

**WILD
RICE**

YOUNG & WILD
PROUDLY PRESENTS



LOVE & INFORMATION

WRITTEN BY CARYL CHURCHILL DIRECTED BY EDITH PODESTA

9 – 12 SEP 2021

THE NGEEN ANN KONGSI THEATRE @ WILD RICE

SYNOPSIS

Someone sneezes. Someone can't get a signal. Someone won't answer the door. Someone put an elephant on the stairs. Someone's not ready to talk. Someone is her brother's mother. Someone hates irrational numbers. Someone told the police. Someone got a message from the traffic light. Someone's never felt like this before.

Written with profound wit and wisdom by Caryl Churchill, one of Britain's most celebrated contemporary playwrights, *Love and Information* is a moving, exhilarating and hilarious kaleidoscope of the human experience.

Wild Rice is proud to present Young & Wild – the seventh cohort of our award-winning youth ensemble – in this thrilling, inventive new production of *Love and Information*, under the guidance of acclaimed theatre-maker Edith Podesta.

This Young & Wild production of *Love and Information* is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd.
www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

IMDA Advisory: Some Mature Content

MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dear Audience,

Welcome to Young & Wild's adaptation of Caryl Churchill's *Love and Information* – a thought-provoking exploration of how we all live and love in an age of overwhelming information overload.

Although Churchill's play was first written in 2012, its themes resonate more powerfully than ever right now. Every day, our senses are flooded with facts and data and statistics, delivered to us via our smartphones. We have access to more information than we could possibly process in our lifetimes. What is real? What is fake? What can we believe?

And yet, through it all, we do what human beings have always done. We create connections. We forge friendships and families. We look for love – something the world needs more now than ever.

Love and Information also serves as the perfect graduation showcase for this seventh cohort of Young & Wild, a programme that nurtures aspiring theatre professionals. In the absence of stage directions and a linear plot, this play encourages its performers to experiment, to free their imagination, to make mistakes and learn from them – all in the service of becoming better artists and, hopefully, better human beings.

This is very much in line with our values as a theatre company. It is part of Wild Rice's DNA to nurture, support and celebrate the next generation of young theatre artists – and it is truly our privilege to have provided these 15 young performers with the space to grow, change and learn over the past year.

Thank you, Young & Wild, for rising to the challenge of this production, and thank you, Edith Podesta, for lighting their way.

Last, but certainly not least, thank you for joining us in the theatre today. At a time when making theatre and pursuing a career in the arts is more challenging than ever, we deeply appreciate your support for new talents and young artists. They give us hope for the future, and so do you.



IVAN HENG

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The question, “Do you love me?”, merges love with information and creates meaning in our lives where before there was confusion. Love is a quest, a revelation, a comfort, an incentive, but can also be an irritation, a sadness, a mystery. Love can lead us to grief or guide us out of it. I adore this play because it presents the audience with a theatrical kaleidoscope of over 50 self-contained scenes that unpack the myriad of ways we love, while questioning how we make sense of the information we have.

It goes without saying that Caryl Churchill is one of the world’s most respected playwrights. Her experiments with theatrical form and structure are radical, and her observations of contemporary society are ingenious.

Take for example the very structure of *Love and Information* – there are no stage directions, and lines are not allocated to specific characters. The actors and I spent four weeks devising characters and context for each scene. All 15 cast members pitched directorial interpretations for the scenes they were most passionate about, then went on to direct and act in one another’s presentations. They also presented character studies of personalities they felt could be easily identified as “Singaporean” – from a *karung guni* man to a beer lady at the hawker centre. We then brought these characters into *Love & Information* to see how this would change the setting and subtext of each scene.

A play such as *Love and Information* requires its director and cast to rise to meet its challenges – and I’m glad to have had the opportunity to do so with this incredible Young & Wild ensemble.



EDITH PODESTA

CHANGING THE LANGUAGE OF THEATRE

By April de Angelis

In a prolific, experimental playwriting career spanning half a century, Caryl Churchill has remade the landscape of contemporary British drama. Read on to find out how she has earned herself a place among the greats.



