

18
/ 19

ANNUAL REPORT

THE ARTGROUND



THE ARTGROUND

CONTENTS

Corporate Overview	1
Strategic Development Plans	2
Development Plans	3
Corporate Information	4
Organisation Chart	5
Governance	8
Message from the Chairman and Executive Director	9
Highlights of the Year	14
Our Work: Interactive Visual Arts Space, Programmes and Activities	15
The Year Ahead	28
Gratitude	37

CORPORATE OVERVIEW

Who is The Artground?

THE ARTGROUND is nurtured and managed by The Ground Co Limited which was set up in late 2016. Inspired by the poem, *The 100 languages of children* by Loris Malaguzzi which refers to the many ways children have of expressing themselves, The Artground believe that a child is intrinsically curious and naturally creative.

*The child is made of one hundred.
The child has a hundred languages
a hundred hands
a hundred thoughts
a hundred ways of thinking of playing, of speaking.
a hundred, always a hundred
ways of listening of marvelling, of loving
a hundred joys for singing and understanding
a hundred worlds to discover
a hundred worlds to invent
a hundred worlds to dream.
The child has a hundred languages
(and a hundred hundred hundred more)*

Excerpt from The Hundred Languages of Children



Vision

To let art do, what art does.

Weekend Programmes

How to design your own superheroes



STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

We have translated our vision into a “4SA” *Strategic Development Plan* which is a continuous journey for us. The 4S are namely *Society, Schools, Service and Seeding*. These form the core basis of our target reach. The 4As are *Availability, Arts Learning Journey, Accessibility for All and Artist Incubation* which is *genre agnostic*. These form the basis of our development plans.



DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Availability

Our programmes are consistently available to the general public (**society**), enabling free access to the facilities, throughout the year. On top of that, **The Artground** has a scheduled weekday and weekend programming (with admission fees) that apply to manage venue capacity.



Arts Learning Journey

We welcome organised groups of school-going students, and homeschoolers to the centre on the weekdays. We work with educators to create age appropriate resource materials for these young learners, as well as pre and post programme materials for the teachers and carers.

On top of that, we also actively seek to introduce skills development to equip and (hopefully) inspire the teachers to continue the arts engagement back in the classrooms. These can be done on-site at **The Artground** through artists/facilitators-led workshops.

Accessibility

We focus on introducing initiatives that encourage equitable opportunities and inclusive programmes for children with all abilities and needs. These initiatives allow the community to take a more active role in private philanthropy through the arts.

We have started implementing the idea of ‘reversed inclusion’ by having an additional operational day, for example, “relaxed Tuesdays” for our community with additional needs.

On the other end of this service spectrum, we also intend to work with the under-served communities so that they can play a functional role in The Artground. We believe that when we create a vibrant arts environment that empower abilities instead of social standing, we can level up the playing field of these under-served communities and allow them to actively participate in **The Artground** (and our **society**) in a meaningful way.



Oddysea

Artists Incubation

We work with local artists to **seed** original new works at **The Artground**, as well as seek opportunities to create networking and capabilities development in the field of Arts for Young Audiences (A4YA) with our international partners. This is an investment into the local artistic eco-system and we are mindful that not all seeds will germinate. However, it is important that we provide the space for artists to try, and to imagine new ways of presenting works for our young.

CORPORATE INFORMATION

Board of Directors: Appointment from 28 August 2017 to 31 March 2020

The Ground Co Limited (Registration No.: 201632916C), public company limited by guarantee, was incorporated under the Companies Act, Cap 50 on 2 December 2016. It named the business The Artground (Registration No.: 53351458D), which was also incorporated on the same day. The business address is at 90 Goodman Road, Goodman Arts Centre, #01-40 Singapore 439053.

Three persons were appointed as Members of the Company – Mr Wai Chun Yip Thomas, Ms Lim Siew Li Lelaina and Ms Poh Hwee Yen Luanne, and they carry out all business at the Company's Annual General Meetings and Extraordinary General Meetings, including the appointment of directors, adoption of accounts, and approval of resolutions. As a registered charity, The Ground Co Limited strives to align its governance practices with the principles set out in the refined Code of Governance issued by the Charity Council. None of the paid staff received more than \$100,000 in annual remuneration. No non-executive board members are remunerated.

This report describes the Company's activities and structures that were in place during the financial year ended 31 March 2019 which are in accordance with these principles. The Company submitted the online Governance Evaluation checklist together with the audited accounts for the year.

