

**SYNOPSIS**

The 8th ASEAN Para Games Opening and Closing Ceremonies, *Celebrate the Extraordinary*, are exuberant celebrations of the mental and physical strengths of people of all abilities. Philip Tan is the Ceremonies' Creative Director, Music Director and Composer. The Opening Ceremony, held at the Singapore Indoor Stadium, consists of 5 musical movements. The Closing Ceremony, held at Marina Bay Sands, takes place over a lavish 3-course banquet.

HIGH RESOLUTION IMAGES

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/gaymaqvrhxxbw0b/AABecu7zoUkJNXuui2wrbb97a?dl=0>

FOR MORE ENQUIRIES

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5 STARS FROM THE 5 MOVEMENTS OF THE OPENING CEREMONY

I. LUO MANG, 15, STRETCHES THE BOUNDARIES

I like to dance. I'm very happy to be able to dance for the 8th ASEAN Para Games.
 – Lou Mang, 15, Eden School.



Since young, Luo Mang's mother has cultivated her interests in dancing and music. With strong parental support, dedicated attention from her teachers, as well as her own devotion and diligence the dance virtuoso is a sheer natural on the stage.

As someone with moderate autism, Luo Mang may face challenges in the area of social communication. This often means that she may have difficulty expressing her needs such as when she is tired or in pain. She may not always grasp social rules.

At the same time, autism may also afford one hyperattention to activities that one cares about, and allows one to really excel in those areas. While still only 15, Luo Mang is already a stage veteran. She has won the Talent Award and the Best Visual Award in the Hong Kong Autistic Talent Gala Competition 2014. If that's not already impressive, Luo Mang also plays the piano and has achieved Grade 6 certification. It is no wonder that Luo Mang was selected to open the 8th ASEAN Para Games Opening Ceremony with a solo dance in the first movement, *Stretching the Boundaries*.

About *Stretching the Boundaries*

Leave your comfort zone. Disobey the naysayers. Throw away your security blanket. Stretch your physical and mental boundaries. Embrace challenges. Re-invent. Break free. Whether you're an athlete or actor, accountant or astronaut, aged 8 or 80, new frontiers and exhilarating expeditions await you.

A mind-blowing video poem *Because I Am A Champion* by Bertrand Lee opens the Ceremony with a proud, defiant bang. A solo dance by 15-year-old Luo Mang (Eden School) follows on, exhibiting the same fighting spirit. Next, Kleopatra Korai's breathtaking hand-drawn animation introduces us to the 15 sports to be played at this ASEAN Para Games, which leads us to the National Anthem brought to you by choirs Chao Yang, Grace Orchard and other Special Education Schools. Then comes the grand entrance of the athletes from 11 nations, set within a stunning film installation by Yan Tuck Hong. Our 1500 sporting heroes and heroines know just what it means to persevere ceaselessly, against architectural and cultural barriers, against limitations, and to begin again and again after each and every failure, and victory.



II. A WORLD OF CREATIVE POSSIBILITIES FOR PHILIP TAN

People with disabilities have been central to the creative process of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies. They have been the beating heart which has given life and spirit to this remarkable show. Every single item has been anchored, inspired and/or created by an athlete, performer or Creative Team member with disability. These are the people who help us to grasp, expand and spread the true meaning of the ASEAN Para Games. We say 'Celebrate the Extraordinary'! The finest legacy would be a renewed respect for people of all abilities. So join us in a jubilant celebration of, by and for people from all walks of life. What a perfect image to inspire us all to strive towards a more inclusive community, society, country, region and world that we dream for!

— Philip Tan, Creative Director, Music Director and Composer of the 8th ASEAN Para Games Opening and Closing Ceremonies.

The second movement of the Opening Ceremony of the 8th ASEAN Para Games is entitled *A World of Creative Possibilities*. It is also an apt description of the world that Philip Tan inhabits and creates. Philip Tan is the Creative Director, Music Director and Composer of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies. The 42 year-old, who has a 20-year international portfolio, is also a Composer, Surround Sound Designer, Visual and Performing Arts Consultant, as well as a well-respected Educator and Arts Community Leader. Since 1998, Tan has worked with cultural workers, individuals and groups with disability. He has been running programmes for welfare organizations which include VSA, AWWA, Boys Home, Grace Haven, Metta school, Jurong Garden special school, Chao Yang Special school, Andrew and Grace Home. He has also helped to put up performances involving people with disabilities for NKF, THK, Community Chest Fundraising with Media Corp production since 2004.



