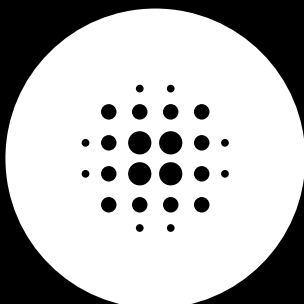


LEARNING FESTIVAL PROGRAMME



16TH - 25TH SEPTEMBER

Online Format

PRESENTED BY FEDERATION OF ASIAN STORYTELLERS



LEARNING FESTIVAL 2022

DAY 1 Focus on Folklore - TALKS

Friday, September 16, *7:00 – 8:00 PM

DR. DANIELA KATO



Japan, Folklore and Nature Creatively Connecting to Place

How do you become of a place, get to know and tell its tales with respect and reverence when you are not from that place? How do you creatively gather and bring alive the remains of local folklore in the face of sweeping social and environmental change?

For nearly two decades now, Japan has been one such place for me. I first caught a whiff of the unruly, mischievous world of its folklore when, as a child, I watched a series of animated cartoon folktales broadcast on Portuguese television in the early 1980s. This was a world inhabited by goblins, ogres, mountain witches and all manner of shape-shifting animals, where human existence was precarious and yet also lived in intimate connection to wild places and the natural cycles of life and death, growth and decay. After I moved to Japan in 2007, I still caught a scent of such wilderness here and there, but its vital signs kept weakening as I settled in the genteel world of academia and began relating to folklore mainly through the lens of literary scholarship. Things took a wild turn when, with the onset of the pandemic, I moved to a small village in northern Yamanashi and retrained as an ecotherapist and shinrin-yoku guide. Ever since, I have been reconnecting to Japan's countryside and its folktales through a series of creative practices of storytelling and community building.

In this talk, by interweaving storytelling, scholarship and personal reflection, we will explore ways of reconnecting to nature and place in an age of increasing uncertainty when much we used to hold true is falling away. While the focus is on Japanese folktales, you will be encouraged to reflect on and connect to your own locality – and thereby to confront these challenges with a renewed sense of purpose and creativity.

ABOUT Daniela Kato

Dr. Daniela Kato is an independent scholar, writer and ecotherapist based in Yamanashi, Japan. She has published widely on the ecology of folk and fairy tales, and is keen to tell old and new stories that inspire audiences to reconnect with the magic of nature in the places where they live.

***All Times are in Singapore time - GMT+7 hours**



LEARNING FESTIVAL 2022

DAY 2 Focus on Folklore - TALKS

Saturday September 17, *7:00 – 8:00 PM



NOR AZHAR ISHAK

'Lipur Lara'

Folklore, fairytales and fables from Malaysia

'Lipur Lara' was the old name of Malay storytelling and the oral tradition practitioners in Malaysia during those days were called 'Penglipur Lara'. Literally it means 'the soother of sorrows'.

A glimpse into the treasures of folklores, fairy tales, fables, myths, legends and wonder tales from the land of Malaysia.

ABOUT Nor Azhar Ishak

Nor Azhar Ishak is an award-winning children's book author and illustrator. He is also a professional educator based at NAI Art Studio, which houses a children's picture book library, an art gallery and a storytelling centre. Recently, Nor Azhar received the inaugural Museum of Picture Book Art Literacy Award 2021 for actively promoting literacy and learning. Two of his works were inductees of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) Honours List 2022.

Nor Azhar has been actively performing in local and international festivals and events as a professional storyteller. He is an avid fan of 'Lipur Lara' (traditional Malaysian storytelling) and loves sharing the country's wealth of beautiful stories with the rest of the world.

***All Times are in Singapore time - GMT+7 hours**



LEARNING FESTIVAL 2022

DAY 3 **WORKSHOP**

Sunday September 18 , * 7:00 – 10:00 PM



LAURA PACKER

Crafting and telling difficult stories

Everyone needs to know they are not alone in their experiences. Whether through personal narrative, traditional material, or fiction, storytelling helps us talk about the difficult things that happen so we can recognize common ground. Sharing these stories requires special attention to the needs of both the teller and the audience. This workshop will help you shape your difficult story so you can tell it safely, so the audience can hear it without worrying about you, and will give you the tools you need for a crafted, powerful story.

