



VERENA TAY

~ EDUCATIONAL RESUME ~

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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.

EDUCATION: Academic

- 2003–2004 **M.A. in Voice Studies**, Central School of Speech and Drama, London, UK
 - Passed: Feb 2005.
 - Thesis: *The Rooted Voice: What It is and How to Cultivate It*
- 1988–1992 **M.A. in English Literature**, National University of Singapore
 - Conferred: Mar 1993.
 - Thesis: *Migrants' Narratives: The Novels of Salman Rushdie, Timothy Mo & Kazuo Ishiguro*
- 1984–1988 **B.A. Hons. (Second Lower) in English Literature**, National University of Singapore
 - Thesis: *Shaw's Argument with Shakespeare: Playwright as Parodist*
 - B.A. subjects: English Literature, History, Political Science, Philosophy
- 1982–1983 **G.C.E. 'A' Level**, National Junior College
- 1978–1981 **G.C.E. 'O' Level**, Methodist Girls' School

WORKSHOPS/COURSES/CONFERENCES ATTENDED: Voice/Performance/Directing (Singapore)

- *World Physical Theatre Techniques—Butoh and Suzuki*: Mark Hill (Singapore Drama Educators Association; 2–3 Dec 2010)
- *Advanced Voice Master Class*: Bill Pepper (The Launch Block; 4 Apr 2010)
- *Introduction to Speech and Eurythmy*: Dr Jane Gilmer & Dr Grace Zozobrado-Hahn (Waldorf Steiner Education, Association Singapore; 24 Oct 2009)
- *Elements of Drama: Performance and Teaching*: Dr Prudence Wales (Singapore Drama Educators Association; 10–13 June 2009—a Workforce Development Agency accredited course)
- *Shakespeare & Young Audience*: Tim Crouch (Singapore Drama Educators Association; 14 Mar 2009)
- *Devising Personas: Devising Performance with Hoipolloi & Exploring Exclusive Cities*: Shôn Dale-Jones & Jill Norman (Hoipolloi/Singapore Drama Educators Association; 14–15 Feb 2009)
- *Physical Theatre: From Artistry to Pedagogy*: Dr Jane Gilmer, Edith Podesta & Noorlinah Mohamed (Singapore Drama Educators Association; 26–28 Nov 2008—a Workforce Development Agency accredited course)
- *Asian Intercultural Conference 2008—Theatre Today: Seeking New Paradigms* (Theatre Training & Research Programme; 28 May–1 Jun 2008)
- *The Sound Voice*: Shelagh Davies (Alexandra Hospital; 26–27 May 2008)
- *No Audience, No Echo*: Tim Crouch (The Esplanade; 6 May 2008)
- *Suzuki Training/Viewpoints*: Shelly Quick (World-in-Theatre; 13, 17, 20, 24, 27 & 31 Jan 2008)
- *Workshop for Actors: ImageWork Training & Chekhov Technique*: David Zinder (Theatre Training & Research Programme; 14–15 Jul 2007)
- *Workshop for Actors and Directors*: Lee Breuer & Maude Mitchell of Mabou Mines (National Arts Council (Singapore)/Theatre Training & Research Programme; Singapore Arts Festival 2007; 22 & 24 Jun 2007)
- *Exploring Our Physical and Emotional Selves Through Art, Drama and Movement Therapy*: Caroline Essame & Heidi Powles (CREATE: Creative Arts, Therapy and Training; 20 May 2007)
- *The Language of Memory*: Cristina Castrillo & Bruna Gusberti of Teatro delle Radici (The Substation/Magdalenia (Singapore); 7–8 May 2007)
- *Voicing Shakespeare*: Nora Samosir (Singapore Drama Educators Association; 20–23 Nov 2006)
- *Kecak*: Luh Luwih of Bali (*Crossroads 2006: International Women's Theatre Festival/Magdalenia* (Singapore); 13–14 Jul 2006)
- Private singing lessons: Joanna Wong of Chinese Theatre Circle (May–Jun 2005)
- Private singing lessons: Thomas Manhart (Dec 2004–May 2005)
- Physical training with Elizabeth de Roza (Nov 2004–Mar 2005)
- *Physical & Vocal Training*: Ang Gey Pin & Elizabeth de Roza (Jul–Aug 2004)
- *Visual Language*: Ramesh Meyyappan (Association of Singapore Actor; 2–3 Aug 2004)
- *Freeing the Voice and Introduction to Voice Production*: Nora Samosir & Noorlinah Mohamed (Singapore Drama Educators Association; 29–31 Mar & 5–7 Apr 2004)