Recent high-profile multidisciplinary events he led include the Opening of the Sports Hub 2015, Opening of the Gardens by the Bay 2012, 20th World Orchid Conference 2011, 27th SEA Games Closing Ceremony 2013, Garden Rhapsody Light and Sound show 2012-2013. Philip's work has been praised as 'Gesamtkunstwerk' - a total work of art (Dr K.K. Seet 2012) and 'one of the most innovative performances I've ever seen' (Minister Heng Swee Keat). A large-scale commission was described to have 'set a new benchmark that is hard to match' (Ambassador Robert Chua 2013), while another is 'spectacular' as 'a world class event that bears resemblance to what China did for the Olympics' (Dr. John Elliott, 2011). On top of that, Tan has also been described as 'one of the best composers in Southeast Asia' (Sarajevo reviewer). Tan's zest for exploration of new formats, technologies, ideas and multi-media story-telling have been showcased in more than 30 countries worldwide. Philip was awarded the Young Artist Award in 2007 for his visionary approach, enthusiasm and sincerity which has also inspired people from all sectors of the community. Tan holds a Master of Arts from Kingston University, UK, 2001. www.philbeat.com

About *A World of Creative Possibilities*

A young Opera singer and a group of dancers who are on their feet, on wheelchairs as well as off their feet, up in the air. Choreographed by Peter Gn, these dancers form a magical carousel. With each of the ribbon symbolising each of the ten ASEAN countries, we celebrate our unity, friendship and love for superb sporting competition. Spectacular video projections, generated from artworks made by students from the Association for People with Special Needs and other schools, illuminate the Stadium.

III. THE CREATIVE TEAM SHOOTS FOR THE BEST

Shooting For the Best is the 3rd movement of the Opening Ceremony. It also sums up the attitude of the Creative Team that Creative Director, Philip Tan, has assembled to create the Opening and Closing Ceremonies. Our collaborators are of mixed abilities, and yield from Singapore, South East Asia and as far as UK, Greece, Sweden and New York. Amongst the 75-member team are emerging talents as well as established cultural workers. Let's meet a few of them.

Pua Jin Wen, Movement Director



'I am extremely humbled to have been given this opportunity to be a part of the Creative Team, to explore and showcase the strong human spirit of the Games. This show proves that there are truly no limits within the sports and the arts, and that everyone can be a player and creator. It is simply about how we open our hearts and minds to it. The way athletes and performers collaborate reveals how we can build friendship and connect with one another – which is the spirit of the Games. With our neighbouring countries coming together, we hope to create a beautiful connection and memory together, truly a Celebration of the Extraordinary!'

Still only in his mid-twenties, Pua is a well-known choreographer in the local dance world. A freelance choreographer and instructor with a wealth of experience in competitions, managing productions, performing in shows performed and educating youths in dance through his classes. He has choreographed for Chingay from 2009 to 2015 and National Day Parade (NDP) for 2011, 2012 and 2014. In addition, Pua has represented Singapore for the SEA Games 2013 Closing Ceremony in Myanmar, and more recently, part of the Opening Ceremony for the 28th SEA Games that was held in Singapore. Other opportunities include choreographing and performing for Project Superstar Kelly Poon's Music Video and her public performances and shows, working with Universal Music (Music Videos), the Singapore Press Holdings (Roadshows), Mediacorp (Shows) and People's Association Youth Movement (Chingay).

Airik Ng, Set / Props Director

'Working on this project has impacted me on many levels. In *Fire Your Imagination*, we are reminded how as individuals we play an important part within the larger community. We partake as a creator or an observer. Either way, we experience that emotional resonance for the athletes who expand and redefine what we understand about human being's exceptional capabilities.'



Ng comes with a background in fine art. Currently a storyboard artist, set designer, props designer and an art educator, his dynamite experience is a force to be reckoned with. Ng has produced storyboards for films, documentaries and television commercials. As an art educator, he shares his personal art experiences with a wide range of students including children, adults and retirees. As a set designer and props master for the APG OCC, Ng interprets the complexity of the show through his pre-visualising skills to bring about Tan's vision in a way that is easily understood.



Kleopatra Korai, Associate Visual Director <https://vimeo.com/lokey>



‘It is a great honour to be involved as an artist in such a huge and aspirational event. Seven days of pure sportsmanship bringing together people from all over Asia to demonstrate and celebrate the power of the human spirit. I surely hope my work touches the hearts and minds of all the people watching. My aim is to make the world feel closer to the amazing athletes participating in this glorious celebration of the extraordinary.’

Korai is a director and animator with a focus on video, motion graphics and stop-motion animation. She studied Photography at Blow Up in Athens and Film at the European Film School in Denmark. She has also completed the Animation Program in Bristol U.K., co-created by the University of Bristol and the world-renowned Aardman Animations, for which she has also worked as Production Assistant. Kleopatra has developed, directed and produced short films, music videos as well as animation for television, film and advertising commercials. She has also created video components for theatrical plays and 3D art installations. Since 2005, alongside art director Yanni Lolis, she has been one half of the creative team LoKey based out of Athens and New York. She is a founding member of the new media art collective Medea Electronique whose work has been displayed and performed at the Onassis Cultural Centre, the Benaki Museum and the Michael Cacoyannis Foundation, among others.





