

NUS CENTRE FOR THE ARTS presents

NUS ARTS FESTIVAL 2022

SHADES OF LIGHT(NESS)

Perception

幻·悟

NUS Chinese Dance

22 & 23 March, UCC Theatre





DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



A very warm welcome to **NUS Arts Festival 2022: Shades of Light(ness)** – which NUS Centre For the Arts is once again proud to present.

We live in a world grappling with uncertainty. Now, more than ever, society is challenged to look beyond black-and-white paradigms, and contend with the shades of grey in-between. This ever-expanding liminal space demands that we use a wider variety of cognitive “lenses” to bring focus and make sense of a multi-hued, multi-faceted world. In that regard, this year’s festival theme is most apt, as is our multi-disciplinary creative approach which brings together student artists, professional arts practitioners, as well as leading researchers and thought leaders in NUS to explore how the arts can help us better appreciate and negotiate ambiguity.

To that end, we open the festival with NUS Dance Synergy’s *Incandescent - A City That Never Sleeps*, a work that investigates the disappearance of stars in Singapore’s night sky. In a city with one of the highest light pollution levels in the world, this work probes the effects of our contemporary urban lifestyle, asking if it embraces or disrupts the symbiotic relationship between the environment and our human bodies.

We also see this in works like *Bodhi - The Awakening* by NUS Indian Instrumental Ensemble. Directed by Cultural Medallion recipient T Sasitharan, the work fuses Indian classical music with theatrical elements, reflecting on the duality of light and darkness, and the transitions between light and darkness in the journey towards enlightenment.

Another work utilising the metaphor of light to explore ambiguity and uncertainty is *Blackout* by NUS Stage. Directed by award-winning theatre-maker Chong Tze Chien, this dark comedy looks at a man’s odyssey through the fractured recesses of a dark, forgotten past, as he struggles to make sense of the conflicting stories about who he is.



In this edition of the Festival, we have been most fortunate to partner the College of Design and Engineering (CDE) for a series of thought-provoking and visually arresting installation works. *Somewhere in This Fog of Memory* explores the mind of a person living with dementia, putting the viewer in the place of someone constantly grappling with a slippery reality; *In Living Company* challenges the norms of our disposable economy, using light to show how discarded objects can give rise to new life. *A Close Eyecounter* - a collaboration with visual artist Ryf Zaini - uses simulated LiDAR technology in an interactive installation that questions how our physical vision determines what we can see, and how we take our natural quality of eyesight for granted.

Of course, NUS Arts Festival would not be possible without the hard work, courage and creativity of our students and artistic directors. Their passion, resilience, and creativity have really shone through during these dark and uncertain times.

We are also deeply grateful for the continued support from NUS creative partners, such as our long-standing partnership with the Department of Communications and New Media, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. We are also particularly privileged to extensively partner the College of Design and Engineering for the first time, and we believe that this fusion of the arts and engineering will be particularly illuminating.

Our thanks also for the continued support of our donors: Bowen Enterprises, Kewalram Chanrai Group, and RB Capital. We would also like to thank the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth for its Cultural Matching Fund. All these generous support has been invaluable in keeping ablaze our students' passion for the arts.

I sincerely hope that you will enjoy **NUS Arts Festival 2022: Shades of Light(ness)** - may the many performances, installations, and films bring light into your life.

Sharon Tan
Director
NUS Centre For the Arts



MESSAGE FROM JENNY NEO AND XIAO JING

Choreographers, *Perception* 幻·悟



“向阳而生，逆光而行。”

人生可以虚幻，可以证实。一切的一切，最终的结果，都是由人，做自己的选择。努力让自己发光、一切美好才会迎光而来！”

这次我很庆幸，能和肖静一同参与国大艺术节为国大华族舞蹈团编创“幻·悟”两部曲舞蹈作品。

这次在编创“幻·悟”的过程，最开心的是，遇见一群热爱华族舞蹈的学生。她们的热爱，让我不舍不让她们跳。虽然时间很短，但我相信他们的热爱，他们的追求，会在舞台上呈现一场精彩的演出。让我们拭目以待！

Jenny Neo

Choreographer, Shades 幻



因为有光，我们才能看到这个世界，

光，赋予万物生命。

生命始于一抹红，

友情是橙色的，

阳光是黄色的，

在绿油油的夏天盛放。

之后她懂得了蓝，

似靛一般的静，净，

在一缕紫气中，不断升腾，

她追逐着那一束光，七彩炫目的生命之光。

Xiao Jing

Choreographer, Enlightenment 悟



SYNOPSIS

Light reveals, illuminates and clarifies. While light can be perceived as a beginning, it can also be perceived as an end. We see only as far as light illuminates. The world unfurling before us, like a painting in all its colour and splendor.

It is the root of a philosopher's theorem and the symbolisation of emotions and sensations, an artist's tool in portraying oneself.

Light illuminates possibilities. Where there is light, there will be shadows. The coexistence of light and shadows inspires us to explore the duality of opposites. The space between them gives us the space for all kinds of different interpretations.