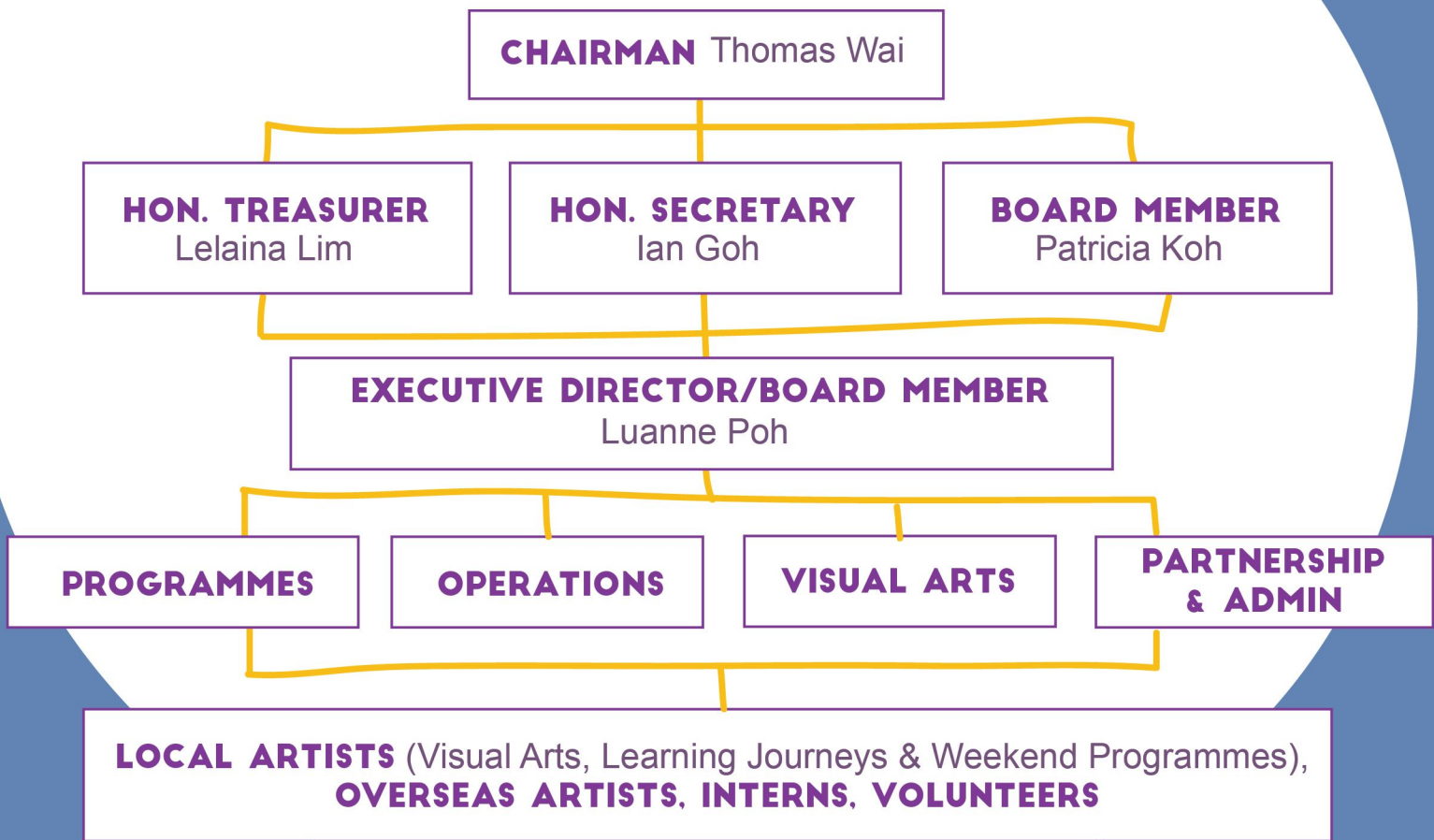


EXTERNAL AUDITOR
One Partnership PAC

COMPANY SECRETARY
KC Corporate Solutions Pte Ltd

PRINCIPAL BANKER
DBS Bank Limited

ORGANISATION CHART



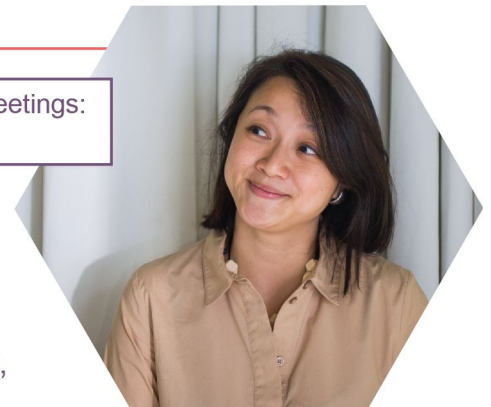
GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

Luanne Poh

Executive Director and Board Member

Attendance for Board Meetings:
4 out of 4

Luanne is the brainchild behind The Artground. This head honcho has a big heart with a soft spot for little ones. Luanne's creative nature inspires the team to challenge boundaries, and fosters a culture of intrapreneurship within the team as she believes in empowerment for every individual, the young and the younger alike.



GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS



Wai Chun Yip Thomas *Chairperson*

Attendance for Board Meetings:
3 out of 4

Age 41
Appointed to the Board on 28 August 2017

Workplace and Designation
National Gallery Singapore
Chief People Officer

Professional Commitments
Head of HR, Visual Arts Cluster
Lead of Cop (HR), Museum Roundtable
Non-Executive Director, Cups Media Pte Ltd
Non-Executive Director, My Locker Laundry Pte Ltd

Qualifications
Masters of Business Administration (MBA), Dean List,
Nanyang Technological University

Master of Arts (Strategy & International Management),
University of St Gallen, Switzerland

Bachelor of Electrical & Electronic Engineering (Honors),
Nanyang Technological University

Global Professional in Human Resources (GPHR),
HR Certificate Institute

Quality Selection Process – Gold Medal (QSP),
Talent Plus Inc, USA

Lelaina Lim *Honorary Treasurer*

Age 58
Appointed to the Board on 28 August 2017

Workplace and Designation
Eu Yan Sang International Limited
Group Chief Financial Officer

Professional Commitments
Auditor – Farrer Holland Neighbourhood Committee
Treasurer – Singapore Hockey Federation
Hon. Treasurer – Football Association of Singapore
Council Member – Institute Of Singapore Chartered Accountants (ISCA)

Qualifications
Bachelor of Accountancy
National University Singapore

Professional Bodies
Fellow Member -Institute of Singapore Chartered Accountants(ISCA)
Member – Singapore Institute of Directors (SID)



Attendance for Board Meetings:
3 out of 4



Goh Jin Zhong, Ian
Honorary Secretary

Age 31
Appointed to the Board on 28 August 2017

Workplace and Designation

The Alternative Campfire
Leadership Catalyst and Coach

Attendance for Board Meetings:
3 out of 4

Qualifications

BA (Hons) in Psychology

Patricia Koh Ai Leng
Board Member

Age 57
Appointed to the Board on 28 August 2017

Workplace and Designation

KK Women's and Children's Hospital
Senior Medical Social Worker (Locum)

Professional Commitments

Secretary, Local Church Executive Committee,
Wesley Methodist Church (WMC)

Member, Board of Directors, Wesley Vineyard Childcare (WVC)