ABOUT Laura Packer

Laura Packer knows that the best way to the truth is through a good story. With 30 years of experience, she has used the transformative power of story to entertain, enlighten, coach, heal, help, and consult worldwide. Her passion for deep, effective storytelling has led her to share difficult stories with many audiences and to help hundreds of people craft their own challenging stories. Laura is the author of *"From Audience to Zeal: The ABCs of Finding, Crafting, and Telling a Great Story"* and is the winner of multiple awards for her performance and service, including induction into the National Storytelling Network's Circle of Excellence. She believes that storytelling has the power to heal, connect, and create a more compassionate world. Website link: <https://laurapacker.com>

***All Times are in Singapore time - GMT+7 hours**



LEARNING FESTIVAL 2022

DAY 4 **WORKSHOP**

Tuesday, September 20, *7:00 – 10:00 PM



SHEILA ARNOLD

Folktales, Fairytales & Social Justice

Fairytales can engage us in the imaginary and hopeful. Folktales give us glimpses into cultural thoughts and norms. This session will combine hopes and cultural thoughts to address social justice issues like suicide, PTSD, poverty, immigration, race reconciliation, etc. Hear a story combining a fairy tale and a current issue, and then join a group discussion and brainstorm how we can use the oldest stories as vehicles for awareness and change.

ABOUT Sheila Arnold

Sheila Arnold has been performing since age eight. She presents Storytelling Programs, Historic Character Presentations, Christian Monologues, Professional Development for Educators and Inspirational Speaking for schools, churches and organizations throughout the US. One of Sheila's greatest joys is being the co-founder and Artistic Director of Artists Standing Strong Together (ASST). In the past, she has worked as a Drama Ministry Director, Colonial Williamsburg employee, Substitute Teacher, and Social Worker for aggressive teens with emotional problems. Website link: www.mssheila.org.

***All Times are in Singapore time - GMT+7 hours**



LEARNING FESTIVAL 2022

DAY 5 Focus on Folklore - TALKS

Wednesday, September 21, *7:00 – 8:00 PM



C. MANGALAM SENTHIL & MR. MUTHU CHANDRAN

Lights and Shadows

Traditional Indian Leather puppetry storytelling

Shadow puppetry is a beautiful folk art, widespread in South India, allegedly the motherland of this art; this genre is known by different names and forms in different parts of India like – ***Ravanachhaya, Tholu bommalatta, Togalu gombe atta, Tholpava koothu, Tholpaavaikoothu and Charma bahuli natya.*** In the 45-minute programme, you will glimpse this age-old tradition with a performance by award-winning shadow puppeteer Mr Muthu Chandran from Tamil Nadu, India. He will also be sharing his in-depth knowledge of the art with the participants. Alongside him is FEAST member C.Mangalam Senthil who will share her journey and experiences of doing shadow puppetry.

ABOUT Mr.Muthu Chandran

Award-winning Shadow Puppeteer Mr Muthu Chandran grew up learning the art from gurus, his father, Mr S.Balakrishnan and his grandfather, Mr G.Subbiah Rao. He has staged more than 3000 shows and has an experience of over 31 years to date in the field. He has performed in various art, culture, heritage centres, schools, colleges and festivals. He is gifted with the extraordinary talent of being able to talk in 31 different voices and 2 languages (Marathi & Tamil). His awards include "Kalai Valarmani", "Kalai Mamani", "Veedhi Virindhu", "Pondicherry Art & Culture award", and the "Gold Medal", in addition to being featured in the ACME Book of World Records. He has been featured in all the Tamil newspapers and magazines and "The Hindu". He has performed extensively across TN and many parts of India. His leather puppets dance in the light to the rhythm of his hands, toes, and words. A delight to watch and hear, his performance leaves one mesmerised, asking for more.

***All Times are in Singapore time - GMT+7 hours**

***About C.Mangalam Senthil***

An engineer by education, a trainer by passion and a storyteller and story listener from the heart, Mangalam strongly believes that everyone everywhere is telling stories all the time and that a world of possibilities opens with stories. She is known for bringing the characters to life in her performances. She is a story enthusiast, a Tedx Speaker, a Kolam fanatic, and tells stories under the name of KathaKuteeram. She has performed in the Jharkhand and Chennai festivals and at international platforms with the NSN and ASST. She tells stories in English, Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam and occasionally Sanskrit. She is also currently helping rural students learn English through stories.





LEARNING FESTIVAL 2022

DAY 6 Focus on Folklore - TALKS

Thursday, September 22 * 7:00 – 8:00 PM



DR. MURTI BUNANTA

Crocodiles, Turtles, Snails

Indonesian Folktales as Resources to Respect and Love the Earth

ABOUT Dr. Murti Bunanta

Murti Bunanta is the first person to receive a Doctorate from the University of Indonesia, Jakarta, using research in children's literature as the topic for her dissertation in 1997. She is the founder and president of *The Society for The Advancement of Children's Literature* or *Kelompok Pencinta Bacaan Anak* (established in 1986), a non-profit organization that pioneers various activities to develop children's reading in Indonesia. Murti has written approx 250 essays and given numerous lectures on children's literature, nationally and internationally;

Her Collections of Indonesian Folktales have been published in the USA by Libraries Unlimited entitled *Indonesian Folktales* (2003) and by Groundwood in Canada entitled, *The Tiny Boy and Other Tales from Indonesia* (2013) . She has visited schools and libraries, telling stories in India, South Africa, Iran, Laos, Thailand, Malaysia and Sweden.

