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1. Message from The Substation’s Chairman

Dear Friends,

2019/20 was a busy year with a record number of visitors to the Substation. We owe this to certain particularly robust partnerships and programmes that led to over 26,000 visitors. Considering the experimental nature of programming at the Substation, this degree of traffic is promising, as it signals that the public is open to engaging with creative communities that may be found not just within the mainstream.

2020 saw our 6th generation of co-artistic directors, Ms Raka Maitra and Dr Woon Tien Wei, take programming in a refreshing direction. 2020 also marks our 30th anniversary, but all our major plans for a grand festival under the theme of 'in the margins' had to be rescheduled to a timetable and constraints imposed by the pandemic. Theatres in Singapore complied with shutdowns and the Substation relied on digital platforms to continue. However, our new web series 'Isolation' was a success. It featured 18 original works by local artists that garnered 48,715 views.

Moreover, we continue to hold small workshops and exhibitions at our venue in order to support the local arts community. Thus, our vision of nurturing young creatives is very much alive in spite of the obstacles we have faced.

Our financial performance in the last financial year exceeded our expectations it should be pointed out, though the gain in absolute terms was still modest. Earned revenue from our primary hirer Timbre proved a reliable base. While our fundraising efforts were not as successful as we had hoped, we did well in the venue hire of our spaces. These coupled with our CMF funding, has resulted in a modest net surplus for the financial year. Nonetheless, we still face a dire situation ahead in the light of the ravages of the Covid pandemic in our new financial year. The task ahead is therefore urgent and poses an existential challenge, and we will strenuously pursue major gift donors for the new financial year.

On behalf of The Substation Board and staff, I want to thank all the artists, collaborators, donors and visitors who have continued to engage with and support our very special institution.

Chew Kheng Chuan Chairman

[Signature]
2. Artistic Directors’ Message

In March 2020, we saw our city project, A Public Square, coming to a full circle with a return to on the physical site of The Substation. A Public Square ended with the 're-presenting' of a 1995 event, Space, Spaces, Spacing conference to reopen the conversation around public space and the public sphere. Bringing new ideas and attitudes 25 years later re-enter conversations that are still relevant today.

A Public Square's ideological and physical return to the Substation is timely as a precursor of what is coming. From 2020, we wish to initiate the discourse on the arts through the lens of The Substation' being here' for 30 years. Not so much to historizing but to unpack larger questions that the arts face today through the 'here' of The Substation.

Our contribution to the arts is offering a space dedicated to openness and space for the community to collectivise. As our arts scene is maturing, the success in the arts is defined more narrowly. We are losing more of this spirit of openness and diversity as a result. The Substation value diversity, inclusiveness and art's engagement with society. We believe that art need spaces that allow play, experimentation and dialogue between artworks, artists and the audience to take place. It is this sense of 'openness' which facilitate communities to grow and is instrumental in creating a healthy and resilient arts ecosystem. Our work is somewhere between the making of a home and the making of place that we seek to find a way in navigating and rebuilding the brokenness of the world. We strive to turn towards community making and collective learning through our Associate Artists Programme, Sandbox and Arts Education Programme.

Woon Tien Wei
Co-Artistic Director
2. Artistic Directors’ Message

I envision The Substation as an interface between the artists and the wider Singapore community, an incubator for innovation and creativity for young creatives. The Substation is an arts space for everyone. In my vision the independent avant garde cannot be separate from the concerns of every person from all walks of life. To nurture this dialogic space organically, I have installed specific themes for each year.

- 2020- In the margins – takes a closer look at the stories of the marginalised, displaced and forgotten communities.

- 2021- ‘the art of the ordinary’ – the focus will be on folk and the street arts of the region.

- 2022- The moving traditions – the focus will be on interdisciplinary contemporary works developed from traditional forms.

Raka Maitra
Co-Artistic Director
3. About Us

3.1 Company Overview

The Substation was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee on 26th September 1995. It was registered under the Charities Act on 5th December 1995.

UEN: 199506857R
Registered Address: 45 Armenian Street
Singapore 179936
Charity Registration: 1138
IPC Number: IPC000254
IPC Status: Valid from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2020

Board of Directors: The Board of Directors as of 31 March 2019:
1) Chew Kheng Chuan
2) Paul Khoo
3) Annabelle Yip
4) Edmund Wee
5) Wahyuni Hadi
6) Tan Tarn How
7) Jean-Louis Morisot
8) Terence Chong
9) Jiarong Goh

Advisor to the Board Sally J. Clarke
Company Secretary: KC Corporate Solutions
Banker: DBS Bank Limited
Auditor: Prudential PAC (appointed in July 2013)

The Substation was founded in 1990 by the late dramatist Kuo Pao Kun as a unique, independent space for Singapore contemporary art combining theatre, gallery, classrooms and a dance studio with experienced artistic direction and production support. It is committed to the spirit of experimentation, the value of diversity, the power of critical dialogue and the development of professional artistic practices.
3.2 Contact Information

The Substation
45 Armenian Street
Singapore 179936
Phone: +65 6337 7535

Website: www.substation.org
Email: admin@substation.org
3.3 The Substation’s Artistic Mission & Activities:

To be a critical and rigorous developmental space for interdisciplinary contemporary art practice in the context of Singapore and the region through active partnerships, collaborations and dialogues with diverse artists and communities.

