



The Players • The Inside Stories
The Momentous Moment in Singapore

Hewlett-Packard gives you ten minutes to become famous.



Andy Warhol predicted that in the future everyone would be famous for fifteen minutes.

With our commitment to local arts, Hewlett-Packard is helping with the first ten.

Our latest project is to sponsor a first of its kind, The Hewlett-Packard/ ACTION Theatre Ten-Minute Play Contest. A competition which we believe will truly challenge both established and budding talent in playwriting.

To help you prepare for the contest, ACTION Theatre will be conducting a series of talks and workshops by eminent local and foreign playwrights. They will also be staging "The Squeeze", a showcase of prize-winning American ten-minute plays, which will allow you to experience first hand the excitement of this unique genre.

HP encourages you to put pen to paper and enter the contest. Who knows, your ten minutes of theatre could bring you much more than fame.





A SHOWCASE OF SEVEN TEN-MINUTE PLAYS FROM ACTORS THEATRE OF LOUISVILLE

(In order of performance)

A Private Moment by Stephen Gregg
Bread by Andy Backer
Visiting Dad by Judith Fein
Procedure by Joyce Carol Oates
Tape by José Rivera
Mental Reservation by Roger Cornish
Poof! by Lynn Nottage

Directed by

Aarne Neeme, Max Le Blond &

Ekachai Uekrongtham

Set Design

Poon Hin Kong
Lighting Design
Thio Lay Hoon
Production Manager
Gail Perera
Artistic Director

Ekachai Uekrongtham

Sponsored by
HEWLETT
PACKARD

Staged in conjunction with the 1993 Hewlett-Packard/ ACTION Theatre Ten-Minute Play Contest

Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc. (Bread, Visiting Dad, Procedure & Mental Reservation), Helen Merrill, Ltd. (Poof!), International Creative Management (Tape) and Mr Stephen Gregg (A Private Moment).

1RST WORDS

"What a concept! To touch the human experience in a significant way within the discipline of ten minutes, or in ten pages of script...

In the United States, it certainly has been the case that the ten minute play contest has been an important factor in the revitalization of theatre...

The ten minute play is a medium that can spark the whole theater world,

those presently involved and those who would like to try their hands at writing, acting, producing, directing or working backstage. It can be an exciting shot in the arm for theatre in general..."



Excerpts from the Opening Remarks by HE Jon M. Huntsman, Jr., United States Ambassador to Singapore at the launching of The Hewlett-Packakrd/ACTION Theatre Ten Minute Play Contest on March 15, 1993 at Jubilee Hall, Raffles Hotel.

THOUGHTS FROM OUR FRIEND AT ACTORS THEATRE OF LOUISVILLE

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The Momentous Moment In Singapore

By Michael Bigelow Dixon, Literary Manager, Actors Theatre of Louisville

hen Jon Jory (Producing Director of Actors Theatre of Louisville where the ten-minute play contest originated) alchemized the ten-minute play nearly twenty years ago,

no one at Actors Theatre of Louisville was crazy enough to imagine that micro-drama would spark international exchange. But that's what happened. Over two decades this magical genre has charmed skeptics worldwide with surprising depictions of momentous moments - the rifts, the revelations the moral conundrums that illuminate our lives and these times. All that and belly laughs, passion and arguments, too? An evening of ten-minute plays is a mind-full.

As ACTION Theatre champions this drama of the fourth dimension - time - how will Singapore playwrights make it their own? How will the heartbeat of this island nation fit into the ten-minute form? Mixing time with culture makes a potent brew, and the results of the first Singapore Ten-Minute Play Contest are anxiously awaited on both sides of the Pacific. Dare we imagine we can build a bridge from Singapore to Louisville of ten-minute plays? It's a crazy idea maybe, but so was the ten-minute play to begin with!



Making a long-term contribution : Paul Chan, Managing Director, Hewlett- Packard Singapore Sales (Pte) Ltd.

HEWLETT-PACKARD GIVES BACK TO THE NATION...

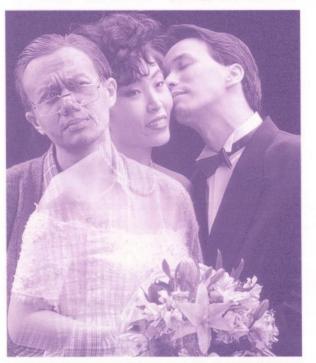
WE are thrilled ...