Secretary, Executive Committee, Association for Early Childhood Educators,
Singapore (AECES)

Volunteer with Group-Up Initiative (GUI), Safe Place,
Caregivers Alliance (CAL)

Qualifications

BA, MA Counseling



Attendance for Board Meetings:
4 out of 4

GOVERNANCE

Board Meetings

Board meetings are held on a quarterly basis to review the results and performance of the Company, and its strategic plan. To facilitate attendance, Board meetings are scheduled at least a year ahead. At the last meeting of the financial year, the Board will also approve the annual budget for the following year. As part of good governance, key matters requiring decision are reserved for resolution at Board meetings to facilitate discussion, rather than by email circulation. The Chairperson ensures that Board meetings are held as and when necessary with optional meetings convened when there are pressing matters requiring the Board's consideration. The Treasurer stands in as the Chairperson during the Chairperson's absence, if applicable. The Secretary assists the Board with the preparation of meeting agenda, administers, attends and records minutes of Board proceedings in a timely manner to ensure good information flow within the Board.

Conflict of Interest

The Company's constitution documents state that whenever a member of the Board in any way, directly or indirectly, has an interest in any transaction, project or matter, the member shall disclose the nature of his interest before the discussion and should not participate or vote on the matter. He should offer to withdraw from the meeting and the Board shall decide if this should be accepted. Board member, Ms Luanne Poh, does not participate in any voting and approval of operational matters.

Additionally, The Ground Co Limited also has in place a policy for conflicts of interest for the Board as well as for staff to ensure that all parties act independently and in the best interests of the Company and avoid ethical, legal, financial or other conflicts of interest which may impede or compromise their responsibilities. As a general rule, they must not place themselves in a position where their duties and interests may possibly conflict, whether perceived or actual. Where a director or staff has personal interests that may conflict with his duties to the Company, he should make disclosure to the Company as soon as possible and obtain the approval of the Board or management. All directors and staff have to make an annual declaration that they have read and understood the policy and whether there are any present or potential conflicts.



THE ARTGROUND

90 Goodman Road,
Goodman Arts Centre,
Blk J, #01-40
Singapore 439053

FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



In the last year, Artground has inspired and engaged close to 80,000 visitors. Each took time out of their busy lives to experience art, creating memories, being curious and empowering the young ones to explore, question, think, appreciate, and discover arts. Most memorably to me, our exhibition Hullabaloo held from September 2018 to January 2019, which greets our visitors with rainbows, colours, patterns, shapes, appealing to children's exploration and discovery.



A lot of people may not know, this art exhibition was the work of local artist Nur Aida Binte Saad, 27 and was inspired by her sister Aisha, 17, who has autism. Through the interactive art exhibition, our visitors expand their imagination, go wild with our gigantic rainbow slides and have fun with our colour wheel, which serves as a fun spot for kids to scramble up and slide back down again. At the same time, it provides a good platform to continue our effort in growing and nurturing local young artists who have the talent and passion to create great work.



During the same period, we also presented Perth-based Sensorium Theatre's multi-sensory production *Oddysea*, taking audiences on a multi-sensory journey, venturing a tactile underwater wonderland, journeying through a coral reef while being surrounded by sea-themed songs and person-to-person interactions. They are the only professional group in Australia to design productions specifically for children with additional needs, and we have also worked with them to conduct professional development workshops for local artists, and educators. We are furthering our partnerships with *Oddysea* this year so we can continue to seed and grow our artists for the community, and in return, they can curate new and better enrichment art programs for all children, especially for children with additional needs.

Many first-time visitors of all ages, from toddlers to parents, waited in line to view and interact with our artwork and performance. Hundreds of pictures were shared on social media and featured by various magazines. Many had a wonderful and positive experience at Artground, making new friends and enjoying their afternoons. BUT, we wonder, were there as many conversations exchanged about the artworks? Did we help our visitors to learn new skills?

Children, especially those who are under 12 years old, are intrinsically curious and naturally creative; and Art has the power to affect us, inform us, remind us of a person, place or feeling, alter our perspectives and create new ways of seeing things. Many families are now spending more time with their children: we go shopping, movie theatres and beaches. So could we do more as artists? Could we create a place where it is accessible and available for all, providing art learning experiences for our children so they can continue to be inquisitive and creative, producing more artists and great thinkers for the future?

In the coming new year, we will further our collaborations with our artists. We hope every artwork, exhibitions, installations, events, learning journeys, workshops at the Artground will spark conversations that inspire and motivate us to be creative and inquisitive. Thank you for your support as we continue striving towards our vision "To Let Art Do, What Art Does".

Chairman,
Thomas

FROM THE CHIEF WORM...

The Artground – A Curious Place To Be, continues to fulfil our vision of "To let art do, what art does". In doing so, we were able to inspire our local audiences and connect our communities, as well embark on collaborations that took Singapore out to the international platform. We have had a really busy year and we hope you had the opportunity to join us for the past 12 months.



We started the year with a bang on the global stage; with a co-presentation work with Australian artists, *Especially on Birthdays*, that premiered in Commonwealth Games Festival in Brisbane, Gold Coast in April 2018. After a sold-out run season

where we engaged with nearly 1,000 families with young children, The Artground was invited to speak at a panel discussion in Bangkok International Children Theatre Fest (BICT Fest) in May 2018 where we spoke alongside festival giants such as Edinburgh International Children Festival (Edinburgh, Scotland) as well as ricca ricca* festa (Okinawa, Japan) to share about the children's festival scene on an international platform. We are grateful for these opportunities to share what our Singaporean artists and The Artground can offer to our regional partners, as well as for the meaningful cultural exchanges that took place through dialogue and collaboration.



Premier of *Especially on Birthdays* Commonwealth Games at Brisbane



Luanne on the panel at BICT Bangkok International Children Theatre Fest

Back home, we presented our inaugural 10-day festival, *100 and 100 more Festival*, for our local audiences, where we presented, commissioned and showcased 6 productions from Australia, Denmark, Scotland, Indonesia and Singapore, and reached 10,668 ticketed and non-ticketed audiences. Through the festival, we not only inspired families with young audiences, but also created opportunities for local artists to network and dialogue with the international artists.



