

IPS Prism! Art! Governance! The lowdown!

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I have to admit my confusion when I first found out about the Institute Of Policy Studies' Prism project. All the talk about imagining the future of Singapore and big words like "governance" rubbing shoulders with "art", all coming together in a multimedia exhibition produced by DramaBox. Wah...

Well, we got a better picture this morning when IPS and its collaborators explained a bit more about what you can expect when it goes up at the National Library from Nov 8 to 14. (And for that feel-good, change-the-world vibe, we entered the room to the music of Bob Dylan.)

It's touted as the first nationwide civic arts engagement project and the interactive exhibition was the result of a series of workshops where they chewed over the future of Singapore. What's the Singapore of 2022? What government do we want in 2022? What role do we want to play in governance? Chew. Chew.

The point of the exhibition is for all of us to join in the chewing, and you can start at this structure that'll be set up at the library's plaza area.



Artist's impression of the exhibition space at the National Library's plaza area. Photo courtesy of IPS Prism

Designed to remind you of an HDB flat, it'll be where a number of interactive performances will take place.

There's the Sing-Along-Song portion where Singapore songs are rewritten to fit the three scenarios that have been imagined: SingaStore.com (pro-Singapore), SingaGives.gov (pro-Singaporean), and WikiCity.sg (pro-active). You can read more [here](#).

Kok Heng Leun and the DramaBox folks are also doing a forum theatre piece, Wouldn't It Be Nice, that looks at what happens when disaster strikes Singapore in 2022. Flood, drought, power outage—we're all in this boat together so let's chip in! Something like that.



DramaBox does a forum theatre piece on governance. Photo courtesy of IPS Prism

Hanging all over on poles are banners of everyday objects juxtaposed with catchphrases. We saw some examples—very graphic design hip—and I must say I like it.



One of the thought-provoking banner images at the IPS Prism exhibition. Photo courtesy of IPS Prism. Shared Wealth. A hospital bed. Chew. Chew.

And then you've got two other elements which will be found at the Plaza and at the library's Black Box foyer.

You've got cut-outs of the "Model Politician" and "Model Person", both today and in 2022—and you're invited to stick post-its with your thoughts on what qualities they should possess.

And then there's the Use-less Exhibition—a collection of "artefacts" and images of things that folks living in Singapore deem to be useful today but also suggest to be rather useless in 2022.

Like this one.



A student's report book is part of the Use-less Exhibition. Photo courtesy of Don Wong.

And this.



Cup noodle at the Use-less Exhibition. Photo courtesy of Don Wong.

Although for this one, the action is more slurping, actually.

You've also got at the Black Box foyer, something called the Chit-Chat Chop-Chop, a space where, for some 10 to 15 minutes at a time, you've got certain peeps talking about their ideas regarding Singapore's future. It's also a discussion so you can chip in. Creative team member Charlene Rajendran compares it to coffeeshop banter "but a little bit more edgy." That's cos

guests will be Banyan Tree's Ho Kwon Ping, Select Books' Tan Dan Feng, AWARE's Corinna Lim and IPS' Janadas Devan.

And finally, there's Future Screens, Tomorrow Scenes, a multi-screen installation of commissioned short films imagining 2022 in Singapore. It's to "contemplate the uncontemplatable" shared another creative team member, Jasmine Ng. We had a very short glimpse, but I'd probably hang out here a lot. Some of them look quite funny, with hints of role reversals, among others. You've got something like this bit about a new (political?) party of senior citizens. Woot.



One of the short films at Future Screens, Tomorrow Scenes. Photo courtesy of IPS Prism.

That about sums it up. Except for one other important thing. There's a point behind all of this—other than making one think hard of course.

You're encourage to do a survey after checking out all of these. IPS will be sifting through your answers (they promise it's not your usual survey survey) and the data will go to developing a "map" of political attitudes in Singapore, which will be presented at the Singapore Perspective conference in January.

If you're wondering if it has anything to do with the Our SG Conversation, it's simply coincidental. Or complementary. They've had this idea and had been working on it way before, said creative team member Ngiam Su-Lin of Artswok.

Perhaps one main difference is that it really is rather open-ended in a way. IPS' Gillian Koh describes the Prism project as a "horizontal" rather than "vertical" discussion to imagine not "one world of 2022... but several worlds."

By the way, they want to underscore that it's free. Just drop by.

There's also a website with all the details and the survey. They'll also be uploading snippets of the forum theatre performances in case you miss it. Check it out [here](#).