...to be the sponsor of "The Squeeze", which is held in conjunction with the Hewlett-Packard/ ACTION Theatre Ten-Minute Play Contest.

We believe that the contest, a first-of-its-kind in Singapore, marks the birth of a whole new genre of theatre in the local arts and culture scene. I must congratulate ACTION Theatre for their pioneering spirit in bringing this unique art-form to Singapore.

The staging of "The Squeeze" aims to give both potential participants of the contest and fans of the theatre a first-hand experience of the explosive energy which ten-minute plays can generate. I think we are in for a real treat.

Some of you may remember...





ACTION Theatre's Prelude to a Kiss, a Broadway hit in Singapore - sponsored by HP in March 1992.

...our debut sponsorship of the Broadway hit, "Prelude to a Kiss", staged by ACTION Theatre last March. We are very happy that the play was well received. But what is more important is that the sponsorship helped, in its own small way, to provide opportunities for local drama groups like ACTION Theatre to further their efforts in promoting the theatre in Singapore.

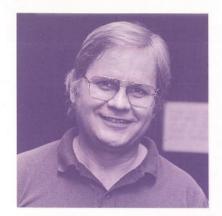
Although our sponsorship this year takes a different form, our goals remains unchanged. We want to help cultivate the local talents in drama and theatre so as to provide more opportunities for people in Singapore to experience these art-forms. The contest and its supporting activities, we believe, will have a long-term impact on the development of talents in drama and theatre.

Hewlett-Packard has benefited much from Singapore's economic success and as a major corporation, we strongly believe it is our responsibility to give back to the nation. Supporting the local arts is part of HP's overall efforts in helping Singapore achieve its vision of the Next Lap.

I would like also to take this opportunity to thank the other organisations who have helped make this event possible - the National Arts Council for their official endorsement; and the Singapore Broadcasting Corporation, the US Information Service and the British Council for their support and contributions.

I hope you will enjoy the performance and I wish the cast of "The Squeeze" good luck.

Paul Chan







L-R : Aarne Neeme, Guest Director; Ekachai Uekrongtham, President & Artistic Director, ACTION Theatre and Dr Max Le Blond, Guest Director.

Justant By Aarne Neeme

he ten minute play form is a fascinating innovation and challenge. While it can be easily disparaged as Reader's Digest one act plays or instant microwave heated theatre, it does nonetheless require all the discipline and skill inherent in such dense forms as a Haiku or Sonnet, or even a miniature painting.

Indeed the ten minute play may be ideally suited for the limited concentration span of the news byte and MTV generation.

With the restricted time span, the form requires a very clear situation, shape, theme and characters. As there is little scope for revelation or development. However, amongst the plays I worked on, and others that I read, there is surprising diversity of style.

A Private Moment is a formal piece of period realism, but the playwright's choice of Siamese Twins in a room full of identical chairs further exaggerates and exacerbates a highly intimate and vulnerable moment in most people's lives. Bread, on the other hand, is an austere and Pinteresque example of surrealism, dependant on the hidden subtext and unspoken inner tensions. Finally, Poof! has all the hallmarks of a domestic situation comedy/drama however with an inciting action of pure expressionism that threatens to shatter the every-day veneer of existence.

These plays also offer distinct challenges to the actor. There is virtually no time to warm into the role, so the action, objectives and relationships have to be established precisely. Here I have had the privilege of working with some excellent and dedicated actors such as Irene, Melvyn,

Squeeze it out!

What can you get out of a ten-minute play? So much more than I've ever imagined! And to think that I stumbled upon this unique genre almost by accident. It's a powerful teaching tool for playwrights. It's a rigorous exercise for actors and directors. It's a refreshing experience for the generation that has no time to waste. IT MAKES SENSE.

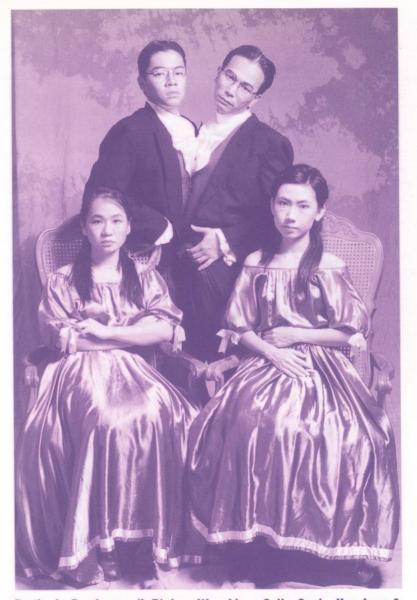
The potential of how it can contribute to the local theatre in the long run is staggering. This is just a beginning. We'll be "squeezing" a lot more out of it. Stay tuned.



