

ARTS HOUSE LIMITED

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015

Arts House Ltd. (AHL) is a company limited by guarantee, formerly known as The Old Parliament House Limited (TOPHL), which was incorporated by the National Arts Council on 11 December 2002 in Singapore. It is registered under the Charities Act on 24 February 2003. The name change to Arts House Ltd. took effect from 19 March 2014.

With effect from 1 April 2014, the National Arts Council (NAC) with the support of MCCY and the Boards of Arts Festival Limited (AFL) and The Old Parliament House Limited (TOPHL), merged both companies to form a single entity renamed the Arts House Ltd. (AHL). The entire business undertaking of AFL was transferred to TOPHL (now AHL) at the net book value per the audited annual report for the period 30 May 2013 (date of incorporation) to 31 March 2014.

At the same time, AHL entered into a Business Sales Agreement with The Rice Company Limited to transfer the business under the Budding Artist Fund (BAF) and International Youth Artists Exchange (IYAE) fund (under General Fund) to The Rice Company Limited, which took effect on 31 March 2014. Therefore, as at 31 March 2014, the balance sheets of the Company and the Group exclude the assets and liabilities relating to Budding Artist Fund and IYAE Fund. The impacts of the transfers are disclosed in Note 16 to the financial statements for FYE March 2014 and reiterated in Note 18 to the financial statements for FYE March 2015.

Charity Registration No: 01658

Unique Entity Number (UEN): 200210647W

Registered Address: 1 Old Parliament Lane Singapore 179429

Board of Directors:

- Gan Christine (Chairman)
- Chong Yuan Chien
- Ho Nyuk Choo Deborah Joanne
- Koh Choon Fah
- Lee Chor Lin
- Mok Wei Wei
- Ong Chao Choon
- Tan Kim Liang Paul
- Mary Ann Wai Sheng Tsao (appointed 31 Aug 2015)
- Tham Kwang Hsueh Yvonne (resigned on 12 Aug 2015)
- Colin Goh (resigned on 31 Jul 2014)
- Jennie Chua Kheng Yeng (resigned on 1 Apr 2014)

With the resignation of Tham Kwang Hsueh Yvonne and the appointment of Mary Ann Wai Sheng Tsao in August 2015, AHL now has 9 board members and it is its aim to make good with a 10th board member who can identify with, and contribute to, the cause of AHL.

Banker: DBS Bank Ltd
OCBC Ltd
UOB Ltd

Auditor: Ernst & Young LLP

Management: Lee Chor Lin, CEO (appointed 1 Apr 2014)
Desirene Ho, Assistant CEO (appointed 2 Jun 2014)
Yong Yuet Mei, CFO (appointed 1 December 2014)

None of the above has prior appointment in a charity.

Related Entities:

The following board members: Gan Christine, Koh Choon Fah, Lee Chor Lin, Mok Wei Wei, Ong Chao Choon, and Tham Kwang Hsueh Yvonne are directors on Arts Festival Limited, which became a dormant company after its entire business undertaking is transferred to AHL.

Objective:

Arts House Limited (AHL) is a not-for-profit organisation committed to enriching lives through the arts. AHL runs The Arts House, a multi-disciplinary arts centre with a focus on literary programming located in the heart of Singapore's civic district; presents the Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA), an annual celebration of performing arts; and manages Goodman Arts Centre and Aliwal Arts Centre, two creative enclaves for artists, arts groups and creative businesses, and the exhibition and performance spaces located at ARTrium @ MCI. AHL was renamed from The Old Parliament House Limited (TOPHL) from 19 March 2014.

Funding Sources:

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

Review of Year 2014/2015

Staffing

As of 31 March 2015, the breakdown of the staff strength is as follows:

CEO	1
Assistant CEO	1
CFO	1
Head Of Department	7
Managerial	16
Executive/Management Support	14
Technicians	9
Total Staff Strength	49
Local Staff	48 (including 3 Singapore PR)

Key Public Programmes

The Arts House

Overview

The Arts House had a number of highlights this year including the launch of the first national campaign of its kind to promote poetry via a mobile app called Text In The City. As the key programming partner of the Singapore Writers Festival (SWF), the SWF Fringe continued into its third year with the theme Truly, Madly, Deeply which focused on writers who risked their lives in pursuit of truth, justice and freedom. The Fringe received its highest attendance to date. The 2014 Creative Writing Residents completed their residencies while the second season of Sing Lit 101: How to Read a Singapore Poem saw healthy participation. These highlights, along with a line-up of other programmes, showed the growth of literary arts in Singapore in its breadth and depth.