Credit: Photography by Marc Brenner

It is impossible to imagine the landscape of contemporary drama without Caryl Churchill, the author of more than 30 plays, a handful of adaptations, and a clutch of radio plays. And what plays! *Top Girls*, *Cloud Nine*, *Serious Money*, *A Number*, *Far Away*, each a landmark in the history of British theatre culture. She has, as the playwright Marius Von Mayerburg has pointed out, “changed the language of theatre, and very few playwrights do that”. Only the greats deserve that accolade: Shakespeare, Chekhov, Ibsen, Brecht, Beckett, a roll call to which we could easily add Churchill.

The only woman on the list. Would Churchill be happy to be corralled into the category of “female playwright”? It may be of some solace to those of us who are women and

playwrights, who have had to contend with nonsense pronouncements such as “women can’t do structure”, or who have noted the lack of a robust tradition of women’s writing in the theatre to, at last, have a woman take her place in the theatrical canon, but, for Churchill herself, it might suggest a subtle limitation of her creative enterprise.

I took a stab at listing some of the outstanding things about her work: playful, postmodern, serious, funny, theatrical, bold, innovative, poetic, political, surreal. In what way could these qualities be said to be specifically “female”? The question is not how has Churchill influenced women playwrights but rather, is there a contemporary playwright, female or male, who hasn’t been influenced by her oeuvre?

Throughout her writing life, Churchill has experimented with form as well as process, which is why the question “What is a Caryl Churchill play?” is hard to answer; they are protean. Churchill is a playwright with a body of work that has continually responded to the “form and pressure of the times”, as if she has turned the idea of what a play should be over and over, revisioning it beyond the accepted imaginative boundaries, to produce plays that are always revolutionary.

Her latest work, *Love and Information*, has no named characters, rather a series of unnamed voices in a collection of encounters circling around the central preoccupation. It is up to us as the audience to draw our conclusions as to the meaning of the possible connections and disconnections between the scenarios.

What is the meaning of the lack of information the writer is giving us? On paper, the white spaces seem frightening, threatening to engulf the words. Without the usual signposts of stage directions or scene numbers, the lack of information becomes terrifying in some way – or is it like the space in a therapist’s room, where you encounter your own thinking and feeling? There is always darkness in Churchill’s work.

In the scenario entitled “Lab”, the most precise scientific rendering of the slicing of a chick’s brain in order to understand the pecking mechanism is particularly brutal for being conveyed in unemotional scientific jargon. One starts to wonder – what is information without love? Is it a madness, like the obsessive fan in “Fan” where the need to know everything, disguised as love, threatens in another way?

This mysterious, powerful play is like a disquisition on two of the most powerful poles in our lives: needing to know and needing to love. It is also the work of a great artist, a late work, so in some way it is a reflection on all that has preceded



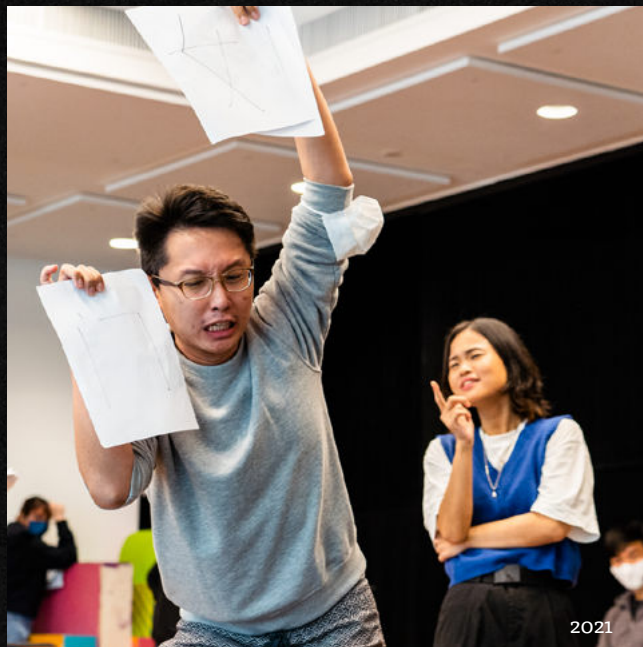
Adi Sri of Young & Wild in rehearsals for *Love and Information*

it. In “Climate”, a voice states: “I’m frightened for the children”, and later: “It’s whether they drown or starve or get killed in the fight for water.” Here is a writer who can convey with simplicity and directness such a terrible fear. Is this the information you want? Here it is. Can you live with it?

