

FOUR SHORT FILMS BY HOMEGROWN DIRECTORS ON OUR REFRESHED SINGAPORE DREAM

1. **Singapore, 9 November 2023** – Homegrown Singaporean film directors – Boo Junfeng, K. Rajagopal, Siyou Tan and Roslee Yusof – have each directed a short film to encourage Singaporeans to reflect on key issues raised during the Forward Singapore (Forward SG) exercise, and highlight how everyone has a role to play in building Singapore’s shared future together. The four films will be launched today on Our SG and Gov.sg’s social media platforms.

2. The four films articulate the aspirational possibilities of Singaporeans embracing the new social compact; it fleshes out the importance of recognising new definitions of success, respecting different pathways, taking care of our career health through lifelong learning, active ageing, and supporting our neighbours and communities. The stories are presented in everyday scenarios, which are familiar and relatable to viewers.

3. Boo Junfeng’s “Beautiful Dreamer” is about Leong, a taxi driver, who discovers his granddaughter Kai’s passion for music and grapples with his own unfulfilled dreams. As he supports Kai’s aspirations, they both find solace and connection in Kai’s pursuit of her passions, reflecting how Singaporeans can embrace learning beyond grades to fulfil their potential and realise their dreams.

4. K. Rajagopal’s “In the Pipeline” seeks to challenge conventional ideals of success and stereotypes of jobs for women and skilled labour in Singapore today. The protagonist, Vanessa, is an apprentice plumber who shows how a skilled worker’s path is just as valued and meaningful in its own way.

5. Siyou Tan's "The Machine" showcases how modern-day fathers now play a more active role in the upbringing of their children. A young father, Hari, is caught between the demands of his job and his desire to be more present for his daughter, Deepa. In the film, Hari and the community come together to support Deepa in her pursuits.
6. Roslee Yusof's "Masih (Always)" is a romantic short film that features a grumpy retiree named Jufri. With time on his hands, his deaf daughter, Aisyah, signs him up for active-ageing courses against his will. Initially reluctant, a spritely elderly lady, Su helps him find a sense of independence and a love for the silver years ahead of him.
7. The full synopsis of the four films, Directors' notes, and film stills can be found in the Annexes.
8. To view more ideas proposed by Singaporeans during the Forward SG exercise, and explore opportunities where you can engage or partner the Government, visit the Forward SG website at www.forwardsingapore.gov.sg and the various Our SG social media platforms below.

 www.facebook.com/oursingapore | @oursingapore

 www.instagram.com/our_sg | @our_sg

 www.youtube.com/c/oursg | @oursg

 www.linkedin.com/company/oursg | @oursg

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Annex A**ABOUT THE FILMS****Beautiful Dreamer by Boo Junfeng**

Leong, is an elderly taxi driver who loves opera but never got the chance to pursue his passion. His priority in life is to provide for his family. His granddaughter Kai, an aspiring singer-songwriter, decides to enrol into an arts college. While driving her to an audition, he tries to persuade her to pursue more stable pathways, like becoming a teacher or lawyer. However, he changes his mind when he chances upon Kai's soulful performance at the audition. Her adaptation of the song, Beautiful Dreamer, speaks of her desire to live her dreams, reminding Leong of his own forgotten dreams. He realises Kai should be supported and given the space and opportunity to pursue her dreams.

Director's note: "I draw inspiration from the generations preceding mine — my parents and grandparents — whose life priorities and purpose differed from my own. While it took some effort to persuade them of my aspiration to become a filmmaker, I am always grateful for the foundations they laid, enabling me to pursue my dreams."

