VERENA TAY

~ COACH: VOICE, PRESENTATION SKILLS, STORYTELLING, CREATIVE WRITING ~

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MA in English Literature (National University of Singapore, 1993)
MA in Voice Studies (Central School of Speech and Drama, London, 2005)

For more than 25 years, Verena Tay has acted, directed and written for local English-language theatre in Singapore, working for companies such as The Necessary Stage, ACTION Theatre, TheatreWorks and Practice Theatre. She created various solo and collaborative performances, often based on original, self-written material while she was as an Associate Artist with The Substation (2002–09).

Three collections of her plays have been published: *In the Company of Women: Selected Plays* (Singapore: SNP Editions, 2004), *In the Company of Heroes* (Singapore: Math Paper Press, 2011) and *Victimology* (Singapore: Math Paper Press, 2011). An Honorary Fellow at the renowned International Writing Program, University of Iowa (Aug-Nov 2007), she is now working on her first volume of short stories and debut novel.

Apart from theatre, Verena brings stories vocally and physically alive in her unique fashion. She chooses her storytelling repertoire carefully, adapting folktales with strong characters or creating original tales with a twist. Where possible, she invests her quirky brand of humour, especially in her stories for adults, to delight and encourage her audience to appreciate a different perspective on life.

Together with Kamini Ramachandran with whom she founded MoonShadow Stories in November 2004, Verena has been telling stories at various community venues across Singapore, much to the delight and enjoyment of adults and children. In particular, MoonShadow Stories has done much to push the boundaries of storytelling for adults in Singapore.

A Professional Member and founding member of the Storytelling Association (Singapore), Verena has successfully coached members of the SAS and members of the public to improve their craft of telling stories through various courses, particularly her intermediate level workshop, *Beyond Storytelling 101*, that she has been conducting on a regular basis since 2008.

Outside of theatre and storytelling, Verena has worked in public affairs, marketed books, and edited newsletters and books on teaching and learning issues in higher education. Her interest in performance led her to pursue an MA in Voice Studies (2005) at the Central School of Speech and Drama, London during 2003-04, thereby augmenting her MA in English Literature (1993) from the National University of Singapore. Since 2005, she has taught voice, speech and presentation skills at the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, National University of Singapore, LaSalle College of the Arts, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and other local institutions.

VOICE & PRESENTATION SKILLS: Lecturer/Tutor

- **National Institute of Education** (Visual & Performing Arts Group)
  - Aug 2005–Apr 2007; since Jan 2008: Part-time lecturer for module, *CAV280/AAU280: Voice Studies and Production*
- **Nanyang Technological University** (Wee Kim Wee School of Communication of Information)
  - Aug–Nov 2011: Part-time lecturer/tutor for module, *CS2005: Speech & Argumentation*
  - Aug 2008–Apr 2011: Part-time lecturer/tutor & course leader for module, *COM 205: Speech & Argumentation*
  - Jan 2006–Apr 2007: Part-time lecturer/tutor & course leader for module, *CS106: Speech & Presentation Skills*
- **LaSalle College of the Arts** (School of Theatre & Dance, Faculty of Performing Arts & Integrated Studies)
  - Aug–Nov 2008: Voice teacher, BA (Hons) Acting Programme
    Taught 1st & 3rd year students, and conducted twice weekly vocal warm-ups for students of all three year levels
- **Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts** (Theatre Department)
  - Part-time voice lecturer/tutor for 1st year acting students (English stream)