Light brings about both the scorching heat of the sun, and the coldness of the moonlight. The effects of light can emphasise, and also distort. When uniting this duality into one, it provides us with a colourful life filled with myriad joys and sorrows.

Whether stillness of contemplation or movement and the movement, NUS Chinese Dance's *Perception* invites you to an adventurous encounter with dance and discovery. A Double Bill marks a new chapter in NUS Chinese Dance's history as it presents two exciting new works by highly acclaimed choreographers Jenny Neo and Xiao Jing, who are presently the group's tutors.

光给了我们感知世界的能力，其所到之处便是我们目所能及之地。它将世界填上颜色，如画卷般一帧帧地为我们展开。它是哲学理论的启示，是代表喜怒哀乐的符号，也是艺术家们用来表达自我的工具。

我们在明暗交融中探索黑白正负，光影双生的奥秘。两极之间又是另一片天地，光所揭示的世界并不局限于一种答案。光是阳光的灼热却也有荧光的冷寂，揭示了真相却又时而迷了我们的眼睛。我们在光的世界里有着七彩人生，悟出万千悲喜。

新加坡国立大学华族舞团邀请您一起在这次由肖静老师和梁杰妮老师原创编舞的双剧目演出中探寻自我，遇见并定义属于自己的光影。

SHADES

by Jenny Neo

Guided by blur and indistinct light, we muddle through our ordinary life. Journeying through trials and tribulations, and seeking to explore the meaning of life. As the journey progresses, the lights reveal a clearer view of an extraordinary life led, allowing us to reflect on our past and realise with greater clarity that life is worthwhile.

《幻》

编舞：梁杰妮

平凡人生，
被一道迷糊的幻光，牵影着走。
走着，寻着，探索着，忐忑不安。
渐渐的，迷糊的光变得清晰了。
这时我回头一望，
那是一个不平凡的人生。
值了。





ENLIGHTENMENT

by Xiao Jing

One wonders, when do we achieve 'Enlightenment'? Could it have been the eureka moment? Just like flowers of various colours that bloom with light, it opens our hearts to journey through the myriad of colours in the world.

This is an adventure into the world of dance. An exploration into the vast world of light where emotions are inexplicable, this will be a journey that transcends through the realm of light.

《悟》

编舞：肖静

这个单词这样的排列，
当中的light是得到启示时脑中灵光一现的那种感觉吗？
大自然如此玄妙且神秘，似乎让一切的存在都成了可能。
而追逐那一束光，向着它奔跑，是一路的修行。



INTERDEPENDENCE

by Teo Ning Ginn (Student Choreographer)

Interdependence

At the break of dawn, mankind was born.

We reach for the guiding light, eager to learn.

In the blazing midday sun, we learn to sow, to reap, to wield.

And to destroy.

We seek more, biting the hand that fed us.

Finally dusk falls.

Along with the tree of life.

《相依》

学生编舞：张宁真

相依

大自然是生命之根，

她供养了我们所需的一切，无怨无悔地支持我们。

但随着时光的流逝，我们只懂得夺取，不懂得归还。

总有一天，大地会变得荒芜。

CREATIVE TEAM

Jenny Neo

Choreographer, Shades



Jenny Neo started her dance journey at the age of ten under the tutelage of her mother, Madam Lim Moi Kim at the Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan Arts and Cultural Troupe. Having fully devoted her youth to dancing, Jenny has gained herself a wealth of experience and opportunities as a dancer. Jenny's grace and strong performing abilities has deemed her an undeniably popular performer on stage.

In 2004, Neo Jenny was awarded a training grant and scholarship from the National Arts Council and the Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan to further her professional training at the Beijing Dance Academy. In 2009 she graduated with a BA (Hons) in dance at LASALLE College of the Arts.

A driven individual dedicated to her craft and currently managing and leading the Singapore Chinese dance theatre as the Artistic Director with the mission to promote Chinese dance through artistic and creative excellence. SCDT envisions itself as a Centre of excellence for Chinese dance both locally and internationally and plays a vital role in the development and exploring the identity of Chinese dance in Singapore.

CREATIVE TEAM

Xiao Jing

Choreographer, Enlightenment



Xiao Jing graduated from the Beijing Dance Academy where she specialised in Classical Chinese dance, and was also formerly a dancer of the China Oriental Song and Dance Troupe. She came to Singapore in 2001 and became a full-time contemporary dancer. In 2004, she began to focus more on teaching and promoting Chinese dance.

Over her 17 years of experience with teaching and choreography, she has established her very own style and belief, where she continues to produce and perform works in collaboration with her students, including dancers who had graduated from Hwa Chong Chinese Dance etc.

She is dedicated to promoting traditional Chinese culture and holds the vision that Chinese dance has to progress with the times to remain relevant and maintain its vitality. She strongly believes that every individual has vast potential and that every individual can become an outstanding dancer.