In the Pipeline by K. Rajagopal

"In the Pipeline" is a film that encourages viewers to reconsider their perspectives towards jobs that are often overlooked or under-respected in society. Meet Vanessa, a young aspiring plumber who defies convention and pursues her passion for fixing things. Working for Teck, an experienced colleague in a small plumbing company, she gains invaluable experience under his mentorship. Teck, a no-nonsense and down-to-earth boss, guides and influences Vanessa's professional journey. Her enthusiasm for plumbing is unwavering, even in the face of prejudice from peers and work-related hurdles. Determined to enhance her skills, she bids and acquires a significant industrial contract, commanding the respect and recognition of those around her.

Director's note: "The film challenges stereotypes of jobs for women and skilled labour. It highlights how a skilled worker's path is just as valued in its own way, and how these workers are making worthy contributions to society. The film encourages viewers to re-evaluate notions of success, while emphasising the importance of passion through genuine connections."

The Machine by Siyou Tan

In "The Machine", Hari is caught between the demands of his job and his desire to be more present in his daughter's life. He wants to be a parent who is actively involved in his children's upbringing. His daughter, Deepa, is struggling on her latest project to build a plant-watering machine. This presents the perfect opportunity to prove himself as a father. Through the film, we see how Hari and the community come together to support Deepa in her pursuits. Fuelled by the encouragement she receives, Deepa's confidence grows, and so does Hari's relationship with his daughter. This heartwarming film highlights how the care and support from the community empowers the individual.

Director's note: "I believe in the strength of our communities, and the connections with our neighbours and families – of origin and of choice. Can we have progress without losing our kampung spirit? I believe so. With the support of our village, we can raise the next generation of leaders, thinkers and dreamers."



Masih (Always) by Roslee Yusof



Masih is a romantic short film that features Jufri, a grumpy retiree. With time on his hands, his deaf daughter, Aisyah, signs him up for active-ageing courses against his will. Initially reluctant, he comes around and looks forward to the activities, thanks in part to fellow participant, Su. Her enthusiasm and optimism prove to be contagious. However, a medical condition becomes an unexpected setback to Jufri. With the support and encouragement of Su and Aisyah, Jufri is able to overcome these challenges. He develops a new-found sense of independence and a love for the silver years ahead of him.

Director's note: "Who looks forward to ageing? Not many people will look to it as a time of discovery and learning, and as an opportunity to reconnect with all things precious. One challenge I faced was adjusting to working with the hearing impaired. I needed to find new non-verbal ways to give the cast the assurance that they were doing great. This was an enlightening experience for me!"

Annex B



DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHIES

| Director's Name and Photo | Biography |
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| <p data-bbox="320 394 501 421">Boo Junfeng</p>  | <p data-bbox="644 394 1390 730">Junfeng's debut film, <i>Sandcastle</i> (2010), was the first Singapore film invited to Cannes Critics' Week. His second feature, <i>Apprentice</i> (2016) premiered at Cannes Un Certain Regard and was shown at over 90 festivals worldwide. It was Singapore's 2017 official entry for the Academy Awards Best Foreign Language Film category. His early short films include <i>A Family Portrait</i> (2004), <i>Katong Fugue</i> (2007), <i>Keluar Baris</i> (2008) and <i>Tanjong Rhu</i> (2009).</p> <p data-bbox="644 779 1390 1115">In 2008, he became the inaugural recipient of the McNally Award for Excellence in the Arts – the valedictorian honour of Lasalle College of the Arts. He was also accorded the Young Artist Award (2009) by the National Arts Council and the Singapore Youth Award (2011) by the National Youth Council. In 2018 and 2021, he served as Creative Director for Singapore's National Day Parade. He is also presently the Chairperson of the Board of Singapore International Film Festival.</p> |
| <p data-bbox="320 1171 501 1198">K. Rajagopal</p>  | <p data-bbox="644 1171 1390 1462">K. Rajagopal is an experienced storyteller in the mediums of films, documentaries and television commercials with over 30 different series exploring a wide range of subjects such as the compromise of welfare, security and human rights across Southeast Asia. He is a recipient of the Singapore Film Commission New Feature Talent Grant, and his commercial works have garnered over 60 million views collectively.</p> <p data-bbox="644 1512 1390 1933">His films, <i>I Can't Sleep Tonight</i> (1995), <i>The Glare</i> (1996) and <i>Absence</i> (1997) have been featured at international festivals. He had a retrospective of his short films at the National Museum in 2010. His short film, <i>The Flame</i>, was also part of the SG50 Media Development Authority-commissioned project titled <i>7 Letters</i> (2015). His first feature film, <i>A Yellow Bird</i> (2016), had its world premiere at the Cannes Film Festival and Asian premiere at the Busan International Film Festival. He recently worked on a live cinema project titled <i>Pompeii</i> for the Singapore International Arts Festival.</p> |