Activities

Every year The Substation presents an overarching artistic theme that informs the exhibitions, programmes and initiatives for the year. Each of these programmes explores in greater detail the questions posed by the artistic theme and the societal issues surrounding these questions.

Through these annual artistic themes, The Substation expands, leads and supports cultural conversations in Singapore, engaging the general public and exposing them to the full possibilities of contemporary art in shaping public discourse.

Additionally, The Substation serves as a platform for other artists, students, cultural producers and the occasional corporate event through our venue hire programme. The black box theatre, gallery, classrooms and dance studio are all available for hire during off-season. Subsidised pricing is available for non-profit and arts-related hirers.

The Substation actively participates in arts community dialogue about policy, issues and challenges.
4. Leadership

4.1 Board of Directors

Chew Kheng Chuan (Board Chairman, Fundraising Committee)  
**Joined: 28 September 1995**

KC is Chairman of The Substation. He is a consultant in philanthropy and Chairman of the Harvard Alumni Interviewing Committee for Singapore. He was educated at the Anglo-Chinese School, and Harvard University (AB 1982 Social Studies). He has previously held senior development positions Nanyang Technological University and National University of Singapore, and was founder and Managing Director of Wordmaker Design, a consultancy in corporate communications.

Paul Khoo (Finance Committee – former Chair appointed 11 April 2015, and Corporate Outreach Committee)  
**Joined: 6 September 2010**

Paul Khoo teaches cultural policy and creative industries at ADM, Nanyang Technological University. He also writes extensively on Indonesian art history. Previous experience includes strategy, corporate mergers and acquisitions, management turnarounds, and distressed debt trading. He was educated at Stanford, the University of Chicago, and LaSalle College of the Arts.

Annabelle Yip (HR Committee)  
**Joined: 8 March 2012**

Annabelle is partner at WongPartnership and co-heads its Corporate Governance and Compliance Practice. She has been a practising corporate lawyer in Singapore for many years and writes and speaks on corporate governance topics in the course of her work and has a keen interest in sustainability and corporate responsibility.

Edmund Wee (HR Committee)  
**Joined: 8 March 2013**

A psychologist turned journalist turned design agency founder, Edmund Wee is today the managing and creative director of Epigram. The agency’s work ranges from corporate collaterals, magazines and newsletters to corporate and retail identities and environmental wayfinding and signage. It is also a publisher of Epigram books.

Wahyuni Hadi (Programme Committee)  
**Joined: 30 March 2015**

Yuni is a film producer and curator known for her promotion of Singapore cinema. She is Artistic Director of Objectifs and Executive Director of Singapore International Film Festival. Her career began in the visual arts and she has since worked as Senior Programme Manager (Film) at The Substation and Commissioning Editor at Mediacorp TV12. She also co-founded Fly By Night Video Challenge with filmmaker Tan Pin Pin in 2003. In 2008-2009, she headed the Singapore International Film Festival as festival director. Yuni was a Co-Producer of Anthony Chen’s *Ilo Ilo* (winner of the Camera d’Or at the 66th Cannes Film Festival and winner of four Golden Horse Awards including Best Feature Film). She rejoined the festival as Executive Director in 2014.
Tan Tarn How (Programme Committee)  
**Joined: 17 August 2016**

Tan Tarn How is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Policy Studies. His research areas are in arts and cultural policy and media and Internet policy. He has written on the development of the arts in Singapore, in particular, fostering partnerships between the people, private and public sectors; the creative industries in Singapore, China and Korea; cultural policy in Singapore; and arts censorship. He has also carried out research on the management and regulation of media in Singapore; the impact of the Internet and social media on society; the role of new and old media in the 2008 Malaysian election and the 2006 and 2011 Singapore elections; and the way in which the Internet and social media has influenced the development of civil society and democratic development. He has also been a teacher and television scriptwriter, and is a playwright and arts activist. Tarn How also writes for IPS The Angle series.

Jean-Louis Morisot (Finance Committee Chair – appointed 5 December 2017, Corporate Outreach Committee)  
**Joined: 17 January 2017**

Based in Singapore since 1994, Jean-Louis is co-founder and director of Fondation la Roche Jacquelin, a non-profit foundation for the promotion of Southeast Asian art in Europe. Chief operating officer and co-founder of Proa Partners Pte Ltd, an institutional long-only fund manager based in Singapore and investing in Asia ex-Japan equities. Jean-Louis previously worked as a managing director, Global investment research, Goldman Sachs where he was responsible for transportation/infrastructure equity research in the Asia-Pacific region. B.A. McGill University (Montreal, Canada), postgraduate degrees (Maîtrise and DEA) in political philosophy from University of Paris, Sorbonne.

