



RAINSHADOW STUDIOS

Straits Times Arts Pick!

THE NEST



AUGUST 4-21 2022
42 WATERLOO ST

STARRING

TE HAO BOON
ETHEL YAP

DIRECTED BY

JONATHAN
VANDEMBERG

DESIGNED BY

ELIZABETH MAK
JOHANNA PAN

SPONSORED BY

CARBUYER Endowus GRAIN

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A NOTE FROM ELIZABETH

We started Rainshadow Studios last year with a dream and a hope. A dream of a world where people and our planet coexisted in balance, and a hope that people would come together to do something about it. And an urgency to confront the defining issue of our time: climate change.

I am always asked, "I'm just one person, what can I do?" In speaking last week to Professor Winston Chow, SMU Associate Professor and Climate Researcher, he said, "Talk about it. Learn about it. And then gather in communities to do something about it."

So this is us, doing what we do best — making art — and reaching out past the divide between you and me, with the hope that we can co-create a new world together. Thank you for your support, for being a part of this journey, and for joining us for our inaugural production, *The Nest*.

ABOUT KROETZ



Franz Xaver Kroetz is one of the most distinguished living German playwrights. He was born in Munich, West Germany in 1946. As a young man, he worked odd jobs such as banana cutter, truck driver, and orderly in a mental hospital, before becoming an internationally acclaimed playwright. His dramas are influenced by the socially-critical plays of Ödön von Horvath and Marieluise Fleisser, as well as the German tradition of the "folk play." But Kroetz developed his own

distinctive voice in order to examine social issues that remain timely. His plays are often comprised of succinct scenes which begin and end abruptly. His characters are often of low socio-economic status, unable to express themselves. Thus, dialogue in a Kroetz play tends to be terse, punctuated by silences. Occasionally, there are even entire scenes without dialogue. Some of his major plays are *Request Concert* (1971), *Farmyard* (1972), *The Nest* (1974), *Through the Leaves* (1976), and *Mensch Meier* (1977). His work has also been adapted into television and film, including *Jail Bait* (1972), directed by celebrated filmmaker Rainer Werner Fassbinder.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Kroetz plays have several distinctive elements: succinct scenes; characters of low socio-economic status; laconic dialogue; a combination of unflinching realism with fable-like narratives.

In *The Nest*, a low-income couple with an unplanned pregnancy aspire to a middle class family lifestyle. The play uses this scenario to explore interwoven themes such as capitalism, obedience, and environmental destruction.

We have set this German play in Singapore circa 1974, the year *The Nest* was written. The spartan design reflects the script's anti-materialistic themes and foregrounds the characters. What evolves is a kind of "poor theatre." The actors evoke a world. A blanket becomes a lake. An infant is created with gesture.

Honored to be part of Rainshadow Studios' inaugural production.



RAINSHADOW STUDIOS

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
ELIZABETH MAK

FINANCE DIRECTOR
SHAWN LOW

HEAD OF PARTNERSHIPS
THAMMIKA SONGKAO

PRESENTS

THE NEST

by Franz Xaver Kroetz

KURT
TE HAO BOON

MARTHA
ETHEL YAP

DIRECTED BY
JONATHAN VANDENBERG

SET & LIGHTING DESIGNER
ELIZABETH MAK

COSTUME DESIGNER
JOHANNA PAN

RESEARCH DRAMATURG
ANG XIAO TING

STAGE MANAGER
TAN XIN YOU

STAGE MANAGER
PATRICIA GABRIEL

WARDROBE COORDINATOR
GLENNNA NG

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
KYLE FOO

ASSISTANT PRODUCER
EUGENE CHOW

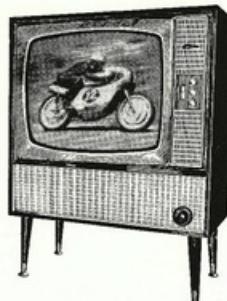
THE WORLD OF THE PLAY



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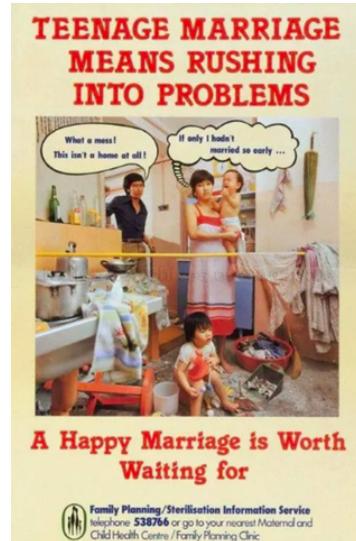
Rapid industrialisation of the 1960s and influx of new industries led to rapidly growing affluence for the middle class. GDP per capita grew from ~\$500 in 1965 to ~\$1,000 by 1970 and \$2,500 by 1975. More households could afford "new luxuries" such as televisions and fridges. This industrialisation was hard on the workers who bore the brunt of socio-economic change in this period. The working class was asked to bear with the changes for the sake of future benefits.