***All Times are in Singapore time - GMT+7 hours**



LEARNING FESTIVAL 2022

DAY 7 **WORKSHOP**

Friday September 23, *7:00 – 10:00 PM



WONG SWEE YEAN & LAVANYA PRASAD

SILVER CONNECT

The art of telling stories to seniors

Age is not a barrier to telling one's story. SILVER CONNECT is a comprehensive workshop that gives you the tools to connect with older adults as well as a systematic approach to plan storytelling programmes that develop their abilities.

Explore theatre activities and research on PERSON-CENTRIC arts facilitation and leave with ideas you can use with older adults.

ABOUT Wong Swee Yeon

Wong Swee Yeon was formerly a secondary school teacher teaching students ranging from those with low self-esteem and poor learning abilities to gifted and motivated high achievers. She harnessed the power of stories to transform the lives of young people and in the last 5 years, she has been transforming the lives of older people through workshops on storytelling and story-making. She is a certified facilitator of **Timeslips**, an evidence-based approach to guide persons with dementia to creative story-making and is trained in the person-centred approach to arts facilitation. She has been planning storytelling programmes for older persons to engage with artefacts from museums and to tell stories with confidence. Watch highlights of one of her projects called Grandpa And Grandma Tell You A Story [here.](#)

***All Times are in Singapore time - GMT+7 hours**



LEARNING FESTIVAL 2022

DAY 7 CONT ...

Friday September 23, * 7:00 – 10:00 PM



ABOUT Lavanya Prasad

Lavanya Prasad is an electrical engineer turned professional storyteller who believes she makes better and long-lasting connections through stories than electrical wires. Lavanya has been telling stories professionally since 2011 through her organization Tale'scope and has been invited as a featured teller in many Indian and International storytelling festivals. A trained Bharatanatyam dancer and Carnatic singer, Lavanya's storytelling style seamlessly weaves in its music and movement.

Her project "Roots" with senior citizens, which documents stories of senior members in families and her interactive sessions with them, was acknowledged and appreciated by the Honorable PM of India, Shri. Narendra Modi, in September 2020. Lavanya has been associated with "Silver Talkies" in Bengaluru for the past six years and has done a range of events for the silvers using the person-centric approach. Catch a glimpse of her work [here.](#)

***All Times are in Singapore time - GMT+7 hours**



LEARNING FESTIVAL 2022

DAY 8 **WORKSHOP**

Saturday September 24, * 7:00 – 10:00 PM



DAVID NOVAK

Massaging the Story

This workshop presents David Novak's approach to process and performance for storytellers.

In 'Massaging the Story,' David presents games and exercises designed to challenge thinking and interpretive skills when composing stories for performance. What can we discover in our stories that we have never seen before? What might our stories mean, and what is our reason for telling them? In '**Exercising the Listener**', we consider the listener's experience. What catches their attention? What refreshes their interest? Throughout this master class, participants will be given storytelling 'etudes' and opportunities for 'spot coaching' on varying elements of their stories and performance techniques.

ABOUT David Novak

Highly prized for his ability to bring ancient tales, classic myths, and original stories to life and enthrall audiences of all ages, American storyteller David Novak, is in demand for his school presentations, stage plays, keynotes, and workshops. Smithsonian Magazine describes him as "a gifted teller who enhances his stories with a bag of tricks." Novak is a recipient of the Circle of Excellence for storytelling, and the Aurand Harris Memorial Playwrighting Award for excellence in professional theatre for children. David's 30+ year's experience as a performing and teaching artist includes a stint as Master Storyteller for The Disney Company, tours for The Lincoln Center Institute, L.A. Music Center, and as a featured storyteller for the National Storytelling Festival. www.atellingexperience.com/

***All Times are in Singapore time - GMT+7 hours**



LEARNING FESTIVAL 2022

DAY 9 **WORKSHOP**

Sunday September 25, *10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

ETH-NOH-TEC

Moving Stories

Your Face, Body and Voice Tell the Tales

How do our bodies tell stories? Where do we begin? ... with our hands, our arms, facial gestures, even our body stances? This workshop explores the creativity between words and action using the language of the body, energy dynamics, and theatrical technique. It's action packed, fun-filled with dramatic, musical, and creative movement processes that will offer new approaches to performing exciting, "three dimensional" storytelling.



ABOUT Nancy Wang and Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo

Nancy Wang and Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo have developed a unique style of storytelling that weaves music, dance, rhythmic dialogue, lively facial expressions and the spoken word to present ancient and contemporary Asian stories to adults and children nationally and internationally.

Their mission is to create art that heals the divides within us and between us. To carry out this mission, Eth-Noh-Tec builds cultural bridges that celebrate diversity and create compassionate communities through interdisciplinary narrative art forms focusing on themes of social justice.

***All Times are in Singapore time - GMT+7 hours**