Terence Chong (Programme Committee)  
**Joined: 1 November 2017**

Terence Chong is Deputy Director-designate at the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute (ISEAS). He is Head of the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre at ISEAS. He has a BA (First Class) in History from the University of Leeds and a PhD in Sociology from the University of Warwick. His research interests include heritage, arts and cultural policies, and politics in Singapore, new Chinese immigrants in CLMV countries, and Christianity in Southeast Asia. Chong has won several research grants, the latest being the Social Science Research Thematic Grant worth over $600,000 to research Christian growth in the region.

Jiarong Goh (Corporate Outreach Committee)  
**Joined: 27 September 2018**

Born in Singapore, Jiarong Goh completed her Bachelor of Arts (Architectural Studies) in 2008, followed on a Masters in Architecture (Design) in 2010 at the National University of Singapore. With keen interest in conservation and adaptive re-use, she has worked on cultural and residential architecture projects in Singapore and its region. She has been with studioMilou Singapore as a Senior Architectural Associate since 2011, and has been closely involved in several key projects of the studio, such as the National Gallery, Singapore, and international projects in Vietnam and Hong Kong.
Sally J. Clarke (Corporate Outreach Committee)
Advisor to the Board
Joined: 14 February 2019
Sally J. Clarke has led award-winning global marketing and communication teams at the world’s largest financial technology firms with market valuations exceeding 35 billion USD. Sally was a Director at the Singapore Institute of International Affairs and graduated from LaSalle/ University of London with an MA in Asian Art Histories. In 2014, she received the LaSalle Incubator Fund biannual award for an online arts e-commerce company she co-founded and successfully exited from in 2017. Sally has curated exhibitions, lectured on Asian contemporary arts, is a published writer and member of the Singapore Press Club Management Committee. In 2018, she formed part of the LitUp Asia festival and Art and Action: Contemporary Art and Discourse in Southeast Asia organising committees. In 2019, she founded Asian Art Advisory, a firm providing strategic brand growth and communications consultancy for the creative industries. Further qualifications include an MA International Finance, University of Barcelona and a BA (Hons) majoring in economics.
4.2 Management Team & Staff

**Raka Maitra (Co-Artistic Director)**

Raka Maitra is a classically trained Odissi dancer. A disciple of Odissi dancer Madhavi Mudgal at the classical music and dance institution Gandhrva Mahavidyalay in New Delhi, India, Raka was awarded the Shringarmani, a national level award for Odissi. She has also undergone intensive studies in Serraikella Chhau under Sashadhar Acharya at Triveni Kala Sangam in New Delhi, India.

Through her 26-year practice, Raka has explored the notion of ‘Asian Culture’ through contemporary dance, the basis of her movement is both martial arts and classical Indian dance. As described by dance scholar Dr. Stephanie Burridge, “with great courage and perhaps audacity, Raka has stepped outside safe boundaries and blurred the lines of tradition.” As Dance Europe stated, “Maitra is without doubt a dancer of the 21st century.”

In 2007, Raka founded Chowk Productions, the company produces contemporary and classical dance works, as well as offers dance classes and research opportunities. Chowk has performed at festivals around the world including The Kennedy Centre, in Washington DC, USA, (2017), Fest’Hiver in Avignon, France (2016), and multiple engagements at Ten Days on the Island, Tasmania.

**Woon Tien Wei (Co-Artistic Director)**

Woon Tien Wei is an artist/curator. His work focuses on cultural policies, collectivity in art, social movements, community engagement, land contestation, urban legends, and social movements.


Tien’s projects have been featured in the Jakarta Biennale (2015), Unearthed at the Singapore Art Museum (2014), and documenta 11 (2002). He is a regular participant in regional talks and conferences including the ‘International Conference of Sustainable Art: Creative Collaboration as Catalyst for Change,’ Bamboo Curtain and Treasure Hill Artist Village, Taipei, Taiwan (2018), and CIMAM 2017 Annual Conference, Singapore. Tien received a Doctorate of Creative Arts from Curtin University in 2012.

**Loh Alk Khoon (General Manager)**

Aik Khoon joined the organisation in February 2020. His responsibilities include operations, HR, finance, governance and compliance, fundraising and sponsorship, donor management and Board liaison. Aik Khoon’s background includes media
management and production, strategic planning and education, in both public and private sectors. He holds a Masters in Mass Communication from NTU, Singapore.

