

ARTS HOUSE LIMITED

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016

Arts House Ltd. (AHL) is a company limited by guarantee, formerly known as The Old Parliament House Limited (TOPHL), which was incorporated by the National Arts Council (NAC) on 11 December 2002 in Singapore. It is registered under the Charities Act on 24 February 2003. The name change to Arts House Ltd. took effect from 19 March 2014.

With effect from 1 April 2014, NAC with the support of MCCY and the Boards of Arts Festival Limited (AFL) and The Old Parliament House Limited (TOPHL), merged both companies to form a single entity renamed the Arts House Ltd. (AHL). The entire business undertaking of AFL was transferred to TOPHL (now AHL) at the net book value per the audited annual report for the period 30 May 2013 (date of incorporation) to 31 March 2014.

Charity Registration No:	01658
Unique Entity Number (UEN):	200210647W
Registered Address:	1 Old Parliament Lane Singapore 179429
Board of Directors:	Gan Christine (Chairman) Chong Yuan Chien Ho Nyuk Choo Deborah Joanne Koh Choon Fah Lee Chor Lin (ex-officio) Mok Wei Wei Ong Chao Choon Tan Kim Liang Paul Ang Kah Eng Kelvin (Appointed on 31 Mar 2016) Lynette Pang Hsu Lyin (Appointed on 31 Mar 2016) Maniza Jumabhoy (Appointed on 31 Mar 2016) Tan Chee Meng (Appointed on 31 Mar 2016) Madeleine Lee Suh Shin (Appointed on 3 Aug 2016) Mary Ann Wai Sheng Tsao (Resigned on 12 Jul 2016) Tham Kwan Hsueh Yvonne (Resigned on 12 Aug 2015)

AHL presently has 13 Board members who can identify with, and contribute to, the cause of AHL.

Banker:	DBS Bank Ltd OCBC Ltd
Auditor:	Ernst & Young LLP
Management:	Lee Chor Lin, CEO (Appointed 1 Apr 2014) Desirene Ho, Assistant CEO (Appointed 2 Jun 2014)

Yong Yuet Mei, CFO (Appointed 1 Dec 2014)
None of the above has prior appointment in a charity.

Related Entities:

The Company does not have any subsidiary.
Its members are appointed by the National Arts Council.
Board member Mr Tan Kim Liang Paul is the deputy CEO
of the National Arts Council.

Objective:

Arts House Limited (AHL) is a not-for-profit organisation committed to enriching lives through the arts. AHL runs The Arts House, a multi-disciplinary arts centre with a focus on literary programming located in the heart of Singapore's civic district; presents the Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA), an annual celebration of performing arts; and manages Goodman Arts Centre and Aliwal Arts Centre, two creative enclaves for artists, arts groups and creative businesses, and the exhibition and performance spaces located at ARTrium@MCI. AHL was renamed from The Old Parliament House Limited (TOPHL) from 19 March 2014.

Funding Sources:

AHL is financially supported by Government grants, rental income, donations, sponsorships and sales of tickets for its programmes.

Review of Year 2015/2016:

Staffing

As of 31 March 2016, the breakdown of the staff strength is as follows:

CEO	1
Assistant CEO	1
CFO	1
Head of Department	5
Managerial	19
Executive/Management Support	12
Technicians	9
Total Staff Strength	48

The annual remuneration of the 3 highest paid staff are as follows:

\$100,000 - \$200,000	1
\$200,001 - \$300,000	-
\$300,001 - \$400,000	2

Key Public Programmes:

THE ARTS HOUSE

Overview

Due to the rather extensive upgrading works at The Arts House in the first half of FY15, the programming team shifted its focus to managing events *outside* of the House instead. These events included the open call and workshops for the *Golden Point Award (GPA)* at Goodman Arts Centre, and the May and September meetings for *MASTERA* at Bugis Village Hotel and Hotel Jen Tanglin respectively. The team also worked closely with the National University of Singapore for the *Singapore Creative Writing Residency*, appointing two very talented poets into the programme.