Literary Arts – Highlight Programmes

- i The national poetry campaign Text In The City was launched on October 2014 to promote Singaporean poets and poetry through poems about various places in Singapore. The campaign consisted of a mobile application that featured 100 curated poems by 50 poets. To promote the app, seven roadshows to various locations such as libraries, Gardens by the Bay and Books Kinokuniya were planned for, with curated programmes such as readings or workshops by featured poets. Poetry walking trails were also offered. In addition, workshops on how to write a place-based poem were conducted in 17 schools to reach out to students. The app received over 2,000 downloads during the campaign period which ended on 25 January 2015. A public competition encouraging “every day Singaporeans” to submit their own poetry took place concurrently. The public category saw 858 entries with 162 submissions from students under 18. Poems across the four

languages were received. A prize-giving and appreciation ceremony was held on 22 April for the 12 winners which included two Judges' Favourites in each category, who received a cash prize in addition to book vouchers. The response to the campaign, not just from the poets and literary community, but the public especially, was overwhelmingly positive. Many were surprised by the breadth and quality of work submitted, and appreciated that the app allowed an easy and convenient starting point to Singapore poetry.

- ii A reworked staging of the opera *Kannagi – The Jeweled Ankle*, was co-presented by The Arts House. It received positive response from the audience as well as critics both at home and abroad. With music by John Sharpley and libretto by Robert Yeo, the story is based on the 1,500 year-old legend of Sillappadikaram, where Kannagi, whose unfaithful husband is unjustly executed for theft after selling off one of her jeweled anklets, reaps a harvest of death and destruction on the city of Madurai.
- iii As a key programme partner for the Singapore Writers Festival (SWF) 2014, three main programmes namely the SWF Fringe, Region Focus and Literary Meals were organised. SWF Fringe featured five writers – William T. Vollmann (USA), Mukesh Kapila (India/UK), Solahuddin (Indonesia), Maria Ressa (The Philippines) and Loung Ung (Cambodia/USA) in panel discussions. In addition, there were film screenings, a visual art exhibition and performance which attracted more than 9,000 participants over a two-week period from 1 – 9 November. Non-fiction writing as a focus for the Fringe panels was popular with audiences and achieved a 73% House average. The site-specific cum interactive-experiential murder mystery performance *Body X* achieved a sold-out run. Although SWF Fringe will not be continuing in 2015, it provided many useful insights for the revamped SWF 2015 as the Festival returns to The Arts House. The Region Focus highlighted writers from South America, a continent steeped in turbulent history and colourful culture. Three authors were presented – Eduardo Sacheri (Argentina), Héctor Abad (Colombia) and J.P. Cuenca (Brazil). The panel discussion was robust and insightful. Two films were screened as part of the programme. As Gabriel García Márquez had passed away a few months earlier, a special screening of *Love in the Time of Cholera* was held followed by readings and discussion of his work. Over 488 people attended the South America Region Focus events.
- iv *New Word Order 2014* ended its run with Monica Li's latest book *The Dragon Phoenix Bracelet* and was re-launched in January 2015 as an Open Call seeking to award a talented applicant a \$10,000 grant to develop his/her project. The revamped programme now aims to celebrate Singapore literature through various art forms. This cross-disciplinary initiative will give voice to Singapore writers and artists exploring new ways of presenting the written word. After a rigorous selection process, the selection panel awarded the grant to filmmaker Liao Jie Kai who will produce a film essay as a prelude and research to his feature film *Art Studio*, an adaptation of Yeng Pway Ngon's Chinese novel of the same name. The short documentary or film essay will be presented at The Arts House in December 2015.

- v A bilateral literary residency programme between Singapore and France, the Singapore-France Writing Residency selected and sent Chinese writer Dr Chua Chee Lay to Bordeaux in March, where he will spend six weeks working on a flash fiction project which he has already started. He will also conduct public programmes to share his writing experiences and process. In addition, Dr Chua has garnered the interest of Lingzi Media, who has expressed a wish to publish a book on his residency in Bordeaux. The Arts House will be hosting a French Resident, Christian Cailleaux, cartoonist and scenarist, in October 2015.