"The Director's Message" is nearly always institutionalised blivits. Avoid Blivits. Thanks for coming and enjoy the show.

Cindy, Ken, Sze-Lin, Wee Ling and Colin. Also ably assisted by Chin Han.

Due to prior overseas commitments I am unable to be at the opening (which for a director feels most strange and awkward - like missing the birth of your child!). However, I do want to take this opportunity to congratulate Ekachai for his initiative and all embracing vision, and to wish him and the whole enterprise every deserved success!!



Brotherly Bondage : (L-R) Loo Wee Ling, Colin Seah, Ken Low & Cindy Sim.

A Hope For Happiness

Private Moment is a play with universal appeal and recognition. It looks at the vulnerability of a marriage proposal - a



fear of rejection for him and agony of choice for her. An intimate moment made more excruciating by the fact he is one of a pair of Siamese twins! However a solution may lie outdoors. Meanwhile, a room full of chairs and the other twin bear silent witness to these delicate negotiations.

Aarne Neeme, director of A Private Moment.

Private Moment

Written by Stephen Gregg

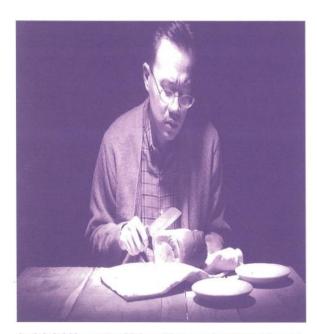
The Players. Stars Ken Low, Cindy Sim, Colin Seah, Loo Wee Ling; Directed by Aarne Neeme.

Squeeze it! How do you have a private moment with a Siamese twin? A touching romantic comedy that takes a leaf from the lives of the two most famous Siamese twins Chang and Eng.

The Inside Story. Finding a twin for Ken Low (Chang) was one of the challenges of staging Stephen Gregg's A Private Moment. (We should have held a contest for a Ken-lookalike. Ken is however pleased that he has an uncommon face.) Rehearsals began with just Ken going solo, one on one with Cindy Sim who plays the sweet young thing Sally whom Chang is enamoured with. Soon, we finally found Ken's 'twin brother' Colin Seah who used to be Cindy's student! The piece-de-resistance was when the two separate twins were joined by a band of "flesh" for the first time during a rehearsal. It was incredibly hilarious because our Siamese twins simply couldn't coordinate and kept hitting each other! (And it wasn't a case of sibling rivalry.) The cast completely hit the roof and Cindy ended rolling on the floor in laughter!



Following Procedures: Cindy Sim & Irene Lim prepare for the final journey.



Insightful Moments : Melvyn Chew contemplates his next move.

PROCEDURE

Written by Joyce Carol Oates

The Players. Stars Irene Lim, Cindy Sim & Chua Swee Lye; Directed by Ekachai Uekrongtham.

Squeeze it! An experienced nurse helps a junior nurse prepare a patient's corpse for its final journey to the morgue. It is the novice's first. It will be her most unforgettable...

The Inside Story. In the attempt to authenticate experience in theatre, the cast and the crew of Procedure went to a real morgue to get a real feel of what real death was like. They were completely gung-ho about it... until they arrived at the morgue. It was clean, clinical, and there was no smell?! It was a no-big deal situation until the attendant opened the refridgerator containing vital organs left over from autopsies. (Someone called them "spare parts" but certainly this is one fridge you wouldn't open for snacks!) The cast was suddenly hit by a nauseating smell. Fortunately nobody had lunch or breakfast before that memorable incidence...the things some people do for the arts!

BREAD

Written by Andy Backer

The Players . Stars Melvyn Chew & Irene Lim; Directed by Aarne Neeme.

Squeeze it! One man, one woman and a loaf of bread. So little is left. So much is expected...