Weekend Programmes *Bitesize Little Creatures*

"The Artground has given me opportunities to present works that are at the incubation stage, test audiences, and develop new audiences."

*Natalie Alexandra Tse
Mama Creature
Little Creatures by SA*

"An amazing space where my children get to explore their inner artist and imagination. Also to sometimes have very engaging programs offered at very reasonable prices or some are even FOC. Will definitely look out for the next installation."

Parent, Michelle Lim



Weekend Programmes *Terrific Tales*

More importantly, we ended the year with projects that connected our communities. By presenting **Oddysea** by Western Australian company Sensorium Theatre, a multi-sensory production for children with profound and severe needs, we opened our doors to the communities who often face barriers to purpose-built arts spaces for an authentic theatrical experience designed just for them.



"The students from all 3 classes that went to the session had a wonderful time at the performance. The performance was so interactive and engaging and really something out of the ordinary. As they are students with autism, a lot of them seek various sensory inputs and having the 5 senses incorporated, it was fulfilling and calming. We really appreciate that even when students are overwhelmed and are walking outside the story area, the performers will go out and still interact with them, showing that there is nothing to be afraid of."

Teacher Megan, St Andrew's Autism School



On top of the presentation, Sensorium Theatre conducted professional developments for both artists and teachers who support children with additional needs. Sensorium Theatre combined arts pedagogy within a classroom and facilitated exchanges between the teachers and educators which led to many fruitful discussions. In fact, we are now seeking funding for a collaborative new work involving both the local and Sensorium artists for 2020 that could change the way arts is presented in an all-included manner in public spaces for the society.

As it has been said before, it is not the years that make up a life, but the moments that count. We hope that in the last year, The Artground created memorable memories for each and everyone who has walked through our doors, be it a part of their childhood, parenthood and/or artistic journey, and will continue to be curious and inquisitive! Let the arts begin!

Chief worm,
Luanne

FINANCE

\$ 1,633,998

Income

This included contributions from individuals through cash donations and corporate entities, employment and wage credit grants and grants from the National Arts Council (NAC).

\$ 1,611,858

Expenditure

INTERACTIVE VISUAL ARTS SPACE



Rolling @ TAG by Daiya Aida



Hullabaloo by Nur Aida Sa'ad



Wild Rumpus by Adeline Loo

The intention of these core visual arts exhibitions is to provide positive arts experiences across a variety of art forms for children aged 12 and under in an accessible space that welcomes children from every community. Throughout the year, we present interactive visual art installations that children can climb through, over and under, and the installation changes tri-annually.

The open-plan space not only allows children to engage in non-directive play and practise their motor skills but also heightens their awareness of aesthetic elements and sense of appreciation. Providing a free arts space is the first essential step in our tiered levels of engagement to ensure accessibility.

The theme of each of these exhibitions has been designed to highlight the space's overarching objective of encouraging children to learn from their environment, and to encourage their innate sense of curiosity in the environment around them. We work closely with the artists to create a safe space that allows children to "climb through, over and under" – this simple philosophy allows the children to build their confidence in uninhibited exploration in the arts space, as well as allow for self-directed learning while developing their gross and fine motor skills, all of which are important aspects in developing a holistic individual and his/her interest in the arts from young.

ROLLING @ TAG BY DAIYA AIDA

19 Apr - 19 Aug 2018



Rolling @ TAG is an interactive children's play area, which encourages spontaneous play, and aims to cultivate an environment that prompts children to take ownership of the space and feel comfortable to create their own versions of 'play'.

The interactive element is further enhanced through media technology, such as simple electronics that creates sounds and lights when triggered.

Rolling @ TAG's original concept was conceived by Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM].

Play Meetings

During the installation, we conducted two meetings, where we got children to brainstorm about what changes they envisage for the arts space. They would then present their ideas and vote as a group for the top three ideas they would like to implement! The Artground team would then get together to incorporate these ideas into the arts space within the week and invite the children back to explore.



HULLABALOO BY NUR AIDA SA'AD

30th Aug 2018 - 6th Jan 2019



Hullabaloo is an explosion of colours, patterns and shapes which beckon children's exploration and discovery. This whimsical landscape invites children to crawl into tiny spaces to uncover quiet hidden realms and run around structures of brilliant hues. Taking cues from the natural environment, *Hullabaloo* encourages children to see the space from different perspectives, imagine a world of magic, and immerse themselves in the kind of fun that beats at the heart of creativity. Aida was inspired by her younger sister Aisha's rainbow-themed drawings to create *Hullabaloo* and by making the leap from page to stage, we were able to take a peek into Aisha's world.



FROM A MUMMY'S HEART

I'd like to think of every experience as an adventure on a journey, my life's journey as an autism mum. My adventure with *The Artground* started when my eldest, Aida, was tasked to construct a rainbow-themed indoor playground, *Hullabaloo*, inspired by her younger autistic sister, Aisha.

What ensued was an organised mess of colours, fabrics, yarns, floats, in rainbow hues. The whole family got roped in to help Aida materialise her ideas. That did a lot of good for family bonding, I must say. I even had to put my elementary sewing skills to the test when I had to make sense of Aida's visualisation of support materials for her rainbow wonderland.



The Sa'ad family busy preparing for *Hullabaloo* at home



Then it happened; the game changer. Aisha and her friends from **BeadbyBead (BbB)**, a self-funded friendship club formed by a few mothers for their young adult children with autism, were invited to participate in the project. That's when I launched an all-out effort to showcase what Aisha and her friends can do - in the name of our perennial mission to spread autism awareness. Our children tamed their fidgety fingers and restless energy to focus on making pompoms and handpainted cushions. Working on a tight schedule can be stressful and intimidating, but we did it!