Literary Arts – Regular Programmes

- i Sing Lit 101: How to Read a Singapore Poem returned for a second season with six sessions from 27 September – 13 December. Dr Gwee Li Sui covered poems by Robert Yeo, Kirpal Singh, Elangovan, Leong Liew Geok, Heng Siok Tian and Boey Kim Cheng, which were written during the nation-building years. Over 138 people attended the six sessions. The season concluded with a panel discussion with Elangovan and Leong Liew Geok on how writing and reading poetry affect our daily lives. The series has sustained the interest of the public and student participants, hence, The Arts House and Dr Gwee will be looking at developing a third season of Sing Lit 101 in the second half of 2015.
- ii The start of 2015 saw World Lit featuring acclaimed Chinese author Su Tong, multi-award winning author Cate Kennedy, controversial author of *A Million Little Pieces*, James Frey and Dana Thomas, a fashion and culture journalist. A series of writing workshops were organised as part of their appearance during World Lit which included a unique workshop that applied journalistic skills to fiction writing by Man Asian Literary Prize winner, Miguel Syjuco. Over 200 people attended the four sessions and 60 people attended the workshops. The switch to focus on workshops with specific writing topics and purposes has proven popular as seen in the higher ticket numbers and feedback from participants.
- iii The last session of CITA included Cita Keris and Cita Lukis. In Cita Keris, Suhaimi Bin Nasrain, a keris collector and enthusiast, gave a talk on the features of a keris and its significance in the cultural life of the Malays. This session was held in English. Cita Lukis, a special tribute to the late Abdul Ghani Hamid, kick-started with a poetry recital of Pak Ghani's poems in both Malay and English. The session ended with a talk by Syed Muhammad Hafiz on *Mata dan Hati: The Artistic Vision of Abdul Ghani Hamid*, where he discussed Pak Ghani's paintings and activism in nurturing and promoting fine arts in Singapore.
- iv The Singapore Creative Writing Residency 2014 concluded with Jason Wee and Faith Ng presenting a joint showcase reading of their final works. Jason presented new poems inspired by his relationship with artist Lee Wen, and Faith staged a reading of her new play *Speak Good English* which explored how language policies affect a Singaporean nuclear family. Their works were insightful and touching, provoking heated and engaging post-show dialogue with the audience. Their mentees also received showcases of their own works. Jason's mentees had an exhibition of their poetry while Faith's mentees staged dramatised readings of their 10 short plays.

Goodman Arts Centre

Overview

Goodman Place Management Office (PMO) continues to work closely with stakeholders, tenants and community partners to reach out to the public. Programmes initiated by Goodman PMO, or in collaboration with partners, include CONTACT 2014 with T.H.E Dance Company, Tanjong Goodman – 4th Goodman Arts Centre Open House and the Great Singapore Garage Sale 2015.

Key Programme Highlights

i CONTACT

Initiated in 2010, the CONTACT Contemporary Dance Festival organised by T.H.E Dance Company advocates the spirit of learning, creation and collaboration through carefully curated performances, workshops and technique classes for audiences from all walks of life. A champion of contemporary dance, CONTACT provides platforms for established and emerging dance artists from Singapore and abroad to showcase their talents. The fifth edition of T.H.E Dance Company's annual contemporary dance festival celebrates a milestone year with title sponsor M1 coming onboard, as CONTACT remains the must-go event for contemporary dance lovers. This year, an electrifying line-up of more than 90 artists from Israel, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, South Korea, Australia, Southeast Asia and more, hailing from major names such as NDT II, Cullberg Ballet, Batsheva Dance Company and Dance Forum Taipei were featured, bringing in a total of 1,800 dancers and enthusiasts over 17 days to participate in performances, classes and workshops.

ii Tanjong Goodman – 4th Goodman Arts Centre Open House

Goodman Arts Centre hosted its fourth annual open house with a full day of arts activities for families, art-lovers and the curious. Tanjong Goodman, named in tribute to the Geylang River and Tanjong Katong, is a showcase of the talented tenants of Goodman Arts Centre. Highlights included a screening of award-winning director Boo Junfeng's debut feature film Sandcastles, free performances by Jack & Rai and established dance companies T.H.E and Frontier Danceland, as well as talks by prominent Singapore artists Justin Lee and Ulrich Lau. Traditional art forms were well-represented with Apsaras Arts presenting the Kathak – one of eight forms of classical Indian dance and Kamal's Artshop contributing their batik workshops. Other workshops covered a wide spectrum of mediums from fabric to digital design to paper. The Young People's Performing Arts Ensemble further provided a writing workshop and NRA Legacy gave a hip-hop dance workshop for the groove-inclined. A total of 3,680 visitors thronged Goodman Arts Centre during the one day extravaganza.

