

## **THE OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE LIMITED**

### **ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014**

The Old Parliament House Limited (TOPHL) is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated by the National Arts Council on 11 December 2002 in Singapore. It is registered under the Charities Act on 24 February 2003.

**Charity Registration No:** 01658

**Unique Entity Number (UEN):** 200210647W

**Registered Address:** 1 Old Parliament Lane Singapore 179429

**Board of Directors:** Gan Christine (Chairman) (appointed on 1 Apr 2014)  
Chong Yuan Chien (appointed on 14 Apr 2014)  
Colin Goh (resigned 31 Mar 2014, reappointed on 1 Apr 2014 and resigned on 31 July 2014)  
Ho Nyuk Choo Deborah Joanne (appointed on 14 Apr 2014)  
Koh Choon Fah  
Lee Chor Lin (appointed on 1 Apr 2014)  
Mok Wei Wei (appointed on 1 Apr 2014)  
Ong Chao Choon  
Tan Kim Liang Paul (appointed on 1 Jun 2014)  
Tham Kwang Hsueh Yvonne  
Jennie Chua Kheng Yeng (resigned on 1 Apr 2014)

**Banker:** DBS Bank Ltd  
OCBC Ltd  
UOB Ltd  
UBS AG

**Auditor:** Ernst & Young LLP

#### **Objective:**

TOPHL is a full-service arts organization with the key aim of managing art spaces under the purview of the National Arts Council, namely, The Old Parliament House, Goodman Arts Centre and Aliwal Arts Centre. It also manages Sculpture Square, The Little Arts Academy (a dedicated

arts and learning space for children between the ages of 4 to 12) and the ARTrium@Old Hill Street Police Station (a performance and exhibition space located in MCCY/MCI building).

### **Funding Sources:**

TOPHL is financially supported by the Government, public donations, sponsorships, sales of tickets for its programmes and rental income.

### **Review of Year 2013/2014**

#### **Staffing**

As of 31 March 2014, the breakdown of the staff strength is as follows:

CEO	1
Deputy CEO	1
CFO	1
Management (Council Members)	8
Managerial (Asst Mgr/Mgr/Sr Mgr)	16
Executive/Management Support	17
Technicians	10
Total Staff Strength	54
Local Staff	53 (including 3 Singapore PR)

#### **Key Public Programmes**

##### **\*The Arts House\***

#### **Overview**

The Arts House launched a new series Food-O-Philia that sought to encourage discussion about Singapore's obsession with food through literature, theatre and the arts. The event brought together writers, food scholars, bloggers and social entrepreneurs in a series of panel discussions on the cultural history of food as well as presenting a number of new plays and musical performances.

The Arts House also started a partnership with Monsters Under The Bed, a creative writing school that organises writing workshops for primary and secondary school children.

In addition, it launched several popular initiatives – We Love Shorts! and Sing Lit 101.

Another highlight in FY13 is the forming of an alliance with the Melbourne Writers Festival to expand the House's roster of foreign writers keen to stop over in Singapore to offer workshops or masterclasses.

NLB's Read! Singapore and the Singapore Creative Writing Residency added substantially to the Literary Arts programming of the House for the year.

