



For immediate release

9TH AFCC CELEBRATES SINGAPORE AS COUNTRY OF FOCUS:
SPOTLIGHTS LITERARY HERITAGE THROUGH 3-DAY CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL
TWO AWARD SHORTLISTS ANNOUNCED

SINGAPORE, 20 August 2018 – In conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the Singapore Book Council, the Asian Festival of Children's Content (AFCC) celebrates Singapore as the Country of Focus with a three-day programme that showcases over 100 local writers, illustrators and publishers; an exhibition on illustration pioneer Kwan Shan Mei 关山美; and a Singapore Night gala dinner and awards ceremony. The 9th AFCC will run from 6 to 8 September at the National Library, marking the theme Imagine-Asia.

Over three days, participants can attend over 130 ticketed and free programmes, featuring 150 Singapore and international speakers.

AFCC has also announced the shortlists for two awards this year, the Hedwig Anuar Children's Book Award (HABA) and Scholastic Asian Book Award (SABA), which come with a top prize money of SGD10,000 each. Six books have been shortlisted for HABA, which include titles by Xie Shi Min, Ben Lai and Low Ying Ping. Recognising the best Singapore children's book, the award received 71 submissions this year. SABA has shortlisted six works by writers from Singapore, Hong Kong, India and The Philippines. A joint initiative between SBC and Scholastic Asia, it is given to the best unpublished manuscript by a writer of Asian descent. The winners will be announced at the Singapore Night-cum-50th Anniversary dinner and awards ceremony on 8 Sep. Please refer to Annex V and VI for the full shortlists and panels of judges.

AFCC casts the spotlight on Singapore's literary heritage in children's books as the Country of Focus, whilst highlighting new means of content creation and digital platforms

for storytelling. Boasting a line-up of speakers that range from established writers and illustrators – such as Adeline Foo, Colin Goh and Yen Yen Woo, David Liew, David Seow, Emily Lim, Patrick Yee, Rilla Melati and Rosemarie Somaiah – to new, emerging ones (Eunice Olsen, Eva Wong Nava, Quek Hong Shin) and Gen-Z writers like Gabby Tye and Ashley Koh, the programmes will tackle a wide range of topics. The topics include creating iconic kidlit characters; advocating for inclusivity; getting children to read SingLit; and learning our history through children's books.

Two other key highlights are the Children's Literature Lecture "Nurturing Roots of Self & Culture in Our Children Through Stories About Us" by award-winning writer Suchen Christine Lim; and AFCC's first retrospective exhibition, which pays tribute to the late illustration pioneer Kwan Shan Mei 关山美. The *Kwan Shan Mei: Drawing From The Heart 关山美:以心动笔* exhibition sheds light on her enduring influence and artistry. Please refer to Annex III for the full schedule of the Country of Focus programmes.

AFCC also welcomes many international speakers to the festival this year. They include industry heavyweights like the UK publisher and editor Sarah Odedina, who has worked with J.K. Rowling; renowned Japanese storyteller and illustrator Satoshi Kitamura; media and content producer Marc Checkley from New Zealand; US children's book author, publisher and consultant Cynthea Liu; established Malaysian author and illustrator Yusof Gajah; award-winning Filipino author and illustrator Robert Magnuson; and Lucia Obi, the Chinese and Korean children's literature at the International Youth Library in Germany. They will be involved in various programmes from masterclasses on pitching to story creation with transmedia, illustrating, getting published, and creating stories for TV and digital publishing.

AFCC will also host three days of free activities at the AFCC Book Fair, storytelling sessions, book launches, the Book Illustrators Gallery, as well as an activity zone in the National Library Plaza with games centred on literary arts to engage the public and raise awareness of local children's literature.



For more information on the AFCC 2018 programmes and schedule, please visit afcc.com.sg

Event details

Asian Festival of Children's Content 2018

Date: 6 to 8 September

Venue: National Library

100 Victoria St, Singapore 188064

Ticketing

- One Day Pass: \$80
- Two Day Pass: \$150
- Three Day Pass: \$220

20% off group purchase of five passes or more. To purchase, please visit afcc.com.sg.

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Marketing & Outreach Director

ANNEX I: About Singapore Book Council

Singapore Book Council (SBC) is a charity founded in 1968. Its vision is to support Singapore authors and literature and to **Build Our Imagine-nation** by developing creativity, imagination, original thought and empathy through writing, reading, illustrating and storytelling. Its mission is to fulfil this vision by developing the literary arts sector through books and literary arts events, workshops, and awards. Its focus is Singapore and Asian content, content creation, training, translation, and appreciation of SingLit.

SBC is currently chaired by Ms Claire Chiang, co-founder of Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts.

SBC supports the community at all levels, from language programmes and books for children, to aspiring individuals and professionals like writers, illustrators, storytellers and relevant industry partners by providing a platform to learn, network and collaborate. It also organises events to foster professional and community engagement like the annual Asian Festival of Children's Content and All In! Young Writers Festival, and grants prestigious awards, like the Singapore Literature Prize, to recognise and encourage excellence. Finally, SBC offers publishing-related and literary arts-focused courses and workshops to enhance skills and encourage lifelong learning through its academy.

SBC aims to become a hub for Asian content for the world, encouraging stories to be created and told across platforms. Through telling our own stories by writing or illustrations, it promotes understanding, impacts legacy and connects Asia with the world.

Because it all starts with a story.

SBC is supported by NAC under the Major Company Scheme for the period from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2019. For more information, please visit bookcouncil.sg.

ANNEX II: About Asian Festival of Children's Content

The Asian Festival of Children's Content (AFCC) is the leading festival in Asia focusing on children's books and stories. Targeted at writers, illustrators, parents, teachers and children, this one-of-a-kind festival offers a series of exciting conferences, seminars, masterclasses, workshops, evening events and various activities celebrating and promoting the creation and appreciation of quality children's literature, with a focus on Asian themes. For the past 8 years, the AFCC has since grown to become a key literary event in the children's literature scene, attracting over a hundred local and international speakers, as well as thousands of delegates and participants, yearly. To date, AFCC has welcomed 5303 delegates, hosted 221 book launches, given 5 awards with 30 winners.

For more information about the speakers and schedule, please visit www.afcc.com.sg.

AFCC is organised by the Singapore Book Council and supported by the National Library Board.