



Five Arts Centre

PRESS RELEASE

THREE AWARDED GRANTS FROM THE KRISHEN JIT-ASTRO FUND

Kuala Lumpur, 14 December, 2006 – Three champions of the Arts were awarded grants from the Krishen Jit – ASTRO Fund to carry out their original projects.

The first three recipients of grants awarded through the Krishen Jit-ASTRO Fund are Au Sow Yee, Sharon Chin and Dr. Ray Langenbach who will each receive RM8,400, RM9,600 and RM16,000 respectively. They were selected from a total of 80 applicants, by a panel of five comprising two members of the Five Arts Centre, two representatives from the industry and one representative from ASTRO.

For Au Sow Yee, the grant she received will be used to complete a performative cinema series entitled *Cinema of the Trompe L'oeil*, a film installation and performance utilizing 16mm film projectors and a LCD projector.

Sharon Chin plans to utilize her funds on research and an interactive installation via an exhibition of new work concerning libraries and banned books - printed material that has been outlawed in Malaysia for certain reasons at certain points of time.

Dr. Ray Langenbach will use his share on his Malaysian Performance Video Archives Project, a project to preserve performance documentation, including many of the directorial works of Krishen Jit. The documentation also extends to other Malaysian theatre performances and performance art works from the period 1988-2006.

[Astro quote]

Representing Five Arts Centre, Ivy Josiah added

"Five Arts Centre would like to thank ASTRO for initiating this fund, as the overwhelming response to the Krishen Jit ASTRO Fund, 80 applications in all, does indicate that there is a great number of artistes who do need financial support. Krishen Jit's legacy lives on through the KJ ASTRO Fund as it is in keeping with Krishen's lifelong work and passion for the arts. Krishen worked tirelessly to create Malaysian theatre and it is our belief that the artistes who benefit from this fund will add to the rich tapestry of our arts scene".

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The Krishen Jit - ASTRO Fund was introduced by ASTRO together with Five Arts Centre in commemoration of the late Krishen Jit and is aimed to provide **deserving arts practitioners with monetary aid to pursue projects in the Arts.**

One of the main objectives of Krishen's pioneering work was about celebrating original Malaysia creativity in as varied and alternative ways as possible in all the areas of the Arts. His groundbreaking theatre practice included producing projects that were inter-disciplinary, multi-culture, multi-lingual and experimental. Krishen's works articulated a Malaysian identity that was ever evolving, which encourage practitioners and audiences to reflect on their lives and societies.

The Krishen Jit – ASTRO Fund, works as an extension of this spirit to encourage and support creative work in Malaysia. Its annual allocation of RM 38,000 is to be distributed into grants ranging from RM5,000 to RM20,000 each, for training, workshops, attachments or residencies, experimental productions, writing, or creating new work in music, dance, theatre, writing, visual or performance art.

The response towards the first round of applications had been very encouraging and an announcement for the next round of applications will be **released soon.**

For more information on the Krishen Jit – ASTRO Fund and the Five Arts Centre, please contact Five Arts Centre at +603-7725-4858.

ABOUT ASTRO

ASTRO ALL ASIA NETWORKS plc is the region's leading cross-media operator with Direct-To-Home (DTH) satellite television services in Malaysia and Brunei and soon, in Indonesia. It is also the leading commercial radio broadcaster in Malaysia, a major publisher of TV guide and lifestyle magazines and the largest buyer and producer of TV content, as well as the country's premiere Malay film producer. Celestial Pictures, an ASTRO subsidiary and home to the world's largest Chinese film library and the Celestial Movies channel, is a major content aggregator with a complementary global distribution network. The strength of these complementary brands has extended into interactive and multi-media services, including provision of content for mobile devices.

AAAN operates out of the All Asia Broadcast Centre, a fully-integrated digital broadcast and production complex in Kuala Lumpur. With a market capitalization of RM10 billion (US\$2.7 billion), AAAN ranks among the top 15 companies on Bursa Malaysia.

ABOUT FIVE ARTS CENTRE

Five Arts Centre is a collective of artists and producers dedicated to generating alternative art forms and images in the Malaysian creative environment. Formed in 1984 by **Chin San Sooi, Krishen Jit** and **Marion D'Cruz**, the company has since grown to include 14 members from 4 generations of arts activists and practitioners - **Anne James, Chee Sek Thim, Chew Kin Wah, Ivy N. Josiah, Janet Pillai, Jerrica Lai, June Tan, Lew Chee Seong, Mac Chan, Marion D'Cruz, Ravi Navaratnam, Suhaila Merican, Sunetra Fernando** and youth theatre collective **Akshen (Adrian Kisai, Fahmi Fadzil, Gabrielle Low, Joannou Ng, Lee Yoke Kit, Kitrhona Ramday, Kubhaer T. Jethwani and Mark Teh)**.

Contemporary social and cultural issues impinging on Malaysian life are precipitated by the Centre by way of exhibitions, performances, and creative and research workshops. The Centre's activities include drama, dance, music (including the *Rhythm In Bronze* ensemble), young people's theatre (including Youth Theatre, *Teater Muda* and Theatre-in-Education) and the visual arts.

Five Arts Centre has been instrumental in the growth of a Malaysian identity in the arts. When the company began doing Malaysian plays in 1984, very few other companies were committed to local playwriting. In its commitment to local creativity, Five Arts pioneered much of the kind of work seen in contemporary theatre and dance in Malaysia today. Five Arts has also done much interdisciplinary and multimedia work, combining theatre, movement, music and the visual arts.

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ABOUT THE GRANTEES

Au Sow Yee graduated with a BFA in 2001 from the Chinese Culture University (Department of Drama in Film and Theatre Section), Taiwan and an MFA in 2004 from the San Francisco Art Institute. Evolving from a film trained artist to making works that cross the discipline of films into other realms, Sow Yee's work is concerned with the revelation of light and 'cinema' itself, and is often times theatrical, especially with her *Performative Cinema Series* which she started working on during her studies in the U.S. Returning in mid-2005 to Kuala Lumpur, she engaged in video collaborations with

theatre artists in events such as *Utih... Celebrating Krishen* (with Soon Choon Mee) and *Break-ing: Pentas Theatre Collaboration Project 2006* (with Loh Kok Man).

Ray Langenbach has a PhD in Art History, Performance Studies and Cultural Studies (2004) from University of Western Sydney. He is a curator, academic, visual artist and performance artist. Ray has exhibited his artworks (including performances) extensively, including at the National Art Gallery of Malaysia, the National Gallery of Singapore, the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the Whitney Museum of Art (New York), Artspace (Sydney), *Kunsthaus* (Glarus, Switzerland), the *Asia Pacific Triennale*, Queensland Art Gallery; and the Gwangju Biennale, amongst others. He is currently Co-Head of the Department of Performance + Media at Sunway University College.

Sharon Chin graduated with a BFA (Sculpture) in 2002 from the Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne. She is a visual artist and freelance writer, and was a recipient of the *KLUE Blue Chili Award* earlier this year. Over the past two years, she has had two solo exhibitions of her work – *Fourth World* (The Australian High Commission, KL) and *Boats & Bridges* (Reka Arts Space), and participated in a number of group exhibitions.

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