

## **ROOTED IN THE EPHEMERAL SPEAK (R.I.T.E.S.)**

We would like to reiterate that the event held on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2013 is the last in the series under the platform of R.I.T.E.S (Rooted In The Ephemeral Speak). Since its beginning in August 2009, R.I.T.E.S (Rooted In The Ephemeral Speak) has been a regular performance and sound art event that provided an open platform for artists to showcase their works. To date, RITES presented about 100 artists including both local and foreign. At the same time, we are also glad to see a growth of audiences that not only in terms of numbers but also a returning and maturing one that are becoming more familiar and supportive towards the language and practice of performance art. Since the late 1980's when performance art was taken up as a manifestation of art practice by the pioneering works of Tang Da Wu, S. Chandrasekaran, Amanda Heng, Vincent Leow as individuals or with various others in collective groups. After much serious consideration, we decided this is a good time to end the project on a high note and move on to seek new directions.

## **INDEPENDENT ARCHIVE and RESOURCE CENTRE (I.A.R.C.)**

The new project initiated as **Independent Archive and Resource Centre (I.A.R.C.)** would like to offer the continuation of an artists directed project in the service of providing that which is lacking in contemporary society and that we deemed are necessary and hence, have motivated our input to the task of filling in the jarring vacuum. There are libraries and institutions of learning indeed laudably respectable ones of much professional repute that maintained standards of undisputed qualities. In our initial efforts of approximately one year the IARC admittedly is still a clumsy wobbly one and though we do now try to set the stage for a more steady second year of focus and hopefully adjusted our management skills.

We apologize to differ from the bureaucratic, business and executive management and allow decision making to be somewhat anarchic but responsible, individually yet mutually agreeable directions of decision making guided but not dictated by the experienced and the elder advisory. We allow mistakes when decisions that sometimes take higher risks they hence on course will need to bear the occasional human error. The open relationship of anarchic expresses responsibility that often mistakenly seen as chaotic and anti-social, rebellious and violent while what we are saying is that decisions must be made, and the choice in taking one road as opposed to another is equally one individual taking time to choose.

It may not be apparent when we work under more autocratic structures. The management technocrats will probably advise us for a Standard Operating Procedures (S.O.P.) manual to be written and will advise that we run it like a church with the S.O.P. our bible. If not to go to war with commanding officers reading the S.O.P. like Alexandra's or Napoleon's conquer the world battle plans. Indeed some well run art initiatives do manifest the same power driven concerns that do make dreams come true. However it is not that we wish to make a pitch for failure in retaliation to the inherent success driven social norms nor to fulfil our beloved Kuo PK's well quoted refrain of "grand failures". We are manifesting a conscious will towards anarchy as a possible managerial proposition of experimentation that like all attempts may possibly succeed as well as fail.

As artists in our own right there is much to be at stake that may lead to misunderstanding our motivations as especially selfish ones for those in it not in the spirit of art as a quest for truth, beauty and humanity but that of political power and capital gains. We lay our cards down to make clear of our intentions. Our intentions are real as far as dreamers are allowed to manifest them for ours is a realistic approach though we are guided by high ideals. It is like how stars in constellations of precise locations in the night skies had given navigational directions much longer before than the books of history were written.

## **INDEPENDENT**

The one thing we are most aware of is that there is more and more centralization of our cultural directions in a massive way that we negotiate with hope they will not stamp out the individual and we act in defence of the freedom and rights of the individuals. We will assert an independent direction that is autonomous in decision making whilst this not necessarily means an abstention from accepting the financial assistance of the state. The autonomy of the archive and research that we as individuals decidedly become subjected to be initiating this institution will be contained in the executive committee we shall aspire to elect so as to transfer the official registration of our organization into that of a non-profit charity organization that shall participate in the activation of maintaining an archive, documentation and research of time based ephemeral forms of manifestation in art performances, processes and production, of the neighbourhood as well as region first and consequently in concentric growth of priority to gradually include that of the international art making world and network.

## **ARCHIVE & RESEARCH**

As mentioned earlier it is inevitable that as active artists our decision to enter into working for the establishment of such an enterprise has various unintended implications and it is most necessary to clarify them before we embark on the nitty gritty of it to avoid unnecessary hiccups in the next twenty years for a start.

Ephemerality of course has its advantages that we in the desire to maintain archival and documentation in fact has very little to do with that of self-preservation against the fear of death or living in a forgetful ahistorical community with tendencies of dementia. There has been an accumulation of documentation that did not see any end result and as one finds the tendencies of farcical repetition of historical performances done in ignorance and lacking any rigour for research and discourse after some decades of mega blockbuster biennales that one wonders where all this will lead to if we do not take heed to activate our concerns into manifestations of the archive and to follow on with the calls for research and analysis.

An archive will similarly only be a thing of the past if it were a mere collection, containing records, documents in whatever media, be it printed texts, software media, video or photographic samples if we do not use them, by reading, analysing, interpreting, interrogating and intentionally scrutinize them in research. As described in the succinctly hardcored dissertation, "Archive Fever" by Jacques Derrida, we shall not leave the archive in peace and rest but interrogate it with our interventions of research if not re-interpret them by way of re-enactments.

This is in fact a development towards appreciating the production of art making be it ephemeral or not on a higher or deeper level of evaluation. Reviewing them with comparative considerations, reflections and in fact enjoying them by study, investigation and discussion.

## **CENTRE**

As Singapore becomes more urbanised and costs of living increases incessantly there is a lack of focal point in our city for artists to gather, meet, hang out and share our resources and ideas. We do not want to replace other established institutions but simply provide a service to welcome and appreciate artists openly and spend time together in a meaningful way. We shall continue to organize events and platforms in more focused directions as opposed to the general platforms. This in a way becomes a suggested point of departure for research. At the same time, in similar commitment to the artists we invite and present, ours is an intention of service to allow artists creative spaces, freedom from restrictive obstacles as much as our negotiations may allow.

We hereby sincerely thank everyone who had continuously showered us with love and support for the past 4 years, especially all those who have presented and helped in providing platforms for the presentations in our programmes.

We hope you will continue to support us in future.

Thank you.

**INDEPENDENT ARCHIVE AND RESOURCE CENTRE**

[www.independentarchive.sg](http://www.independentarchive.sg)