

**IPS-NAC Arts & Culture Research Symposium 2022:  
The Role of Arts in Well-Being and Social Inclusion**

Thursday, 25 August 2022

**PROGRAMME**

9.00 am – 9.30 am

**Registration**

9.30 am – 9.40 am

**Opening Address**

Mrs Rosa Daniel  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Arts Council

9.40 am – 9.50 am

**Overview of Our SG Arts Plan (2023-2027)**

Ms Lynette Pang  
Deputy Chief Executive  
Planning and Corporate Development  
National Arts Council

9.50 am – 10.35 am

**Presentations on The Role of Arts in Well-Being  
and Social Inclusion**

**Speakers**

Dr Kathleen Agres  
Assistant Professor and  
Principal Investigator of the Music Cognition Lab  
Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music  
National University of Singapore

Dr Victor Zhuang  
Research Fellow  
Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and  
Information  
Nanyang Technological University

Dr Jesvin Yeo  
Associate Professor  
School of Art, Design and Media  
College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences  
Nanyang Technological University

10.35 am – 11.00 am

**Tea Break**

11.00 am – 11.45 am

**Question-and-Answer Session with Speakers**

**Moderator**

Dr Justin Lee  
Senior Research Fellow  
Institute of Policy Studies

11.45 am – 12 noon

**Closing Remarks and Survey on Symposium and  
Our SG Arts Plan (2023-2027)**

12 noon – 1.00 pm

**Lunch and Networking**

1.00 pm

**End of Symposium**

*Last modified on 19 August 2022.*



## SYNOPSIS

The arts play an important role in improving quality of life. At the individual level, they provide support to people of different ages during difficult times like the ongoing pandemic. In recent years, there has been growing interest and research on using the arts in healthcare to complement traditional clinical approaches to improve people's mental well-being.

Today, technology plays a big part in our lives, especially during the pandemic. Innovations such as music technology help to improve people's well-being. Similarly, the use of visual language and graphic design in everyday products and public spaces can help to improve people's moods. Another area is the application of design in healthcare to elevate health outcomes.

At the community level, the arts facilitate dialogues on complex issues. Socially engaged arts, also known as participatory arts or relational aesthetics, is an artform that seeks to co-create solutions through collaborations and social interactions among different groups of people, especially those from marginalised backgrounds like the low-income and differently-abled.

There have been greater efforts by various organisations to help people reduce stress through arts-based activities and programmes held in public spaces. Such activities also help bring people together and bond over shared experiences in a diverse society like Singapore.

This symposium brings researchers and practitioners together to discuss the following:

- How can the arts improve people's mental well-being, especially in challenging times such as the pandemic?
- How can we better integrate the arts, technology and design science in healthcare to complement traditional clinical solutions? What are the opportunities and challenges in doing so?
- What are some opportunities and challenges in designing community arts programmes and activities?
- How can the arts promote societal well-being in a diverse society like Singapore?

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

**Kathleen AGRES** is Assistant Professor at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music at the National University of Singapore, where she teaches classes related to the Psychology of Music, as well as Music and Health. She received her PhD in Psychology with a graduate minor in Cognitive Science from Cornell University in 2013, and conducted her postdoctoral research at Queen Mary University of London. She also holds a bachelor's degree in Cello Performance and Cognitive Psychology from Carnegie Mellon University. She has received numerous grants to support her research, including Fellowships from the National Institute of Health, and the National Institute of Mental Health, postdoctoral support from the European Union, and grants from several Singaporean-based agencies. Her research explores a wide range of topics, including music perception and cognition, music technology for healthcare and well-being, brain computer interfaces, computational creativity, statistical learning, and the evaluation of creativity in humans and artificial systems. She has presented her work in over 15 countries across four continents, and remains an active cellist.

**Rosa DANIEL** is the Chief Executive Officer of the National Arts Council. In this role since 2017, she oversees state-funded arts policies and programmes across the performing, visual and literary arts. She serves on the boards of the Esplanade Theatre and the National Gallery of Singapore. She also oversees the Ministry's Culture Academy as Dean where she drives leadership development, cross-cutting research projects and international partnerships for the culture sector. In July 2022, she was appointed Singapore's Ambassador to the United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). In this role, she represents Singapore's interests in preserving our culture and heritage, as well as profiling our achievements in education and science. Mrs Daniel served as Deputy Secretary (Culture) from 2012 to 2021, and concurrently Chief Executive of the National Heritage Board from 2013 to 2017. Mrs Daniel was awarded Singapore government scholarships for undergraduate and postgraduate studies from the Oxford University (UK) and the Harvard University (US) for politics, philosophy, economics, and business administration.

**Justin LEE** is Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Policy Studies, National University of Singapore. He is interested in issues relating to community development and social services. He has created a wiki platform that allows citizen mapping of social needs ([socialcollab.sg](http://socialcollab.sg)) and co-founded a skilled volunteer-matching platform ([serve.sg](http://serve.sg)). He frequently trains and consults for voluntary organisations and foundations in design thinking and programme evaluation. He is Chairperson of ArtsWok Collaborative, and serves on the board of Trampoline and the research committee of Singapore Children's Society.

**Lynette PANG** is the Deputy Chief Executive, Planning and Corporate Development Group at the National Arts Council. She is an Executive Committee Member of the World Federation of Advertisers and a board member at Arts House Limited. She had previously sat on the boards of the Singapore International Film Festival and the Council for Private Education. Formerly the Assistant Chief Executive, Marketing, Ms Pang was responsible for building the Singapore destination brand globally and helmed the international marketing efforts of the Singapore Tourism Board. Ms Pang graduated from the National University of Singapore with a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature and Sociology and has an Honours in English Literature. Her passion for the arts saw her dedicating a few years to not-for-profit arts group, Singapore Repertory Theatre (SRT) as General Manager that saw the development of SRT's theatre at Robertson Quay and launch of The Little Company, a children's theatre group.

**Jesvin YEO** explores and challenges how design is applied to societal, cultural and educational issues. On the subject of well-being, she explores new ways to spark insight that addresses people's needs through bold, optimistic design. Her recent project explores the perception of applied arts as a new environmental interface at the intersection of health, media and applied physics. She also explores design innovation in collaboration with diverse communities, resulting in three cultural products and seven books, including *Vanishing Crafts*, and *Architectural Decorations*. Her creative works have been exhibited in top venues, including the Centre Pompidou Shanghai and Berlin Communication Museum, and received over 70 international design awards. In 2021, Associate Professor Yeo established Designing Cultures Studio Seed Funding to encourage young designers to explore collaboration as a method to foster design interest and strengthen community bonds. She serves as Associate Dean (Students) of the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences at the Nanyang Technological University; Board Director of Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts; and Vice President of Singapore Society of Asian Studies.

**Victor ZHUANG** is Research Fellow at the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information at the Nanyang Technological University, where he is working on a project and book exploring the intersections of disability and emerging technologies with Gerard Goggin. His own book manuscript arising from his PhD explores the biopolitics of inclusion in contemporary Singapore. From September 2022, Dr Zhuang will be a Fung Global Fellow at Princeton University where he will research disability, technology and sustainability as they emerge in Asian smart cities. He hopes to use his research to contribute to current debates about how inclusion happens both in Singapore and around the world.