

Press Release 新闻稿

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For Immediate Release

Ding Yi Music Company Unveils Final Edition of Disappearing Series *A Moving Tribute to Singapore's Endangered Crafts and Artisans*

Singapore, 25 April 2025 – In the final chapter of Ding Yi Music Company's acclaimed *Disappearing...* series, audiences are invited on a stirring journey into Singapore's intangible cultural heritage—where the fading echoes of traditional trades are revived through the expressive language of Chinese chamber music.

Titled *Disappearing...Series: The Last Episode*, this immersive performance honours the legacy of three fast-vanishing crafts from Singapore's diverse cultures: lion dance head-making, rattan weaving, and Malay songkok crafting. These time-honoured practices, rich with cultural memory and passed down through generations, find new life in a concert experience that fuses live music, storytelling, and visual artistry.



Helmed by Creative Director and Conductor Wong De Li, Dedric, whose vision bridges music and tradition, this multimedia concert is directed by theatre practitioner Jeremiah Choy and shaped by the deep cultural insights of Dr. Jesvin Yeo, who serves as the Research Advisor. The musical landscape is crafted by composers Cultural Medallion recipient Eric James Watson, Tan Yu Ting, and De Silva Alicia Joyce with entirely new compositions, while visual storytelling is led by Video Director Sandra Sek.

Her exclusive documentary film—screened only during the concert—offers an intimate, cinematic window into the lives and hands of the artisans. Through her lens, each vanishing craft is beautifully

and meaningfully encapsulated, allowing audiences to witness not only the final product, but the painstaking journey behind it.

At the heart of this programme are the artisans themselves: **Henry Ng** (lion dance head-making), **Chen Foon Kee** (rattan weaving) and **Hj Abdul Wahab Bin Abdullah** (Malay songkok crafting). They are widely regarded as the last torchbearers of their trades. As their crafts grow increasingly rare, their hands continue to shape not only materials, but the memory of tradition itself.



In the hands of these artisans, tradition quietly lives on – honouring the final torchbearers of Singapore’s vanishing trades

Through intricate compositions and live multimedia, audiences will witness the sacred symbolism behind lion head-making, the meditative precision of rattan weaving, and the pride imbued in the making of a songkok. More than just trades, these are personal legacies—each thread and stroke a reflection of community identity and artisan soul.

“The *Disappearing...* series has been Ding Yi’s heartfelt response to the quiet fading of Singapore’s intangible heritage,” said Wong De Li, Dedric, Creative Director and Conductor. “From dialect nursery rhymes to traditional handicrafts of Teochew embroidery and giant joss stick-making, this flagship

series has evolved to honour what's slipping away. Working with these artisans and hearing their stories has been incredibly inspiring — their creativity and resilience shaped the way we approached the music. This final chapter marks both a celebration and a farewell—where Chinese chamber music meets cultural memory, and hopefully, inspires audiences to keep these fading legacies alive.”

As Ding Yi Music Company closes this heartfelt series, the concert becomes not just a finale, but a call to remembrance—an artistic tribute to the quiet heroes who carry Singapore’s cultural memory in their hands. In a rapidly modernising society, *Disappearing... The Last Episode* underscores the urgency of cultural preservation, and the powerful role that music and storytelling play in keeping these fading trades—and the legacies they embody—alive for future generations.

This production is part of the *Disappearing...* series and part of Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre’s (SCCC) *Cultural Extravaganza* 2025. The partnership between Ding Yi Music Company and SCCC marks the collaboration to develop programmes that promote local Chinese arts and culture, through Chinese chamber music. The *Disappearing...* series shines the spotlight and pays homage to the fading heritage and vanishing trades of our local Chinese culture. Please visit <https://ce.singaporeccc.org.sg/> for more information.

Disappearing...Series: The Last Episode will be held on 6 June 2025 (Friday), 7.30pm and 7 June 2025 (Saturday), 3pm at SCCC Auditorium, Level 9. Tickets are available for public sales at \$35 (excluding booking fees) on SISTIC [here](#). SAFRA, HomeTeamNS and merewards members enjoy a 20% discount. Terms and conditions apply.

