



Embargoed until 8 September 2018, 8pm

9TH AFCC SINGAPORE NIGHT AND SBC'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY GALA DINNER
WINNERS ANNOUNCED FOR HEDWIG ANUAR CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARD AND
SCHOLASTIC ASIAN BOOK AWARD

SINGAPORE, 8 September 2018 – The 9th edition of the Asian Festival of Children's Content (AFCC) ended with a birthday bash at The Clifford Pier at Fullerton Bay Hotel tonight. Celebrating Singapore Night and Singapore Book Council's (SBC) 50th Anniversary, this occasion concluded a three-day festival that hosted more than 350 delegates from Singapore and around the world, and welcomed close to 5,000 members of the general public.

SBC also announced the winners of two book awards at the gala event. Xie Shi Min's *Dragonhearted* (Scholastic) won the Hedwig Anuar Children's Book Award and The Philippines' Joel Donato Jacob's *Wing of the Locust* took home the Scholastic Asian Book Award. Each prize winner received prize money of SGD10,000. (Please refer to Annex III and IV for the winners, shortlists and panels of judges).



Caption: Winner of the Hedwig Anuar Children's Book Award, Xie Shi Min (right) with past winner, Hidayah Amin (left).



Caption: Winner of the Scholastic Asian Book Award, Joel Donato Jacob's (right) with Scholastic Vice President, Selina Lee (left).

The festival celebrated Singapore as the Country of Focus with 130 ticketed and free programmes at the National Library, featuring 150 Singapore and international speakers.

Tonight, over 300 guests attended the gala dinner to commemorate Singapore's literary art history with anecdotes shared by a variety of individuals, including former SBC Executive Director, R. Ramachandran, who recollected the birth of the Book Council and how it maintained its independence as an institution; author of the locally beloved *Teenage Textbook*, Adrian Tan, who talked about his memories of his book launch as a first-time writer at the Festival of Books and Book Fair; children's book author, Sharon Ismail, who shared her experiences about AFCC; and journalist and past winner of the Singapore Literature Prize, K. Kanagalatha, who reminisced about her win. The sharing ended off with three students from Singapore Polytechnic, Caitlin Ong, Judith Toh and

Samantha Peng, who recounted their experiences of launching their book, *Smile*, at AFCC this year, as they represented the future of the literary scene in Singapore.

To mark its birthday, SBC lit up a specially-made Wishing Tree, embellished with leaves bearing birthday wishes from guests and AFCC participants to signify its continual growth to promote Singapore literature. Performances by TENG Ensemble, and children storytellers based on the myth of Kusu Island, bookended the night's programme.



Caption: Executive Committee of the National Book Development Council of Singapore with the Board of Advisors for the Asian Festival of Children's Content.

AFCC aims to continually cast the spotlight on Asian literary heritage in children's books, whilst highlighting new means of content creation and digital platforms for storytelling.

Next year, AFCC's Country of Focus will be Myanmar.

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 2018

Venue: National Library

100 Victoria St, Singapore 188064

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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.



ANNEX III: About Hedwig Anuar Children's Book Award

The Hedwig Anuar Children's Book Award started in 2011 in honour of Mrs. Hedwig Anuar. It is presented biennially to an outstanding children's book written by a Singapore citizen or Permanent Resident.

Its objectives are to encourage the quality and quantity of books published for children and to promote the publication of books, set in a familiar and meaningful background that is relevant to the Singapore children.

The prize carries a cash award of \$10,000, which is to be shared by the writer and the illustrator. Should the book be a translation, the award will be shared equally between the writer, illustrator and translator.

About Mrs. Hedwig Anuar

Mrs. Hedwig Anuar was the first Singaporean Director of the National Library of Singapore, a position she held from 1960 until her retirement in 1988. Though she made contributions to all aspects of library work and put in place the foundations of the modern library system in Singapore, this award recognizes her outstanding contribution to children's librarianship in the promotion of books and reading for children.