**Organisational structure**
The Substation has a flat hierarchical structure. All staff are accountable to, or work with other staff. Below are the positions and a brief description:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsible for</th>
<th>Reporting to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Artistic Director (AD)</td>
<td>Artistic direction, integrity and moral/civil position</td>
<td>Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Manager (GM)</td>
<td>Financial performance, organisational management, corporate governance, communications, PR and marketing</td>
<td>Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Managers</td>
<td>Programming all events in association with AD. Manage programme budgets with GM</td>
<td>AD &amp; GM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility Manager (FM)</td>
<td>Building maintenance, technical production, general administration, office management</td>
<td>GM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venue Coordinator – permanent, part-time</td>
<td>Venue rentals, VIP event coordination, invoicing</td>
<td>FM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts – Outsourced to KC Corporate Solutions</td>
<td>Accounting, Payroll, receipts – all financial applications</td>
<td>GM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technicians</td>
<td>Building maintenance, technical theatre production</td>
<td>FM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duty Officer</td>
<td>Building security and after hours coordination of hirers and bookings</td>
<td>FM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caretaker – permanent, part-time</td>
<td>Building cleanliness or orderliness</td>
<td>FM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Highlights from the Year

5.1 The year in brief

Cultural Question/Theme for 2019/20

Our 2019/20 programme titled *A Public Square* looks at how our physical spaces reflect or extend our ideas and attitudes about the public sphere. Public space is always contested. In Singapore, public space and infrastructure is dominated, on one hand, by the logic of capitalism and real estate; on the other, nation-building and the new-fangled language of placemaking.

Our foray into the public begins with the newly pedestrianised First Botanic Gardens @ Armenian Street in front of The Substation. We can call this a public space—but what does it mean? Is it a park? A pedestrian corridor? An event space for pop-ups or festivals? Perhaps a public square?

Through a year-long journey with artists, designers, and writers, we explore claims, tensions and contradictions through our interaction and challenges to the public space in front of The Substation.
Building & Engaging Audiences

For the year 2019/20, The Substation’s programming engaged audiences in the various disciplines, committed to meeting our Major Company Bridging objectives with quality content to all our stakeholders, and keeping The Substation relevant and important as an independent and developmental partner in the arts ecosystem.

Our programmes continue to bring in a healthy mix of attendees, with our percentage almost 50/50 in terms of new versus prior visitorship. Professionals (PMET) and students continue to make up the bulk of our audience. The attendance for our internal programming for the FY ending Mar 2020 was 13,253. This is a significant decline from the more than 17,000 in 2018, in part due to the onset of the COVID-19 crisis in February which affected the key events Stealing Public Spaces exhibition in February and Space, Spaces, Spacing Conference in March. The programming for 2019 was also very tightly curated, which meant a reduction in the number of programmes presented, focusing instead on quality and authenticity to the theme.

Our 2019 programme titled *A Public Square* looks at how our physical spaces reflect or extend our ideas and attitudes about the public sphere. Public space is always contested. In Singapore, public space and infrastructure is dominated, on one hand, by the logic of capitalism and real estate; on the other, nation-building and the new-fangled language of placemaking. As part of A Public Square conversation, our Concerned Citizen Programme (CCP) asked the questions of How does one define agency? How do social structures and built environments affect gender and class-consciousness? What is the definition of a safe space? The response from visitors was encouraging.

**Visitor Survey Questions on A Public Square conversation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>% of Yes Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did the event increase your understanding of public space in Singapore?</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was challenged and/or learned something new.</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was a sense of energy with the other event attendees.</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will be talking about this event with others.</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some aspects of the event resonated with me on a personal level.</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total audience for The Substation for 2019/20: 13,253**
5.2 Support for The Substation

The Substation relies on multiple funding sources for its operations. Through a combination of private and government grants, venue rental income, private foundations and individual donations, The Substation has been a home for arts in Singapore for 29 years.

In calendar year 2019, donations to The Substation were eligible for a 250% tax exception.

Major institutional and foundation funding supporters in 2019/20 included:
Cultural Matching Fund
National Arts Council

Major corporate sponsors in 2019/20

There were no major corporate sponsors for 2019/20.

Major Individual Donors

We would like to thank our private donors who have given generously over the past year to support The Substation and our programmes.
5.3 Supporting Arts and the Community (to be updated with venue hire details)

The Substation has a long history of service in Singapore and is seen as a leader in the local arts community. Independent artists, students and non-profit organisations continue to get support of The Substation through the subsidised use of our venue with discounted rental rates reserved for arts groups and related activities. Commercial organisations have also found The Substation as an interesting venue for some of the events, because of the rawness and unpretentious nature of our spaces, and hired our spaces at commercial rates as well.