With the extensive upgrading works nearing completion in October 2015, the programming team worked on bringing vibrancy back through its doors with new festivals on top of its regular line-up of programmes. The inaugural *Singapore International Festival of Music* had its two week long concert series from 26 September to 10 October, and shortly after, the *Singapore Writers Festival* made its return to the House. In addition, the *Singapore Lieder Festival* returned for its fifth year with a brand new programme that drew an increase in number of audiences.

Literary Arts – Highlight Programmes

i *Golden Point Award (GPA)*

Registration for the *GPA* opened in May and was followed by a series of well-attended workshops in June to prepare applicants for the closing of submission in July. A record 778 entries were received, the highest number in *GPA* history. There was a marked increase in Tamil submission and for all official language submission and genres, with the exception of Malay short stories.

ii *MASTERA*

Majlis Sastera Asia Tenggara, also known as *MASTERA*, is a regional language organisation formed to plan for and monitor the development of Malay/Indonesian Language and Literature in the Southeast Asian region. In 2012, Singapore became an official member of *MASTERA*.

The Arts House co-organised this year's secretariat meeting from 21 – 23 May and the *Sidang* (Conference) and *Sakat* (Seminar) from 2 – 9 September. This is the first time

Singapore hosted delegates from Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia. Apart from the usual paper presentations and keynote speeches, a discussion element was injected in the form of a forum for young writers to discuss the theme “Transmedia Literature in the Development of 21st Century Southeast Asian Literature”.

iii *Singapore Creative Writing Residency*

The Singapore Creative Writing Residency appointed Chinese American poet Sally Wen Mao and Singaporean poet Ong Szu Yoong as its 2015 residents. Mao will mentor students in the University Scholars Programme and Ong will mentor students in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

iv *5th Singapore Lieder Festival*

The 5th Singapore Lieder Festival presented a series of three recitals dedicated to the works of local composers as a tribute to Singapore’s 50th year of independence. Some of the composers featured were the late Leong Yoon Pin, Cultural Medallion recipient Dr Kelly Tang, Young Artist Award recipient Dr Zechariah Goh, and a new generation of young, upcoming composers such as Jennifer Lien. This edition received some of its highest audience attendance to date.

v *Singapore Writers Festival (SWF)*

The Arts House curated the *Country Focus (Indonesia)* and *Literary Pioneer* programmes for *SWF* this year with three performances and four discussions. Attendance for the performances ranged between 50–60%, with responses overwhelmingly positive. The discussions fared well with each session drawing an average of 80% participation. The *Literary Pioneer* concept was expanded with an examination of a group of pioneering editors and writers from *Lianhe Zaobao* instead of showcasing a single author like in the previous years. This new trajectory was explored through two panel discussions conducted in Mandarin with the editors and writers themselves, who were instrumental in establishing the literary supplements of the Chinese newspaper.

vi *More Than Words – Visual Playground of Chinese Characters*

Award-winning artist Sun Chan and his architect daughter Irene Chan (Hikoko Ito) took visitors on an extraordinary visual adventure with their inventive artworks created from Chinese script. Apart from acrylics paintings, the exhibition featured works in multiple-media formats from print to 3D installations.

vii *The Arts Open House*

This year, the annual *Arts Open House* invited the various writers groups who meet regularly at the House to curate some of its programmes. These programme were an interesting twist to traditional literary arts programmes and attracted audiences mainly in

their 20s–30s. The two more popular activities were the art journaling and the book necklace workshops which were fully subscribed.

Literary Arts – Regular Programmes

i *World Lit*

Collaboration with the *Melbourne Writers Festival* continued into its third year with the co-presentation of best-selling thriller author, SJ Watson. Watson revealed to an audience of over 50, his writing process for his debut novel *When I Go To Sleep* which became a Hollywood blockbuster. Watson also read from his sophomore novel *A Second Life* before the session closed with Q&A. The following day, the author gave a sold-out workshop on how to write crime and thrillers.

Singapore Creative Writing Resident Sally Wen Mao was also introduced to her Singapore audience through *World Lit*. Her evening session was moderated by poet Cyril Wong who was a member of the selection committee who picked Mao for this year's residency programme. The chemistry between the two poets was immediate and ensued into an evening of invigorating discussion on issues Mao was passionate about, such as identity, displacement and feminism. Audiences were also treated to readings from Mao's book *Mad Honey Symposium* and other unpublished poems she has been working on.

ii *The Alphabet Series*

The 2015/2016 season kicked off with the letter *R for Roses*. The evening was filled with songs that were about, or referenced, roses. Paper roses were used to decorate the Living Room, with crochet roses given out with the programme booklet. The concert received one of the highest attendance rates in the series to date.