iii Singapore Youth Festival Rehearsals

The humble beginnings of the Singapore Youth Festival could be traced to its roots in the Jalan Besar Stadium. Launched on 18 July 1967 by then-President Yusof Ishak, it was a festival that involved 24,000 students from primary and secondary schools in a two-week celebration. It has metamorphosed into an annual kaleidoscopic showcase of talents involving more than 40,000 students in the month of July. Goodman Arts Centre is proud to be partnering with the Ministry of Education in supporting the Black Box rehearsals of over 180 secondary schools and junior colleges.

iv Great Singapore Garage Sale 2015

The first ever Great Singapore Garage Sale was launched at Goodman Arts Centre with over 20 stalls selling vintage and pre-loved (used) goods ranging from clothes to toys, books to knick knacks. A free public event, the garage sale drew over 300 visitors but was cut short due to heavy rain and founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's state funeral.

Aliwal Arts Centre

Overview

Aliwal Place Management Office (PMO) broke its own visitorship record with the Urban Art Festival in January which drew more than 5,200 people.

Key Programme Highlights

i The International A Cappella Festival

The A Cappella Society launched its annual International A Cappella Festival at a special performance in the Botanic Gardens. The following weeks of performances by a cappella groups hailing from countries all around the globe from Switzerland to Taiwan, Korea to Indonesia were held in their studio in Aliwal Arts Centre.

ii Sixth Sense

Sixth Sense is an assemblage of boxes – originally two-dimensional digital images captured with a Leica camera that have been hand-crafted and transformed into three-dimensional works by Singapore artist Miun. The result is a whimsical and dream-like exhibition of mini dioramas made from a variety of every day materials.

iii The Wasteland

Inspired by the classic novel by T.S. Eliot, The Wasteland is the graduation showcase of Teater Ekamatra's youth incubator programme, MEREKA. Eleven emerging theatre practitioners created an immersive and interactive performance after completing a year of intensive theatre training under the guidance of playwright-director and Teater Ekamatra associate Irfan Kasban

iv Aliwal Urban Art Festival

The 2nd edition of the Aliwal Urban Art Festival held in conjunction with Singapore Art Week drew more than 5,200 people into Aliwal Arts Centre for an evening of activities including 'live' graffiti on vehicles, breakdance performances, a skate competition sponsored by Volcom, 'live' music and Mediacorp DJs.

v Sound Steady Saturday

Aliwal Arts Centre participated in a Kampong Gelam-wide music festival Sound Steady Saturday, supported by the National Library Board's Singapore Memory Project. It was a showcase of six different music venues within walking distance of Aliwal Arts Centre, featuring a range of established and emerging bands from the hardcore spectrum of Singapore music.

vi Q Commons

An international community conference with more than 10,000 participants in 65 cities, Q Commons' objective is to empower learning and collaboration in each of the countries it is held in. This edition of Q Commons Singapore featured an amazing line-up of speakers which included bestselling author Malcolm Gladwell (Tipping Point, Outliers) and Emmy Award-winning producer Mark Burnett (Survivor, The Apprentice).

Singapore International Festival of Arts

i Having played a symbiotic and catalytic role in the development of Singapore's artistic and cultural landscape for the past three decades, the Singapore Arts Festival has rebranded itself as the Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA), reflecting its refreshed focus on internationally acclaimed acts, and spring-boarding local productions onto a global stage. Set to enchant people from all walks of life as they engage intimately with the arts, the Festival encourages audiences to understand that the performing arts is about stories; from familiar stories that stem from daily emotions and transform into powerful motivations, to wider perspectives which reflect on histories to actively mold our futures.

ii The much-anticipated Festival, themed *Legacy and the Expanded Classic*, ran from 12 August to 21 September, and is organised by the Arts House Limited, and directed by celebrated theatre director Ong Keng Sen – marking the first time the national Festival has introduced an artist as the Festival Director.

iii SIFA 2014's outstanding line-up includes 12 eminent productions spread over six Festival weeks; deconstructing common notions of human dignity and vulnerability, re-imagining childhood classics and famous tragedies, and treading the realms of history versus the future, reality versus fantasy. Bringing these elements to life through drama, dance and music, are the awe-inspiring groups such as the Berliner Ensemble and London

Sinfonietta; renown masters such as artists Robert Wilson and Jerome Bel, alongside respected playwright Amir Reza Koohestani; and esteemed performance artists Mamela Nyamza and Nikhil Chopra, to name a few. Furthermore, illustrating this continuum between tradition and the contemporary is National Living Treasure Mansaku Nomura and his son Mansai Nomura, a truly rare treat to see them together on the same stage. From works that seek to bridge contemporary dance and Western classical music back to audiences in the context of popular culture, to performances that showcase the unique artistic talents and creativity of individuals with learning disabilities, SIFA 2014 is truly the 'people's Festival' .