- *Strengthening Connections Through Playback Theatre*: Beverly Hosking (Academy of Human Development/Fei Yue Family Service Centre (Choa Chu Kang); 29–31 Mar 2004)
- Voice Lessons: Leow Puay Tin (special arrangement for 6 hours of voice lessons; Apr–May 2003)
- *Dance Master Class*: Lin Yuan Shang (Compagnie Eolipile/The Substation; 1 Jun 2002)
- *The Voice that Sparkles–Speech & Pronunciation*: Rebecca Low (Singapore Institute of Management; 26 Jan 2002)
- *The Voice that Sparkles–Voice*: Rebecca Low (Singapore Institute of Management; 19 Jan 2002)
- *Workshop for Professional Voice Users*: Prof P.W. Alberti & Ms Sarah Lovell (Dept of Otolaryngology, National University Hospital; 15 Dec 2001)
- *Workshop for Performers*: Sardono W. Kusumo (Practice Performing Arts School; 2, 3, 9 & 10 Nov 2001)
- *Shau & Yoga for Actors*: Jayanta Meetei Chongtham (Practice Performing Arts School; 8–15 Sep 2001)
- *Alexander Technique*: Niamh Dowling (Drama Box/Singapore Art Museum; 21 Jul 2001)
- *Movement & Voice Workshop*: Grzegorz Bral (Drama Box/The Substation; Apr 2001)
- *Making the Text Live/Giving the Body a Voice: Intensive Work for the Actor*: Robert Draffin (The Theatre Practice; May 2000)
- *Lab Work–Physical Training & Improvisation*: Koh Leng Leng (Jan–Jun 2000)
- *The Feldenkrais Method–Awareness Through Movement*: Bob Feldman (The Substation; Oct–Nov 1999)
- *Integrated Dance & Vocal Technique*: Maxine Hepner (Dance Dimension Project; Nov–Dec 1998)
- *Physical Theatre & Mime*: David Glass (Act 3/National Youth Council; Apr 1998)
- *Introduction to Decroux-style Mime/Awareness of the Spine*: Thomas Leabhart (The Necessary Stage; May 1997)
- *Le Coq-inspired Movement & Mask Work*: Jean Ng (The Necessary Stage; Mar–May 1997)
- *Advanced Acting Workshop*: Michael Simpson (Practice Performing Arts School; Mar 1997)
- *Movement & Percussion*: Robert Jones (The Necessary Stage; Feb 1997)
- *Movement Master Class*: Paul Sadot (Action Theatre; Oct–Nov 1994)
- *Movement*: Molissa Fenley (TheatreWorks; Oct 1994)
- *Directing*: Penny Casdagli (TheatreWorks; Aug 1994)
- *Movement*: Gregory Nash (TheatreWorks; Jun–Jul 1994)
- *Voice*: Mel Churcher (TheatreWorks; Mar 1994)
- *Movement*: Blake Brooker & Denise Clarke (TheatreWorks; Jun 1993)
- *Acting*: Georges Bigot (TheatreWorks/French Embassy; Aug 1992)
- *From the Outside In & Advanced Improvisation*: Russell Boyce (The Necessary Stage; Jun 1992)
- Acting Masterclass: Volker Quandt (Act 3; Feb 1992)
- *The Actor and His Method*: Ivan Heng (TheatreWork; Jan 1992)
- *Basic Mime*: Christina Sergeant (The Substation; Sep–Nov 1991)
- *Directing*: Simon McBurney (TheatreWorks; Aug–Sep 1991)
- *Acting*: Julia Bardsley (TheatreWorks; Feb 1991)
- *Directing*: Kuo Pao Kun; (Practice Performing Arts School; Mar–Sep 1989)
- *Grotowskian Training*: Liu Jing Min (Practice Performing Arts School; Late 1987)
- *Acting*: Kuo Pao Kun (Practice Performing Arts School; Mar–Aug 1987)

WORKSHOPS/COURSES ATTENDED: Writing/Playwriting (Singapore)

- *Making Up Stories*: Roger Jenkins (Singapore Writers Festival 2011; 26 Oct 2011)
- *The Essential Questions of Picture Books*: Pooja Makhijani (Mentor Access Project 2011/The Arts House; 13 Aug 2011)
- *Letters to the City*: Miriam Nash & Kash Cheong (Lit Up Singapore 2011 Festival: The City Limits/Word Forward; 19 Jul 2011)
- *Writing with Letters*: Miriam Nash (BooksActually/The British Council; 15 & 29 Jun 2011)