This was followed by the staging of Jean Cocteau's enigmatic 1928 monodrama *La Voix Humaine*, expertly set to music by Francis Poulenc, that saw soprano Jennifer Lien getting a standing ovation from a performance that came straight from the heart.

iii *Sing Lit 101*

Dr Gwee Li Sui returned for a third season of *Sing Lit 101: How to Read a Singaporean Poem*. This season covered six poems from the 1980s to the 1990s. Majority of the poets Dr Gwee featured attended the sessions, which provided participants with a unique opportunity to ask the poets themselves salient questions about their work.

iv *CITA*

Ipoh-based artist and independent curator Nur Hanim Khairuddin held a lecture on Malaysian contemporary art with a comparative discussion of Singapore. The lecture, held in English, was attended by 50 people.

GOODMAN ARTS CENTRE

Overview

Goodman Place Management Office (PMO) continued to work closely with stakeholders, tenants and community partners to reach out to the public. Programmes initiated by Goodman PMO or in collaboration with tenants and/or partners include *Field Vibes* with Café Melba, the *Great Singapore Garage Sale 2015*, *Visual Talkback!* and *Tanjong Goodman* – Goodman Arts Centre's 5th Open House.

Key Programme Highlights

i *Field Vibes*

Initiated in January 2015 during the *Tanjong Goodman* Open House, *Field Vibes* is a collaboration between Café Melba and Goodman Arts Centre. The event centers on an afternoon of family fun out on an open field. Featuring a diverse line up of International and Singapore musicians such as Casie Lane (USA), The Lost Hat (Singapore), Ulysses (Singapore), JB (France), Andrew M (Australia), Yadin (Singapore), Matt & Ashraf (Singapore), Marvin Gold (Singapore), MC Fresh S (UK) and Julien (France), *Field Vibes* also included a weekend pop-up market, barbeque, and charity car-wash. The popular event drew 800 people right into the evening.

ii *Great Singapore Garage Sale 2015*

The second *Great Singapore Garage Sale* was held at Goodman Arts Centre with over 20 stalls selling vintage and pre-loved (used) goods ranging from artworks to books, clothes to toys. A free public event, the garage sale drew over 1,000 visitors.

iii *Visual Talkback!*

When one views a piece of art hanging on the wall of a gallery, the conversation is between the viewer and his own mind, seldom does he have the privilege to seek the mind of the artist to find the latter's source of inspiration, unique method of working, or time he took to complete the work. Hence, it is in this spirit of wanting dialogue that the *Talkback!* series was created as a platform for anyone who wants to ask (or answer) that burning question, or to offer (or receive) constructive feedback, in a safe environment.

Aside from the public conversing with the Centre's artist tenants on their work, the artist tenants themselves take on the role of critic, giving feedback to non-tenants' artwork. Hence, the Centre's artist tenants play the dual role of critic and the critiqued, to create an open community of trust and exchange.

October's edition of this popular series saw 50 participants engaged by visual artist tenants Michael Lee, Ang Song Nian, Tan Pei Ling and Wang Ruobing as they spoke candidly with Wei Teck Chee, Bernard Khoo, Leonand Yang and Jing X. Hu on the latter's work.

iv *Tanjong Goodman*

Over 3000 parents packed their kids and grabbed their friends to *Tanjong Goodman* for a day-long art excursion within the lush compound of Goodman Arts Centre. Family-friendly events spread across the seven acre Centre grounds, from a performance of *The Pigeon and the Cicak* by Sweet Tooth (the outreach arm of CAKE Theatrical Productions) to a working-rod puppet workshop by Paper Monkey Theatre; listening to the brass quintet of the Philharmonic Winds, to learning Indian classical dance that originated in the temples of Tamil Nadu by Apsaras Arts; getting one's hand smeared with paint in a watercolour workshop by Marvin Chew to watching Boo Junfeng's film, *Parting*.