### **Literary Arts – Highlight Programmes**

- i Food-O-Philia attracted much media coverage and interest. It was the first such programme in Singapore that encouraged discussion about food through literature and the arts. The first edition, which started on 19 June continued till 31 July, seeking to explore the concept of food community and the cultural history of Singapore food. Three panel discussions were organised, centring on the themes of Singapore identity and food; food as an agent to effect social change; and the evolution of Singapore's hawker heritage. The panelists included playwright Alfian Sa'at, food blogger Dr Leslie Tay, and Australian writer and food academic Dr Nicki Tarulevicz. Dr Nicki is the author of *Eating Her Curries* and *Kway: A Cultural History of Food in Singapore*. She also gave a talk based on her book.
- ii As part of Food-O-Philia, a call was made for photo submissions that would interpret food passages in books through photography. Close to 100 entries were received and they were curated into an exhibition called *Edible Lit*, which featured the pictures that best combined literature and photography. In addition, a new play *Rojak* that looked at the issue of immigrant workers was staged. The play, which ran for four shows, was very well-attended with more than 80% full. Food-O-Philia continued into July with a number of book launches and readings, plus a storytelling performance and a double-bill of short plays – *Three Children* and *Hokkien Me*.
- iii *Monsters Under The Bed (MUTB)* is a creative writing school that encourages children to imagine and create characters and stories. Established in 2006, the boutique company provides custom packages of writing workshops for primary and secondary schools students. As part of the partnership with MUTB, a series of creative writing and publishing workshops for children and youth was organised throughout the year. In Q1, two workshops and one talk was held.
- iv *We Love Shorts!* celebrates the art of short form writing as Singapore becomes a hub for short story writing with the steady flourishing of anthologies and short stories in the four official languages. Working with local publishers, an exhibition of anthologies and short stories that were published in Singapore in the last three years was put together. The *We Love Sing Shorts!* exhibition featured more than 60 books and close to 300 writers.
- v The first partnership with NLB – Read! Singapore – saw the commissioning of two classic Malay stories, *Pertemuan* and *Gajah Putih* (*Encounter* and *The White Elephant*) adapted into theatre. These stories were chosen as part of the Read! Singapore selection this year. Singapore Malay theatre group *Anak Wayang* adapted the classics for stage as one complete production, incorporating multi-media projection and dance. It was a free performance opened to the public. The play garnered extremely positive response from the audience, with a lot of robust dialogue in the post-show discussion after each

performance. A panel discussion with the two writers and a two-day intensive writing boot camp was also organized as part of the programme.

- vi The Singapore Creative Writing Residency appointed two writers in FY13, an unprecedented move as previous years only saw one resident appointed. The selection committee, which comprised playwright Eleanor Wong, publisher Goh Eck Kheng, and representatives from NUS University Scholars Programme (USP) and The Arts House, decided unanimously to award the residency to both UK poet Jasmine Cooray and Singapore playwright Daniel Koh. The residency is co-funded by NUS USP and The Arts House. The 6-months residency requires the writers to complete their personal projects, mentor NUS students, and conduct public programmes at The Arts House
- vii The pilot season of Sing Lit 101 was launched in August to promote the canon of Singapore literary works. The series is held in a faux classroom setting with a lecture and discussion element covering novels, poetry, plays and short stories in all four languages. Sing Lit 101 kick-started with poetry conducted by popular academic and poet Dr Gwee Li Sui. The six-week programme tackled six important poems by six poets written during Singapore's formative years – Edwin Thumboo, Arthur Yap, Goh Poh Seng, Wong May, Lee Tzu Pheng and Chandran Nair. The programme received very positive response and a good attendance of 40-50 "students" per "lesson" which included teachers, writers and retirees.

#### **\*Goodman Arts Centre\***

##### **Overview and Key Programme Highlights**

The Literary Talkback – Comic, Manga and Graphic Novel was organized on 19 May and featured comic artists and illustrators who had their works-in-progress critiqued by a panel of three judges, all of whom are professional graphic artists from the Centre itself. The event drew an audience of 50 participants which included a tele-conference with a participant stationed in France.

This year's Open House, its 3<sup>rd</sup>, extended into the night with the inclusion of the South-East CDC district festival, Urban Sensation! drawing over 2,400 visitors (71% were families). Visitor feedback was extremely positive with 94% approval of the programmes being 'good to excellent', and 98% recommending the event to their families and friends. The popular Open House activities were the art workshops, performance showcases and ceramic art.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Urban Moments Photography Competition further enhanced into a two-day symposium supported by the Photographic Society and featuring seven leading photographers. Based on the theme Ecology, the symposium attracted 200 enthusiasts. The competition's call for entries received a resounding 189 submissions from the public, with the winning works showcased in the Centre's Gallery plus various libraries in the South-East district.