Annexes

- A. *Disappearing...*Series: The Last Episode creative team
- B. Concert Poster Artwork
- C. Featured Artists' Biographies
- D. Ding Yi Music Company Information and Materials

About Ding Yi Music Company

Established in 2007, Ding Yi Music Company is Singapore's most prodigious Chinese chamber music ensemble and a coterie of accomplished Chinese instrumentalists that trademark Singapore Chinese chamber music in the traditional and contemporary field. The ensemble has captivated audiences with its distinctive approach to music-making and dedication to showcase a vast repertoire that ranges from traditional Chinese music to contemporary interpretations and cross-genre works. For more information, please visit www.dingyimusic.com.

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***Disappearing...Series: The Last Episode* creative team**

Wong De Li, Dedric
Creative Director/Conductor

Jeremiah Choy
Director

Dr. Jesvin Yeo
Research Advisor

Eric James Watson
Composer

Tan Yu Ting
Composer

De Silva Alicia Joyce
Composer

Sandra Sek
Video Director / Set Designer

Henry Ng
Artisan (Lion Dance Head-Making)

Hj Abdul Wahab bin Haji Abdullah
Artisan (Malay Songkok Crafting)

Chen Foo Kee
Artisan (Rattan Weaving)

Concert Poster Artwork






Please download the high-resolution version [here](#).



Featured Artists' Biographies


High-Res Photo Link:


<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/47ijq2xnp4l32gkpqr2kn/AAuyFALaUX6lluuO0NpGea8?rlkey=9npcpd9rspyzojiuuu6r8o3d&st=jk4k27k8&dl=0>

Image	Write up
	<p>Wong De Li, Dedric, Creative Director / Conductor</p> <p>Wong De Li, Dedric is the Resident Conductor of Ding Yi Music Company and Music Director of the Asian Cultural Symphony Orchestra and Nanyang Collective. A recipient of the National Arts Council Arts Scholarship in 2014, he was featured in Straits Times Scholars' Choice in 2016 and served as a panelist for Singapore's Youth Action Plan in 2019.</p> <p>Wong holds a Master's in Orchestral Conducting from the China Conservatory of Music, where he studied under Professor Yang You Qing and Maestro Tsung Yeh. He graduated from the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts in 2007, majoring in Suona Performance, with conducting mentorship from Dr. Tay Teow Kiat.</p> <p>He has guest conducted various ensembles, including the Singapore Chinese Orchestra, China Sze Chuan Tian Zi Ensemble, and Suzhou Symphony Orchestra, and has represented Singapore at international arts festivals in countries like China, the UK, and Australia. He currently holds key roles with the Singapore Chinese Music Federation, Suona and Guan Society of Singapore, and School of the Arts Chinese Chamber Ensemble.</p>
	<p>Jeremiah Choy, Director</p> <p>With over 30 years of experience in Singapore's arts scene and with international experience that ranges from Asia to South Africa and Europe, Jeremiah Choy is a Creative Director, Producer and Curator. He has directed and produced theatre shows, concerts, arts festivals, Singapore and International events such as Singapore Day (Sydney, Shanghai, San Francisco), Spotlight Singapore (Cape Town, Bratislava and Prague, and Mexico City), ChildAid and Sing50.</p> <p>For some of the recent shows, he directed Singapore Chinese Orchestra's <i>Day Break</i> (2022), <i>Unforgotten, the Musical</i> (2023) SEA of Stories (2024) and <i>Nanyang Collective – Love</i> (2024).</p> <p>Last year, he gave workshops at Tiffany & Co (Singapore and Bangkok). He was creative consultant for Milipol Singapore, ICA Workplan Seminar, and The Legacy of Giving (a charity dinner). He</p>