Rivers and waterways were polluted partly due to rapid industrialisation in the 1960s/early 1970s. Regulation of trade effluents only began in the mid to late 1970s with the creation of the Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment (MSE) in 1972 and the Water Pollution Control and Drainage Act in 1975.

THE WORLD OF THE PLAY

The Singapore Family Planning and Population Board created the "Stop-at-Two" campaign to encourage family planning in 1966. Increasing incentives and disincentives were put in place from 1968 to 1972. Couples were encouraged to have fewer children than prior generations did, and children became more precious.



Children playing in Alexandra canal (1974)



Changi Beach (1973)

In a world before screens and the internet, leisure often involved picnics and unstructured play around canals, beaches, and the outdoors.



East Coast Swimming Lagoon (1976)



Charity event behind Tanglin Shopping Centre (December 1974)

CAST



Te Hao Boon (Kurt) is an actor and multidisciplinary artist. They graduated from NAFA with a Diploma in Theatre (English Drama). They have worked with companies such as The Necessary Stage, Pink Gajah Theatre, and The Second Breakfast Company, and performed in festivals such as Twenty-Something Theatre Festival, Asian Youth Theatre Festival, and Singapore Writers Festival. In 2021, they were one of 20 selected participants for The Necessary Stage's Devising with Actors and Playwrights, a five-month training programme led by Haresh Sharma.



Ethel Yap (Martha) is an actress who has appeared in numerous theatre and television productions in a variety of lead and supporting roles. Her work includes the Singapore stagings of Tribes by Nina Raine and Urinetown: The Musical, Liao Zhai Rocks, Beauty World, Lao Jiu: The Musical, Four Horse Road, Untitled Women, and PROJECT Utopia. As a singer-songwriter, she released her debut EP in 2017 and continues to write music that centres on themes of identity and meaning in the folk genre. Ethel is also a passionate arts educator and mummy of one very active little boy!

ARTISTIC



Jonathan Vandenberg (Director) is a director based in Singapore. New York: Oresteia (Classic Stage Company); The Kingdom (Mabou Mines); The Crossing of the Visible (Center for Performance Research); Tantalus (Site-specific); Festenmacher with director Robert Woodruff (NYU Grad Acting). US Regional: Iago: Images Unseen (Cutting Ball Theater); Axis Mundi (Middlebury College Museum of Art); Landscape, Far Away, and Amnesiac (Berkeley Chamber Theatre); Young California Writers Project (Magic Theatre). International: The Suppliants (Theatre Jeock, Seoul). Faculty: Yale-NUS College; Carnegie Mellon University; Vanderbilt University; Middlebury College. MFA Directing, Columbia University School of the Arts.



Elizabeth Mak (Producer, Set & Lighting Designer) is an interdisciplinary artist and theatrical designer. She founded Rainshadow Studios to make art for climate action. She believes in the power of visual, immersive and experiential storytelling to change mindsets and move hearts to action in our communities. As a designer, she has worked on Broadway, off-Broadway, regionally in the US, and in Europe, China and Singapore. Major designs include project Salome (T:>Works); The Chinese Lady (The Public Theater); The Tricky Part (The Barrow Group); Miss You Like Hell (Baltimore Center Stage); The Square Root of Three Sisters (International Festival of Arts and Ideas). MFA Yale School of Drama. elizabethmak.com.



