

**[MEDIA RELEASE]
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Inaugural Singapore Writers Festival Access Programme made possible by British Council

British Council lends support to Singapore Writers Festival to make the festival accessible to Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals

Singapore, 4 November 2016 – For the first time, Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities will be able to participate in the Singapore Writers Festival (SWF) organised by the National Arts Council.

The British Council announced their support towards the SWF's first-ever Access Programme. The SWF Access Programme will introduce sign language interpretation for Deaf and hearing impaired participants at 12 selected SWF events (please refer to table A for the full list of events). This pilot initiative hopes to increase arts access for local beneficiaries, and enable opportunities for them to be a part of the Festival.

The Access Programme was initiated by the British Council as part of the Council's wider push to create a more inclusive arts sector. In March 2016, the British Council, in conjunction with the National Arts Council and Singapore International Foundation launched the inaugural Arts & Disability Forum, aimed at addressing disability and inclusivity in the arts and cultural sector. Access to arts venues and activities were some pressing issues discussed at the forum.

The British Council hopes to expand disability access to more festivals, events and arts venues in Singapore.

Speaking about the partnership, Dr **Sarah Meisch Lionetto**, Director of Arts, British Council Singapore said that, "Inclusivity, diversity and equality are very much a part of the British Council's core ethos. By pioneering this programme, we are excited to support people with disabilities by enabling them access to equal opportunities to participate in the arts. Creating basic access to arts programmes allows a starting point for discussing an inclusive society and cultivating disabled artists. Through our ongoing art programmes, we hope to contribute to an even more dynamic and inclusive cultural scene in Singapore."

"We have made efforts to implement inclusive programming to widen our reach, so that everyone can have the opportunity to attend and enjoy our events. In this way, every festival-goer can be exposed to the wonderful and exciting ideas being shared over the next 10 days," said Mr **Yeow Kai Chai**, the director of SWF.

The SWF will run from 4 to 13 November 2016 at the Civic District.

Details:

Deaf and hearing impaired participants will each be given complimentary festival passes to the selected events. Sign language interpreters will be present at the selected programmes.

Each event has reserved seating for up to eight Deaf and hearing impaired attendees. As venue capacity is limited, and to assist us in planning, registration is required at <http://bit.ly/SWFsignlanguage>

For the two ticketed lectures, attendees will need to purchase a separate ticket to attend. Festival Pass holders will be entitled to a 20% discount.

More information on the SWF Accessibility Programme can be found at <https://www.britishcouncil.sg/programmes/arts/arts-and-disability/access-programme-singapore-writers-festival>. Registration for programmes with sign language interpretation can be done via the SWF website, <https://www.singaporewritersfestival.com>.

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About British Council

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. Using the UK's cultural resources we make a positive contribution to the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust.

We work with over 100 countries across the world in the fields of arts and culture, English language, education and civil society. Each year we reach over 20 million people face-to-face and more than 500 million people online, via broadcasts and publications.

Founded in 1934, we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body. The majority of our income is raised delivering a range of projects and contracts in English teaching and examinations, education and development contracts and from partnerships with public and private organisations. Eighteen per cent of our funding is received from the UK government.

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Annex A
Singapore Writers Festival Programmes with sign-language interpretation:

Date	Time	Programme	Venue
5 Nov	11.30AM – 12.30PM	<p>Panel Football Nations</p> <p>Featuring: Aleksandar Duric, James M Dorsey, Neil Humphreys Moderated by: Kelly Latimer</p> <p>Football is arguably the most popular sport in the world. Academic and foreign correspondent James M Dorsey shows that football fans can be a powerful civic force in the Middle East and North Africa, while former national footballer Aleksander Duric assesses the state of Singapore football. In his fiction, Neil Humphreys has written about match-fixing in Singapore, and the sleaze and corruption behind the Premier League. Together they will discuss if football can divide or unite a nation.</p>	Asian Civilisation Museum, Ngee Ann Auditorium
	2.30PM – 3.30PM	<p>Classroom Series Europe's Migrant Crisis</p> <p>Featuring: Atia Abawi</p> <p>The images are haunting: from the lifeless body of a drowned Alan Kurdi washed up on a Turkish beach to the constant trail of overcrowded vessels which sink in the Mediterranean Sea. News correspondent and writer Atia Abawi, who has witnessed the atrocities up close and personal, will share her thoughts on this topic.</p>	
6 Nov	11.30AM – 12.30PM	<p>Panel Webcomics: The Death Of The Newspaper Comics?</p> <p>Featuring: Chihoi, Cheah Sin Ann, Foo Swee Chin aka FSc Moderated by: Lim Cheng Tju</p> <p>Comics were once a staple in newspapers, acting as a source of light reading, even boosting newspaper readership. In this digital age, readers have turned to webcomics and daily strips in newspapers are starting to be</p>	The Arts House, Blue Room