From her early historical, epic Brechtian plays to the more surreal later plays, Churchill has lit a blazing trail. Her career is unmatched in contemporary theatre and she stands with the greats in insisting, with brilliance, on her vision.

Excerpted from April de Angelis’ article on Caryl Churchill’s work and legacy, published in *The Guardian* on 7 September 2012.
Read the full piece [here!](#)

ABOUT YOUNG & WILD



2021



2019



2020

Young & Wild is a division of Wild Rice dedicated to the training and nurturing of future generations of actors in Singapore.

Currently under the leadership of award-winning theatre-maker/educator/performer Edith Podesta, this year-long, comprehensive acting programme aims to prepare promising young talents for careers in the creative industry.

By providing opportunities to learn from and work alongside career professionals from Singapore and all over the world, Young & Wild offers participants unique insights into how a professional theatre company creates work, connects with an audience, and engages with the community.

First established in 2008, close to a hundred promising talents have benefited from our Young & Wild training programme, many of whom have gone on to make substantive contributions to Singapore's performing arts scene.

Wild Rice is proud to invest in the future of Singapore theatre by educating and empowering the next generation of multi-faceted, socially aware and creatively versatile theatre practitioners.

OUR CAST



ADI SRI

Adi is an actor, dancer, writer and improviser. He aspires to effect positive change in society through his art, especially by giving a voice to the historically marginalised. Recently, you might have seen him starring in *Meri Bhai*, an SGIFF 2020/NYIFF 2021 film; doing improv with The Improv Company; acting in *Dastak*, the Hindi theatre festival; and performing Street Latin dances at festivals across Asia.



ELISHA X BESTON

Elisha attained her BFA in Musical Theatre in Chicago and continued her theatre career in San Francisco before returning to Singapore. Performance highlights include the North American tour of *Llama Llama Live!*. Elisha has spent the last year teaching music and developing a singing curriculum for MindChamps PreSchool. She is currently the Business Manager for Bay Area Children's Theatre.

www.elishaxbeston.com



RACHEL LINN BRABERRY

Rachel is an actor, singer and aspiring playwright. A versatile performer, she has experience in immersive theatre, sketch comedy, attraction-based shows, acting on camera and voice acting. Rachel is a firm believer that life is a never-ending adventure. In the future, she plans to further her training in voice, while teaching others how to better understand theirs.



THEO CHEN

Theo is a theatre-maker. He has performed with T:>Works, Wild Rice and The Substation, and was commissioned by The Theatre Practice under their Tuckshop Incubation programme. He founded Playwrights Commune, and currently runs their independent arts space and platform, incubating the work of 75 playwrights through a variety of programmes. In 2021, his first play, *Cyril & Michael*, premiered.



JASMINE CHRISTIAN

Jasmine is an aspiring musical theatre performer who always strives for personal growth and improvement. Armed with her experience in playing the keyboard and singing pop music, she is currently focusing on expanding her knowledge in vocal awareness and musical theatre. Inspired by storytelling, she hopes to apply the skills she has learnt in Young & Wild to her performances in the future.



JASMINE LIU

Young & Wild marks Jasmine “Jazzy” Liu’s return to the theatre after a long hiatus, during which she danced ballroom competitively, picked up Russian and earned her bachelor’s degree. She has worked as an actor and stage manager for Brown University and Couch Theatre, and is looking for opportunities to do more of both!



MOIRA LOH

Moira is a classically trained soprano. Initially trained at SOTA, she received the National Arts Council Scholarship in 2015 to pursue a double degree programme with the New England Conservatory and Tufts University, studying Classical Voice and Film respectively. She moved back to Singapore in 2020, and is now fully vaccinated and excited to get back into the theatre!



JORGAN ONG

Jorgan is an aspiring actor, dancer, singer and voice-over artist. His recent credits include acting in independent films such as *Confessions of a Hungry Poet* and *One Night in Solitude*. He previously worked with Access Path Productions on *alieNATION Project* and is excited to make his theatrical debut with *Wild Rice*.



