

Biographies of artists

Take Off Productions

Take Off Productions is a network of young theatre practitioners dedicated to supporting independent youth theatre in Singapore. It is committed to staging and promoting new writing by young Singapore dramatists while also encouraging interest in the managerial and technical aspects of theatre-making.

As a collective, Take Off Productions serves as a flexible and accessible platform for young theatre talents to engage in creative collaboration and realise their artistic visions. Take Off Productions also provides opportunities for young producers, managers and crew to hone their skills through hands-on involvement and mutual mentorship. It creates a shared network of artistic talent and provides technical crew and support, financial funding and sponsorship, publicity design and marketing as well as producing and management.

Take Off Productions most recently presented Joel Tan's *Mosaic* at Word Forward's indie arts festival, Lit Up (2013), and produced *Orb Hor!* (2013), a comedy sketch show by team writers Luke Vijay Somasundrum, Hee En Hua and Phua Jun Wei. Take Off Productions has also produced numerous multiple bill presentations of new writing. To date, the collective has produced and financially supported productions of new Singapore writing by playwrights Christopher Fok (*Loud Mouth Loving*, 2013), Luke Vijay Somasundrum (*The Untitled Funeral Play*, 2012), Joel Tan (*Postgrads*, 2012 and *Mosaic*, 2013), Lee Jing Yan (*Inheritance*, 2012), Melissa Yoong (*Last Bicycle on the TPE*, 2010), Daryl Yam and Eleanor Lim (*What We Wanted*, 2010), Rebecca Kwan and Hannah Yukon (*That's Not My Name*, 2010), in so doing bringing together a wide and energetic network of young actors, directors, designers, writers, managers and technicians, presenting their work to diverse audiences.

Perpendicular People Production

Perpendicular People Productions (PPP) is a theatre collective with an inclination towards technical design such as Lighting, Sound, Staging and Multimedia. It provides technical support to productions and also mentorship and hands-on platforms for young theatre technicians looking to learn the ropes.

PPP has provided several other theatre companies and theatre enthusiasts; such as NUS Stage, Hatch Theatrics, GenerAsia and Take Off Productions with technical design and support. By creating a strong foundation in technical knowledge and skill, this enhances the ability to design for each respective field, which in turn creates theatrical pieces that move and touch people's lives while making them question the world around them.

Playwright – Joel Tan

Joel Tan is a playwright, director and performer. A versatile artist, his work crosses genres, styles and theatre-making cultures, including poetry, contemporary drama, dance theatre, pantomime and musical theatre.

He has worked as a writer, director, dramaturg and actor with young theatre groups, including varsity theatres like NUS Stage (*City Night Songs*, 2012) and USProductions (*People*, 2013) and community youth groups like Take Off Productions (*Postgrads*, 2012; *Orb Hor!*, 2013; *Mosaic*, 2013) and Creative Edge (*People*, 2014). Joel mentors young writers in playwriting, most extensively at Buds Youth Theatre, and gives talks on writing, the theatre and literature at schools. He also works with veteran theatre-makers, and has written for Wlldrice (*Family Outing*, 2011; *Jack and the Beansprout!*, 2013), The Finger Players (*The Next Page*, 2014) and Checkpoint Theatre (*Our Lady of Lourdes*, 2014), where he is an Associate Artist.

Director – Chen Yingxuan

Yingxuan started out in theatre as a playwright under Huzir Sulaiman's tutelage. As part of NUS Stage, she also directed, wrote, and acted for several varsity productions. In 2013, she was selected for a mentorship program with Chong Tze Chien, where she directed *Face to Face III* under the Centre for the Arts. Late last year, she assistant directed Checkpoint Theatre's *Atomic Jaya*, and directed Faith Ng's *Normal* for Checkpoint Theatre's Associate Artist Play Readings.

She has been involved in Take Off Productions as a director and actress, most recently directing Joel Tan's *Mosaic* for the Lit Up Festival. Apart from theatre, she continues to create and develop her sensitivity to text and performance through film. This year, a telemovie, *Hongbaos and Kisses*, that she co-wrote for Mediacorp was released, and *Move Out Notice*, a short film she wrote and acted in has just entered the post-production phase. She is currently co-directing NUS Museum's script read for the NUS Arts Festival.