	<p>wrote the script for SIBOS Opening (Beijing). He was also the creative consultant for ChildAid 2024 The Dream Emporium.</p> <p>This year, he is working on Heart of Healthcare (MOHH), DSTA 25th Anniversary, ATxSG, ICA Workplan Seminar and SIBOS (Frankfurt). He is also working on several music productions: Disappearing... Series – the Last Episode for Ding Yi Music Company, and The Last Blue Forest for Singhanagara Orchestra and Choir. He is also the Creative Director for Sing60, as part of the SG60 celebrations.</p> <p>He is now teaching at Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music and is part of NAC's Resource Panel. He is also an advocate for Freelancers in the Creative Industry, having done numerous talks and mentorship programmes. He was commissioned by NAC to do a series of webisodes <i>Unboxing the Arts</i> for freelancers.</p> <p>Jeremiah was awarded the inaugural Outstanding Kent Ridge Hall Alumni award in 2010. He was also recognised by the Law Society's Pro Bono Service for his contributions to Legal Awareness in 2019. He won the Best Supporting Actor Award at Life! Theatre Award 2019 for his role in <i>Leda and The Rage</i> (which also won the Best Production Award).</p>
	<p>Dr. Jesvin Yeo, Research Advisor</p> <p>Dr. Jesvin Yeo is a distinguished Professor of Visual Communication Design at the School of Art, Design and Media at Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in Singapore. Her research focuses on applied design, particularly addressing societal, cultural heritage, and educational challenges. Passionate about preserving cultural heritage, Dr. Yeo actively collaborates with traditional craftsmen and local communities, exploring century-old architecture and developing innovative design solutions that connect the past with the present.</p> <p>Her culturally-related works have been widely recognised and exhibited at prestigious international venues, including the Basel School of Design, Museum for Communication Berlin, Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Taipei Design Museum, The London Design Festival, and the Venice Art Biennale. Dr. Yeo has garnered over 80 international accolades for her design work, including the Red Dot Award (Communication Design), GOOD DESIGN™ Award, Core77 Design Awards, AIGA 50 Books, and the iF Communication Design Award. She is currently ranked No. 10 among the best designers in Singapore on the World Design Rankings and holds the No. 1 spot as a visual communication designer.</p>

	<p>An accomplished author, she has published eight award-winning books, including <i>Forgotten Heritage: Uncovering Singapore's Traditional Chinese Puppets</i>, <i>A Collection of Singapore's Fading Traditional Crafts and Trades</i>, <i>Vanishing Crafts</i>, and <i>Architectural Decoration: Negotiating Symbols Across Time and Place</i>.</p> <p>Beyond her academic and creative pursuits, Dr. Yeo holds several influential leadership roles. She currently serves as Deputy Associate Provost (Strategy) at NTU, Director on the Board of the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, and Chair of its Academic Quality Assurance Committee. She is also President of the Singapore Society of Asian Studies and a Scientific Board Member for the Applied Human Factors and Ergonomics conference series in the USA.</p>
	<p>Sandra Sek, Video Director / Set Designer</p> <p>Sandra Sek is a Singapore-based filmmaker and visual storyteller who graduated in 2023 from Nanyang Technological University's School of Art, Design and Media (ADM), where she majored in Film. Since then, she has been actively involved in the local film industry, with a focus on the art department.</p> <p>Her work spans set design, prop making, and visual world-building — contributing to short films, commercial projects, and editorial shoots. With a hands-on approach and an intuitive eye for aesthetics, Sandra creates immersive environments that elevate storytelling. Her process blends precision with playfulness.</p> <p>Beyond production design, Sandra is closely connected to Singapore's local music scene. A casual musician herself, she's drawn to the expressive freedom of music videos — where sound, image, and feeling meet. She has directed several videos for local artists, with 《都说不再玩火》 by Goose as her most recent piece.</p> <p>Whether she's shaping a set or shaping a vision, Sandra brings intention, curiosity, and a quiet spark to everything she does.</p>
	<p>Henry Ng Artisan (Lion Dance Head-Making)</p> <p>Henry is a traditional lion head artisan in Singapore, deeply respected for his unwavering dedication to an age-old craft that is slowly fading in the face of modern challenges. Likely the last artisan of his kind in the country, Henry's journey began at the age of 13 when he first took up lion dancing. His passion for the cultural art form eventually led him to pursue lion head crafting full-time in 1995. Despite the odds, Henry has continued to preserve the integrity of the tradition, pouring his skills and heart into every piece he creates.</p>