For more information, please visit: <https://bookcouncil.sg/>

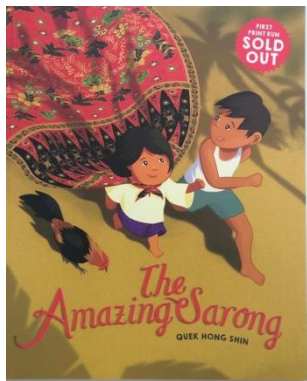
Panel of Judges

Name	Designation	Bio
David Seow	Chief Judge	David Seow is a well-known children's book writer in the Singapore literary scene, having written 42 children's books.
Sarah Odedina	Judge	Sarah Odedina is the Editor-at-Large for Pushkin's Children's Books and is also the editor of Scoop Magazine
Emily Lim	Judge	Emily Lim is an award-winning children's book author and is the first South-east Asian recipient of the Moonbeam Award (2009).

Hedwig Anuar Children's Book Award Shortlist

<p>WINNER</p> <p>Author: Xie Shi Min</p> <p>Book Title: Dragonhearted</p> <p>Scholastic, 2016</p>		
<p>Bio:</p> <p>Xie Shi Min spends her time writing books and living in a book fort. She has written for lifestyle publications, and have been published in journals. Her first book, Dragonhearted, was shortlisted for the Scholastic Asian Book Award in 2014 and the Singapore Book Awards in 2017.</p>		
<p>Synopsis:</p> <p>Xin Long is like any ordinary ten-year-old girl. She prefers Wushu to studying, likes hanging out with her friends, and loves listening to her Ah Ma's stories. But when these stories tell of an ancient mythical beast that threatens to destroy the world, Xin Long realises that she is the only one who can stop it.</p> <p>Can she destroy this evil? As time flies by, Xin Long and her friends – Shu Ping, Four Eyes, and dragon guardian Xiao Lan – must unlock the secrets of ancient Chinese mythology to find a way to stop the end of the world.</p>		

<p>Author: Ben Lai</p> <p>Book Title: I Can</p> <p>Epiphany Arts, 2017</p>		
<p>Bio:</p> <p>Ben Lai is a freelance designer and illustrator based in Singapore. Having trained in industrial design and worked as a digital artist, he eventually devoted himself to making picture books after the birth of his first daughter.</p>		
<p>Synopsis:</p> <p>Embark on a journey of discovery around Singapore as you learn about the island nation's most famous landmarks and icons.</p> <p>The story stars a young girl who proudly proclaims "I can" as she engages in fun activities in her interaction with these places and objects. A sense of ableness and independence is thereby conveyed to young readers.</p> <p>"I Can" is the perfect introduction to life in Singapore for early readers. This is a book for every child growing up here.</p>		

<p>Author: Quek Hong Shin</p> <p>Book Title: The Amazing Sarong</p> <p>Epigram Books, 2015</p>		
<p>Bio:</p> <p>Quek Hong Shin is a freelance illustrator who has illustrated several picture books. <i>The Amazing Sarong</i>—the first book he wrote and illustrated—was shortlisted for Best Children's Title at the Singapore Book Awards 2016. He intends to promote local culture to the young through his works and storytelling.</p>		
<p>Synopsis:</p> <p>Isn't a sarong just a boring big piece of cloth? What can be so amazing about it? Nora and Adi are about to go to the beach when their mother takes off her baby sling and hands it to the two children. They discover that there is more than meets the eye to this seemingly ordinary sarong. Join Nora and Adi as they go on a playful day out and discover what unexpected fun, joy and new encounters the sarong can bring.</p>		

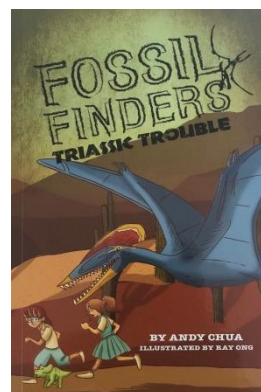
Author: Andy Chua

Illustrator: Ray Ong

Book Title: Fossil Finders 3:

Triassic Trouble

Bubbly Books, 2017



Bios:

Andy Chua

Andy Chua has been collecting fossils since he was 20, and now owns over 400 unique specimens. As a pioneer member of the local palaeontology society, Singapore Fossil Collectors, he is a guest speaker on prehistoric life and dinosaurs in schools, libraries and museums.

