



**Embargoed till 11 May 2018**

**100 Beneficiaries of Arts Training Fund Put Up Largest Original Production to date  
for Fund's 13th Anniversary**

Singapore, 11 May 2018 - This May, more than 100 children and youth from underprivileged families will be coming together to showcase their talents in an original multi-disciplinary production that is the largest they have done to date.

Titled "My Story", this production is by present and past beneficiaries of The Business Times Budding Artists Fund (BT BAF) and is part of the 13th anniversary celebrations of the Fund. Inspired by the stories of young people whose involvement in the arts have helped them to cope with difficult personal and family circumstances, this production reflects the true life experiences of beneficiaries in overcoming loss, rejection and failure to achieve success.

Says former BT BAF beneficiary Nur Afiqah Rapee, 23, an aspiring dancer who is performing in 'My Story', "The training and opportunities I received from BT BAF has helped me build a strong dance portfolio. With the training I received, I landed a place in LASALLE College of the Arts where I am able to work towards my dream of being a professional dancer."

BT BAF provides arts training without costs to children and youth aged six to 19 from financially disadvantaged families to develop their talents and interests so that they can grow in confidence and strength. To date, the fund – which is managed by not-for-profit arts organisation The RICE Company Limited (TRCL) - has supported more than 16,000 children and youths since 2005. Beneficiaries receive their training at arts training centres operated by TRCL, The Little Arts Academy (LAA) and 10 Square Youth.

Afiqah is at present a final year dance student at LASALLE. Since graduating from 10 Square Youth in 2015, Afiqah has returned to mentor younger beneficiaries and inspire them to further their dreams. As part of the celebrations this year, Afiqah will also perform with four other dance alumni beneficiaries.

Elaborates current BT BAF beneficiary, Marsya Nashmia Bte Muhd Sateria, 11, who is part of the dance training programme at LAA, "BT BAF has given the opportunity to learn new techniques and skills in dance and this has inspired me to pursue my passion for dance. I am also thankful

for the alumni who have returned to mentor and encourage us to continue pursuing our passion in the arts.'

Nashmia hopes to continue her education at the School of the Arts Singapore where she is able to pursue her passion in dance.

Says Mr Alvin Tay, Chairman of BT BAF, "The impact of the arts on the lives of our beneficiaries has been far-reaching. We have witnessed how they have blossomed in spite of hardship and achieved many successes on their own terms. We are heartened that many of them in spite of their achievements and busy schedules, have returned to contribute to the fund's programmes."

Adds Mr Tay, "In this spirit of "passing it on", we are also grateful to the sponsors and donors who have stood by BT BAF through the years. Their unstinting support for BT BAF is one of the key reasons why our beneficiaries have made wonderful progress over the last 13 years."

At the closing of the celebration, Mr Choo Kee Siong, Managing Director and Head, Enterprise Banking, Commercial Banking of United Overseas Bank (UOB) will present a cheque to Mr Alvin Tay, Chairman of BT BAF. UOB's donation of \$500,000 to BT BAF will be made through ChildAid, an annual children's charity concert.

Says Mr Choo Kee Siong, Managing Director and Head, Enterprise Banking, Commercial Banking, UOB, "At UOB, we believe the arts play an essential role in strengthening societal bonds. We also see it as an avenue for children to learn and to express themselves. This is why art, children and education form the pillars of our UOB Heartbeat Corporate Social Responsibility programme. Our long-term support of ChildAid enables us to encourage and to nurture the creative interests of more children and youth."

Members of the media are invited to the BT BAF 13th anniversary celebration on 11 May 2018, 7pm-9pm, Auditorium at 10 Square @ Orchard Central, Orchard Central, 181 Orchard Road, #10-01, Singapore 238896.

For media enquiries, please contact:

Faith Leong

Communications Executive

Email: [faith\\_leong@therice.sg](mailto:faith_leong@therice.sg)

Mobile: 9173 0246

<b>Event:</b>	<b>BT BAF's 13<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – 'My Story'</b>
<b>Date:</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> and 12 <sup>th</sup> May 2018
<b>Time:</b>	7pm – 9pm
<b>Venue:</b>	Auditorium at 10 Square @ Orchard Central  181 Orchard Road Orchard Central, #10-01 Singapore 238896
<b>Synopsis:</b>	This May, more than 100 children and youth from underprivileged families will be coming together to stage an original production about their search for identity and meaning amidst true live experiences of loss, rejection and failure. Titled "My Story", this work is part of The Business Times Budding Artists Fund's (BT BAF) 13th anniversary celebrations which will be held on 11 and 12 May. This production tells the stories of young people whose involvement in the arts have helped them to cope with difficult personal and family circumstances.
<b>Contact Person:</b>	The RICE Company Limited: Faith Leong (9173 0246)

### **About The Business Times Budding Artists Fund**

Initiated in 2004 and adopted by The Business Times in 2005, The Business Times Budding Artists Fund (BT BAF) originated from a conviction that no child with the strong interest and potential in the arts should be denied the opportunity to develop his or her talents due to a lack of financial resources.

Since 2005, BT BAF has reached out to more than 16,000 financially-disadvantaged children and youth, between the ages of six to 19 years old, through a variety of programmes including a structured arts training curriculum, arts camps, workshops and signature events. BT BAF supports arts training centres, The Little Arts Academy and 10 Square @ Orchard Central across four locations in Singapore, and is managed by The RICE Company Limited. For more information, visit [www.baf.sg](http://www.baf.sg).

## **About The RICE Company Limited**

The RICE Company Limited (TRCL) is a not-for-profit organisation that harvests the potential of the arts and culture for the development of human lives and connects communities in Singapore with the world. TRCL's core areas of expertise lies in enlivening places and spaces through place making and content creation; building cultural capital through the engagement of arts with business; and developing linkages with communities around the world.

TRCL currently manages two social funds (The Business Times Budding Artists Fund and Sing50 Fund), six creative spaces (The Little Arts Academy City and North Campus I & II, 10 Square at Orchard Central, Temenggong 18/20 and The Pavilion at Far East Square) and two subsidiaries (Global Culture Alliance and Millet Holdings). For more information, visit [www.therice.sg](http://www.therice.sg)