	<p>Henry's crafting process is meticulous and steeped in tradition. He prioritises making lion heads that are lightweight and agile, suitable for dynamic performances. The skeleton of each lion head is constructed with thin bamboo strips, which are then covered in multiple layers of papier-mâché to form the mask. Each piece is a unique work of art, often customised to suit specific customer requests. Remarkably, Henry's lion heads are so distinct in their craftsmanship and style that they are instantly recognisable to those who have used them before—each bearing his unmistakable signature touch. From start to finish, creating a single lion head takes Henry about five to six days—a testament to the labour-intensive nature of this heritage craft.</p> <p>The cultural significance of the lion dance spans over 1,500 years. Traditionally performed at celebrations and auspicious events, it symbolises prosperity, good fortune, and protection against evil spirits. Henry often reflects on the decline of traditional crafts, lamenting the growing dominance of cheaper, mass-produced imports from China. In addition to lion heads, he also creates “Big Headed Dolls” using similar techniques, further showcasing his dedication to preserving a rich and vibrant cultural legacy.</p>
	<p>Hj Abdul Wahab bin Haji Abdullah Artisan (Malay Songkok Crafting)</p> <p>Hj Abdul Wahab is the last remaining songkok maker in Singapore, upholding a proud family tradition that has endured the test of time. Taught by his father, who transitioned from a trishaw rider to a songkok maker in the 1970s, Hj Abdul Wahab has dedicated his life to preserving this deeply rooted cultural craft. Over the years, his family business has moved through several locations due to rising rental costs and is now based in Bedok North, where he continues his meticulous work quietly.</p> <p>Despite his dedication, Hj Abdul Wahab faces growing challenges in a changing retail landscape. The rising popularity of off-the-shelf songkoks and the convenience of online shopping have significantly affected the demand for handcrafted pieces. Fewer artisans remain in the trade, and high rental costs have further strained the viability of traditional craftsmanship. Although he continues to receive a steady stream of orders, he has had to stop accepting new ones during the Hari Raya period due to the overwhelming volume and limited capacity.</p>

	<p>What keeps Hj Abdul Wahab going is the unwavering loyalty of his customers. Many are long-time patrons, returning generation after generation for the same quality and care that his family has provided for decades. His reputation has even reached beyond Singapore's shores, with orders coming in from various countries—a testament to the enduring value of handmade songkoks. For these customers, it's not just about a headpiece, it's about tradition, craftsmanship, and a personal touch that mass production can never replicate!</p>
	<p>Chen Foo Kee Artisan (Rattan Weaving)</p> <p>Chen Foo Kee is a renowned rattan craftsman in Singapore, celebrated for his exceptional skill and dedication to a heritage craft that has been passed down through generations. His journey in the world of rattan began at the tender age of 12, when he made his first chair. After the passing of his father, Chen stepped into the family business at just 19, taking on responsibilities well beyond his years. Balancing schoolwork with the demands of the shop, he often took orders from ship crews, honing his craft while ensuring the business stayed afloat.</p> <p>His craftsmanship is guided not by rulers or blueprints but by instinct and decades of experience. He creates each piece of furniture entirely by hand, relying on his trained eye and steady hands. The result is rattan furniture that is not only lightweight and durable but also perfectly suited for Singapore's tropical climate. Despite the growing challenges, Chen remains committed to preserving this time-honoured craft, recognising its cultural and historical importance.</p> <p>The rattan industry, however, faces significant challenges. Consumer preferences have shifted toward modern, mass-produced furniture, leading to a decline in demand for handcrafted pieces. Soaring rental costs and difficulties in sourcing quality raw materials further threaten the sustainability of Uncle Chen's business. Perhaps most disheartening is the lack of interest among younger generations, who are often unwilling to engage in the labour-intensive art of hand-weaving rattan.</p> <p>Yet, amid these challenges, Chen holds onto hope. He dreams that his son will one day continue the family legacy, keeping the tradition for future generations. For him, rattan craftsmanship is more than just a trade. It is a living expression of Singaporean culture and heritage, deserving of respect and preservation!</p>

Ding Yi Music Company Information and Materials

Ding Yi Music Company Information – Download link for media use:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/zbxyi14itxrttsrp5kwb5/h?rlkey=mmtc9zoeizwi4gx140501o3bi&dl=0>