Ariel Lee



Camy Cheng



Cheah Man Lin



Chloe Seah



Deborah Ling



Fang WenTing



Fang Zhijing



Hester Pore



Hu Han Ling



Hu Yi

DANCERS - SHADES



Joey Ang



Lee Ruoshi



Li Shuning



Liew Shaw Jun



Liu Jiaqi, Georgia



Nicolette Teo



Soh Shun Qin, Cheers



Teo Ning Ginn

DANCERS - SHADES



Wang Ershan



Yew Yan Fong, Elysa



Zhang Yu

DANCERS - SHADES



Angie Chong En Qi



Charmaine Soh



Chen Jiafang



Fang Xinyu



Gao Yuanhui



Lim Ci Xuan



Ng Yan Zhi



**Nurizzawanti
Binte Ramli**



Passion Goh



Phua Suet Cheng

DANCERS - ENLIGHTENMENT



Sarah Tan Si Qi



Stefanie Cai



Teo Kate-Lyn



Wong Xiang Fang



Xing Huixin



Zhang Jingyun



Zhang Xiaoqian

**DANCERS -
ENLIGHTENMENT**

HOW WAS YOUR JOURNEY WITH *PERCEPTION*?

As a dancer from the item **Shades 幻**, I feel that the dance relates a lot to us as university students. It reflects the confusion we face as we struggle to find our place in the society once we graduate. I believe everyone will form their own perception after watching the dance and eventually stain the dance with their own colour!

-- Han Ling



As a dancer from **Enlightenment 悟**, I was amazed by how colours are able to represent not only our emotions but also depict a journey of growth. Through dance, no words were needed to represent this story, and I hope our audiences would share similar sentiments as me.

-- Charmaine

Through this journey of restaging *Interdependence*, I have done some introspection and learnt more about myself both as a dancer and a choreographer ever since SCDT's *Emergence* where the item was first staged. I have explored what I hold close to my heart through dance but also learnt to push the limits of my body and my abilities through this piece.

-- Ning Ginn



DEVELOPING PERCEPTION



DEVELOPING PERCEPTION



DEVELOPING PERCEPTION





CREDITS

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| Artistic Directors & Choreographers: | Jenny Neo Xiao Jing |
| Lighting Designer: | Darren Lee |
| Producer/ Group Manager: | Sing Moh Li |
| Stage Manager: | Lee Xinzhi |

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 21/22

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| President: | Wang Ershan |
| Vice-President: | Passion Goh Wei Ling |
| Dance Captain: | Deborah Ling |
| Secretary: | Ariel Lee |
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| Marketing & Publicity Directors: | Charmaine Soh, Hu Han Ling |



NUS CHINESE DANCE



Over the last 40 years, NUS Chinese Dance has earned a reputation for excellence as an accomplished dance CCA through the development and performance of a highly challenging repertoire of works, from technically demanding traditional Chinese dance to fresh and evocative Chinese contemporary pieces.

As part of a continued mission to raise the standards of Chinese dance, the dancers are given a firm grounding in traditional Chinese dance aesthetics while encouraged to explore contemporary styles and choreography as part of their dance development.

Through a combination of performances within NUS and various external engagements, NUS Chinese Dance aims to foster expertise and experience not just in Chinese dance, but an appreciation for Chinese culture and to bring this unique art form to the masses.



ABOUT NUS ARTS FESTIVAL

The NUS Arts Festival was first staged in 1998, primarily as a showcase of student talents. As part of NUS' centenary celebrations in 2006, the Festival was relaunched and expanded to incorporate faculty and practising local and international artists alongside the best student performers.

NUS Arts Festival is the largest arts event on campus, presented each year in March with collaborative practice at the heart of its programming.

Working with local and international practitioners, our student artists are encouraged to avail themselves to the content-rich environment within the University, grounding their work in deep knowledge and using it as the basis of the development process.

Each edition of the Festival is crafted with a core theme that responds to contemporary issues and facilitates the integration of research and learning as part of the artistic process, in addition to showcasing performances with mass appeal.

Now in its second decade, the NUS Arts Festival draws artists and collaborators from across campus and around the world. It is known for conceptually challenging pieces that speak to both the creative and academic output of NUS.

nusartsfestival.com

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NUS CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

NUS Centre For the Arts (CFA) comprises the NUS Museum and NUS Baba House; the University Cultural Centre, a world class performing arts centre; and a Talent Development and Programming unit that oversees 20 student arts excellence groups in music, dance, theatre and film. On campus and beyond, we take pride in providing the opportunities for the appreciation of the arts.

We seek to champion creative possibilities and inspire strong communities through programming, exhibitions, workshops and outreach such as the university's flagship arts event, the NUS Arts Festival and Singapore's longest running arts outreach programme, the ExxonMobil Campus Concerts.



UNIVERSITY CULTURAL CENTRE

As a high-grade, flexible performance venue nestled in the grounds of a premier university, the University Cultural Centre is a consistently sought-after venue. It operates year-round, hosting key University events, external bookings and CFA's own programming. The Hall and Theatre have hosted numerous political and cultural leaders, thinkers and well-known artists and musicians.

In late 2017, the UCC underwent an extensive renovation to ensure that it continues to be operationally and environmentally efficient and offers a high standard of service.

To enquire about hosting an event at the UCC, please contact the Venues Team (uccvenues@nus.edu.sg).



SPECIAL THANKS

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