Tanjong Goodman is part of *Singapore Art Week*, hence, the visual arts component was a special highlight, with Singapore artists Michael Lee, Justin Lee, Leo Liu, Han Sai Por, Tan Peiling, Renn Lim, Aira Lim and Marvin Chew coming together to showcase their works collectively in the multi-purpose hall to the delight of art lovers, and the uninitiated, alike.

To get the buzz going in the Mountbatten district, lifestyle elements were introduced through a Farmers Market to draw nearby residents into the Centre.

ALIWAL ARTS CENTRE

Overview

Aliwal Place Management Office (PMO) once again broke its own visitorship record with the *Aliwal Arts Night Crawl* on 25 July which drew more than 7,900 people into the Kampong Gelam precinct. The event was the first time the entire Kampong Gelam precinct was activated.

The PMO also debuted its first commissioned contemporary art exhibition titled *Cannot Be Bo(a)rdered* in conjunction with the *Aliwal Urban Art Festival* which launched *Singapore Art Week* on 16 January 2016. The month-long exhibition featured 16 artists from Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Key Programme Highlights

i *Kavichaaral*

As part of the *Tamil Language Festival 2015*, Avant Theatre presented *Kavichaaral*, a presentation of Cultural Medallion Award Recipient Mr KTM Iqbal's poetry, done through music and theatrical movement.

ii *5IVE*

5IVE is the graduation showcase of the first *Playwright-Director Mentorship Programme* (PDMP) by Teater Ekamatra featuring works by Hazwan Norly and Nabilah Said, accompanied by set designer Moses Tan. The PDMP participants were under the tutelage of Teater Ekamatra veterans Zizi Azah Abdul Majid, Mohd Fared Jainal, Irfan Kasban and Alfian Sa'at.

iii *Aliwal Arts Night Crawl: Don't Give Face!*

The third edition of the *Aliwal Arts Night Crawl* expanded its reach to include the Kampong Gelam precinct from Bali Lane to Beach Road. Stakeholders were engaged on a deeper level through the hosting of performances in their premises and donation of craft materials for the community artwork activities. The festival included more interactive activities including drop-in workshops for the entire family.

iv *Letters to Ubin EP Launch by Inch Chua*

Singapore songwriter Inch Chua worked with Aliwal tenants SG Muso to launch her EP titled *Letters to Ubin*. She performed her new songs, written during a four-month residency on the island, to a sold-out audience.

v *Aliwal Urban Art Festival*

The third edition of the *Aliwal Urban Art Festival* commissioned by *Singapore Art Week* featured Aliwal's first contemporary art exhibition titled *Cannot Be Bo(a)rdered*, a study of youth rebellion by 16 artists and collectives from Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. Using the skateboard as the primary medium, the intent of the exhibition was to showcase the skill, ambition, creativity and discipline of the sport which is very much an art form in itself with its own distinct language and visual identity.

vi *Nam Hwa Blazes*

Nam Hwa Blazes is a performance series that introduces traditional Teochew opera in bite-sized pieces. Targeted for beginners, the first installment included excerpts from famous classics as well as performances by the Nam Hwa Teochew Classical Songs students.

SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ARTS

Diversity is the hallmark of 2015's *Singapore International Festival of Arts* as it reached out to new audiences across the island through its line-up of more than 60 shows that were presented in unlikely venues like HDB estates, the living rooms of homes, a mobile theatre in Toa Payoh, Tanjong Pagar Railway Station and Bukit Brown Cemetery.

This second edition closed a season that spanned seven weeks, together with its pre-festival of ideas, *The O.P.E.N.*, attracting more than 62,000 members of the arts-loving public.

