

## **Arts programme aims to gather ideas on S'pore's future**

***Monica Kotwani***

***Channel News Asia***, 1 November 2012

The organisers of an arts programme by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) and the Drama Box - IPS Prism - hopes to achieve an arts experience that will allow society to reflect on its choices, and question the kind of governance for Singapore.

The project will be open to the public next week.

Contributors can post notes, share opinions and offer ideas on the future political attitudes and aspirations of the society.

Over one week, from November 8, the effort to hear what people have to say will take off through theatre performances, chat sessions with special guests and multi-media installations.

The public can be as candid as possible in writing down the qualities they would like to see in their future politicians, and stick it on cut-outs that are available throughout the exhibition venue.

Having arts and academia combine to challenge status quo in thinking is the first in Singapore.

Kok Heng Leun, the artistic director of Drama Box said: "The idea of art is that it creates that kind of frame where you feel safe, and you don't feel as if you need to be something to say something. You just need to be yourself.

"At the same time, when you're creating an art project, it's always participatory. You are not alone, you have a group of people with you, and through that process, you learn from each other... It's an exercise to prepare us for the future."

Organisers hope the project has far-reaching consequences.

Gillian Koh, senior research fellow of IPS said: "We also hope it will have a long tail - that it will be transformative for the individual, for the group of different people who come here, that they be changed in how they view, how they envision Singapore, and their role in contributing to how Singapore can be governed, 10 years from now."

The event will be held at the National Library Building, and is open to the public free-of-charge.

IPS says the public will be able to take part in a survey at the end of the event, and data will be collated and presented at the Singapore Perspectives conference in January next year.