Some of the groups and individuals we have supported in 2019/20 include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adele Goh</th>
<th>Japan Foundation Asia Centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aristotle</td>
<td>JAZZ ARTISTRY MOVEMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Speaks Studio</td>
<td>Nick Zavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belle Epoque</td>
<td>No Two Alike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLDC</td>
<td>NTU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAGEMATCH 2019</td>
<td>Pagesetters Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chan Hon Weng</td>
<td>Patricia Caleibero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi Balance</td>
<td>Rachel Willis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Nagel</td>
<td>Sarah Thursday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative Performance</td>
<td>Shaiful Risan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing Neutrons</td>
<td>Smallshop Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eletronics &amp; Engineering Pte Ltd</td>
<td>SMU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellie Lashiotaki</td>
<td>Symmetry Entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faust International Youth Theatre Pte Ltd</td>
<td>Tate Anzur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flamenco</td>
<td>Tessa Tan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUESS?</td>
<td>ThinkAds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hatch Blue</td>
<td>Voice Whisperer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haven Arts</td>
<td>Zhao Wei Films</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hole In The Wall</td>
<td>Voice Whisperer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huang Zhen Wen</td>
<td>Zhao Wei Films</td>
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5.4 Programmes & Activity

Parky McParkface Naming Competition
9 July - 31 August 2019

Boaty McBoatface was the winning suggestion in a disastrous naming poll for a presumably important boat. From Marina Bay to Budget Terminal, botched renaming and rebranding initiatives are something of a tradition in Singapore. Has the public proved itself untrustworthy?

The Substation humbly places its faith in the public by offering the chance to name what does not belong to us—the newly pedestrianised space in front of the building, formerly known as Armenian Street.

A total of 258 park names were submitted for the contest and with 711 total votes. (The voting mechanism allowed only one vote per email address.) The winning name brought in 252 votes.

The Competition Winning Name: “Park Tor Garden for the Upward Population Growth of Singapore to Combat an Inverted Population Triangle and Rejuvenate Our Slowing Economy Regardless of Race, Language or Religion”
Rejets
17 July - 5 August 2019, Open Call
29 - 31 August 2019, Exhibition

The Salon des Refusés was a famed exhibition of works rejected by the authorising Paris Salon in 1863. Inspired by a recent rejection, The Substation commemorated Night Fest 2019 with a celebration of rejection.

An Open Call kicked things off in July: “If you’ve ever submitted a painting for a prize or show and been rejected, WE WANT YOU! If you’ve ever submitted a proposal to an organisation (The Substation included) and been rejected, We want YOU!”

The Open Call yielded a very healthy response with 70 applicants submitting their work. Audience numbers were exceptionally high, 6411, as the exhibition took place over Night Fest. The event must have struck a nerve as it brought in quite a bit of feedback:

“Best show yet.”

“This idea of an exhibition is refreshing and counter-cultural! Good job Alan and Substation team! :)

“Cool idea. I felt like a spectator + participant of an ‘event’ (in art terms) like a performance piece but not really. Thank you, it’s fresh!"

“Please make this a yearly series! More rejects please!”
In 2017, the Concerned Citizens Programme invited participants to turn their attention to the city, and how its physical structures inevitably control its inhabitants.

This year’s programme returns to shine its attention on the cities’ inhabitants, and to focus on themes of spatial integration and social mobility. Led by artist-mentor Cheong Kah Kit, it tackles questions such as: How does one define agency? How do social structures and built environments affect gender and class-consciousness? What is the definition of a safe space?

Open to practitioners from both arts and non-arts backgrounds, the programme had 30 applicants from an open call process. Of these, six were selected to undergo a series of lectures by invited guests and close mentoring with selected industry practitioners Kin Chui, Nurul Huda Rashid, and Alvin Tan, to help bring their works-in-progress or proposals to fruition.

The selected participants for this 4-month intensive mentorship include: Jocelyn Chng, Amanda Lim, Jaclyn Chong, Kristian-Marc James Paul, Mumtaz Md Kadir, Mysara Aljaru, and ila.
Navigating the margins between power relations and cultural difference, the exhibition *Space Oddities* gestured to the spaces known as alter, inter, or in-between, which exist—or persist—alongside what Homi Bhabha refers to as ‘the spirit of alternate or otherness’, where their occupants contour themselves into shapes and postures—less easily definable than the discourse they may represent, or participate in.

Artists Zhiyi Cao and Divaagar articulated such a contouring—of subcultures and minority communities, of being disavowed and disallowed. Negotiating how the need for space is, so very often, not met with permissiveness but deeper than that, denied legitimacy, their works enact the in-betweenness inherent within systems of encounter in posture and place.

The exhibition took place over a two-week period in July and August with 377 visitors attending. Feedback included:
“Very Good Programming and curatorial essay”

“Good and interactive”

“Brochure added a depth to perception of this space that I didn't expect to have”

“Curation and artwork/exhibition descriptions were so much better than the actual works in their communications”

SAD BAR
9 - 31 July 2019, 1st Cycle Open Call
November & December 2019, 1st Cycle Programmes
The Substation hosted another Open Call offering the basement SAD Bar space for members of public to unleash a conversation on public space through an event. Whether film screening, literary reading, or forum, all the applicant need do was send in a proposal. The only catch was the event must be in line with our programme theme of A Public Square.