The Inside Story. It looked like a good rehearsal... Melvyn slowly cut the bread, put it into his mouth, started chewing, grimaced...then almost choked! And we all thought it was so real. The real truth of the matter was that he was having difficulty swallowing the very dry bread. There wasn't any other bread around at that rehearsal except a very stale loaf and the crew didn't expect Melvyn to actually eat it!



Going Head-to-Head: Loo Wee Ling & Ng Chin Han in "Mental Reservation".





Mental Reservation

Written by Roger Cornish

The Players. Stars Ng Chin Han & Loo Wee Ling. Directed by Ekachai Uekrongtham.

Squeeze it! A witty piece about a young couple and they games they play. Tell the truth or tell a lie? Better yet, tell something in between!

The Inside Story. The emotional layering in Mental Reservation has been a challenge for both Chin Han and Wee Ling who play the couple involved in a set of mind games. At every turn, the stakes of the game are raised. "It's tough," said Chin Han, "discovering that every sentence has an underlying meaning and playing with that meaning... and yet it's very exciting. It's also scary because you know game-playing like this happens in real life."

Poof!

Written by Lynn Nottage

The Players. Stars Irene Lim & Pang Sze-Lin. Directed by Aarne Neeme.

Squeeze it! Suddenly, with just a word, Loureen's secret wish comes true. POOF! and all that's left of Loureen's husband is a pile of smoking ash! Spontaneous combustion or black magic?

The Inside Story. Samuel is Loureen's husband and an important part in the play Poof! Casting for the role was impossible because Samuel is reduced to a pile of ash within the first two minutes of the play - which prompted important questions like: How much ash would a hundred and seventy pound man produce if he was spontaneously combusted? How do you get nice-looking ash? Several piles of ash were auditioned to select the best one. Pile A and Pile B will play Samuel on alternate nights and Pile C will understudy. (Remesh Panicker thinks Samuel should change his name to Ashley.)

Spontaneous Reactions: Irene Lim (top) & Pang Sze-Lin.







Close encounter of an in-law kind: (clockwise from top) Darryl David, Lynette Pang, Remesh Panicker & Pang Sze-Lin.

Lynette & Sze-Lin will take turns to play the role of Laura on alternate nights.



Visiting Dad

Written by Judith Fein

The Players. Stars Darryl David, Lynette Pang, Pang Sze-Lin & Remesh Panicker. Directed by Max Le Blond.

Squeeze it! Meeting your in-laws can be very nerve-wrecking... or hair-raising in Mike's case. His is an unexpected encounter of a weird kind...

The Inside Story. It was the audition for Visiting Dad, a pretty quirky romantic comedy about meeting your in-laws for the first time. Lynette and Darryl were completely into their parts and doing it as if it was for real. What they both did not expect was the sudden, completely unexpected loudly booming voice of our guest star Remesh Panicker. Lynette literally jumped in fright onto a chair and even Darryl turned pale. It was a case of being *Panicker stricken!*

TAPE

Written by José Rivera

The Players. Stars Ken Low & Melvyn Chew. Directed by Ekachai Uekrongtham.

Squeeze it! Someone is always watching. Someone is always listening. You can't escape. It's the same for everyone when the tape rolls...

The Inside Story. Some may know that Melvyn is also Melvyn, the radio talent, the Man with Many Voices. In Tape, he plays a mysterious attendant. During rehearsals, he would try various voices - from Pee Wee Herman to Dracula. He also practiced real hard on the evil laughter and sometimes ended up sounding like someone with gastric pain!









THE SQUEEZE TEAM

CAST & CREW • VIEWS & CREDITS

ALLAN CHAN Sound Operator

Allan's xperiences include organising concerts for the likes of Lisa Stansfield and providing logistic support for productions such as Jacintha's One Woman and The Other Woman.

MELVYN CHEW Man & Attendant (Bread & Tape)

Melvyn is certainly no stranger to the stage, having acted in more than sixteen plays. A lawyer for several years, he gave up his career to pursue a life of culture; he now teaches speech, voice and drama professionally, and does regular radio and TV work.

CHUA SWEE LYE The Body (Procedure)

Since his retirement, Swee Lye has been actively involved in acting. Besides having appeared in Arthur Miller's All My Sons, Brecht's Mother Courage and Li Lienfung's The Sword Has Two Edges, he has also appeared in several documentaries. "A ten-minute play? It's wonderful... if the play is too long people might get bored but this way the audience has something new to look forward to every few minutes."

