chong
\$120	Dianne Hummal Jemma Tan En Wei Hoo Chuan Wei
\$60	Tengku Nur Mariam Bte Raja Noor Azam Shah
\$50	Stephanie Robert

## 5. FINANCIAL AND GOVERNANCE REVIEW

### 5.1 Financial Report

#### Five-year performance matrix

Y/e March	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
<b>Net Profit</b>	-299,615	-184,321	52,082	12,293	28,274
<b>Income</b>	286,109	1,073,328	1,155,783	1,186,793	1,059,904
<b>Expenses</b>	585,724	1,257,649	1,103,701	1,174,500	1,031,630

The Substation FY ended March 2022 in deficit of \$299,615 (2021: \$184,321). It had an income of \$286,109 (2021: \$1,073,328) and expenses of \$585,724 (2021: \$1,257,649). While the financials reflect the combined one-off effects of the transition to an “asset-light” model, with the end of venue-hire revenues and its associated costs and the lasting impact of the pandemic durably impacting event income and donations yet attracting the remaining portion of the Jobs Credit grant. Expenses were significantly inflated by the one-off costs associated with the reduction in force exercise and the physical closure of 45 Armenian Street.

**Financial statement** - The Substation’s full audited financial statement is made available online at [www.charities.gov.sg](http://www.charities.gov.sg) and copies provided to MCCY and NAC.

We are grateful for the Presentation and Participation grant awarded by the National Arts Council and Arts Fund that went towards funding SeptFest 2021.

**Donations** - Due to its IPC (Institution of Public Character) status, donations to The Substation received a 250% tax exemption for the financial year 21/22. Cash donations were also eligible for MCCY’s Cultural Matching Fund (CMF), established on 1 November 2013. The CMF disbursement has been extremely helpful in covering our operating costs since it was initiated.

We are also most grateful for generous individual donations from Annabelle Yip (\$10,000) and Yvonne Tham (\$5,000).

## 5.2 Corporate governance

The Substation remains committed to constantly improving levels of corporate governance with the aim of becoming a model non-profit arts organisation. This attention to good governance has focused on transparency, internal controls and maintaining proper policies and procedures.

### Board-level oversight and authorisation

Board Members understand their responsibilities under the law to use proper legal care in the exercise of their duties. Accordingly, the Board approves all yearly budgets and major transactions and monitors expenditure and revenue against budget. Regular financial reports are provided to the Board by the General Manager, and each yearly audited financial statements are presented to the board for its review. Any payments over \$2,000 require two Board members' signatures and any purchases over \$10,000 require board approval. The Board regularly reviews the progress of The Substation's programmes.

### Term limit of Board

To enable succession planning and steady renewal in the spirit of sustainability of the charity, the Board has a term limit of ten years. In particular, the Treasurer or Financial Committee Chairman (or equivalent) has a term limit of four years.

### Board meetings and attendance

Board meetings are held every quarter. The Company Manager completes required lodgement with the Singapore Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA) accordingly.

A total of four Board meetings and one AGM were held during the financial year, of which three Board meetings and one AGM under the newly constituted Board. The following table sets out the individual Board Member's attendance at the meetings:

Board members	% of attendance
Hadi Wahyuni Adiputri (Chair)	100%
Michele Chang-Wanlass	67%
Bryan Tan Kuan Ho	100%
Cyril Wong Yit Mun	100%
Joe Ng Hock Sun	100%
Jean-Louis Morisot	67%

**Board remuneration**

No Board members are remunerated for their Board services.

**Board sub-committee**

Programme Committee	Cyril Wong Yit Mun Hadi Wahyuni Adiputri Joe Ng Hock Sun
Finance Committee	Michelle Chang-Wanlass Hadi Wahyuni Adiputri
Treasurer	Joe Ng Hock Sun
Audit Committee	Jean-Louis François Morisot Bryan Tan Kuan Ho

**Disclosure of remuneration of three highest paid staff**

- 1) Ezzam Rahman, Artistic Director
- 2) Yvonne Lee, Company Manager

None of The Substation's two highest paid employees receives more than \$100,000 in annual remuneration.

**Professional consultation**

The Board and management retain both inside and outside independent financial and governance counsel and, in addition to regular consultation, seek their opinion on special matters as prudence dictates. These opinions are noted in the minutes of the board meetings when appropriate.

**Conflicts of interest**

All Board Members and staff are required to comply with The Substation's conflict of interest policy. It includes documented procedures for Board Members and staff to declare actual or potential conflicts of interests. Board Members and staff abstain from decision-making on matters where they have a conflict of interest.