Fossil Finders is his first children's book series.

Ray Ong

Ray is a designer/illustrator based in Singapore. She is trained in concept game art, storyboarding, animation and motion graphics. On the side, she runs her very own

webstore, designing and selling iron-on patches, enamel pins and other knick knacks. More of her work can be viewed at: <https://www.behance.net/rayong>

Synopsis:

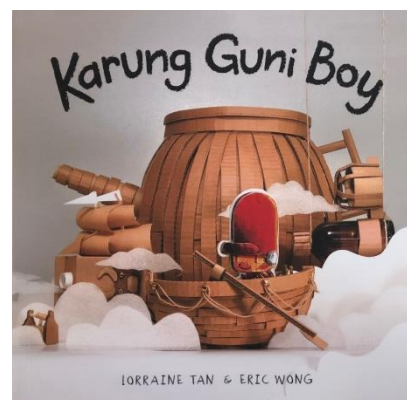
Armed with a magical watch from Norus, the guardian of the prehistoric exhibit at the Singapore Science Museum, Samuel and Anna get transported back to the time of the dinosaurs. However, Samuel is hiding a secret that will endanger the lives of those closest to him: a triceratops egg he brought back from the past has hatched. Samuel is hiding a real, live baby triceratops in his room...

Author: Lorraine Tan

Illustrator: Eric Wong

Book Title: Karang Guni Boy

Publisher: Epigram Books,
2016



Bios:

Lorraine Tan

Lorraine Tan is a lecturer at the School of Humanities & Social Sciences, Ngee Ann Polytechnic. Her first children's book, *Pip's Garden*, won the First-Time Writers and Illustrations Award in 2009. In 2013, her picture book, *Origami Girl*, was the Singapore first prize winner for the Daekyo Eye Level Children's Literature Award.

Eric Wong

Eric Wong is an illustrator who takes every opportunity to deliver work that is witty and aesthetically pleasing. He is always finding and experimenting with new ways to challenge his limits.

Synopsis:

Ming is a very creative boy who loves to make things and he would love the chance to create his fanciful inventions.

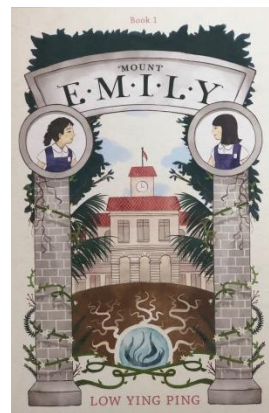
He didn't have the money to buy the things to make his inventions, and was wondering what to do when the sound of the Karung Guni man's car horn beeped. This gave Ming an idea: he would become Karung Guni boy and make things out of things he collected instead. So he went door-to-door to his neighbours asking for things they no longer wanted. Soon he had enough to build his machine. The grateful neighbours came to the unveiling of Ming's invention and were delighted to see that he had built a machine that would serve as a helper for them, whenever they needed an extra hand.

Author: Low Ying Ping

Illustrator: Chee Jia Yi

Book Title: Mount Emily
(Book 1)

Epigram Books, 2016



Bio:

Low Ying Ping

Low Ying Ping holds a Master's degree in English Literature from the University of Warwick. Her poems have appeared in *Singa*, the journal of the National University of Singapore Centre for the Arts; and *QLRS* (Quarterly Literary Review Singapore). *Mount Emily* is her first novel.