SIFA 2015 featured 12 Singapore commissions, the largest to date to celebrate the Golden Jubilee year, and a line-up of seven foreign productions, including a dance marathon, presented by contemporary artists from Hungary, India, Australia, France, Germany, Japan and Taiwan. 12 of the shows were sold-out. These included *Versus*, a ferocious performance about man's existence amidst all the wars he waged; the multi-generational epic, *HOTEL; Cabinet Of Curiosities*, a music-theatre work performed on small and large pianos, toys and sound objects; *Taiwan Dreams Episode 1: Dream Hotel* that told a story of diaspora through the mysterious disappearance of the Western Xia Dynasty in the 11th Century; *Black Angels*, one of three concerts that explored the influences and inspirations that have molded the T'ang Quartet; a two-part socially-engaged production *It Won't Be Too Long: The Cemetery (Dawn and Dusk)* that examined the notion and reality of public space through Bukit Brown; and *The Incredible Adventures Of Border Crossers* that told a story of past-present-future through the voices of border crossers from 19 different countries who are presently living in Singapore.

Five productions in *Dance Marathon: OPEN WITH A PUNK SPIRIT!* were sold-out as well. These included *Wall Dancing; Double Bill: Real Reality* and *Lay/ered; Double Bill: Daikoushin* and *Some Experiments In A Decade And A Half; Double Bill: Eyes Open. Eyes Closed* (a.k.a. Traitriot) and *My Mother and I*; and *Double Bill: The Daily Life of Ms. D* and *Passage on Blur*. Three of these dance evenings were at the Tanjong Pagar Railway Station, highlighting Singaporeans' interest in unusual site-specific work.

There was standing room only at the four free performances in the HDB heartlands by Kumar and his comedian collaborators in Kumar's *Living Together*, and across many of the 100 living room performances presented by home-owners in *Open Homes*, a *SIFA 2015* commission in collaboration with PAssion Arts of the People's Association.

The diverse line-up of over 30 events held across six venues offered multiple perspectives that provided access to knowledge, evoked emotions, sparked conversations and opened hearts, minds and spaces to connect audiences of all ages.

Fundraising Event and Activity:

There was no public fundraising event during the year. The Company continues to actively solicit for cash donations and in-kind support from individuals, corporations and foundations for its programmes. In addition, the Company launched the Patrons Circle at The Arts House in August 2015, with an aim of growing and cultivating a pool of donors who will be closely connected to what the House does and what it aspires to be.

Financials:

The Company recorded a surplus of \$295,852 in the financial year ended 31 March 2016.

Total expenditures including building rental is \$20,326,094, supported by income of \$5,606,319 and grants of \$15,015,627. Reserves at \$7,245,313 is 36% of total expenditures.

Included in the grants was an amount of \$8,285,040 (FYE 2015: \$11,280,000) in relation to the Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA). The SIFA grant comprises of \$8,285,040 (FYE 2015: \$6,280,000) grant and Nil (FYE 2015: \$5,000,000) start-up funds meant for Arts Festival Limited (AFL) which was reallocated to the Company upon the transfer of the business from AFL to the Company in the previous financial year.

Reserve Policy:

Any annual surpluses or prior years' reserves within the General Funds shall form the Operating Reserve and shall not be reduced except in accordance with the reserve policy as authorized by the Board, which dictates its use, authorisation, reporting and monitoring.

Future Plans and Commitments:

THE ARTS HOUSE

- i *CITA SENI*
- ii *Shakespeare Lives in Film*
- iii *World Lit Workshops featuring Miguel Syjuco*
- iv *Young Critics Mentorship Programme*
- v *Knowledge San Frontières*
- vi *The Light Beyond – A Photographic Pilgrimage by Melisa Teo*
- vii *Singapore Writers Festival*

GOODMAN ARTS CENTRE

- i *The Great Singapore Garage Sale*
- ii *The Twenty-Something Theatre Festival*
- iii *Tanjong Goodman 2016*

ALI WAL ARTS CENTRE

- i *Aliwal Arts Night Crawl 2016*
- ii *Aliwal Urban Arts Festival 2016*

SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ARTS

SIFA 2016 will be curated around the theme 'Potentialities'. This will be the final section of the Trilogy which began in 2014 with 'Legacies', followed by 2015 with 'Post Empires'. *SIFA 2016* will investigate the future through several tracks, example the potential of tradition (Huang Ruo's *Paradise Interrupted*), the potential of archives (Trajal Harrell's *In the Mood for Frankie*), the potential of technology (Ron Arad's *720°*), amongst others. Potentiality is an optimism that looks to the future than at the grimness of the present.