- iv In the bid to enrich lives through the lens of art and to deepen audiences' love for the performing arts, SIFA 2014 presented a novel public engagement initiative, The O.P.E.N. (Open, Participate, Enrich, Negotiate), which ran from 26 June to 12 July 2014. Where Q&A sessions with a production's cast and crew usually take place post- performance, The O.P.E.N. connects with the public in a holistic, integrated manner in the weeks *prior* to its actual performances. Styled as a popular academy, The O.P.E.N. is a place to explore fascinating questions about humanity and the world at large. Audiences are invited to participate in The O.P.E.N. through its public performances, film screenings, exhibitions, brunch talks and beginner's guides. Audiences can thus enjoy *beforehand* the ideas, issues and themes around the main Festival shows they wish to attend, encouraging an active viewing during the Festival in August and September. This, in turn, lends to the Festival's relatability, making the arts resonate and extend beyond just a standalone experience.

Fundraising Event and Activity

None had been organized this financial year.

Financials

The Company recorded a surplus of \$5,189,903 in the financial year ended 31 March 2015.

This follows from the General Fund after spinning off the Budding Artist Fund (BAF) and International Youth Artists Exchange (IYAE) fund (under General Fund) to The Rice Company Limited.

The Company received grants of \$15,055,068 from the government for the financial year. Included in these grants was an amount of \$11,280,000 in relation to the Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA). The SIFA grant comprises of \$6,280,000 operating grant for the current financial year and \$5,000,000 start-up funds meant for Arts Festival Limited (AFL) which was

reallocated to the Company upon the transfer of the business from AFL to the Company in the current year, thus the large one-off surplus for the financial year.

Reserve Policy

Any annual surpluses or prior years' reserves within the General Funds shall form the Operating Reserve and shall not be reduced except in accordance with the reserve policy as authorized by the Board, which dictates its use, authorisation, reporting and monitoring.

Future Plans and Commitments

The Arts House

- i Golden Point Award_(GPA)
- ii MASTERA
- iii Singapore Creative Writing Residency
- iv World Lit
- v The Alphabet Series
- vi Singapore International Festival of Music
- vii Singapore Writers Festival Country Focus: Indonesia
- viii Sing Lit 101
- ix CITA
- x New Word Order

Goodman Arts Centre

- i Tanjong Goodman Open House
- ii Visual Talkback!

Aliwal Arts Centre

- i Aliwal Arts Night Crawl
- ii Aliwal Urban Arts Festival

Singapore International Festival of Arts

- i SIFA 2015 will feature 12 Singapore commissions, the largest to date to celebrate the Golden Jubilee year, and a line-up of 7 foreign productions, including a dance marathon, presented by contemporary artists from Hungary, India, Australia, France, Germany, Japan and Taiwan.

- ii Based on initiatives put in place in 2014 to further engage and enhance the experience of festival-goers, SIFA 2015 will offer more than 30 events in The O.P.E.N. (Open, Participate, Engage, Negotiate), the pre-festival academy of ideas that connected audiences with the over-arching POST-Empires theme of SIFA 2015. The O.P.E.N. will be a 19-day run and engage with audiences at different levels through its five platforms – O.P.E.N. Performance, O.P.E.N. Concert, O.P.E.N. Exhibition, O.P.E.N. Salon and O.P.E.N Film. The diverse line-up of over 30 events to be held across 6 venues will offer multiple perspectives that provide access to knowledge, evoke emotions, spark conversations and open hearts, minds and spaces to connect audiences of all ages.

- iii In addition, 4 SIFA Shares talks will be offered. These will connect audiences with the thinking and deeper insights of the Festival artists' work in *Dementia* by Hungarian film director Kornel Mundruczo; the video images by South African artist William Kentridge for *Winterreise*; the art of Kathakali by Indian dance masters for *Smriti Padha*; and *Cabanons* by French installation artist, Daniel Buren.