



European Union
Delegation to Singapore



The European Union and LASALLE College of the Arts launch inaugural European Union Writers Festival (EUWF)

Celebrating European literature

As the European Union marks 60 years, the European Union Delegation to Singapore deepens its cultural connections with Singapore. On May 25-26, together with LASALLE College of the Arts, the EU launches its inaugural European Union Writers Festival (EUWF).

With EUWF, the EU Delegation to Singapore and LASALLE College of the Arts join their efforts to create a platform showcasing European authors based in Singapore. Through an opening event and a full-day of panel discussions on May 26, this festival will use literature and words to add to the rich Singapore-Europe dialogue and deepen long-established European connections in the city-state.

Says Dr Michael Pulch, European Union Ambassador to Singapore: "We celebrate literature with our inaugural European Union Writers Festival."

Discussions to launch this festival started nine months ago and Dr Pulch adds the "aim is to create a platform for European writers and publishers based in Singapore to discuss their work and the many ideas that inspire writing in many forms."

"We are delighted to partner with LASALLE College of the Arts. As we mark 60 years of the European Union and 40 years of EU-ASEAN ties, this collaboration strengthens our long-established connections with the city-state. It adds to the rich artistic and cultural dialogue between Europe and Singapore," says Dr Pulch.

Professor Steve Dixon, President, LASALLE College of the Arts says they are honoured "to be the partner of choice for the European Union Delegation to Singapore in co-hosting this inaugural European Union Writers Festival on our iconic city campus".

"This partnership reflects true creative collaboration where our faculty and students will actively contribute to and engage with notable European writers, publishers and directors. One of LASALLE's strongest propositions is that we constantly seek to create avenues that ignite creativity, conversation and connection, for faculty and students, both inside the classroom and out of it. This writers' festival is one prime example, with an esteemed partner," says Professor Dixon.

EUWF is a celebration of culture and literature that has the natural potential to travel beyond borders.

Says Dr Darryl Whetter, Programme Leader, MA Creative Writing, LASALLE College of the Arts: “This cultural fusion is even more obvious here in the European Union Writers Festival’s combination of firsts: our MA Creative Writing is the first taught Creative Writing MA in Singapore and Southeast Asia, and we are delighted to co-host this inaugural version of the European Union Writers Festival in the first semester of the first year of this exciting new Creative Writing MA. Like all good stories, ours has a dramatic beginning and an interesting cast of diverse characters”.

Opening night

An opening night will kick-start EUWF on May 25. Taking place at the Campus Green at LASALLE College of the Arts, the opening night will give free rein to four fresh voices from Singapore and Europe. Opening readings will explore the many themes in European contemporary literature. It will also include Singapore poets who have travelled to Europe and have written poems in response to their journey there.

Following this opening event, a series of conversations with authors from Europe and full-fledged panel discussions will be showcased on 26th May.

From film script to screen

Promoting European cinema in Singapore has always been a core priority for the EU in the city state. The European Union Film Festival is Singapore’s longest running foreign film festival. It runs at the iconic National Gallery Singapore from May 11-21. In keeping with this tradition, the intertwining of film and literature will be in the limelight in two panel discussions during EUWF.

Following his contribution to 27th EUFF in Singapore, the German writer and filmmaker Michael Schindhelm will present his latest publication, *Happy Tropics I* at EUWF. It explores the changing cultural landscapes of the city-state.

Another roundtable on “The Craft of Filmwriting” will bring together a British screenwriter, Benjamin Slater, and a German film director and Associate Professor at NTU, Sebastian Grobler. Together with moderator Kenneth Tan, Chairman of the Singapore Film Society, they will address the opportunities stemming from the interpretation of film scripts, and how they shape the movie’s visual outcomes.

Arts And Literature

We often underscore the great difficulty to put into words the abstract endeavour of artistic creation. How do artists, curators and writers coping with this challenge use words to make artistic creation meaningful to others? This is the challenge arts writers and curators Anca Rujoiu, Melanie Pocock, Stephanie Burt, Silke Schmickl and Kathleen Ditzig take on.

