

Arts Picks: Zubir Said tribute, arts festival Bhaskareeyam, Dancers' Locker triple bill



Don't Call Him Mr Mari Kita by Wild Rice. PHOTO: RUEY LOON



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PUBLISHED 30 JUN 2022, 0:00 PM SGT

Don't Call Him Mr Mari Kita

Most Singaporeans know the late Zubir Said for composing the national anthem, Majulah Singapura, but there is more to him than that.

This Wild Rice show pays tribute to the man behind the melody, a local music pioneer who, over four decades, composed close to 1,500 songs, including well-known classics such as Semoga Bahagia and Orang Singapura.

It is written by music director Julian Wong, whose mentor Iskandar Ismail was a student of Zubir's, and directed by Wild Rice artistic director Ivan Heng in the style of a 1960s television variety show.

With highlights from Zubir's songbook and archival film footage, the show is a love letter to Singapore's musical heritage. While it was previously performed as part of a fund-raiser, this will be the first time the public will get to see it, after its 2021 premiere had to be cancelled due to tightened pandemic restrictions.

Where: The Ngee Ann Kongsi Theatre @ Wild Rice, 04-08 Funan Mall, 107 North Bridge Road

MRT: City Hall

When: July 7 to 23, Tuesdays to Fridays, 7.30pm; Saturdays, 2.30 and 7.30pm; and Sundays, 2.30pm

Admission: \$25 to \$60 from Sistic (go to [this website](#) or call 6348-5555)

Info: [Wild Rice's website](#)

Bhaskareeyam



Damaru, which will be performing parai aatam at Bhaskar's Arts Academy's festival Bhaskareeyam. PHOTO: DAMARU

The annual festival by home-grown Bhaskar's Arts Academy, which marks its 70th anniversary this year, returns as an eight-day affair in two parts.

There is a solemn weight to this year's festival, which also commemorates the life and legacy of the company's artistic director Santha Bhaskar, a Cultural Medallion recipient who died in February 2022.

It will feature a diverse array of Indian dance forms, from ancient folk dances such as karagattam, in which performers balance pots on their heads, to a festival-within-a-festival devoted to kathakali storytelling.

Among the events is the launch of the academy's flute ensemble, which was a long-held dream of Mrs Bhaskar's. The ensemble, helmed by music director Ghanavenothan Retnam, comprises flautists from the late teens to the early 50s.

Where: Alliance Francaise Theatre, 1 Sarkies Road (Season One); Drama Centre Theatre, 03-01 National Library, 100 Victoria Street (Season Two)

MRT: Newton; Bugis/Bras Basah

When: June 30 to July 3; July 21 to 24

Admission: \$20 (single-day ticket) to \$136 (eight-day festival pass) from [this website](#).

Dancers' Locker



Dancers' Locker 2022 by Frontier Danceland. PHOTO: CRISPIAN CHAN

Frontier Danceland's annual showcase presents a live triple bill featuring the creations of company dancers Sammantha Yue, Mark Robles and Chia Poh Hian.

In Sunlight Rhythm, Yue takes stock of her six years with the company, her choreography mirroring the growth of an orchid she has been cultivating in the studio.

Robles, who is Filipino, considers gender roles in Bahayana ("woman" in Bisaya, a language spoken in southern Philippines), drawing on the Tagalog myth of the god Bathala's three daughters - the deities of the moon, dawn and stars.

In Counting To A Million. Will I Make It To A Billion?, Chia works with 250kg of rice in the studio to explore themes of poverty and inequality.

Where: Goodman Arts Centre Amphitheatre and Frontier Danceland Studio, 02-52, Block M Goodman Arts Centre, 90 Goodman Road

MRT: Mountbatten

When: July 7, 8pm; July 8 and 9, 5.30 and 9pm

Admission: \$25, \$20 (concession) from [this website](#)