The first cycle of the Open call is complete and of the 33 submissions the following three programmes were selected and will take place in the coming months:

Rules of Engagement (Amelia Abdullahsani & Merryn Trevethan) An exhibition-event that engages the implicit rules of the art world as related to public spaces. 20 artists are invited to respond to the theme of A Public Square. Artists and audience are both asked to comply to the Rules of Engagement.
Hello, How Do You Move? (Rachel Nip Oi Ting & Ammar) A site-specific dance performance created by Ammar, a deaf choreographer, dancer and filmmaker and Rachel Nip, a hearing dancer, choreographer. This project explores how people of varying abilities can communicate and express ourselves through movement and the senses.

Red Thread (Sonia Kwek & Ila) A mole, a scar, the stretch marks that have been with you in secret carry with them different stories of traumas and triumphs and this is the time to share it within a public space. This interactive performance invites you to break away from the discomforts and shame of your body and reclaim the parts which are unique only to you.
**Touch Me, Touch Me Not** (Natalia Tan) invites artists and designers from various creative fields to respond to hostile design and the politics of space in Singapore. The show features wearables, installations, and performances that riff on the theme of personal space, exclusivity, reclaiming our right to public space, and what it means to have an unassailable sense of belonging and ownership.

**BlackKajiXtra Nusasonic**  
20-21 July 2019

BlackKaji offered its most provocative edition to date with *BlackKajiXtra–Nusasonic*. Featuring two packed nights of music and discourse, this edition was presented in collaboration with Nusasonic, following its successful debut in Yogyakarta (October 2018) and a feature in CTM Festival (Berlin 2019).
Each day featured a series of musical performances including: The Observatory, Setabuhan, Gabber Modus Operandi with Amazon Sun, Horizon99–A;D, Kasimyn, Nuh Peace, ROT FRONT, Pupa, Jessica Ekomane, Cari Padu, Nadah El Shazly, Fauxe.

Discourse programmes included the topics “Music through historicism and cultural referencing” and “Resistance through music: Secular territories of the underground”.

**State of Love and Trust and Stars**

**3 August 2019**

State of Love and Trust and Stars (SLTS) was an event that aimed to reposition and question the concept of the grand national narrative that is our National Day Parade. Mass and extravagant performances, harmonious social messaging, issues of national security, and top-down secular rituals; the parade is the largest public display of shared national consciousness. But how much of our so-called republic identifies with this uber-celebrated version?

SLTS was a free, one-day, indoor and outdoor, lifestyle event with musical, dance, and theatrical performances, and roving DJs acts. Curated by Rizman Putra, the alternative national day parade features artists, actors, and musicians such as Syimah Sabtu Collective, DJ Itch, Vinyl Heavy, and Syndicate, and more.

The event was free to the public but had a limited capacity, a total of 316 guests attended. Feedback included:
“LOVED IT”

“Love you Rizman”

“Abg Rizman and Abg Safuan give me strength to play with arts”

The Good Review Circle (GRC)
September 2019 - March 2020
The Good Review Circle is a critical art writing initiative. Over the course of 6 months, five specially selected writers will post monthly reviews (6 each) in response to exhibitions, art spaces, performances, films, and interviews, through the interrogative lens of The Substation’s 2019/2020 programme season, A Public Square.

Articles were posted on the Blog section of the A Public Square microsite: https://apublicsquare.sg/blog/

Writers include: Akanksha Raja, Alfonse Chiu, Sharaad Kuttan, Reena Devi, and Ng Yi-Sheng.
But in a country where home ownership is an uphill battle for young adults looking to leave the nest, and spatial concerns like a lack of decent housing for foreign labourers and minority communities remain unaddressed, there is little room for basic privacy and individuality in our designated private spaces, let alone for sex.

The competition invited Singaporeans to celebrate their struggles and contestation for space with a healthy dose of satire and self-deprecating humour.

#PiakPiakPlace Insta-Comic Competition Showcase ran from 21 October 2019 to 6 January 2020 and called for submissions of Insta-Comics in response to the theme of space. Over an open call period of three months, we received entries with varying degrees of satire and humour, but one thing remained clear and common—our constant struggle for space.

**Facelift**  
*August 2019 - September 2019*

FaceLift activates The Substation's facade as a constantly evolving canvas. In this city of constant renewal, self-improvement, and urban redevelopment, imperfection is often glossed over or polished till unrecognisable. This year, rather than scraping away the old to make way for the new, traces of the building's past marks remain and reverberate as interventions to conversations in the now.

This year's Facelift artists and projects include:
**All Good by HelloPigu** - *All Good* is a spanking new mural depicting a utopian garden paradise. In utter disregard for propriety in a public garden, and ignoring their impending doom, the PiguBao bask in their very own version of Shangri-La. The work is a reference to our obsession for a clean and green city, and the activities we engage in to display everyday normalcy.