- *Hippotomonstrosqipedaleophobia*: Kei Miller (The British Council/The Arts House; 31 May 2011)
- *Writing the City*: Tiffany Murray (The British Council; 11–12 Sep 2010)
- *City of Four Million Storeys: Characters and Place in Intimate Relationship*: Patrick Gale & Suchen Christine Lim (The British Council; 20–21 Feb 2010)
- *The Art of Story: How to Design, Create & Write Commercial, Bestselling Fiction*: Rob Parnell (National Book Development Council of Singapore; 13 Nov 2009)
- *Secrets of the 10-minute Play*: Dean Lundquist (Magdalena (Singapore); 11 & 18 Sep 2009)
- *Playwriting Master Class*: Jonathan Dorf (Wordwrights/Society for Reading & Literacy; 15 Aug 2009)
- *Speaking the Group Mind: Collaborative Playwriting*: Joan Holden (Drama Box, Blanc Space New Play Season 2009; The Hall @ The Arts House; 26 Jul–8 Aug 2009)
- *Creative Writing*: Emmy Horstkamp (National Book Development Council of Singapore; 8 Mar 2008)
- *Short+Sweet Writing Workshop*: Michael Huxley (Short+Sweet Singapore; 15 & 17 Feb 2008)
- *Jumpstarting Your Script–Playwriting Master Class*: Kaite O'Reilly (Magdalena Singapore/The Substation; 10 & 12 Sep 2004)
- *Playwriting Workshop*: Desmond Sim (TheatreWorks, as part of TheatreWorks' Writers' Lab/'Hearing Voices' Project; Jun–Jul 2002)
- *Playwriting*: Noel Grieg (The Necessary Stage; Mar 1997)
- *TCS Drama Scriptwriting (Beginners)*: Linda Hamner (Television Corporation of Singapore; Apr–Jun 1996)
- *Writing For Children Through Improvisation*: Bruce Keller (Practice Theatre Ensemble; Feb 1996)
- *Playwriting*: John Clifford (TheatreWorks; Jun 1994)
- *Playwriting*: David Britton (TheatreWorks; Jul 1992)

WORKSHOPS/COURSES ATTENDED: Storytelling (Singapore)

- *Asian Congress of Storytellers 2011/Singapore International Storytelling Festival 2011* (National Book Development Council of Singapore; 3–4 Sep 2011)
 - Attended workshops by Randel McGee, Lili Rodrigues-Pang, Abbi Patrix, Dr Gideon Arulmani & Kamini Ramachandran
- *The Storyteller's Tool: Exploring the Body as an Essential Subject that Supports the Storyteller in His Art Form*: Abbi Patrix (Singapore International Storytelling Festival 2011/MoonShadow Stories, Master Class; 2 Sep 2011)
- *Creating a Performance Piece*: Donna Jacobs Sife (Storytelling Association (Singapore), Master Class; 4 Sep 2010)
- *Asian Congress of Storytellers 2009/Singapore International Storytelling Festival 2009* (National Book Development Council of Singapore; 11–12 Sep 2009)
 - Attended workshops by Ruth Kirkpatrick, Valentina Ortiz, Eth-Noh-Tec & Anna Jarrett
- *The Listening Storyteller: Learning to Listen to Your Audience and Yourself*: Ruth Kirkpatrick (Storytelling Association (Singapore), Master Class; 5 Sep 2009)
- *Permission to Play: Using Community Coaching to Work with Story Development*: Kevin Cordi (Storytelling Association (Singapore), Master Class; 6 Sep 2008)
- *How Storytelling can Influence the Literacy Development of Young Children*: Dr Rebecca Isbell (Asian Storytelling Network; 19 Jun 2008)
- *Sharing Tales for a Kinder Planet: Peace Tales and Care for the Environment*: Margaret Read MacDonald (Asian Storytelling Network; 14 Apr 2007)
- *Storytelling Fun*: Ann Pellowski (Asian Storytelling Network; 11 Feb 2006)
- *Asian Congress of Storytellers 2005* (National Book Development Council of Singapore; 11–12 Nov 2005)
- *Asian Congress of Storytellers 2004* (National Book Development Council of Singapore; 25–26 Nov 2004)
 - Attended workshops conducted by Dr Wajuppa Tossa, Rangimoana Taylor & Diane des Las Casas
- *Storytelling Course*: Sheila Wee, Kiran Shah, Cathy Spagnoli & Norlinah Mohamed (National Book Development Council of Singapore & Asian Storytelling Network; May–Jun 2003)
- *Asian Congress of Storytellers 2002* (National Book Development Council of Singapore, 8–9 Nov 2002)
 - Attended workshops conducted by Dr Margaret Read MacDonald, Dr Wajuppa Tossa & Cathy Spagnoli