**Employee salaries and benefits**

The Substation strives to provide its employees fair and reasonable salaries, taking into consideration: the nature of the job, individual qualifications and merit, the training, education or experience required, the outside marketplace, the cost of living, the non-profit nature of The Substation, the financial capacity of The Substation and other relevant factors.

### 5.3 Financial practices

#### **Statement about financial stewardship**

The Substation takes the matter of financial stewardship very seriously and strives to abide by high standards of fiscal integrity. The Board and Management understands that these documents can be updated and strengthened when necessary, and with Board's approval.

#### **Solicitation of funds**

Public fundraising events or appeals conducted by The Substation follow statutory regulations in relation to licenses, procedures, communication, transparency, and audit.

#### **Use of funds**

Strict internal procedures are followed including budgeting, controls, checks and balances for using donated or earned funds.

#### **Restricted funds**

The Substation has disclosed its restricted funds in the Financial Statement.

#### **Reserves policy**

The reserves set aside provide financial stability and the means for the development of the company's principal activity. The company seeks to maintain a reserve of 6 months of operating expenses. The reserves would be accessed should income from earned revenue, raised revenue, or support from grant monies become untenable.

The Board of Directors annually reviews the amount of reserves that are required to ensure that the company is able to fulfil the continuing obligations.

#### **Accounting practice**

The Substation maintains its accounts on a cloud-based accounting system (XERO) conforming with generally accepted accounting systems. Its accounting system operates under internal controls that are designed to safeguard The Substation's assets and produce accurate and reliable accounting information. The Substation adopts Financial Reporting Standards and has chosen not to adopt the Charities Accounting Standards.

#### **Audited financial statements**

Each year The Substation produces a financial statement that is audited by an independent auditor. Prudential PAC has been retained to conduct our year-end audit. The yearly audit is published after The Substation's senior management and board of Directors issue a formal, written representation to the auditors that the organisation has in good faith provided everything for which the auditors have asked, and that, to the best of their knowledge, no irregular transactions have occurred, and no violations or possible violations of laws or regulations have occurred that should have been disclosed.

Certain fundraising events, Cultural Matching Fund applications, certain core programmes and the NAC Year End Budget report will require an audited statement of accounts. For these “project” audits we use either Prudential PAC or our accountant of record, KC Corporate Solutions.

**Internal Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS)**

The codes and rules of IRAS regarding the solicitation, acknowledgement, or receipt of, accounting for and use of tax-exempt funds are complied with carefully. All charitable donations to The Substation are tax deductible, subject to certain conditions being met. As a non-profit organisation with IPC status, The Substation is exempt from paying corporate tax.



## 6. THE YEAR AHEAD

For any arts organization going through fundamental changes, we start with reviewing our role in the arts landscape today. The Substation has such a rich history involving so many artists in Singapore.

Many people started at The Substation, in more ways than one - with a dance performance, a music gig, a monologue, an exhibition or even a teaching or taking part in a workshop. It was through these art events that artist experiences were built and a community formed. As we chart a new future for The Substation, we draw from these memories that will allow us to create new artist and audience experiences today.

Without permanent housing like before which saw multiple activities happening simultaneously, we have to consolidate the areas of work with our modest resources.

We will be putting our efforts into these main areas:

i. **Programmes:** We will be working to re-shape The Substation's annual celebration of independent arts SeptFest with new partnerships that allows flexibility. We will explore more intimate experiences that will heighten the audience experience at all our presented shows. Linked to SeptFest, our hope is to evolve and launch a new Artist-in-Residence programme.

ii. **Grow partnerships and collaborations (locally and regionally):** The challenges include building generous partnerships with companies and individuals that have the space to house us and/or the synergy to bring life to our programmes and workshops.

We also want to maintain as much as possible, The Substation's interest in engaging with artists and curators from multiple art forms locally and regionally.

iii. **Fundraising:** It has been a difficult last couple of years for many arts companies in terms of donations and sponsorship. In the year ahead, we aim to cultivate new donors and build on the success of this year's Objects of Affection Online Fundraiser and Adopt-A-Programme campaign.

To create new revenue platforms, we aim to hold public workshops with artists and new partners. This is also a good way for us to work with artists in a different capacity and build new audiences for The Substation. Specifically in 2023, we plan to hold a fundraising exhibition (featuring works from local

and regional artists) and an Adopt-A-Programme campaign centred on SeptFest 2023.

iv. **Expenditures:** Our aim is to operate in the most cost-effective manner, minimizing overheads and prioritizing programming-related expenses (which will remain the bulk of non-staff expenses) while prudently investing in fundraising campaigns and governance upgrades.