The Fine Art of Publishing

As a major cultural hub in Southeast Asia, Singapore is home to several publishing houses. As such, the city-state is a unique platform where The Fine Art of Publishing can be dealt with in all its guises. This will fuel the conversation between Dominique Husken-Ulbrich, founder of the established publisher Husken-Ulbrich Books, and the Singaporean Edmund Wee, the founder of the well-known Epigram Books.

Reading and Writing in the Age of Social Media

Book lovers and wordsmiths can also look forward to the state of play of the literature in the context of the widespread use of social media tools and platforms. Singapore Literature-Prize-winning author Joshua Ip (*Sonnets from the Singlish*, 2015) will join Vladimir Todorovic, Associate Professor in the NTU School of Arts, Design and Media, to discuss how literature can reinvent itself and embrace the challenges posed by social media.

British Council Initiates and Supports the EUWF Accessibility Programme



Another first for this inaugural festival: the British Council is working with the European Writers Festival in an effort to present a more inclusive

Festival by supporting the EUWF accessibility programme. The programme consists of introducing sign language interpretation for participants with hearing impairments at selected events. British Council is pioneering this programme as part of their wider Inclusive Arts campaign. Inclusion, diversity and equality are at the core of the British Council's global cultural relations aims and part of building trust, respect and understanding between the UK and Singapore.

Says Dr Sarah Meisch Lionetto, Director of Arts, British Council Singapore: "With a programme of research, awareness raising events and projects, our work in the arts endeavours over the next few years to contribute to a dynamic and inclusive cultural scene in Singapore where disabled artists and patrons are able to access equal opportunities to participate in the arts."

See Annex for EUWF programme schedule.

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Details for listing blurb:

What: European Union Writers Festival

When: May 25 (Opening Night from 6pm to 7pm)

Where: LASALLE College of the Arts

1, McNally Street – Singapore 187940

Admission: Free

MRT: Rochor

Details: www.europe.sg

About European Union Writers Festival

The inaugural European Union Writers Festival showcases European authors based in Singapore. Tapping on their experience in the city-state and the region, the selected authors will share their views on a wide range of topics related to literature and the arts. While promoting the many themes in European contemporary literature and European diversity, the one-and-half-day festival will also explore the avenues for cultural dialogue between Singapore and Europe.



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About European Union Delegation to Singapore

Set up in December 2002, the EU Delegation to Singapore formally opened on June 30, 2004. Since then, the EU's diplomatic representation has worked to promote closer ties between the EU and Singapore. The wide-ranging relationship has strengthened over the years. In close coordination with the diplomatic missions of the EU Member States, the Delegation ensures consistency and effectiveness of the EU's external action in Singapore. With 28 countries, nearly 500 million people and the largest GDP in the world, the EU is of increasing importance to Singapore as well as ASEAN. The Delegation runs a range of programmes that cover a range of issues such as trade, climate change, aviation as well as education programmes such as the popular annual Study In Europe fair and the annual European Union Film Festival.



About LASALLE College of the Arts

LASALLE College of the Arts in Singapore is a leading tertiary institution in cutting edge contemporary arts and design education and practice. The college offers over 30 undergraduate and post-graduate programmes in art, design, film, animation, fashion, dance, music, theatre, arts management, artist education, art therapy, and Asian art histories.

Its faculty is led by a community of award-winning artists, designers, educators and researchers, and their practice-led research sets LASALLE apart as an international centre of excellence. Critically acclaimed alumni form the core of the cultural and creative sectors in Singapore and increasingly internationally.

Founded in 1984 by de la Salle Brother Joseph McNally – a visionary artist and educator – LASALLE is a not-for-profit, private educational institution. LASALLE receives tuition grant support from the Singapore Ministry of Education. Its degree programmes are validated by Goldsmiths, University of London.

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