IV. FIRE YOUR IMAGINATION WITH VOLUNTEER ALICE BEE AH LEONG @ MA LOON YIN, 78

I feel very delighted to participate in the ASEAN Para Games Opening and Closing Ceremonies. With all the love and kindness in the team, I feel so warm. The trainers are patient, so I don't have to worry about not remembering all the steps!

— Alice Bee Ah Leong @ Ma Loon Yin, 78, Volunteer

At 78, Alice Bee Ah Leong @ Ma Loon Yin is our oldest but most inspiring performer, bringing along with her such exuberant energy, resilience and motivation. Though blind in one eye, Alice has been an active volunteer since 1961.

Alice is happy to perform with people of all ages. She is grateful that the younger dancers are always there to help her practice the moves. After her intensive rehearsals, Alice never fails to return home with a huge smile on her face, feeling happy and satisfied. She uses the MRT journey back home as an opportunity to socialize with her Indian and Malay friends. And their non-stop chats make the long journey back home one to look forward to.

About *Fire Your Imagination*

Fire Your Imagination is the climax of the 8th ASEAN Para Games Singapore 2015 Opening Ceremony, in which the cauldron is lit and the Games officially begins. It also marks Singapore's glorious achievements as a nation that turned 50 this year. "Nothing is impossible; I am able to", declares Singapore's Paralympian gold medalist and torch bearer Yip Pin Xiu. We are limited only by our imagination. The little red dot that is Singapore glows, brightly, proudly, and loudly.

Khirmern Mohamad opens this movement (filmed by LASALLE College of the Arts) with an imaginative tour through the business district of Singapore. Then, an energetic army of cheerleaders teach you how to sign and indeed sing with your hands, as wheelchair dancers in steampunk outfits form patterns evoking Singapore's iconic skyline. Torch bearers ranging from emerging sporting talents to veteran heroes burst into action on the video screens (filmed by Bertrand Lee), then continue into the Indoor Stadium, guided by the stunning floor patterns.

V. A VICTORIOUS CELEBRATION OF THE EXTRAORDINARY WITH SINGING SENSATION LIDIYA, 11

A key feature of the 8th ASEAN Para Games Ceremonies is to nurture people with emerging talent and provide a platform on which to shine. Let's meet 11 year old Lidiya Binte Rymee Iskandar of Rainbow Centre Yishun Park School.



I love working with others and I love music. I can't wait to be in the show!
 – Lidiya Binte Rymee Iskandar, Rainbow Centre Yishun Park School.

Imagine the gargantuan task of singing in not just one but *two* movements (first and final) of the Opening Ceremony of the 8th ASEAN Para Games in front of a 'live' audience of 7000 in the Singapore Indoor Stadium. Would you crack under pressure?

Not 11-year old Lidiya. The possibilities are endless with this strong-willed young woman. Lidiya's performing talents were spotted during music therapy sessions at school. She was eager to take on the responsibility that she was tasked with. Initially, she struggled to manage her emotions. She also found it challenging to coordinate with her peers in performances. Over sessions of practices, this improved. Her teachers were impressed by how quickly Lidiya learnt her performance, managing to master the movements and song within eight sessions.

For Lidiya, music is her medium of connection and expression.

Let's give our sublime singing sensation a rapturous round of applause.

About A Victorious Celebration of the Extraordinary

A Victorious Celebration of the Extraordinary (pictured in rehearsal, right) is the final spectacular 'bang' to the end of a wonderful programme of activities celebrating SG50. As the last movement of the show, this ushers in an extraordinary party to mark Singapore's anniversary and the kaleidoscope of diversity which so enriches our nation. Students from 15 Special Education Schools lead us in a dance of victory, transforming the venue into a riotous explosion of colours and sound. In this movement, we celebrate friendship, sportsmanship and excellence. Let us dance. Let us play. Let us transform the Singapore Indoor Stadium, and the world into a barrier-free, beautiful and exuberant playground.



3 STORIES FROM THE 3 MOVEMENTS OF THE CLOSING CEREMONY

I. A CELEBRATION OF THE EXTRAORDINARY WITH PURPLE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



Performing at the Closing Ceremony marks the orchestra's first major performance since its debut in July 2015. We want our music to touch people's hearts and spread the message that it is important to build an inclusive society around the world.