**Sing Along If You Know the Words by Speak Cryptic.** *Sing Along if You Know the Words* is inspired by the artist’s memory of The Substation and how it was (and still is) a place for people who are fans of alternative music to meet, talk, catch up and have fun - a safe place where everyone can be themselves and not have to worry about judgement or ridicule. The mural is also based on the mosh pit, defines as “an area in front of the stage at a rock concert, where moshing occurs”. Both murals have been completed and remained on display throughout the remaining programme period.
Propose-a-Parklet
January – March 2020
Propose-a-Parklet is an open invitation for all public enthusiasts (including architects, designers, artists, students, creatives, etc) to join in a conversation about the use of public space(s) within the vicinity of The Substation. The public is invited to participate either as individuals or in teams.

6 parklets and an outdoor performance in collaboration with the Diverse Abilities Dance Collective (DADC) were realised.
Stealing Public Space
11 January – 23 February 2020

Stealing Public Space explores the connection between Southeast Asian art languages, the city, and intangible or symbolic public “sites” such as money, national anthems, history, and maps. This expansive exhibition comprises 25 artists and 32 historical and newly-commissioned works by established and emerging artists from across the region. Several works invite audience participation, exemplifying expressive strategies that distinguish Southeast Asian contemporary art on the global scene.

Space, Spaces, Spacing  
**21 & 22 March 2020**

The Substation re-presents Space, Spaces and Spacing 2020, to reopen the conversation around public space and the public sphere. How have notions of space—in physical, virtual, and socio-political spheres—evolved? And who are the individuals and institutions that grapple with this? In contending with the 1995 event, the conference provides a re-entry into conversations that remain just as pertinent today. Retaining the themes from the four original panels, with new ideas and attitudes to create space not only for reflexive scholarship, but also representation for the arts community.

The COVID-19 crisis affected the conference because of the social distancing measures that had to be put in place, including reducing the number of participants who could be present. Some of the panelists had to join the conference via video link including Cherian George.
6. Financial Review

6.1 Financial Performance

Seven year performance matrix

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Income

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Expenses

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(F – Financial year ending)

F2020 found The Substation at normal operating levels, with income and expenses in line at just over $1m. The monthly rental fee from Timbre and an active venue hire programme helped to ensure a steady income year round. However, the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic and the government’s requirement for landlords to grant tenants a 4 month rental waiver also meant that The Substation had to waive the rental for March 2020, and the waiver continued into the next FY till July 2020. The climate fundraising was also not very favourable and a major fundraising concert with Jassy Husk had to be cancelled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Financial Statement - The Substation’s full audited financial statement is made available online at www.charities.gov.sg and copies provided to MCCY and NAC.

Donations – Due to its IPC (Institution of a Public Character) status, donations to The Substation received a 250% tax exemption for the year of 2019. Cash donations were also eligible for MCCY’s Cultural Matching Fund (CMF), established on 1 November 2013. The CMF disbursement has been incredibly helpful in covering our operating costs since it was initiated.

6.2 Corporate Governance

The Substation is committed to constantly improving levels of corporate governance with the aim of becoming a model non-profit arts organisation. This attention to good governance has focused on transparency, internal controls and maintaining proper policies and procedures.

The governance review that was conducted by KPMG in February 2014 lead to enhancements of Board, Human Resources and Financial policies and procedures as well as the creation of a Communications, Corporate Identity and Personal Data Protection Act.
**Board Meetings** - Board meetings are held every quarter. The Company Secretary completes filings of all company documents.

**Board Remuneration** - None of The Substation's Board Members are remunerated for their Board services.

**Board-level authorisation and oversight** – Board Members understand their responsibilities under the law to use proper legal care in the exercise of their duties. Accordingly, the Board approves all yearly budgets and major transactions, regular financial reports are provided to the board by the General Manager, and each yearly audited financial statement is presented to the board for its review. Any cheques over $2,000 require two board members’ signatures and any purchases over $10,000 require board approval.

**Professional consultation** – The Board and management retain both inside and outside independent financial and governance counsel and, in addition to regular consultation, seek their opinion on special matters as prudence dictates. These opinions are noted in the minutes of the board meetings when appropriate.

**Conflicts of Interest** – All Board Members and staff are required to comply with the charity’s conflict of interest policy. It includes documented procedures for Board Members and staff to declare actual or potential conflicts of interests. Board Members and staff abstain from decision-making on matters where they have a conflict of interest.

**Employee salaries and benefits** - The Substation strives to provide its employees fair and reasonable salaries, taking into consideration: the nature of the job, individual qualifications and merit, the training, education or experience required, the outside marketplace, the cost of living, the non-profit nature of The Substation, the financial capacity of The Substation and other relevant factors.

**Disclosure of employee salaries** – None of The Substation’s three highest paid employees receives more than $100,000 in annual remuneration.

### 6.3 Financial Practices

**Statement about financial stewardship**

The Substation takes the matter of financial stewardship very seriously and strives to abide by high standards of fiscal integrity. The Board and Management understands that these documents can be updated and strengthened when necessary, and with Board’s approval.

