

Partner South East Asia

Malaysia Now: Arts & Culture Mosaic

Speaker Profile



Jo Kukathas
Actor, Writer and Director of The Instant Café
Theatre Company

- **Moderator**

Jo Kukathas, actor, writer, director, The Instant Café Theatre Company (1989) best known for its political satire and New Malaysian Writing platform, FIRSTWoRKS. Has run independent art spaces, The Theatre Upstairs, Instant Café's House of Arts and Ideas; produced/curated festivals, Out in the Open and Raise The Roof; directed indoor, outdoor and site-specific productions from new Malaysian opera to Shakespeare to new Malaysian plays to political satire. Acting roles include Winnie (Beckett), Mercutio (Shakespeare) Ophelia (Hennedige), Helen (Fugard), Poncia (Lorca), Agnes (Sa'at), Paulina (Dorfman) plus her own stand-up comedy as different personas. She has written and performed in her own, and others, solo plays.

During Covid-19, her company started experimenting online, engaging with civil society activists to take digital theatre further afield.

International Work: Singapore (acting/directing), Brazil (Shakespeare Forum/ Workshops), Taiwan [Theatre of Healing workshops], Australia [dramaturg/ director, New Asian Plays]. Japanese/ Asian collaborations include [directing/ writing/ acting]: The Island in Between, Hotel Grand Asia, Beautiful Water. Touring: Singapore, Brisbane, Adelaide, Tokyo, Jakarta, Hong

Kong. Intra-cultural projects: Sutra, Pentas Projects, Rumah Anak Teater, Afghan refugee theatre company, Parastoo. Co-authored two art books for children. API Fellow (Asian Public Intellectual), DDS Fellow (De La Salle Democracy Discourse) Is YBeeee, the fictional Deputy Minister of Moral Panic.



Jazreel Goh
Director of British Council Malaysia

- **Opening Remarks**

Jazreel joined British Council China in June 2004 where she led on the UK's largest education marketing and partnership initiatives in mainland China.

Jazreel Goh has worked in various organisations in Malaysia, Australia, as well as Hong Kong in the areas of brand management, corporate planning and investment, international education consultancy, as well as in intellectual property licensing.

In 2011 she set up British Council's Education Intelligence Unit – the first e-marketing platform dedicated to international education research for the industry globally. In 2013, she led the development and launched the UK's flagship outward mobility programme - Generation UK which has since led to a 104% growth in British students to China. During her tenure, the UK became one of the largest providers of transnational education in China and the first country to initiate a multi-lateral education collaboration platform bringing together institutional partners from UK, China and BRI countries on co-funded projects.

Jazreel Goh was born in Malaysia and after completing her secondary school in Malaysia and senior secondary school in Singapore, left for further studies in Melbourne, Australia. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Monash University and was awarded the Equity and Merit Scholarship by the Australian Government to undertake her Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics. She was awarded an MBE in 2017 for her services to UK education in China.

Jazreel returned to Malaysia in September 2020 to take up the role as Director for British Council Malaysia.



Izan Satrina Mohd Sallehuddin
Founding Chief Executive of Creative Economy
Development Agency (CENDANA)

- **Keynote Speaker**

Izan Satrina Mohd Sallehuddin is the founding chief executive of CENDANA, a unit under the MyCreative Ventures Sdn. Bhd. (wholly owned company of Minister of Finance Incorporated) which reports to the Ministry of Communications and Multimedia Malaysia. CENDANA was created to enhance Malaysia's cultural and creative ecosystem by Energising the Arts, Empowering the Communities and Reorganising Structures and Policies. Its aim is for Malaysia to be known for its great arts and artists and eventually transform arts and culture into a true economic driver for the country.

Izan served on various industry development committees and was part of the KL Biennale Committee for the National Visual Arts Gallery, Performing Arts Committee for the National Creative Industry Policy, as well as the organize and committee member of The Royal Arts Gala Fund. Both groups are governed by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia. She was a speaker at the Producers Academy Brussels, Performing Arts Market Seoul, Australia Performing Arts Market Brisbane, ASEAN-Korea Culture and Arts Forum, IETM Melbourne, and had facilitated the Korea-Malaysia Connection Programme between Korea Arts Management Services and National Department for Culture and Arts.

In addition to that, she was instrumental in working with the Government of Malaysia in creating a Creative Entrepreneurship Hub called Borneo744 in Sarawak, Malaysia. She is a nominee for The Malaysian Women's Weekly Great Women of Our Time 2013 in recognition of outstanding career achievements and contributions to society in the category of Arts and Media, the top 10 National Women Entrepreneurs Award 2014 nominees and Prestige 40 under 40 for her contribution to the nation's economy and her role as a female entrepreneur.

She is also a founding member of the Arts, Live Events and Festival Association of Malaysia. Whilst leading CENDANA, she also currently serves as a Council Member at the Tourism, Arts and Culture Council for the Federal Territories and a Board of Trustee for Yayasan Perintis.