Through this experience, we saw what we and our special needs children can do. They are different but not less. I cannot thank *The Artground* enough for giving us this opportunity, for embracing our community with such compassion and understanding. The team brought in acts like the *Sensorium Theatre*, that's all about inclusion and interaction in a sensory-rich setting. Their thoughtfulness included the provision of a quiet room and a continually running video about **BbB**.



BbB is very much part of *The Artground* family now. When we come to play there, we are invariably greeted with a welcoming warmth, as the team busied themselves to ensure that we feel right at home. For all this, thank you thank you and thank you. You're a class act indeed.

Saleha, mum of Aida and Aisha.



" TAG is a dream space for any child, with safe, well thought out activities and programmes, that stimulate all the five senses. My daughter is always excited to go to TAG, regardless of how many times she's been before, as there is ample opportunities for her to explore and expend her boundless energy. We look forward to the next installation! "

Su Ann, Mother of 3 year old girl



An invitation into an imaginary world of creatures big, small, furry or gentle, *Wild Rumpus* is full of cuddly friends hiding behind the corner. Embrace the world of tactile material and feel what it is like to hug, cuddle and squeeze into something out of the ordinary.

INSPIRING LOCAL AUDIENCES THROUGH OUR VISUAL ARTS EXHIBITIONS

With our tri-annual exhibitions, we work closely with local artists and creatives, many who have never created an interactive installation for young audiences before. In doing so, we are able to extend their existing creative practices, to design and create play experiences that allows the young to play and discover their work through crawling, jumping and going through the artworks – the way they know best.



Besides the families that visit *The Artground*, we were able to find partners to present these artworks by our local artists in public spaces, allowing more touchpoints by the community to appreciate these works. *Rolling @ TAG* was re-presented at Tanjong Pagar Centre and *Hullabaloo* travelled to the Malay Heritage Centre.



The Artground has been the go-to art space curator for Tanjong Pagar Centre since our first project together – *Rolling@TAG*. I have to say that their open communications and enthusiasm for their work is highly commendable.

*Roxanne Lee, Assistant Manager
GuocoLand (Tanjong Pagar Centre)*

DESIGN INITIATIVE BY THE ARTGROUND



"We have since worked with *The Artground* on *Hullabaloo* for Christmas 2018 that brought the diverse community of young kids, office workers, tourists and families together. On numerous occasions, they have displayed stellar execution of the play installation and a deep passion for their work. It is an absolute joy and an inspirational journey to work with *The Artground*. Looking forward to more exciting projects with TAG!"

Roxanne Lee, Assistant Manager, GuocoLand



Quilling Workshop conducted by *Beadbybead*

The Artground has also programmed art groups to facilitate craft workshops during this festive session!

BeadbyBead (BbB) organised by four mothers who has teen with special needs, conducted quilling workshops for giftboxes.



Pom-pom Pets Workshop conducted by *In Merry Motion*

PROGRAMMES FOR SCHOOLS

Our school programmes have grown exponentially since we began in July 2017. We closed the previous FY17/18 after 9 months of operation with 6 Arts Learning Journey (ALJ) programmes with an outreach of 1,166 students. In the past year, we increased our ALJ programmes to 16 workshops, growing the variety of art forms and programming mix, as we continue to develop and design more age-appropriate programmes with local artists, and engaged 5,007 students (over 300% increase).



Arts Learning Journey *Bitesize Little Creatures*



Learning Journey *Colours from the Garden*

"The installations are definitely very fun for the children to play especially the Rainbow slide station. It is challenging yet the children just love it! The workshop was also very well carried out as the facilitators are very clear when explaining it to the children and guided them well! So far, so good!"

Teacher Nuraslinda, My First Skool @Edgefield Plains



Arts Learning Journey *Let's Dance*



Arts Learning Journey *Bamboo Melodies*



The Artground Booth at ECDA Conference

When we started our school programmes, we wanted to move beyond preliminary arts experiences into programmes with higher touchpoints. Besides deliberate efforts in engaging with stakeholders in the Early Childhood (ECH) sector such as Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA), we also worked with artists to share best practises in integrating the arts into ECH learning and facilitated exchanges between artists and educators through our *GroundBreakers* programmes and educators training programmes.



Thank you for the wonderful opportunity [for the Dance Jambo teachers' workshop conducted by Faye Lim of Roly Poly]. My staff were so inspired by the workshop that they tried it out on afternoon of that day.

Principal Stefanie, Eshkol Valley

We also engaged our traditional masters in our arts community to produce a work together with the NAC's Traditional Arts team, *The Tales of the Sang Kancil*, to engage the 4 to 6 years in their enjoyment and appreciation of our heritage. Working closely with Era Dance Theatre and Maya Dance Theatre, this interactive storytelling of the small and clever mousedeer incorporated hands-on workshop of Malay and Indian dance and music forms to design an age-appropriate experience for our young kinaesthetic learners. This production took place in August 2018, in line with Racial Harmony month, as well as in November to December 2018 period, in line with our Deepavali festive period.

THE TALES OF SANG KANCIL



“In line with ECDA Spark requirements and to expose our children to appreciate traditional arts. Good to inculcate appreciation of arts & enhanced child’s sense of wonder as it is one of the PRAISE disposition we want students to have.”

Teacher from PCF Sparkletots Preschool @Sengkang West, 17 Aug 2018

PROGRAMMES FOR FAMILIES

The tiered-levels of access at The Artground means that anyone can enjoy the arts regardless of socio-economic background, cultural capacity or even just where the energy level of the child is at that moment. Besides the weekend drop-in programmes offered at \$10/child-parent, we have also introduced an increasing variety of performances and higher engagement workshops priced from \$12 for the families throughout the year. Most of these programmes are developed at The Artground through our incubation and/or capabilities development programmes.