RESIDENCIES/FESTIVALS/WORKSHOPS/SEMINARS/CLASSES ATTENDED (OUTSIDE SINGAPORE)

- *Under the Banyan Tree: Darwin Storytelling Festival* (part of the Darwin Festival; 12–15 Aug 2010).
 - *Wisdom of the Elders: Honouring Our Senior Citizens* (Casuarina Library; 12 Aug 2010)
 - *The Tamarind Tree Storytelling Session* (Casuarina Library; 12 Aug 2010)
 - *Spirits of the Night: Storytelling Concert* (Casuarina Library; 13 Aug 2010)
 - *Under the Banyan Tree: A Storytelling Show for the Family* (Tree of Knowledge, Festival Park, Darwin Civic Centre; 14 Aug 2010)
- LaMaMa Umbria International Playwright Retreat, Italy (5–15 July 2010)
- Work-sharing session, discussing my playwriting and the arts in Singapore (Eth-Noh-Tec, San Francisco, USA; 8 June 2010)
- Honorary Fellow, International Writing Program (University of Iowa, 25 Aug–20 Nov 2007)
 - 31 Aug 2007, 2 pm: Featured on Iowa Public Radio's *Talk of Iowa* programme (hosted by Ben Kieffer) on WSUI AM910, along with other IWP writers
 - Sep–Oct 2007: Completion of 2 essays ('You Are What You Eat: A Dietary Contemplation of Identity', 'Dead Ends, U-turns & Fresh Starts: Little Ironies of Death in Diaspora'), 1 short story (*Broken*), 1 experimentation of prose/poetry/play (*The Lunar Interviews*), 2 short monologues (*The Watchman*, *Demand & Supply*)
 - 21 Sep 2007: Participated in the Iowa City Public Library Panel Discussion on the topic of "Writing in an Age of Migration, Diaspora and Exile" (<http://www.uiowa.edu/~iwp/EVEN/documents/TayF.doc>)
 - 1 & 5 Oct 2007: Guest speaker at a module on Singapore Literature at the University of Iowa conducted by Peter Nazareth, renowned scholar on postcolonial literature
 - 6 Oct 2007: Performed *The Perfect Shoe* as part of Global Express, actors' readings of a medley of writings by IWP playwrights and prose writers
 - 7-8 Oct 2007: Participated in the 24-hour writing session (in which 15 playwrights from around the world contribute a scene each for the Global Play Project, organised as part of the IWP's 40th anniversary celebrations) with the contribution of the short play, *Imperfect Family Recipes*.
 - 10 Oct 2007: 1st inaugural public reading of the Global Play Project (Theater B, Theater Building, University of Iowa, Iowa City)
 - 18 Oct 2007: 2nd public reading of the Global Play Project (Micheal Frayn Space, Hampstead Theatre, London, UK)
 - 22 Oct 2007: Featured in the International Literature Today module (conducted by Christopher Merrill and Natasa Durovicova) at the University of Iowa, along with other IWP writers
 - 24 Oct 2007: Was one of three IWP writers invited to read personal work at a reception that the US Bank, a major IWP sponsor, organized on behalf of the IWP writers
 - 28 Oct 2007: Public screening of my 1999/2000 short film, *Promise*
 - 2 Nov 2007: Reading of own work as part of the series of readings by IWP writers at Shambaugh House, Iowa City, along with a fellow IWP writer
 - 7 Nov 2007: Guest speaker at the meeting of the West Branch Lion's Club, Iowa; gave an overview of Singapore history and culture and read some of my fiction
 - 11 Nov 2007: Participated in dialogue session between IWP (4 writers, 1 administrator) and Santa Fe residents (2 poets, 2 administrators) about writing and the arts in our respective communities (Conference Room, Hotel St Francis, Santa Fe, New Mexico)
 - 12 Nov 2007: 3rd public reading of the Global Play Project (Portland Stage Company, Portland, Maine, USA)
 - 13 Nov 2007: Read my monologues and shared about my writing philosophy with 2 classes of creative writing students at the Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico
 - 15 Nov 2007: Conducted a voice workshop for students of McMain High School, New Orleans, Louisiana
 - 16 Nov 2007: Shared voice work and Malay folksongs with members and affiliates of Arts Spot Productions, New Orleans, Louisiana during their weekly training session at the New Orleans Center for the Arts
 - 16 Nov 2007: Storytelling for adults at the Lakeview Baptist Church, New Orleans
 - 19 Nov 2007: Reading by professional actors of *The Car* at the New York Theatre Workshop, New York City, co-organised by IWP and NYTW
- Cultural exchange in New York State (18–22 Aug 2007)
 - 18 Aug 2007, 2 pm: Storytelling for children, Stone Ridge Library, Stone Ridge, NY
 - 18 Aug 2007, 7.30 pm: Performance of *3 Women*, beGallery, High Falls, NY
 - 20 Aug 2007: Storytelling for youngsters, Boys & Girls Clubs of Albany, Albany, NY
 - 21 Aug 2007: Storytelling for adults, Storytellers' Circle @ Wordsmith's Studio, Schenectady, NY
 - 22 Aug 2007: Performance of *3 Women*, Union College, Schenectady, NY