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| <p>Siyou Tan</p>  | <p>Siyou Tan’s short films <i>Hello Ahma</i> (2019) and <i>Strawberry Cheesecake</i> (2021) played at festivals such as the Berlinale, Toronto, Locarno, among others.</p> <p>Siyou is currently developing her first feature film, <i>Amoeba</i>, with the support of the Hubert Bals Fund and TorinoFilmLab’s ScriptLab. To date, <i>Amoeba</i> has been awarded the Most Promising Project at the Southeast Asian Film Lab, and the Open SEA Fund Award at Thailand’s SEAFIC. Most recently, it was selected at the 2023 Berlinale Co-Production Market and the Far East Film Festival’s 2023 Focus Asia, where it won the TAICCA/Focus Asia Co-production Award.</p> |
| <p>Roslee Yusof</p>  | <p>Roslee has been in the filmmaking industry for 25 years. Prior to his role as a film director, he has done almost every production job in between, from driver, production assistant, grip, soundman to Director of Photography. Having never formally studied filmmaking, his approach tends to be unconventional.</p> <p>His body of work ranges from beverages to military films for clients globally, such as Coca-Cola, Budweiser, Tiger Beer, Income, Singapore Airlines, Lazada, Singapore Tourism Board and Apple. His works have won awards from around the world including D&AD, Cannes and Spikes Asia. He has also won the Director of the Year at the Gong Show for the past seven consecutive years.</p> |

Annex C

FILM STILLS AND CAPTIONS

| Photos | Caption |
|---|---|
| Beautiful Dreamer by Boo Junfeng | |
|  | <p>Leong (Johnny Ng), a devoted grandfather who supports his granddaughter Kai (Alexis Elisabeth Chew) in the pursuit of her dreams despite his initial scepticism.</p> |
|  | <p>Kai (Alexis Elisabeth Chew), a music-lover, chasing her dream to become a singer.</p> |
|  | <p>Leong (Johnny Ng) imagines an alternate reality where he and Kai (Alexis Elisabeth Chew) perform Beautiful Dreamer together on a grand stage.</p> |

In the Pipeline by K. Rajagopal



Vanessa (Lim Shi An) prepares herself to tackle her next plumbing challenge.



Teck (Chen Tian Wen) interviews Vanessa (Lim Shi An) for her apprenticeship.



Vanessa (Lim Shi An) contemplates whether the path towards being a skilled plumber is truly the right one for her.

The Machine by Siyou Tan



Deepa (Kyira Tshana Tharmarajah) is disappointed as her father, Hari (Bada Jabari), is distracted with his work call.



Hari (Bada Jabari) and Deepa (Kyira Tshana Tharmarajah) working together on the plant-watering machine.



The whole family looks at Deepa (Kyira Tshana Tharmarajah) with pride after her machine goes off without a hitch.

Masih (Always) by Roslee Yusof



Jufri (Zakaria Bin Jalil) often cooks fried rice for Su (Zaliha Binte Abdul Hamid).



Love is in the air as Jufri (Zakaria Bin Jalil) and Su (Zaliha Binte Abdul Hamid) spend time in a chair yoga class.



Su (Zaliha Binte Abdul Hamid) reminisces the happy times she shared with her family.