KAELEN ONG

Kaelen holds a Diploma in Applied Drama and Psychology from Singapore Polytechnic and is a recipient of The Bryan Tan-HCAC Teaching and Acting Scholarship. She enjoys the study of psychology and philosophy, as well as working with different communities. She hopes to be able to use her art as a platform to educate, inform and tackle important issues that are otherwise not spoken of enough.



ANNA QIU

Anna is an aspiring actor. She has trained in physical theatre under Ang Gey Pin, as well as LASALLE College of the Arts, and she has really enjoyed her training with Young & Wild. Anna is passionate about storytelling and is keen to explore the concepts of individuality and belonging through theatre. Outside of acting, Anna is the Head of Partnerships for Shopee Singapore.



YAN SHAN SEET

Shan thoroughly enjoys collaborating with different artists, and is interested in post-colonial approaches to performance-making. She is one of the founding members of Bound Theatre and loves theatre's ability to explore the human condition. Most recently, she performed in *Long Story Short* (NSFTV, 2020) and co-created *Quartz* (Bound Theatre) as part of STRIKE! Digital Festival 2021.



DEVI SHREE

Devi ventured into the local theatre scene via comedic and dramatic improv, which has taken her to the stages of venues such as National Gallery Singapore. Driven to refine her craft, she enrolled in Lee Strasberg classes at Haque Centre of Acting & Creativity and now furthers her pursuits as an actor through Young & Wild. Prior to theatre, she found creative outlets in the advertising and marketing industries.



GREG SIM

Greg is currently pursuing a double degree in Musical Theatre and Arts Administration as he aspires to work professionally on and off the stage. He is passionate about telling stories that encourage different points of view and is mostly just looking for a good time.

www.gregorysim.com



MARCUS ERIC TAN

Marcus is a Singapore-based actor and educator. Credits include the recent restagings of *Off Centre* and *Love Calls*. He was also involved in *Four Horse Road* (The Theatre Practice) and *The Old Woman and The Ox* (The Second Breakfast Company). As a Young & Wild graduand, he is excited to break new ground in his multi-faceted role in *Love and Information*.



SHERILYN TAN

Sherilyn graduated from NAFA in Theatre Studies (Performing). Credits include *Mixed* (TheatreWorks), *Under The Dragon Moon* and *People* (I Theatre), *Romeo & Juliet* (Toy Factory), *Mishima: Women In Love* (World-In-Theatre) and *Orpheus Unplugged/ Fingerton* (Short and Sweet Festival in Sydney, Australia, 2006). Sherilyn was part of I Theatre's Creative Edge ensemble and the 2015 ASSITEJ Next Generation residency programme in Tokyo.



Clockwise L-R:
Jorgan Ong, Elisha X Beston, Yan Shan Seet & Greg Sim



Clockwise L-R:
Kaelen Ong, Adi Sri, Anna Qiu & Moira Loh



L-R:
Marcus Eric Tan, Rachel Linn Braberry, Devi Shree & Jasmine Liu



L-R:
Sherilyn Tan, Theo Chen & Jasmine Christian

CREATIVE TEAM



CARYL CHURCHILL

Playwright

Caryl is one of Britain's most influential and significant contemporary dramatists. The author of more than 30 plays, she has consistently challenged traditional methods of dramatic storytelling in her work. To this day, she continues to push boundaries in writing plays that defy easy interpretations, while exploring socio-political themes ranging from feminist issues and sexual politics to the abuses of power. In 2008, the Royal Court Theatre in London staged a retrospective season of her work in honour of her 70th birthday.



EDITH PODESTA

Director

An award-winning theatre-maker, choreographer and actor, Edith studied Acting and Movement Studies at Australia's National Institute of Dramatic Arts, and holds a Master of Fine Arts from LASALLE College of the Arts. She wrote, directed and starred in *BITCH: The Origin of the Female Species* (M1 Fringe Festival) and *Leda and the Rage* (The Esplanade), which were both named Production of the Year at the Straits Times Life! Theatre Awards. Edith is currently Associate Artistic Director of Young & Wild, a division of Wild Rice. For eight years, she served as Programme Leader of the B.A. (Hons) Acting course at LASALLE.