Johanna Pan (Costume Designer) is a Costume and sometimes Scenic designer for Theatre, Film, Dance and Opera, a textile and visual artist, as well as host and co-producer of the podcast "Dirty Laundry: Unpacking the Costume Closet". They first discovered theatrical design while competing in the creative-thinking competition Odyssey of the Mind and has never looked back. Johanna's artistic practice is centred around decolonising the imagination, breaking down the notions of feminised labor and anti-racism. They continue to harbor hope for a more sustainable humankind in the face of adversity and dreams of a future filled with equity, inclusion and diversity. BFA: Ithaca College, MFA: NYU/TISCH. @jpandesign



Ang Xiao Ting (Research Dramaturg) is a director, actor, dramaturg, programmer and interdisciplinary collaborator. Her practice is informed by the intersection of theatre/performance with field research and community collaboration to advocate for social innovation and change. Her current focus involves creating Eco-Theatre works, such as Poppy and Pickle Party (Practice Tuckshop) and most recently Extinction Feast (Singapore Writers' Festival 2021, re-run in September 2022). In 2021, Recess Time was shortlisted out of over 700 applications to be featured in the 2021 Social Art Award Book (Berlin) and was also presented at World Stage Design 2022. angxiaoting.com



Kyle Foo (Assistant Director) is a graduating Psychology major from Yale-NUS College, who has been active in theatre, improv comedy and role-playing games. He has been a member and leader of the Yale-NUS Improv Troupe for four years, organising Improv comedy workshops and shows for the Yale-NUS community. He has also performed in a student-led production of the Broadway musical Next to Normal and the student-created musical Tiwala.

PRODUCTION



Tan Xin You (Performance Stage Manager) 's heart beats faster when there is good lighting in a production. They like to draw snails and is most recently interested in creating ecological children stories.



Patricia Gabriel (Rehearsal Stage Manager, Deck Manager) recently graduated from her 1-year Technical Theatre Traineeship programme at the Esplanade. She has since worked with The Necessary Stage, Singapore Lyric Opera, Little Dance Academy and Music Theatre Limited on various roles under production. Patricia aims to be a strong advocate for minority representation in the theatre and film industry. Her interest is in bringing different cultures together through drama and the arts. "This has definitely been a wild ride." – Patricia Gabriel



Glenna Ng (Wardrobe Coordinator) graduated from NAFA in Fashion Design. Initially a Fashion Designer, she paved her way to become the Head of Production in the costumes business. Usually behind the scenes designing and producing costumes and mascots, she freelances as a Wardrobe Manager, Designer and Costumier for theatre shows and various events. A few of her works as Wardrobe Manager include Childaid (Dick Lee Asia), Liao Zhai Rocks Shanghai (The Theatre Practice), Musical Taru (Resort World Theatre), STF (Wildrice Theatre), 7 Sages of the Bamboo Grove (Toy Factory); as Costumier: Beauty World (SG Street Festival); as Costume Designer Immortal X (The Theatre Practice), KGB Huayi (Esplanade), Scam on you' (Finger Players).



Eugene Chow (Assistant Producer) is a writer and a mover, and an advocate of everything green. He is fascinated with expression and with anything that moves. He has been strongly influenced by French physical theatre, having studied at the École internationale de théâtre Jacques Lecoq. In his spare time, he takes best practices on how to save energy from the vegetarians around him.

RAINSHADOW STAFF



Shawn Low (Finance Director) is an experienced operator of tech start-ups and a co-founder of Unsearch - a knowledge sharing platform for start-up builders. Previously, he was one of the co-founders of the Softbank-backed fintech Better.com and a board member of its subsidiary BMTG Advisors. In addition, he serves as a Venture Partner at Iterative Capital (a Y-Combinator-style incubator for Southeast Asia) and mentors early-stage start-up founders. In his spare time, he enjoys competitive squash, kayaking and cooking Singaporean food.



Thammika Songkao (Head of Partnerships and Development) is Managing Director of Two Glasses, which partners with organisations in various capacities to create environmental change in effective, but often overlooked, ways. Heading Partnerships and Development at Rainshadow, she is concurrently producing CHANGING ROOM, a film addressing fast fashion overconsumption at its psychological root (projected: The Projector, Summer 2023). Formerly, she was a Penn Social Impact House Fellow, World Economic Forum Global Shaper, and Bread Loaf Environmental Writers Nominee and Scholarship Recipient. MFA Vermont College of Fine Arts.

ABOUT RAINSHADOW

Founded in 2021, Rainshadow Studios is a group of artists, thinkers, engineers and researchers coming together to make art centred on the environment and climate change. Our mission is to create art that confronts our relationship to the climate crisis, inspires a reimaging of a future in balance, and moves people to action.

Climate. Impact. Art. If this vision speaks to you, please contact us at hello@rainshadowstudios.org.

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