VOICE & PRESENTATION SKILLS: Workshops Conducted

- *The Vocally Savvy Guide* (for docents of the Baba House, NUS Museum; 24 Aug & 14 Sep 2011)
- *The Vocally Savvy Educator* (Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, Nanyang Technological University; 12 July 2011)
- *Vocal Savvy* : Private workshops (Jun–July 2011; Feb 2011; Mar–Apr 2010; July 2008; March 2005; Feb 2005; Jan 2005)
- *Presentation Savvy: How to Improve Your Oral Communication Skills & Your Students' Ability to Deliver Speeches*
  (For teaching staff of Methodist Girls' Primary School, 19 May 2011)
- *Reading Your Text Aloud: Tips and Tricks to Make Your Words Sound 'Wow'!*
  (Mentor Access Programme/The Arts House; 8 Jan 2011)
- *The Vocally Savvy Communicator* (Association for Early Childhood Educators (Singapore); 30 Oct & 6 Nov 2010)
- *The Vocally Savvy Performer* (City Harvest Church; 22 & 29 Aug, & 5 & 19 Sep 2010)
- *Voice for the Storyteller* (Singapore Discovery Centre; 1 Mar 2010)
- *The Vocally Savvy Teacher: An Introduction*
  (Department of Biological Sciences, National University of Singapore; 20 Jan, 6 Feb & 5 Mar 2010)
  Plus one-on-one coaching sessions with DBS lecturers (24 Feb, 31 Mar & 26 May 2010)
- *The Vocally Savvy Communicator*: A Talk (Department of Biological Sciences, National University of Singapore; 21 Apr 2010)
- *Voice for the Storyteller: Enhancing Your Vocal Potential to Bring Stories Alive*
  (MoonShadow Stories/Storytelling Association (Singapore); 12 & 16 Jan 2010)
- *The Vocally Savvy Communicator* (CARE Singapore; 13 & 20 Feb 2009)
- *The Art of Good Speech Making: Planning Well, Presenting Well*
  (Management Development Institute of Singapore;13 Sep 2008)
- *Vocal Savvy* (Singapore Drama Educators Association; *Celebrate Drama! 2008* at The Arts House; 16 Aug 2008)
- *Oral Communication Programme* (Punggol Secondary School/Act 3 Drama Academy; Feb–Apr 2008)
- *Voice Workshop* (McMain High School, New Orleans, USA; 15 Nov 2007)
- *The Rooted Voice* (LaSalle-SIA College of the Arts; 12 Mar 2007)
- *Expand Your Vocal Possibilities* (Millennia Institute; 21, 22 & 28 Apr 2006)
- *Treasured Tongues: How to Become a Teller with a Thousand Voices'* workshop
  (Asian Congress of Storytellers/National Book Development Council of Singapore; 11 Nov 2005)
- *Expand Your Vocal Possibilities* (Springfield Secondary School; 20 Jul 2005)
- *Voice Workshop* (St Anthony's Canossian Secondary School; Jul–Aug 2005)
- *Voice Workshop* (Chung Cheng High School; 23 Mar 2005)
- *Expand Your Vocal Possibilities* (Kranji Secondary School; 17 Mar 2005)
- *Enriching Your Performance Voice* (Workshop for young actors; The Fun Stage; 8 Jan 2005)
- Private voice coaching for individual clients (since Jan 2005)
- *Voice Power: Speaking with Confidence*: A Sharing Session With Students (Singapore Polytechnic; 22 Sep 2004)
- *Connecting to the Rooted Voice* (Chinese Mental Health Association, London; 1 Jul 2004)
- *Connecting to the Rooted Voice*
  - 3 practical research workshops conducted as partial fulfilment for the MA Voice Studies programme at the Central School of Speech and Drama, London
  - 15 & 22 May 2004 for a misc. group

- 5 June 2004 for the Chinese Energetic Young Enthusiasts, youth group of Islington Chinese Association

- Teaching practice with 1st Year BA Drama Education students at Central School of Speech and Drama, London
  (As partial fulfilment for the MA Voice Studies programme at CSSD; Apr–Jun 2004)

- *Voice Workshop* (Asian Storytellers' Network; 12 Apr 2004)

- *Introduction to Voice Work* (Buds Youth Theatre, The Substation; 4 & 11 Apr 2004)