— Purple Symphony Orchestra

The Purple Symphony is Singapore's first all-inclusive orchestra comprising musicians with and without special needs such as visual and hearing impairment, autism and physical disabilities. The pioneer 83-member orchestra made its heart-warming debut in July 2015 at the Singapore Concert Hall. It has since received invitations to perform at a number of public platforms. Facilitated by Central Singapore CDC and supported by various partners, the orchestra creates an opportunity for the inclusion of people from different backgrounds. It is a unique platform for musicians to learn and share music with one another and their audiences, support inclusion, and celebrate their abilities together. Musicians under The Purple Symphony play a range of Asian and Western instruments from five key musical sections: The Chinese Orchestra, Strings, Chinese Winds, Percussion, and a special Choir.

About A Celebration of the Extraordinary

The Purple Symphony, Singapore's first all-inclusive orchestra, performs the National Anthem. Playing a range of Asian and Western instruments, the 97-member strong orchestra next accompanies a dazzling short film featuring the highlights of the Opening Ceremony that we have enjoyed, as seen through the discerning eyes of Associate Visual Director by Yan Tuck Hong. This is followed by a carnivalesque Parade of Athletes, accompanied by 90 lively percussionists.

II. ONE VOICE, ONE HEART



Music stirs our soul. It has therapeutic powers to rewire our brains, to move us and to connect with others. We become happier, healthier, and our positivity impact others too. Many people may not have access to this power. A stroke stopped my father from playing the erhu. I founded I'm Soul Inc upon discovering how music technology could enable anyone to play, compose and perform music.

Our performers include people with various disabilities, their families and teachers. Watching us perform, our audiences are reminded that it takes a village to raise a champion. Besides technology, love and support are also key enablers for an inclusive society. We want to enable everyone to harness the power of music for healing and joy. We want to fire the imagination the POSSIBILITIES we can achieve by breaking disabling barriers! There are no limits!

– Michelle Lee Choy Hoong (I'm Soul Inc)

The highlight of the 2nd movement of the Closing Ceremony is One Voice, One Heart, led by I'm Soul Inc. I'm Soul Inc conceptualised the performance to reflect and promote our 2 key messages. The performers range from lower primary school children to the elderly of 60 years old. They represent all the major races in Singapore, come from all walks of life and have a range of disabilities from hearing impairment, blindness, cerebral palsy, rare disease, Down Syndrome to PMLD (Profound Multiple Learning Disability). Performing with them are their parents, spouse, siblings and teachers. Disabled and non-disabled are stage side-by-side making beautiful music and dancing as ONE. For the Closing Ceremony, there's Leo Chen Ian (with cerebral palsy) and his wife, a certified occupational therapist and therapeutic music consultant. There's also William, a 60 year old grandfather, blind at 35 due to a genetic disease who lost his sight completely at 55. He now works as a guide for Dialogue in the Dark. He has no musical background but discovered he has a great sense of musicality.

III. COLLABORATING WITH SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY

The third and final movement of the Closing Ceremony, Celebration of Shared Memories, begins with a film made by Transfixion (led by Christina Mok, Ngee Ann Polytechnic) and Michael Larsson, a Swedish filmmaker and photographer. This movie provides an unparalleled insight into the creative processes, tears of joy of a few of our 1000-strong team of performers, volunteers and creative people behind the glitter and gloss of the 8th ASEAN Para Games Opening and Closing Ceremonies.



The Ceremonies have been 2 years in the making. Collaboration and consultation with community and schools have been the heart of the creative process. As a well-known teacher and community leader since 1998, a strong pedagogical motivation underlies Philip Tan's creative direction. Let's meet Ngee Ann Polytechnic, one of our collaborators.

We feel especially honoured to be part of the Games, the very first in Singapore's history. Just being among athletes dedicated to their game has been overwhelming. Through our work, we want to express the beauty and power of the Games. The athletes are really showing us what doing the impossible means! We can't wait to capture the soul and sounds of what goes on behind the scenes of the 8th Asean Para-Games Opening and Closing Ceremonies.

— Christina Mok, lecturer leading a team from Ngee Ann Polytechnic

Transfixion Production consists of six students and staff members from the School of Infocomm Technology. Lecturer Christina Mok leads staff and students Ho Si Hao, Vittorio Carecci Wei Long, Siti Zalilah Binte Rosli, Godon Koh Wan Rong, Syafiq Syahmi bin Zakariah. They in turn guide and collaborate with Fu Hua Primary School and Clementi Town Secondary School Multimedia Services Club. Together they capture what goes on behind the creative process of the Ceremonies - the sweat, tears and tears of joy. See examples of their short teaser films of the Ceremonies here <https://www.aseanparagames2015.com/news/feature-stories/2015/10/in-hope-of-changing-peoples-perceptions>