Weekend Programmes *Tug*



Weekend Programmes *Cardboard City*

" We love TAG because the space is so welcoming and free for children to play and explore everything through arts. The white box is a cozy little place where we can be transported to another world full of imaginations. My boys enjoy each visit to TAG and look forward to seeing each new interactive art installation. The only complaint is we wish TAG is nearer home (which is at the west side of Singapore)! "

Kai Sin, Mother of three homeschoolers, 2, 6 and 9



Weekend Programmes *The Painter's Waltz*



Weekend Programmes *A Tiny Beat*



Weekend Programmes *Roly Poly Family Dance Party*

In FY18/19, we welcomed 77,571 visitors into our space, and engaged 11,167 paid audiences throughout our programmes. On top of this, we also ignited the curiosity of both artists and close to 400 children by inviting them into our prototyping sessions to co-create, co-play and co-develop ideas with our Artist-in-Residence and *GroundBreakers* artists.



Children's Panel for Groundbreakers

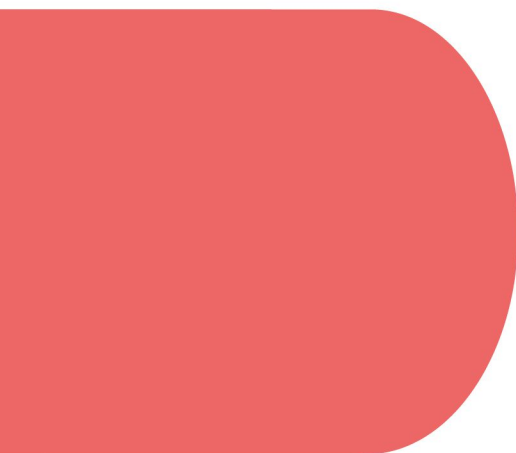
A *Groundbreakers* Production *Invisible Invincible*

“TAG has created a warm and nurturing environment where, as an artist, I feel empowered and encouraged to try out new things to expand my practice. If not for TAG I would not have been exposed to shows for babies and would not have had the opportunity to make works for the different age-groups and experiment with the age range. They manage the audience expectations such that it is less intimidating for me as an artist to present new work, while at the same time, they give me exposure to the different audiences. This is particularly important when making work with high levels of audience participation, interaction and performer responsiveness. I honestly feel that being a GroundBreaker and presenting weekend performances at TAG helps me to raise the level of my repertoire through a process of repetition and refinement that I could not have had elsewhere. If I tried to replicate these conditions myself, I would have needed a team of administrators and tour managers, which takes your focus away from the artistic research, at a time when all you want to do is improve the work.”

Melissa Quek, GroundBreakers & EPIC Artist

PROGRAMMES FOR ARTISTS

Besides our programmes for audience development and growth in the families and schools sector, we are also very inspired by the progress and development of our artist development programmes; namely our Artist-in-Residency, *GroundBreakers* and E.P.I.C. to connect our communities in the arts sector. The main objective of these platforms is to develop artistic capabilities in audience engagement, facilitation and content creation for specific audience segments. We strengthened our understanding of these audience segments through research, development and prototyping our programme design, in tandem with our programmes for the families and schools who visit The Artground.



In our capabilities development programme, we provide a range of tangible and intangible support essential and unique to these platforms, including financial, venue, marketing, feedback/dialogue between the communities and access to age-appropriate audiences for development and prototyping. The tangible support (financial, venue, marketing) allows the artists to focus on developing the artistic content and inspire them to do what they do best. The intangible support (feedback/dialogue, access to age-appropriate audiences) allows them to delve deeper into the practice, question/defend their intentions and develop stronger works that stood the test of research/prototype.

On top of these practices on the ground, The Artground is also the subject of a case study research conducted by the National Institute of Education on arts engagement and practices, and its impact on audiences and the artistic community. The rigour of devising works for young audiences have almost been unheard of until The Artground formalised these practices, and we are starting to reap the fruits of these labours under two years of operational existence.

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCY

The Artist-in-Residency programme at The Artground identifies a local practitioner whom we can work closely with to target programme design for a specific audience segment, in this case the birth to three years. This is a very new segment in the local artistic community and was virtually untapped before we presented the first work for babies, Baby Space, during our opening in July 2017. Besides providing the financial and venue support for our Artist-in-Residence, we also work closely in consultation with the local practitioner to strengthen our mutual understanding of audience segments and behaviours through research.

Over the past year, The Artground has played a vital part in my journey as Artist-in-Residence. The Artground has provided me with spaces for building and making the sets as well as rehearsing and testing the shows and installations such as Cardboard City and TUG with my target audience. Luanne also acts as a springboard and gives supportive feedback. These experiences have both enabled my growth as an artist as well as informed my subsequent play experiments and ideas that I hope to explore in the next year.

*Stan, Artist-in-Residence
(The Artground)*



Annie Ting and the Dragon
by Tiny Feat



Tug by Stan

In the past year, Stan, a local practitioner, developed two new works for the very young; Cardboard City is an installation work for pre-walking babies to develop their senses in aural and tactile sensations, and TUG is a performative play session for 18 – 30 months to engage in music-making and everyday materials to connect the audiences in the shared space.

The Artground also supported Stan's development in developing a puppetry work, *Annie Ting and the Dragon*, which has been invited to an international puppetry festival Pesta Boneka 2018 in Yogyakarta – a first for a Singaporean collective.

ARTIST INCUBATION: GROUNDBREAKERS

The Artground aims to be a space where all artists, young and younger, can be curious about discovering different ways of artmaking, and create works that are delightful for their audiences. We believe that all children deserve aesthetic experiences that are thoughtfully designed and considered.

The Artground will provide the space, literal & figurative, for artmakers to conceptualise, to devise, to test and to design these experiences in order to break new ground in this field.



Invisible Invincible by MySuperFuture



Dance Jambo at Global Tots by Roly Poly Family



Slinky Sticky Toys by The Kueh Tutus

“GroundBreakers was the extra push, the steadfast encouragement and the helping hand that guides the project to what it has become today. “Invisible Invincible” was just a really fun idea thought out by three artists but the incubation process of GroundBreakers is the pivotal step to realising that this particular fun idea can be shared with so many people in a way that is imaginative and thought-through.”