In summary, FY13 saw close to 800 programmes held at the Centre. Some of the programmes included:

Lithe 2013 by T.H.E Second Company  
Gruesome Playground Injuries by World-In-Theatre  
Dance India Asia Pacific by Aparas Arts Limited  
Malaysia & Myanmar: A Collection Resurrected by Artink  
Muara Dance Festival by Era Dance Theatre  
We Are Like This Only! by HuM Theatre  
Differ by Re:Dance Theatre  
Othello, The Fall of A Warrior by Ravindran Drama Group  
Children's Drama Workshop by Play!werks  
The Continuation exhibition by Tang Da Wu  
Khazanah by Sriwana  
Lost Days by Re:Dance Theatre  
Graffiti Workshop by Kamal's Artshop  
I Love Cross Talk by Young People's Performing Arts Ensemble  
CONTACT Contemporary Dance Festival 2013 by T.H.E Dance Company

**\*Aliwal Arts Centre\***

**Overview and Key Programme Highlights**

Aliwal Arts Centre had its official opening by the-then Acting Minister of MCCY Lawrence Wong on 3 June, with its inaugural Open House – Arts Night Crawl – on 14 June. Both events received excellent support from the media. The Centre continued to build buzz after its opening event with the Lit-Up Festival, Digital Voyage and CRAFT Festival.

Details of key events held at the Centre:

i Official Opening

The official opening drew 120 guests comprising the Kampong Gelam stakeholders (CCC/CC, Central CDC, Malay Heritage Centre and Business Association), URA, press members and tenants. The event was officiated by the-then Acting Minister of MCCY, Lawrence Wong. Minister visited several tenant's studios including Nam Hwa Amateur Musical & Dramatic Assn, Teatre Ekamatra, Odyssey Dance Theatre, The A Cappella Society, Word Forward, SGMUSO, RSCLS and I-Lien Drama Society. In Minister's opening speech and his interaction with the artists, he encouraged all tenants to exchange ideas and explore collaborations amongst themselves to develop works to engage the community.

ii Arts Night Crawl

The inaugural Open House, called 'Arts Night Crawl', involved over 100 artists from the Centre as well as the Malay Heritage Centre and surrounding businesses. Spanning some 40 programmes, visitors enjoyed a range of traditional to avant-garde performances from

dance, music and theatre genres. Multi-media art was also featured on the building façade while the surrounding Kampong Gelam neighbourhood offered further engagement in heritage, visual art, film, music and fashion. Visitor surveys showed 88% felt that the quality of the programmes were 'good to excellent', and 90% will recommend the event to their families or friends. Demographically, 92% are between 18 to 35 years old and 73% came with their friends. Overall, the turnout for the event was 1,700 people.

iii Lit Up Festival

Word Forward, a tenant of the Centre, organized the Lit Up Festival with the centre as its home. Themed Progression, the Festival sought responses from various points of engagement with the belief that change necessitates progression. The cross-disciplined Festival involved 80 artists and brought 2,500 visitors (of a mainly younger crowd) into the Centre.

iv Digital Voyage

Jointly organized by the Centre and the LaSalle College of the Arts, Digital Voyage – a video art and short film showcase – saw LaSalle's best students' works projected onto the Centre's façade. 35 students' works were featured, based on themes such as Action, Abstract, Radical and Socio-Political. The programme reached out to 600 people during the two-weekend run in August.

v CRAFT Festival

CRAFT Festival, organized by the Centre's F&B tenant, A-for-Arbite, with collaboration from the A Cappella Society and Word Forward, celebrated Singapore's crafters, artists and artisans around fine food and drink. Activities included music performances and poetry slam by the above-mentioned two tenants, with an added visual arts exhibition and food workshops. This inaugural event attracted 300 visitors into the Centre.

### **Fundraising Event and Activity**

Following fundraising events were organized this FY.

- Children for Children 2013 with Singapore Press Holdings–School Pocket Money Fund
- Child Aid 2013 with Singapore Press Holdings–School Pocket Money Fund
- Dream Ball with Children's Cancer Foundation

## **Future Plans and Commitments**

TOPHL will continue to work on the following programmes:

- Sing Lit 101
- World Lit
- Singapore Creative Writing Residency
- Singapore Writer's Festival (Fringe Programme)
- CITA
- Tanjong Goodman
- Aliwal Urban Art Festival

## **Financials**

The company recorded a surplus of \$26,622 (General Fund) and a surplus of \$354,180 (Budding Artists Fund) in the financial year ended 31 March 2014.

The company received grants of \$3,308,877 from the government for the financial year.