**Solicitation of funds** – Public fundraising events or appeals conducted by The Substation follow statutory regulations in relation to licenses, procedures, communication, transparency and audit.

**Use of funds** – Strict internal procedures are followed including budgeting, controls, checks and balances for using donated or earned funds.

**Restricted Funds** – The charity has disclosed its restricted funds in the Financial Statement.
**Reserve Policy** - The reserves set aside provide financial stability and the means for the development of the company’s principal activity. The company seeks to maintain a reserve of 6 months of operating expenses. The reserves would be accessed should income from earned revenue, raised revenue, or support from grant monies become untenable.

The Board of Directors annually reviews the amount of reserves that are required to ensure that the company is able to fulfil the continuing obligations.

**Accounting practice** – The Substation maintains its accounts on an in-house computer using third-party software (MYOB) conforming with generally accepted accounting systems. Its accounting system operates under internal controls that are designed to safeguard The Substation’s assets and produce accurate and reliable accounting information.

The Substation adopts Financial Reporting Standards and has chosen not to adopt the Charities Accounting Standards.

**Audited financial statements** – Each year The Substation produces a financial statement that is audited by an independent auditor. Prudential PAC has been retained to conduct our year-end audit. The yearly audit is published after The Substation’s senior management and board of Directors issue a formal, written representation to the auditors that the organisation has in good faith provided everything for which the auditors have asked, and that, to the best of their knowledge, no irregular transactions have occurred, and no violations or possible violations of laws or regulations have occurred that should have been disclosed.

Certain fundraising events, Cultural Matching Fund applications, certain core programmes and the NAC Year End Budget report will require an audited statement of accounts. For these “project” audits we use either Prudential PAC or our accountant of record, KC Corporate Solutions.

**Internal Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS)** – The codes and rules of IRAS regarding the solicitation, acknowledgement or receipt of, accounting for and use of tax exempt funds are complied with carefully. All charitable donations to The Substation are tax deductible, subject to certain conditions being met. As a non-profit organisation with IPC status, The Substation is exempt from paying corporate tax.
7. The Year Ahead

We are thankful to be awarded for our Major Company Grant, which would be disbursed over 3 years from 2020-2022 and the first tranche of grant payment was received in August 2020.

Covid-19 and the circuit breaker brought about much disruptions to life as we know it. The pandemic reflected humanity and the care we are capable of dispensing to those that are vulnerable. If there’s anything the pandemic has taught us, it's the importance of community. We are thankful for the National Gallery and Singapore Art Museum who have reached out to other art spaces and initiated the “Proposals for Novel Ways of Being”. We received $60,000 from the National Gallery for participating in this massive project involving 12 art institutions and independent art spaces across the country, who will showcase a series of exhibitions and programmes — both online and offline — reflecting on the global pandemic and the possibilities of "new normal”.

For the rest of the year, we will be traversing through the two threads of 'thought': Coming Home & Reterritorialization for the visual arts. This will be done through engaging with the community through our programming like the Associate Artists Programme, Arts Education Programme, Sandbox, Cabinet of Curiosities (Archive) and the Bras Basah Precinct Neighbourhood Project. Through the programmes, we hope to forge a relationship between the artists, their communities and the Substation. Establish a healthy arts eco-system that can empower the arts to grow, to bring diverse communities and bring about the reach of arts in society.

Marking the 30th Anniversary of Singapore's first Home of the Arts, The Substation's annual month-long festival Septfest will return in March 2021 after a 5-year hiatus with a series of exhibitions, talks, discussions, theatre and music from Singapore and the region that highlights and redefines the stories of the fringe — the marginalised and forgotten communities, as a tribute to The Substation's spirit of celebrating the alternative.

Peripheral. Tension. Separation. A geographical or man-made boundary. In the world we live in, the margins have always been out of sight, forgotten. But are the lived realities of the marginalised unreal, non-existent if they are not seen or heard?

The conclusion of Septfest is the curtain call for The Substation which will be moving out of its home by July 2021. Since its opening on 16th September 1990, everything around this cultural landmark has changed- the garden, the bar, the extension of the university campus. Without this materiality, perhaps the former substation can no longer exist. It could be we will be forced to begin completely anew. Or can it flourish metaphorically and symbolically, far exceeding its physicality.

As the art scene booms in Singapore, the centres are becoming increasingly
corporatized and structured, resembling the development of all other institutions on the island. Now more than ever, we need the 'small', the 'experimental', the 'fringe'. This is what the substation has always represented.

Our founding principles relied upon taking risks. We need to go out of our way to engage with the community, we need to give time to younger, up and coming experimental artists. Even without a body, we hope to keep the substation’s spirit alive by supporting art in the margins. The art of the ordinary, the art of the experimental. We need to continue taking that extra step, no matter how much the organisation is forced to change.