Ian Loy
GroundBreakers Artist

In the past year, we worked with three collectives under the GroundBreakers programme;

MySuperFuture
Theatrical Productions

(helmed by Ian Loy)

Roly Poly Family

(helmed by Faye Lim)

The Kueh Tutus

(helmed by Melissa Quek)

E.P.I.C.

E.P.I.C. is a programme that The Artground proposed to the National Arts Council to leverage on The Artground's artistic networks of art-makers outside of Singapore. E.P.I.C stands for Exposure, Participate, Innovate and Create, and is targeted at local artists interested in developing their practise in work for young audiences (defined here as works for 12 years and under). Locally, Arts for Young Audiences (A4YA) are still in its infancy. In July 2017, when The Artground presented *Baby Space*, an immersive production for pre-walking babies, it was possibly the first "formal" theatrical presentation for this age group in Singapore. Since then, it has garnered an increased awareness amongst parents, and even small-scale non-ticketed productions (for example *You can Reach the Sky*) by local artists, inspired by the possibility of presenting experiential theatrical spaces for the early years. However, the sector is still starved for content and artistic developmental platforms due to scarcity in professional practices in this area.



EPIC participants at *ArtPlay*, Melbourne

The EPIC programme aims to feed this hunger and nurture this desire to develop and design works that are developmentally appropriate. The EPIC programme provides tiered levels of engagement for the artists centred in a geographical location/festival. The programme aims to spark new conceptual practices in order to develop original content that are relevant to our industry, both in terms of practice and "marketability".

EXPOSURE

To expose our local practitioners to a diverse range of presentations and content plausible for theatre for young audiences.



PARTICIPATE

To create participatory platforms/masterclasses based on dramaturgical research and ideas for these practising artists to embody, which can enforce their devising practices in these areas. In addition to a strong practice in the elements of theatre, it is necessary to employ pedagogical know-hows and early childhood developmental milestones to design a work that can engage and excite a young inquisitive mind.



INNOVATE

In designing a programme that combines theory, research-led practicum, and exchange programmes with emerging and practising A4YA artists, we hope to spark innovative ways of developing works that are relevant to our scene and audiences.



CREATE

We hope that the EPIC programme will inspire our artists to create works for young audiences that are ground-breaking and delightful.



Last year, our first EPIC programme was held in the City of Melbourne over 22 – 30 September 2018, at the Melbourne Fringe. The Open Call attracted 39 applicants out of which 15 artists were selected, and partially supported by a capability development grant from the NAC for the programme.



100 & 100 MORE FESTIVAL

25 MAY TO 3 JUNE 2018



When we first proposed the Festival to the council, we shared 3 objectives

1. Artistic Partnerships with Australia
2. Incubation & Artist Development
3. Audience Development

For the first objective, we were able to present a co-production *Especially on Birthdays* between Australia and Singapore. Beyond that, we also managed to secure a presentation of the work at the *Commonwealth Games Festival 2018* in Gold Coast as a premiere.

Also, Dave Brown (*PaperBoats*, Australia) met with Melissa Quek (*The Kueh Tutus*) during the festival and under our recommendation, they are pursuing a collaboration for *The Kueh Tutus* to 'inhabit' a new work *Where the Mirror-Bird Sings* (a similar working model as *Especially on Birthdays*) that involves both Singaporean and Australian artists.

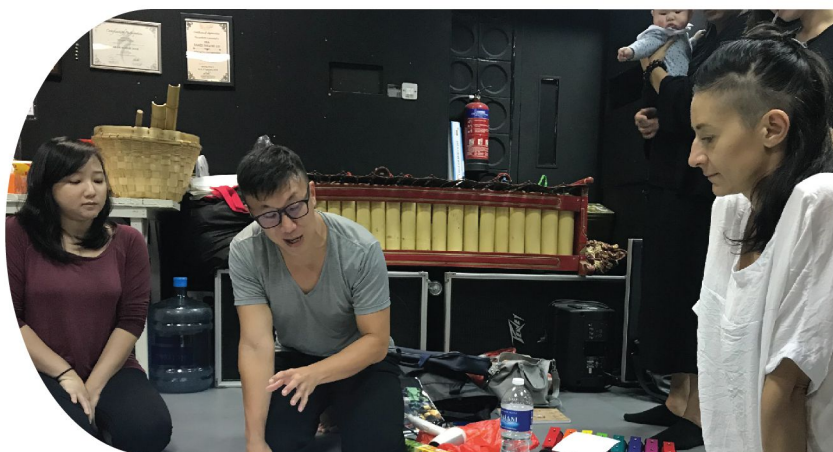
This met both our first objective of building artistic partnerships as well as our second objective of artist development and capability building. *The Kueh Tutus* flew to Adelaide for a one-week residency with Dave Brown's team in October 2018.



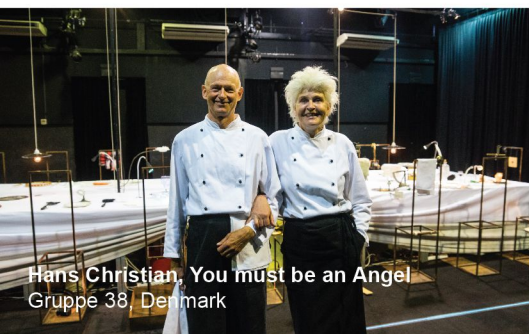
For the local artists' development objective, we invited every international group to share their vision, artistic practice and experiences in our *Living Rooms* sessions. Three of these sessions were more casual in nature, with two of them being more lecture-style with a specific topic, and one hands-on three-hour workshop where the participants moved and experienced content creation with Dave Brown. In the six sessions, we had a registration of 106 from local artists/educators/general public. This consisted of 54 individuals, hence most of them registered for more than one event. On average, each session had an attendance of 15 – 25 participants, some coming back to attend the later sessions which they had not pre-registered for. It was also noted that the attrition rate for the sessions was rather low, which we were heartened by.