- *Voice Awareness for Teachers*
  (Staff workshop conducted for Centre for Development of Teaching & Learning, National University of Singapore:
  5 Apr 2004 & 9 Mar 2005)

- Teaching practice at Oak Hill Theological College, London
  (As partial fulfilment for the MA Voice Studies programme at the Central School of Speech and Drama, London; Jan–Mar 2004)

- *Letting Go: Physical Relaxation Techniques*
  (Student/staff workshops for Centre for Development of Teaching & Learning, National University of Singapore; 2002–2003)

- *Voice Awareness: Tips for NUS Teachers* (*http://www.cdtl.nus.edu.sg/Verena/Voice/*)
  (A web site created for Centre for Development of Teaching & Learning, National University of Singapore; Mar 2002)

- *Voice Awareness*
  (Staff workshops conducted for Centre for Development of Teaching & Learning, National University of Singapore; 1999–2001)

STORYTELLING: Workshops Conducted

- *Beyond Storytelling 101*: An intermediate level workshop organised by MoonShadow Stories
  - 18, 21, 25, 28 Oct 2011
  - 17, 20, 24, 27 May 2011
  - 2, 9, 16 & 23 Apr 2011
  - 4, 8, 11 & 15 May 2010
  - 14, 18, 25 Jul & 11 Aug 2009
    Organised for Associate Members of Storytelling Association (Singapore); included private coaching sessions for participants from Sep to Oct 2009; culminated in paid performances (*Twists: Tales of Surprise and Suspense from Around the World*) by the participants at Classroom 2, The Substation, on 23–24 Oct 2009.
  - 5, 12, 26 May & 2 Jun 2008
    Organised for Associate Members of Storytelling Association (Singapore); included private coaching sessions for participants from Sep to Oct 2008; culminated in paid performances (*A Touch of Wisdom: Wisdom Tales from around the World*) by the participants at Classroom 2, The Substation, on 7–8 Nov 2008.

- *Basics of Storytelling: A Talk* (The Charisma Toastmasters Club, Club No. 153416/Executive Coach International; 17 Oct 2011)

- *Spark: The Art of Developing & Telling Personal Stories to Enliven Your Teaching*
  (Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, Nanyang Technological University; 13 Jul 2011)

- *From Colleagues to Friends: Bonding Through Sharing Personal Stories*
  (National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre Singapore; 6 May 2011)

- *Spark: How to Tell Personal Stories that Kindle Mind and Spirit*
  (workshop for teaching staff of Covent of the Holy Infant Jesus (St Joseph); 21 Sep 2010)

- *Taking the Plunge: Learning to Tell a Story without Memorisation*
  (Co-conducted with Kiran Shah for Darwin-based school teachers at Wagaman Primary School; organised by Asia in Schools; Curriculum, Teaching and Phases in Learning; Department of Education & Training, Northern Territory Government, Australia; 12 Aug 2010)

- *My Story: How to Craft & Tell Personal Stories* (MoonShadow Stories/Storytelling Association (Singapore); 26 & 30 Jan 2010)

- *Voice for the Storyteller: Enhancing Your Vocal Potential to Bring Stories Alive*
  (MoonShadow Stories/Storytelling Association (Singapore); 12 & 16 Jan 2010)

- *Timeless Tales: Bringing Yesterday's Stories into Today*
  (Asian Congress of Storytellers [1st Singapore International Storytelling Festival]/National Book Development Council of Singapore; 30 Aug 2006)

- *Treasured Tongues: How to Become a Teller with a Thousand Voices*
  (Asian Congress of Storytellers/National Book Development Council of Singapore; 11 Nov 2005)

- *Stimulating the Mind's Eye: How to Choose/Create Stories & Tell Them Effectively*
  (with Kamini Ramachandran, MoonShadow Stories/AWARE; 7 & 14 Jun 2005)