Christopher Thomas Allen
Founder and Creative Director of The Light Surgeons

- **Session Speaker**

Christopher Thomas Allen is the founder and creative director of media arts studio The Light Surgeons. His work crosses a range of different media and manifests itself in various forms. He works as a creative producer, director editor and audio-visual artist to create artistic work in moving images that can be viewed as films, installations and live performances.

His work has been broadcast on national TV, presented in national museums and cultural institutes and countless film and music festivals worldwide. Alongside his artistic practice, he has designed and directed many ground-breaking interactive experiences for a wide range of commercial clients over the last 25 years.

Through his performative collaborations as The Light Surgeons, he has helped to pioneer the practice of “live cinema” through the creation of a series of critically acclaimed, feature-length audio-visual live performances that have toured internationally which combine documentary film, real-time visuals and live and electronic music to explore a range of themes and subject matter.



Pauline Fan, Writer, Literary Translator, Cultural Researcher and Creative Director of PUSAKA

- **Session Speaker**

Pauline Fan is a writer, literary translator and cultural researcher. Her translations from German to Malay include works by Bertolt Brecht, Immanuel Kant, Rainer Maria Rilke and Paul Celan. Her English translation of poems by Sarawak poet Kulleh Grasi, *Tell Me, Kenyalang* (Circumference Books, 2019), was shortlisted for the 2020 National Translation Award in Poetry, and longlisted for the Best Translated Book Awards 2020. She is the Creative Director of cultural organisation PUSAKA, and Director of the George Town Literary Festival.



Ng Chor Guan
Co-Founder of Toccata Studio

- **Session Speaker**

Ng Chor Guan, the co-founder of Toccata Studio, renowned Malaysian composer, sound designer, active thereminist, improviser, educator, and cyclist. A familiar face in many international arts festivals across the continents, Guan is a prolific artist whose diverse body of work is rooted in the contemporaneous currents of technology and yet proves to transcend categories in the performing arts.

Ng Chor Guan is demonstrative in his belief of the arts as a world-changing force: his work is often interactive and engages his audience in participation via literal means and artistic renditions. His most recent project with Toccata Studio, titled '2020', is a project five years long: a multidisciplinary performance powered by the concepts of multiple futures and time travel, 2020 is both a meditation on the future and an active progression into the future.

Chor Guan is also a guest lecturer in University Malaya. He has also produced 11 albums of his original composition.



Dr Tom Fleming
Director of Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy

- **Session Speaker**

Dr Tom Fleming is a leading global authority on the creative economy, cultural policy and the role of creativity and culture for sustainable city-making. He is Director of Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy, which works in every global region to develop cultural and creative strategies for nations, regions and cities. His work includes baseline mapping of the cultural and creative industries, situation analysis to understand the creative and cultural potential and shape strategy, and targeted consultancy for creative clusters and cultural infrastructure. In ASEAN, he has been working to develop cultural city profiles and to identify the strategic opportunities for

culture and the creative industries to drive a new era of sustainable city-making. He has also led a range cultural and creative industries strategy work in Vietnam, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia.



Dr Ann Lee
Playwright and Researcher

- **Session Speaker**

Born in Tawau, Malaysia, Ann Lee is an award-winning playwright, and researcher.

Her most recent play, 'Tarap Man' is in *Southeast Asian plays* (Aurora Metro, 2016) and other writing for the stage is in *Sex, Stage and State* (Parama Adhi Perkasa, 2011). Her last self-penned and performed piece was 'Missing: Launch of the Lucy A Iskandar Archives of Tolerance' (Five Arts Centre, 2014). Ann completed her PhD in Southeast Asia Studies at the National University of Singapore and is writing a book on political humour based on her thesis, *Outbreaks of satire: A political epidemiology of dissent in theatre, television and social media memes (Malaysia and Indonesia, 1989-2018)*. She has been a supervising researcher of the Censorship Chronology at www.myartmemoryproject.com which documents censorship and related controversies in Malayan/Malaysian arts and culture since the 1940s.

She has taught 'Cinema and Society in Southeast Asia' at Open University, Malaysia and is currently External Advisory Committee member at Sunway University (Creative Arts and Media). Ann is a past fellow of the Asia Leadership Fellow Program (Japan Foundation and International House of Japan) and a founding protem committee member of PEN Malaysia. She also holds a MSc in History of Science, Medicine and Technology (Oxon).



Lee Jia-Ping
Founder of Pollin8

- **Session Speaker**

Jia-Ping is passionate about seeding hope in people and places. Over the years she has been able to incorporate her varied experiences in theatre, the arts, branding, and place strategy to rejuvenate urban and corporate places, and hospitals. Her main purpose is to increase economic vibrancy through a series of economic, social and cultural interventions that will ultimately attract and retain businesses, communities and talent.

As the former Programme Director at Think City, a govt-linked urban rejuvenation 'think and do' tank (under Khazanah Nasional), she drove the rejuvenation of the heritage core of Kuala Lumpur and introduced an entrepreneur matching grant to the Think City Grants Programme which was adopted for four cities in Malaysia. Using her theatre training and love of the arts, she spearheaded Arts on the Move, KL's longest running visual and performing arts programme in an LRT station to generate excitement within the social media community ultimately leading to increase participation in the heritage core.