DARRYL DAVID Michael (Visiting Dad)

Darryl has taken on various roles - from *Paris* in *Romeo and Juliet* to *Prince Charming* in Desmond Sim's *Blood & Snow*. He's also appeared in *Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance* and *Beauty World*.

SAMANTHA KUNTARO

Assistant Stage Manager (A Private Moment, Bread & Poof!) Indonesian-born Samantha has worked as a helper in The Four Trunks and Lao Jiu. She is studying Economics and Psychology at NUS. "Definitely not easy... for just 10 minutes an SM has to put in hours of work, just like everyone else..."

MAX LE BLOND Director (Visiting Dad)

Dr Max Le Blond has directed a number of plays including *Emily of Emerald Hill* and *Peter's Passionate Pursuit*. A cultural medallion winner, he's a senior lecturer at the School of Arts, National Institute of Education and is now setting up a program in drama and performance.

IRENE LIM

Woman (Bread), Nurse A (Procedure) & Loureen (Poof!)

A radiologist by profession, Irene has appeared in Die Fliedermaus and played the role of Elizabeth Choy in Not Afraid to Remember. She has also directed Eleanor Wong's To Touch the Soul of a God for the Singapore Arts Festival Fringe. Other credits include roles in Prelude to a Kiss, Medea, Metamorphosis, Love Letters, Trojan Women and the short film The Nose.

MARTIN LIM Stage Manager (Visiting Dad)

Martin entered the theatre scene as assistant stage manager for *Prelude to a Kiss*. He is currently a first-year Mass Communication student. *It's incredible how much can be put into just 10 minutes. Big things really do come in small packages."*

From the top: Allan, Samantha, Martin & Mary



Natasha Lim Dresser

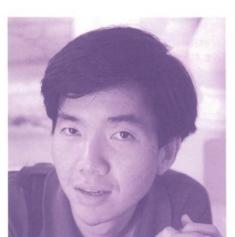
This 19-year old is new to theatre but not unknown to it. Her past working experiences include several months at Jubilee Hall.

Mary Loh Publicity

Mary works as a marketing manager for a conference exhibition company. She has helped with ACTION Theatre's productions since1991 in various capacities and as a playwright, has had four plays produced to date.

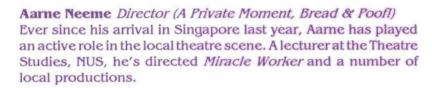
Loo Wee Ling Adelaide (A Private Moment)

Wee Ling describes herself as 'one of those lawyers who have been bitten by the theatre-bug'. She has acted in several plays including Exit, Second Home and The Storyteller.



Ken Low Chang (A Private Moment) & Person (Tape)

The resident composer for ACTION Theatre, Ken has created original scores for many of the group's productions. His acting credits include Prelude to a Kiss, Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance and Percival. A marketing manager by profession, Ken is also a member of the vocal group Full Circle. "10 minutes to pack a punch, pull the heartstrings and put forth a point ... easy-peasy ... "





Ng Chin Han

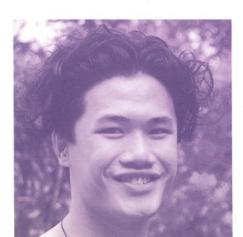
He (Mental Reservation) & Assistant to Aame Neeme

Chin Han has appeared in Mixed Signals, Solitaire and Trip to the South. But he is probably most well known as "The Ready Credit Man" and as the lead in SBC's first English drama, Time Tomorrow. He's also directed Varsity Playhouse's production of Baby with the Bathwater. "(The ten-minute play is) sort of like a buffet instead of a set meal. You get more choices..."



Remesh Panicker The Voice (Visiting Dad)

Remesh first "tread the board" some 20 years ago. His credits include The Island & Sizwe Bansi is Dead, The Caucasian Chalk Circle, Kaluig, Peter's Passionate Pursuit and Dirt. "10 minutes is a very long time in theatre... especially if you're bumming around backstage."



Lynette Pang Laura (Visiting Dad)

This 21-year old first entered the theatre scene as a member of Youth Theatre Singapore in 1986. Since then Lynette has gone on to do work for both theatre and television. Her many credits include roles in Private Parts and ACTION Theatre's Second Home. She has also toured many schools in Act 3's Theatre-in-Education production of Solomon and the Big Cat.