- *Stories in Art: Shoes That Tell Tales*, storytelling performance and craft workshop for children aged 5 to 7
  (with Kamini Ramachandran, MoonShadow Stories/Singapore Art Museum; 31 May 2005)

- *Communicating to Youths Through Personal Stories* (The Salvation Army; The Substation Dance Studio; 25 May 2005)

CREATIVE WRITING: Workshops/Courses/Mentorships Conducted

- *My Story: Crafting Personal Life into Art* (BooksActually; 29 Nov 2011)

- *Perspectives: Seeing New, Writing New* (BooksActually; 15 Nov 2011)

- *My Story: Crafting Personal Life into Art* (BooksActually; 1 Nov 2011)
- *Object Writing* (BooksActually; 4 Oct 2011)
- *My Story: Crafting Personal Life into Art* (BooksActually/Splash Productions Pte Ltd; 16 Sep 2011)
- *Perspectives: Seeing New, Writing New* (BooksActually; 6 Sep 2011)
- Mentor for two writers: Gemma Lee Pereira (prose) & Joanne Tan Mae Shen (playwriting)
  (Mentor Access Project, National Arts Council (Singapore)/The Arts House; Apr 2011–Apr 2012)
- Part-time lecturer in Dramatic Structure (Playwriting)
  (Theatre Arts Programme, Faculty of Performing Arts & Integrated Studies, LaSalle College of the Arts; Sep–Oct 2009)
- *Basic Playwriting Workshop* (St Andrews' Junior College)
  - 5, 19, 22 & 26 Aug 2009
  - 6, 13, 20 & 27 Aug 2008
  - 18, 23, 25, 30 May & 1 Jun 2007
  - 11 Jul & 1 Aug 2007

DRAMA & ACTING: Workshops/Courses Conducted

- *Basic Acting Workshop* (St Andrews' Junior College)
  - 5 & 12 Mar, 2 & 9 Apr 2011
  - 26 & 27 Feb & 3 & 6 Mar 2010
  - 9, 16, 23 & 30 Jul 2008
- *Physical Acting Workshops* (St Andrew's Junior College)
  - 28 Jan; 4, 11 & 18 Feb 2009
  - 22 & 29 Apr; 6 May 2009
- Main Facilitator, Inaugural 'Drama in Production' Programme for lower secondary students
  (National Junior College; Feb–Sep 2009)
- Acting workshop for Chestnut Drive Secondary School (The Necessary Stage; Nov 1996–Jan 1997)

SUMMARY: Organisations Worked With (Singapore)

- Act 3 Drama Academy
- The Arts House
- Asian Storytelling Network
- Association of Early Childhood Educators
- AWARE (Association of Women for Action and Research)
- BooksActually
- Buds Youth Theatre
- CARE Singapore
- Chung Cheng High School
- City Harvest Church
- Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus, St Joseph
- The Fun Stage
- Kranji Secondary School
- LaSalle College of the Arts (School of Theatre & Dance, Faculty of Performing Arts & Integrated Studies)
  - BA (Hons) Acting Programme
  - Theatre Arts Programme
- Management Development Institute of Singapore
- Mentor Access Programme
- Methodist Girls' Primary School
- Millennia Institute
- MoonShadow Stories
- Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts
  - Theatre Department
- Nanyang Technological University
  - Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching
  - Wee Kim Wee School of Communication & Information
- National Book Development Council of Singapore
- National Institute of Education
  - Visual & Performing Arts Group
- National University of Singapore
  - Centre for Development of Teaching and Learning
  - Department of Biological Sciences
  - NUS Museum, Baba House
- National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre
- The Necessary Stage
- The Salvation Army
- Singapore Art Museum
- Singapore Discovery Centre
- Singapore Drama Educators Association
- Singapore Polytechnic
- Splash Productions Pte Ltd
- Springfield Secondary School
- St Anthony's Canossian Secondary School
- St Andrew's Junior College
- The Substation