We also invited Dalija Acin Thelander to conduct an intensive six-day Artist Incubation Lab about 'Choreographic and performing practices for babies' for the GroundBreakers and Natalie Tse from SA Trio.



When we spoke to parents, most of them felt that the quality of the productions was very refreshing and 'different' from what is usually presented on the main stage, some cited that there was a 'gentle' quality in the overseas productions especially *PUNO* (Indonesia) and *Songs From Above* (Denmark) that is not present in local productions for young audiences. They even mentioned that they were pleasantly surprised by the responses of their children e.g., one pair of 3 year old twins replicated the playing with toilet rolls at home after catching *Especially on Birthdays* and a 10 year old girl responded in tears after *PUNO* and how the mother-daughter pair shared a nice afternoon after to talk about the story of *PUNO*. These stories remind us the myriad of responses that our young audience are capable of after a meaningful arts experiences that can inspire both their imagination and heart.



Hans Christian, You must be an Angel
Gruppe 38, Denmark



Songs from Above
Teatre Refleksion, Denmark



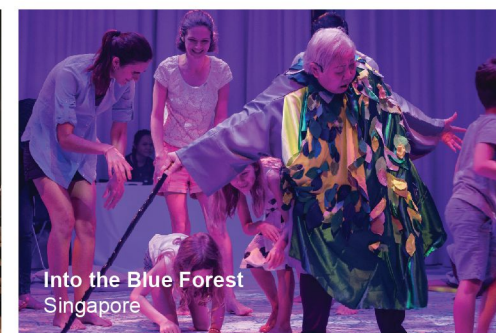
PUNO
Papermoon Puppet Theatre Company
Indonesia



Snigel & Friends
Caroline Bowditch & Friends, Australia & Scotland



Especially on Birthdays
Paperboats & The Artground, Australia & Singapore



Into the Blue Forest
Singapore

Ticketed attendance for the 6 productions was **1,837** with local artists, from emerging to established, making up about 10% of the ticketed audience. While we received a lot of positive feedback from both families and artists about the quality of the work presented, we felt the greater impact for local artists were the Artist Fringe programme that was curated throughout the week.

We programmed **37 ticketed workshops** and **24 non-ticketed workshops** over the 10-day festival in Goodman Arts Centre and in The Artground. These reached a total of **6,029** audienceship (in the Good Garden and GAC) and **2,624** (Rolling @ TAG). We also conducted one pre-festival workshop by In Merry Motion at Grace Orchard School for 57 children and 15 teachers.



\$ 2,880

Cash Sponsorship
Ticket Sponsorship from Singapore Press Holdings

which allowed us to invite the following groups to the festival.

Hans Christian, You Must Be an Angel

Touch Community Services
Chen Su Lan Methodist Children's Home

Puno (Letters to the Sky)

Singapore Association for the Deaf

Especially on Birthdays

Grace Orchard School
SuperHero Me

In-Kind Sponsorships

1. **Venue Support from Arts House Limited** (~ SGD15,000 – 20,000)
2. **Suntory - Ribena** (1,800 tetra packs)
3. **VitaKids - Baby Puree** (300 packs)
4. **Havence - Mini fan with battery and balls** (100 pcs)
5. **Global Pharma - Hand Sanitiser** (120 pcs)
6. **Cloversoft - Anti Bacterial Wipe** (100 pcs)
7. **Firefly Photography - Family Photoshoot Discount Voucher** (800 pcs)
8. **Little Twigs - Bath Sample** (400 pcs)
9. **Preschool Market - \$10-off Discount Voucher for Online Purchases** (850 pieces)
10. **Scholastic - Books** (100 pieces)
11. **Times the Bookshop - Goruru \$10 Discount Vouchers and draw string bags** (200 pieces)

10,668

Audience for 10-day
100 and 100 More Festival

1,837

Attended ticketed productions

2,624

Attended Rolling @ TAG

6,029

Attended ticketed and
non-ticketed workshops

57 Children and **15** teachers

Attended pre-festival workshop
outreach in Grace Orchard School

ODDYSEA

Odyssey is an interactive multi-sensory tale set in a tactile underwater wonderland, developed by Sensorium Theatre (WA) that designs productions for children with severe and profound needs. Young audiences take a hands-on journey through an oceanic world of touch, tastes, smells, live original music and highly visual storytelling. With beautiful sea-themed songs and lots of one-on-one interaction, *Odyssey* ensures that every audience member has the best seat in the house.

Odyssey has been performed at multiple venues across Australia, including the Sydney Opera House and Arts Centre Melbourne, and this is Sensorium Theatre's first presentation in Singapore.



"I feel it has been a good experience for my students. They enjoyed the *Odyssey* adventure. They were thrilled to explore the play area. It was a novelty for them to experience a performance in an interactive manner. They enjoyed feeling the sand, shells, bubbles and sea-spray etc. they were immersed in a multi-sensory way and could understand the story. Thanks to the whole crew, for using their songs, music, actions, drama and props to engage every audience!"

Teacher Stella
St Andrew's Autism School



77,571

Visitors at The Artground

PROGRAMMES

476

Ticketed Workshops

ARTISTS

952

Local Artists

25

Foreign Artists

TRAININE

8

Visits or trainees/interns
from local & overseas

PARTICIPANTS

6,589

Ticketed Workshop Participants

5007

Learning Journey Participants

VENUE SPONSORSHIP FROM THE ARTGROUND

A Little Raw, an inclusive dance
company for teens

SOTA Theatre students' showcase

OUR HEARTFELT THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

"Volunteering at The Artground has provided me with opportunities to practise my communication and negotiation skills between parents and children. More importantly, it requires me to constantly think on my feet as I help artists during workshops and as a facilitator with the children. Creativity is endless here!"

Trixie, Volunteer





WWW.THEARTGROUND.COM.SG