STEVE KWEK

Lighting Designer

stev.e is a Singapore-based technical creative designer. Part of ARTEFACTORY, stev.e takes on works ranging from lighting and technical design for art installations and theatrical performances, to finding creative technical solutions for multimedia art installations. Recent works include *The Mysterious Lai Teck* (Ho Tzu Nyen, Melbourne, AsiaTOPA), *Festival of Women N.O.W.* (T:>Works, 2020), *Idomeneo Refracted* (The Opera People), *Candide* (Young & Wild), *Escape Velocity V* (Zai Teng, Singapore Art Week) and *CosmicWander: Expedition* (Choy Ka Fai, Singapore Art Week).



MERVIN WONG

Composer & Sound Designer

Under the alias of electronic producer PLANESWALKER, Mervin's compositions weave energetic tapestries, creating sonic experiences that serve as powerful catalysts for metamorphosis. Mervin's distinct aural signature is characterised by his years of training as a classical violist. PLANESWALKER's recent work includes a digitally released EP titled *Entity* and an immersive full-length show that was part of the 2020 Singapore Festival of Arts' Sound Social Series.



MIRABEL NEO

Stage Manager

Mirabel is a production and stage manager based in Singapore. She is well-versed in different forms of art, such as drama, musical theatre, classical opera and theatre for the young, as well as commercial events. In recent years, she has travelled internationally and production-managed for *The Mysterious Lai Teck* (2018-2020). She was also the co-producer for *Imaginique*, the 2019 incarnation of the Singapore Children's Festival.

CREDITS

CAST

Adi Sri
Elisha X Beston
Rachel Linn Braberry
Theo Chen
Jasmine Christian
Jasmine Liu
Moirra Loh
Jorgan Ong
Kaelen Ong
Anna Qiu
Yan Shan Seet
Devi Shree
Greg Sim
Marcus Eric Tan
Sherilyn Tan

CREATIVE TEAM

Playwright **Caryl Churchill**
Director **Edith Podesta**
Lighting Designer **Steve Kwek**
Composer & Sound Designer **Mervin Wong**

PRODUCTION TEAM

Producer **Koh Bee Bee**
Production Manager **Melissa Teoh**
Technical Manager **David Sagaya**
Production Assistants **Angela Ee & Victoria Anna Wong**
Stage Manager **Mirabel Neo**
Assistant Stage Managers **Benjamin Lye & Nadia Noordin**
Technicians **Ahmad Hafriz Bin Berkath,**
Muhammad Azhar Bin Azman & Sim Khet Kheng
Wardrobe Manager **Theresa Chan**
Followspot Operator **Low Xingna**
Dresser **Tan Yan Yu**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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THANK YOU!

Crispian Chan / Jem Toh / Ruey Loon / SISTIC.COM Pte Ltd / The Artists Inc
Tuckys Photography / Wild Rice Angels / Wild Rice Ushers

ABOUT WILD RICE

Wild Rice was founded in 2000 by Ivan Heng, an internationally acclaimed and award-winning theatre practitioner, and is recognised today as one of Singapore's leading professional theatre companies.

Its mission is to provide an open forum for the shared experience of theatre: celebrating our diversity; reflecting on the problems and possibilities of our times; and presenting productions that inspire, challenge and entertain.

A commitment to the highest standards informs every aspect of Wild Rice's creative work, which is first and foremost a celebration of Singapore's theatrical talent. By producing and touring productions that are distinctively local in flavour and yet universal in vision and concerns, the company creates memorable experiences for audiences in Singapore and across the world.

The company's exciting and varied programming for the main stage includes:

- + New and original works
- + New productions of the Singapore repertoire
- + New interpretations of world classics

The company's mission to build a theatre culture also extends to the wider community through the following divisions:

- + Wild Rice Academy and First Stage, which offer drama and training programmes to nurture young talents from the ages of 5 to 12
- + Singapore Youth Theatre, which develops and empowers young people aged 13 to 17 through theatre
- + Young & Wild, which identifies and develops Singapore's young theatre professionals from the ages of 18 to 30

Wild Rice is committed to touring its shows internationally to raise the profile of Singapore theatre, to create an international awareness of its unique productions, and to engage its artists and collaborators in creative dialogues with the international arts community. Its distinctively Singaporean productions have won great acclaim in major international arts festivals in Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Macau, Malaysia, New Zealand and Russia.

