

British Council Arts - 2016

1. Arts & Disability Forum 2016: Shaping Perspectives, Enabling Opportunities



We launched the inaugural Arts & Disability Forum 2016 with the National Arts Council and Singapore International Foundation. The forum ran from 29-31 March at the National Gallery Singapore.



Inspired by Unlimited Festival, the world's largest commissioning programme for disabled artists based in the UK. In 2014, every show at London's South Bank was sold out at least two weeks before! Learning so much from Jo Verrent, the senior producer of Unlimited (herself hearing impaired), especially the paradigm-shift notion of the Social Model of Disability. Jo also mentioned the work of Sue Austin: "Underwater Wheelchair" video installation (top right), and Paul Cummins, the creator of the Tower of London poppies work (bottom left). People with disabilities conceptualise ideas and create new perspectives, a freshness of voice, that the arts welcomes.



It's all about access and inclusion, about mainstreaming disability arts. To boldly go where all others have gone before - is all they ask. #ArtsandDisabilityForum2016 #artsanddisability #UnlimitedFestival #inclusivearts #sgarts #arts #disability #JoVerrent #alistsg



Speakers Jo Verrent, senior producer at Unlimited, Claire Cunningham, a multidisciplinary artist, and Barbara Lisicki and Zoe Partington, trainers from Shape Arts joined us from the UK.



And some regional friends from Malaysia and Cambodia.

The forum was fully subscribed and attended by participants from the arts, culture and social service sectors.

Art can create social change if we continue to challenge society's assumptions about disability. We were introduced to the social model of

disability, which simply means that disability is caused by the way society is designed. A person is not disabled if the right structures are created to be inclusive and universal.



Participants were excited to make a difference. "To boldly go where everyone else has gone" - the ambition of inclusive arts in Singapore. They gathered on the rooftop of National Gallery Singapore to discuss how they could shift perceptions in society, create more access and be a difference to Singapore. And treated to performances by disabled artists

Arts & Disability Forum_Shape Workshop



Shape Arts conducted an access audit of the National Gallery Singapore.



Shape Arts Walkabout Session_



Lily Goh_Arts & Disability Forum

2. Singapore Writers Festival Inclusive Programme



Bringing people together through the Arts

The British Council's Inclusive Arts programme which is about inspiring people to cultivate full and equal access to the arts via awareness, skills development and creating opportunities.

It's also about nurturing an appreciation of inclusivity as central to the vitality and dynamism of the arts.

This is in line with the British Council's core values of inclusion, diversity and equality and part of building respect and understanding between the UK and Singapore.

britishcouncil.sg/inclusivearts



SWF Inclusive Programming is sponsored by



For more information, go to:
www.singaporewritersfestival.com



First, go to the SWF website to check the full programme listing
www.singaporewritersfestival.com

Continuing our work to support equality, diversity and inclusivity in the arts, the British Council partnered with the Singapore Writers Festival to pilot the first ever access programme at the fest.

We sponsored sign language interpreters from the Singapore Association for the Deaf for select SWF events. Deaf and hearing impaired participants were given complimentary festival passes.

By pioneering this programme, we supported people with disabilities by enabling access and equal opportunities participate in the arts. Nine Deaf members of public signed up for the interpretation services. Seven of whom then attended one or more events at the festival.

The inclusion of sign language interpretation was well received by not just the Deaf community, but by other festival goers. Members of public posted and shared the inclusion of sign language interpretation on social media as well. In addition, there were invited guests and other patrons who gave verbal feedback that expressed their appreciation of the inclusivity shown at the festival. At the festival, it was also observed that more disabled persons were present. There was also verbal feedback given that the festival grounds are one of the more accessible places in Singapore.

3. Notes on Blindness Film Screening at the Singapore International Film Festival



Notes On Blindness at SGIFF 2016

This film screening by UK directors Peter Middleton and James Spinney, is part of the British Council's Inclusive Arts Programme. Inclusion, diversity and equality are at the core of the British Council's cultural relations aims and part of building trust, respect and understanding between the UK and Singapore.

The sighted directors try to render the experience of losing sight as closely as possible via a visual medium by shooting in a blurry impressionistic style to highlight a lack of visual clarity and by focusing on audio. The directors also worked with the Royal National Institute of the Blind to produce an audio enhanced version of their film for visually impaired audiences.

4. Shakespeare Lives 2016

Shakespeare Lives was an unprecedented global programme of events and activities celebrating William Shakespeare's work on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of his death in 2016. It was an invitation to the world to join in the festivities by participating in a unique online collaboration and experiencing the work of Shakespeare directly on stage, through film, exhibitions and in schools.

Singapore celebrated with a range of activities throughout the year. Singapore was treated to film screenings, talks, workshops, and a big birthday bash for Shakespeare on April 23.

H.E. Scott Wightman opened the birthday celebrations on April 23 at the library@esplanade and launched the Shakespeare Lives library touring exhibition. He was joined by Minister Grace Fu.

Attendees caught the volatile Mercutio in a state - from Singapore Repertory Theatre's Romeo and Juliet



SL Celebration at Esplanade



Shakespearean actor Adrian Pang recited a poem he wrote about Shakespeare

Letters to Shakespeare National Library Board Touring Exhibition

Young and old discovered Shakespeare at the libraries. The exhibition toured five libraries across Singapore.



SL Touring Exhibition at Clementi Library

Shakespeare Lives in Film at the Arts House and the Projector



The Arts House_British High Commissioner



Shakespeare in Film at the Projector

Had a Shakespeare cuppa in partnership with Costa Coffee



Costa coffee Panel 23 April

Country Director, Roland Davies, together with Singapore Repertory Theatre's Artistic Director Gaurav Kripalani and actor Adrian Pang spoke at Costa Singapore's "Costa Coffee with Shakespeare" on April 23, 2016.

Shakespeare Lives in Translation: A Great Feast of Languages

A Great Feast of Languages was a year-long international focus on translating Shakespeare for performance. The British Council partnered with Shakespeare's Globe,



the British Centre for Literary Translation, Writers' Centre Norwich and The Select Centre (Singapore) to develop literary and performance translation workshops in Singapore, encouraging participants to explore the cultural and linguistic challenges and complexities of translating Shakespeare's plays and poetry.

The event was held at the National Gallery's rooftop studios from 29 Sept - 2 Oct, as part of the Select Centre's TranslateSingapore 2016 Festival.

Malay and Chinese translators debated the nuances of language, culture, history, race

and religion in Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet. The four-day workshop culminated in a free public forum on Shakespeare and Translation in the Singapore context.

5. Liz Atkin at the M1 Singapore Fringe Festival



British Council collaborated with M1 Singapore Fringe Festival (curated around the theme of Art and Skin) to present British artist Liz Atkin's #CompulsiveCharcoal and Artist Talks and Workshops.

Liz Atkin's activities in Singapore, **#CompulsiveCharcoal** reached out to an estimated 6,500 people over 11 days in Singapore, with additional outreach via the six talks and two artist workshops conducted with various partnering organisations (including Yishun Community Hospital, Khoo Teck Puat Hospital) and schools.

Liz Atkin's advocacy and art reached out to people from various walks of life and Channel News Asia's video on Liz Atkin's #CompulsiveCharcoal was a hit on social media, generating more than 159,000 views and 2,500 positive responses on Facebook alone!



*Liz Atkin and industry partners with their respective #CompulsiveCharcoal drawings after a talk at Khoo Teck Puat Hospital
Photo credit: Liz Atkin*