		<p>phased out. Chihoi, creator of Fa Fa World; Cheah Sin Ann, former editorial cartoonist with The Straits Times; and FSc, the brains behind A Lost Stock of Children, will explore the changes that have affected newspaper comic strips and discuss the ways in which artists can adapt and remain relevant.</p> <p>This session is part of the Sequential Arts focus.</p>	
	4PM – 5PM	<p>Classroom Series Funny Sonnets With Philip Terry</p> <p>Featuring: Philip Terry</p> <p>In his book Shakespeare's Sonnets, Philip Terry re-engages with the bard's works, splicing contemporary culture with Shakespearean themes to hilarious effect. Find out how he deconstructs the English language into a celebration of creativity, and puts the funny into sonnets, in this Classroom Series talk.</p> <p>This session is made possible with the assistance of the British Council.</p>	The Arts House, Screening Room
12 Nov	10AM – 11AM	<p>Adeline Foo & Stephanie Wong Present Weird And Wonderful Creatures</p> <p>Featuring: Adeline Foo, Stephanie Wong</p> <p>Explore the jungles of Sarawak and venture into the Australian wilderness from the bestselling Amos Lee travel diaries. Discover fascinating facts about weird and wonderful animals with author Adeline Foo and illustrator Stephanie Wong as your trusty guides. You will also create your very own animal masks to join this wild jungle adventure.</p> <p>For ages 8 and up.</p>	Empress Lawn, SWF3 Tent
	11.30AM – 12.15PM	<p>Storytelling Amma, Tell Me About Hanuman And Krishna!</p> <p>Indian mythology comes alive in this storytelling session by New Delhi-born author, Bhakti Mathur. From her Amma, Tell Me series, she will</p>	Asian Civilisations Museum, Shaw Foyer

	<p>regale you with fascinating stories about Hindu gods Hanuman and Krishna. Come pick up cultural tidbits you might never have known.</p> <p>This session is in English. For ages 4 to 6.</p>	
11.30AM – 12.30PM	<p>SWF Lecture Creating A Society Of Empathy</p> <p>Featuring: Jonathan Friesen</p> <p>To anyone who has struggled with feeling out of place, this lecture is for you. Jonathan Friesen’s personal experience with Tourette syndrome and epilepsy was the inspiration behind his highly lauded novel, <i>Jerk, California</i>. Look at the world through his eyes, and understand how kindness and empathy are even more crucial in today’s crisis-riven world.</p>	National Gallery Singapore, Auditorium
4PM – 5PM	<p>SWF Lecture Privacy Versus Surveillance: What The Panama Papers Mean For Everyone In The 21st Century</p> <p>Featuring: Frederik Obermaier</p> <p>It is regarded as the largest data breach ever, and its impact is still being felt. The leakage of the so-called Panama Papers—11.5 million financial and legal files of the rich and powerful—exposed the names of many political leaders and public personalities, even leading to the downfall of one European prime minister. The lecture by Frederik Obermaier, one of the two German journalists who broke the news on the Papers, will tackle a range of issues which implicate every global citizen: personal privacy; hacking and cybersecurity; public accountability; and transparency in the Internet age.</p> <p>Co-presented with Goethe Institut Singapur.</p>	Victoria Theatre
7PM – 8PM	<p>Classroom Series Unravelling The US Presidential Election</p> <p>Featuring: The Nerd Writer</p> <p>Nothing in the history of the United States has</p>	The Arts House, Play Den

		<p>prepared pundits for this year's presidential election. One of the most open and democratic processes in the world, it is also one of the most perplexing. Whether you have been rooting for Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump, The Nerdwriter delves into the complexities of the process and what the results mean for Singapore and the rest of the world.</p>	
13 Nov	11.30AM – 12.30PM	<p>Panel Children Born In The 1980s: Emerging Adulthood Or Extended Adolescence?</p> <p>Featuring: Helen Oyeyemi, Pooja Nansi, The Nerdwriter, Ann Ang Moderated by: Joshua Ip</p> <p>In the age of Snapchat filters, Pokémon Go and BuzzFeed, what does it mean to be approaching adulthood? How do children of the 1980s navigate the twilight zone between turning of age and feeling like a credible adult? Four panellists—three writers and a social media personality—tackle these questions and more.</p> <p>This session is made possible with the assistance of the U.S. Embassy.</p>	Asian Civilisations Museum, Ngee Ann Auditorium
	2.30PM – 3.30PM	<p>Two Comic Icons: Goshō Aoyama Chats With Sonny Liew</p> <p>Featuring: Goshō Aoyama, Sonny Liew Moderated by: Lim Cheng Tju</p> <p>Heavyweights in their countries, they have a string of accomplishments to their names. Japan's premier manga artist Goshō Aoyama, the genius behind the Detective Conan series, meets Eisner-nominated Sonny Liew, arguably Singapore's most celebrated graphic novelist and illustrator. They will touch on a range of topics from artistic integrity to the pressure of churning out best-selling works.</p> <p>This session is part of the Sequential Arts focus and Country Focus: Japan.</p>	The Arts House, Chamber
	4PM – 5PM	<p>Eka Kurniawan, Man Tiger Of Asia</p>	Asian Civilisations

		<p>Featuring: Eka Kurniawan Moderated by: Jon Fasan</p> <p>Indonesia's literary star, Eka Kurniawan, recently longlisted for the Man Booker International Prize, is hailed as Pramoedya Ananta Toer's successor. Meet the author whose books have caught the imagination of the international literary world.</p>	<p>Museum, Ngee Ann Auditorium</p>
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