Wild Rice @ Funan is the company's new home in the heart of Singapore's civic and cultural district. This groundbreaking performing arts complex promises to be an iconic destination theatre for Singapore, one dedicated to creating and presenting the best of Singapore theatre, while nurturing the artists and audiences of tomorrow.

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Founding Artistic Director

TONY TRICKETT
Executive Director

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GLEN GOEI
Co-Artistic Director

ALFIAN SA'AT
Resident Playwright / Co-Artistic Director,
Singapore Theatre Festival

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Associate Artistic Director,
Youth & Education

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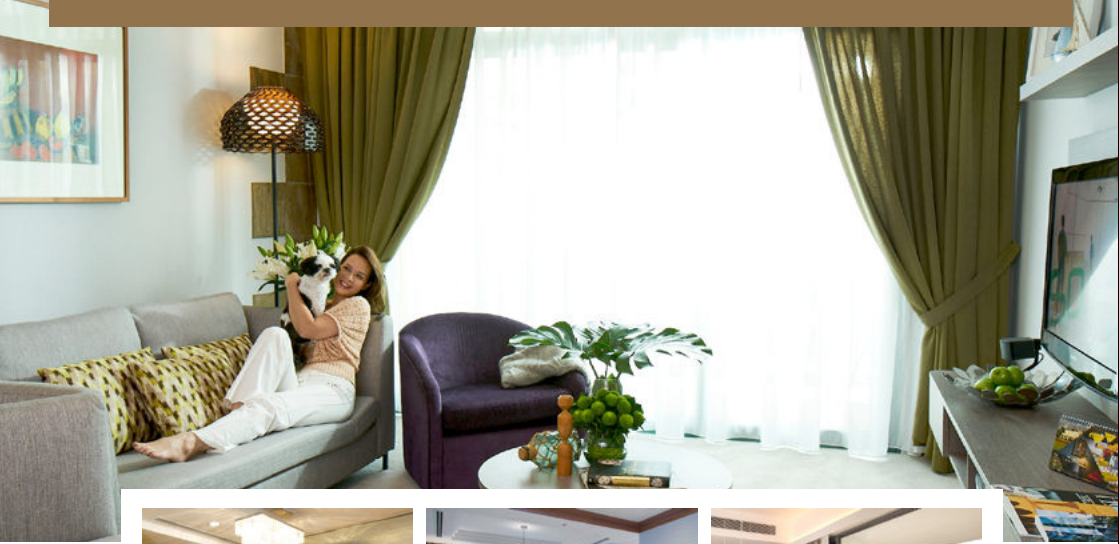
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A group of four people, two men and two women, are walking along a paved path in a park-like setting. The man on the far left is wearing a blue polo shirt and white shorts. The man next to him is wearing a yellow and black patterned shirt over a white tank top and khaki pants. The woman next to him is wearing a yellow dress. The woman on the far right is wearing a green shirt, a plaid jacket, and blue jeans. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. A red stroller is being pushed by the man in the patterned shirt. In the background, there is a red bench, green grass, and a multi-story building with a red and white facade.

WILD
RICE

STRAIGHT ACTING

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY **THOMAS LIM**

14 — 24 OCT 2021

A vibrant, pink-themed promotional poster for the play 'FAGHAG'. The central figure is actress Pam Oei, dressed in a rainbow-colored, high-collared, sleeveless garment and a gold crown. She is wearing long, shiny pink gloves and has a playful, slightly pouting expression. The background is a bright pink with various floating elements: several round, pink, smiling balloons with small arms and legs; several blue, winged, unicorn-like creatures with rainbow manes; and green, cone-shaped objects. The overall aesthetic is whimsical and celebratory.

WILD
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FAGHAG

WRITTEN & PERFORMED BY **PAM OEI**

DIRECTED BY **IVAN HENG**

MUSIC DIRECTION BY **JULIAN WONG**

4 — 14 NOV 2021



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