Actor - Julie Wee

Julie Wee trained as an actor at The Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) Drama School in Melbourne. On stage, she has played Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* for Singapore Repertory Theatre (SRT), Juliet in WILD RICE's *Romeo and Juliet*, Laura in *The Woman Who Cooked Her Husband* for Skinned Knee Productions, Scout in *To Kill A Mockingbird* and Elizabeth Proctor in *The Crucible* with Toy Factory. She has also played Hero in *Much Ado About Nothing* and Bianca in *Othello* with SRT.

Julie's TV credits include series roles in *Moulmein High*, *Light Years* and the international production *gURLs wURLd*. She also appeared in an episode of the Australian soap, *Neighbours* and was a scriptwriter for the Neptuno Films animation series *Megaminimals*.

She also works as a host and is a professional voiceover artist who runs her own home studio. Companies that use her voice include Canon, SK-II, Olay, McDonald's and MasterCard. Julie has worked as a part-time DJ on Class 95FM.

You can check out Julie's showreels on her YouTube Channel: JulieWeeVO.

Actor - Erwin Shah Ismail

A computer engineer-turned-trilingual-actor, Erwin is the first male Singaporean to graduate from LASALLE College of the Arts' BA(Hons) Acting in 2011. Since then, he has performed on the local and international stage including Malaysia, Philippines, Scotland and Peru.

Notable stage credits include Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* (WILD RICE) - nominated for Best Supporting Actor at the 13th Life! Theatre Awards, Montano in *Othello* (Singapore Repertory Theatre), Najip Ali in *National Broadway Company* (TheatreWorks), Jeremiah in *Boom* (Sight Lines Productions), Georg in *Spring Awakening* (Pangdemonium!), Woman Police Constable in *Square Moon* (Function 8) and most recently, Xiao Song in *天冷就回来* *If There're Seasons...* (The Theatre Practice). He also enjoys performing for children and has done several plays with SRT's The Little Company, Players Theatre, I Theatre and Kipper Tie Theatre from UK.

Notable screen credits include the narrator in *Every Singaporean Son* (Nat Geo Channel/OneDash22), 'Shannon' in *Hidden Folk* (FLIM) and 'Rico' in *The Kitchen Musical* (AXN/The Group Entertainment) - nominated for Best Drama Series at the 2012 International Emmy Awards.

More information can be found at erwinx.wix.com/info or [@erwinist](https://twitter.com/erwinist) on Twitter.

Actor - Yap Yi Kai

Yi Kai studied Theatre Studies and Drama from 2008 to 2009 and has since been involved in productions with NUS Stage, the NUS Centre for the Arts, Take Off Productions, Buds Theatre Company and Yellow Chair Productions. She took part in the Singapore Writers Festival, the Lit Up! Singapore Indie Arts Festival, and the NUS Arts Festival in 2013, and has performed in readings for Checkpoint Theatre, the NUS Museum and IndigNation 2013. She has done some hosting and broadcasting work and now does freelance voiceovers while studying law at NUS.

Actor - John Cheah

John is an actor, dancer and musician who has performed on stage in South Korea, the Czech Republic, India, Cambodia, South Africa and Singapore.

In 2010, he began his involvement in the local theatre scene with Take Off Productions' first collection of plays, *Take Off*, after graduating from Anglo-Chinese Junior College's Drama Elective Programme. He has since worked with theatre companies including Cake Theatrical Productions (*Decimal Points: 810 minutes*, *Decimal Points 0.01*, *Si Ti Kay*), WILD RICE (*Romeo and Juliet*) and Pinball Collective (*Bedok Reservoir*).

John also attended the New Prague Dance Festival in 2013 and 2014, where he was part of an ensemble that managed to garner the first place award in the Dance Theatre category as well as the Participants' Choice Award over two consecutive years.

He has also worked extensively with the Anglo-Chinese Junior College theatre group, composing the percussion score for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Jungle Book*, as well as choreographing fight sequences for *The Jungle Book* and *Romeo and Juliet*.