Pang Sze Lin Laura (Visiting Dad) & Florence (Poofl)

19-year old Sze Lin began her theatrical experience with Conference of the Birds in 1991. Since then she has played such roles as Virgin B in Ovidia Yu's Three Fat Virgins Unassembled as well as workshopped in the Theatre-in-Education programme under Theatreworks' Directors' Lab.

From the top: Gail, Hin Kong, Lay Hoon & Peter

Gail Perera Production Manager & Stage Manager (Procedure, Mental Reservation & Tape)

Gail is a recent Mass Communication Diploma graduate. Her past experiences include stage managing Prelude to a Kiss, as well working as a Festival Assistant for the National Arts Council in the Singapore Festival of Arts 1992. "It may be only 10 minutes for the actor but it's hours for the Stage Manager..."

Phoon Hin Kong Set Designer

Hin Kong is one of the architects instrumental for the transformation of the old army barracks at Fort Canning into an arts centre. He's designed sets for Imagine and The Joust, as well as Prelude to a Kiss for ACTION Theatre. He was also the codesigner on the set for SDT's The Nutcracker

Colin Seah Eng (A Private Moment)

a free-lance photographer, Colin sees the theatre as an extension of his photography. While in college he was President of the drama society and has designed sets and programmes for The Necessary Stage and the SYO "10 minutes on in front of the audience but we're backstage warming up and getting into the role for half an hour beforehand!"

Cindy Sim Sally (A Private Moment) & Nurse B (Procedure) Cindy has, in the space of a few years accumulated an impressive list of roles in very diverse plays ranging from The Silly Little Girl and the Funny Old Tree, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Trojan Women, Three Fat Virgins Unassembled and OZero01, to name a few. Her last role was that of Ivy in Beauty World. "(The ten-minute play is) deceptively simple."

Doreen Tan Stage Manager (A Private Moment, Bread & Poofl) Doreen is an undergraduate at NUS, majoring in Theatre Studies and Social Work. She sees herself as a freelance Stage Manager and theatre practitioner specialising in production works.

Hedy Tan Front Of House

Hedy aspires to be in the limelight one day. Her credits to date include an appearance on television on a new comedy cooking programme...

Thio Lay Hoon Lighting Designer

An editor for an interiors and design magazine, Lay Hoon attended a lighting workshop in 1991 and henceforth designed the lighting for many productions by ACTION Theatre, Theatreworks, Mark Chan, NUS Society, SSO Ladies League, The Necessary Stage, as well as Nanyang Dance Academy.

Ekachai Uekrongtham Director (Procedure, Mental Reservation & Tape) & Artistic Director (The Squeeze)

Ekachai formed ACTION Theatre with some friends in 1987. He directed most of the group's productions including Prelude to a Kiss and Imagine & The Joust. He works as the director of marketing & operations with Cameron Mackintosh, the company that's producing Les Misérables in Singapore.

Peter Zewet Costume Coordinator

A Fashion Design student, Peter has been actively involved in the local theatre scene for the past 3 years. His experiences include costume co-ordination for Prelude to a Kiss as well as numerous acting credits.



Special Effects Make-Up YONG KIT CHIN (Pager: 2056489)

> Lighting Operator SIAK LENG

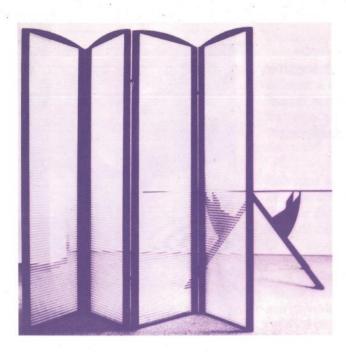
Assistant Sound Operator KERRY MANIAM

Front of House ROSLAN MOHD DAUD SANY SALLEH **AUDREY TAN** HEDY TAN

> Backstage Crew SELENA KUO MAGDELENE JEN LUCY CHEN KHIN WEE ANDREW TAN DERRICK IVAN GLEN

Programme CONCEPT FACTORY (Tel: 4420120)

> Printing HO PRINTING (Tel: 2809322)



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HEWLETT-PACKARD ACTION THEATRE 193 TEN MINUTE PLAY CONTEST

Put pen to paper and enter this first-of-itskind playwriting contest (open or student category).

Squeeze, condense and experiment. Write a play that's only ten minutes long (ten pages of script or shorter). Write a play that will illuminate an unforgettable moment in the mind of viewers!