- *International Festival of Women in Contemporary Theatre*
(Magdalena USA; Providence, Rhode Island, USA; 31 Jul–6 Aug 2005)
 - 1–3 Aug 2005: Participated in 'Articulating Syntax' Workshop by Margaret Cameron (Australia)
 - 2 Aug 2005: Performed *3 Women* at RITE
 - 3 Aug 2005: Participated in 'The Magdalena Project: Past, Present & Future' Panel Discussion
 - 4–5 Aug 2005: Participated in 'Weaving Words' Workshop by Gilly Adams (Wales)
- Private singing lessons: John Tucker (Jan–Jul 2004; London)
- Private singing lessons: Howard Milner (Mar–Jun 2004; London)
- *Making the Body All Eyes: Psychophysical Awareness for Performers*, a beginners' intensive introductory workshop: Phillip B. Zarrilli (Theatre Training Initiative, London; 20–22 Feb 2004)
- *International Festival of Women in Contemporary Theatre* (Theme: 'Theatre-Women-Travelling')
(Magdalena Australia; Brisbane Powerhouse Centre for Live Arts; 6–16 Apr 2003)
 - 9–10 Apr 2003: Performed *Medea: One on One*
 - 14–15 Apr 2003: Participated in 'Body Voice' Workshop conducted by Helen Sharp (Australia)
 - 15 Apr 2003: Helped organised the presentation of the outcome of *Performing Words 2003: Singapore* workshop
 - 16 Apr 2003: Participated in the final installation of *Water(wars)* initiated by Jill Greenhalgh & Michael Brookes (Wales)
- *Transit III: Theatre, Women, Generation: International Theatre Festival & Meeting*
(Odin Teatret/Magdalena Project; Holstebro, Denmark; 18–28 Jan 2001)
 - 19–22 Jan 2001: Participated in 'Singing and Speaking Voices' Workshop conducted by Brigitte Cirla (Belgium) and Julia Varley (Denmark)
 - 19–22 Jan 2001: Participated in 'Life Behind a Mask' Workshop on mask and puppetry conducted by Deborah Hunt (New Zealand/Puerto Rico) and Marie-Josée Ordener (France)
 - 24 Jan 2001: Performed in Grenland Friteater's production of *From Blue to Red–MO: DIY*
 - 25 Jan 2001: Participated in panel discussion on the topic of 'Pedagogy'
 - 26 Jan 2001: Performed in *BURQA*, a public performance resulting from 'Life Behind a Mask' Workshop
 - 28 Jan 2001: Showcased solo performance, *Cotton & Jade*
- Cultural exchange with Grenland Friteater of Porsgrun, Norway (Nov 2000–Jan 2001)
 - 6–24 Nov 2000: Attended 'Crossing Borders: An International Workshop for Actors', a physical acting workshop conducted by Geddy Aniksdal (Grenland Friteater), with help from Gilly Adams of Wales
 - 15 Nov 2000: Showcased solo performance, *Cotton & Jade*
 - 6 Dec 2000: Showcased solo performance, *The Perfect Shoe*
- *International Festival of Women's Performance*
(Magdalena Aotearoa; Wellington, 21–29 Mar 1999, & Paekakariki, 1–3 Apr 1999)
 - 22 Mar 1999: Gave a talk entitled 'Why We Do What We Do: Female Theatre Practitioners in Singapore' at a forum at the City Cinema, Wellington
 - 22–24 Mar 1999: 'Physical Theatre & Voice' Workshop: Geddy Aniksdal (Grenland Friteater, Norway)
 - 25–27 Mar 1999: 'Consciousness of the Body' Workshop: Jolanta Krukowska (Akademia Ruchu, Poland)
 - 2–3 Apr 1999: 'Environmental Costume' Workshop: Pacific Sisters (New Zealand)
 - 3 Apr 1999: Performed *The Perfect Shoe*, at the Performance Tent, Paekakariki
- XI Session of the International School of Theatre Anthropology (Montemor-o-Novo/Lisbon, Portugal; Sep 1998).