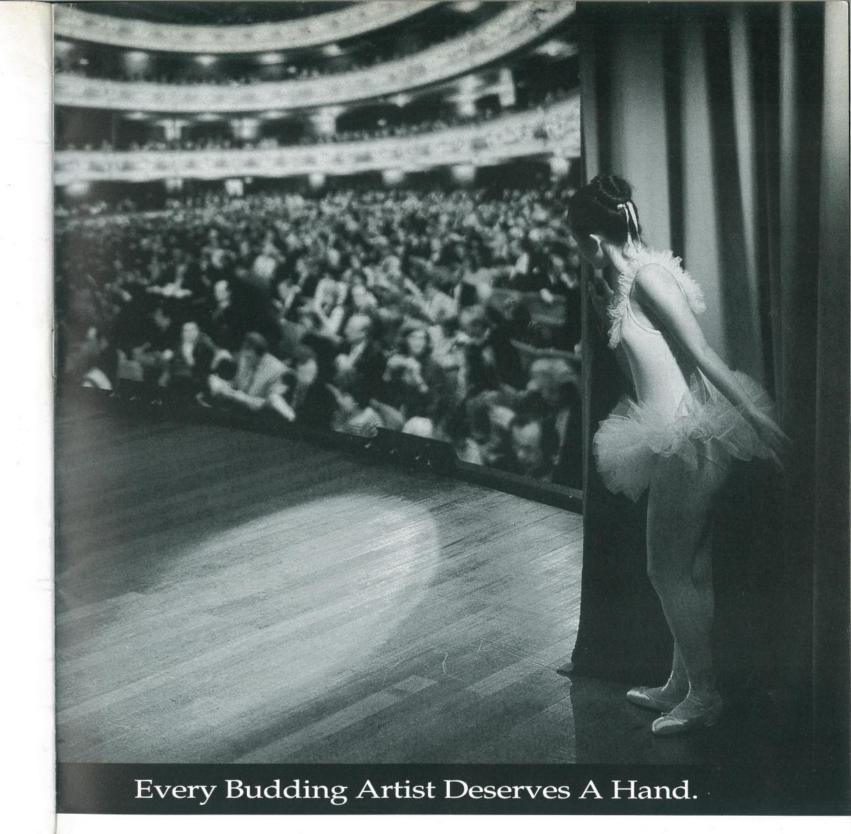
Prizes include a trip to the Humana Festival of New Plays in the U.S., multi-media exposure and cash. For an entry form and full details, get the Ten-Minute Play booklet from National Arts Council (35th storey, PSA Building), The American Center (Level 4, MPH Stamford Road), The British Council, The Substation or ACTION Theatre (Tel 473-0459) today!

Closing Date: August 1, 1993.

Thank you very much...

Hewlett-Packard Singapore National Arts Council Singapore Broadcasting Corporation United States Information Service

Abraxas
British-American Tobacco
Mr Chua Eng Kwang
Ken-Air Fun World
Lim, Ho & Wong
Dr Irene Lim
Link Optics
Shell Eastern Petroleum
Star Medical Co (Pte)
Toa Payoh Hospital
X-tra Designs
& everyone who's helped out
in this production.



As Singapore's leading oil company and largest single multinational investor, Shell is the proud recipient of Singapore's first Distinguished Partner in Progress Award for its economic contributions and its support of community and cultural projects.

As a corporate citizen, Shell is concerned with helping talented young Singaporeans realise their dreams.

Over the years, we've built a reputation as a leading partner of the Arts through sponsoring many significant cultural projects, offering budding artists a platform to perform and more recently, through establishing the Shell Centenary Scholarships for the Arts.



B.A.T SINGAPORE ... SUPPORTING SINGAPORE'S FUTURE GROWTH

B.A.T (S) has been a part of Singapore since 1903.

In our long history, we have grown with the nation and contributed to it in many ways ...



... As an industry leader and productivity ...



operating to the highest standards of quality

... As a professionally managed and financially sound enterprise, contributing to Singapore's economy ...

... As a model progressive employer, providing the staff development and achievement ...



environment and opportunities for

... As an enlightened and responsible citizen, committed to improving the quality of life of Singaporeans by supporting educational, arts, and community projects ...





All this we will continue to be, as with our commitment to invest in and grow with Singapore.

BEING A PART OF OUR FUTURE