Jia Yi (No photo)

Jia Yi is a full-time graphic designer with experience in advertising and publishing in Singapore. She currently designs book covers and layouts and helps with illustration when needed. While versatile in style, her work occasionally contains influences from Japan and its culture. She works with digital, ink and watercolour.

Synopsis:

While digging around their school's backyard in search of an urban legend, Patsy Goh and her best friend Elena are whisked back in time to 1987. Trapped in their mums' 13-year-old bodies, the duo race against the clock to hunt down the magical time crystal that got them in this mess, before the evil Midnight Warriors find it and cause a time crisis that could destroy all of existence.

ANNEX IV: About Scholastic Asian Book Award

The Scholastic Asian Book Award is a joint initiative between the Singapore Book Council and Scholastic Asia that started in 2011. To promote Asian experiences and expression in creative and innovative forms, this award recognises writers of Asian origin whose manuscripts have the potential to share uniquely Asian experiences of life, spirit, and thinking with the rest of the world.

The objectives of this award are:


- To recognize excellence in fiction in Asian stories for children
- To showcase the diversity of literary talent within Asia
- To encourage and inspire more Asian-themed books and stories

For more information, please visit www.scholasticbookaward.asia

Panel of Judges

Name	Designation	One-Liner Bio
Daphne Lee	Chief Judge	Daphne Lee is Editorial Consultant at Scholastic Asia, based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and was part of the team responsible for the creation of the Scholastic Asian Book Award.
Colin Goh	Judge	Colin Goh is a Singaporean film maker, satirist and cartoonist who produced <i>Dim Sum Warriors</i> , a graphic novel about Kung Fu-fighting dumplings.
Ruth Wong	Judge	Ruth Wong teaches at the National Institute of Education, NTU and specializes in methodology courses on teaching English at the primary level.

Scholastic Asian Book Award Shortlist


Author: Yuet Lan Dora Tsang	
Manuscript Title: BLUE ²	
Country: HKSAR, China	
<p>Bio:</p> <p>An author and painter by profession, Dora Tsang is an avid artist and hidden hedonist by nature. She spends a great deal of her time working with children, writing and creating art.</p>	
<p>Synopsis:</p> <p>BLUE², a novel-in-verse set in Hong Kong, is about a relentlessly self-disciplined bulimic girl. On the surface, she wants to drop a few kilos. Deep inside, the weight she wants to shed is mammoth: her coming-of-age confusion, her guilt about her brother's death and the burden of her colonized city being handed back to its motherland.</p> <p>The novel addresses the question of whether she can come to grips with her past and to terms with herself before bulimia kills her.</p>	

Author: Tina Jimin Walton	
Manuscript Title: Last Days of the Morning Calm	
Country: Singapore	
Bio: Tina Walton is a Korean-American writer who lives in Singapore. She studied writing at Vermont College of Fine Arts, where she received her MFA in	


Writing in 2016. She's a new, unpublished writer who has written a middle grade historical fiction novel, short stories, and picture books.


Synopsis:


In a prominent manor, life is changing for Ji-nah, the fourteen-year-old ward, and Han, the seventeen-year-old servant. When Master Yi, the court envoy, sends a mysterious letter putting Tutor Lim in charge, the two, young people suspect foul play. They uncover the tutor's hand in the master's disappearance and his broader conspiracy to overthrow Queen Min. As the "hermit kingdom" falls further into chaos, Ji-nah and Han must save the queen, whose fate seems tied to their master. In their mission, the two discover their own identities in the closing chapters of the Joseon era.

Author: Mabel Gan	
Manuscript Title: My Ghost Story	
Country: Singapore	
<p>Bio:</p> <p>Mabel writes and directs for film and television. She graduated from Florida State University with an MFA in Motion Picture, Television and the Recording Arts. In 2011, Mabel founded the Singapore International Children's Film Festival which she continues to produce each year.</p>	
<p>Synopsis:</p> <p>Ten-year-old Bee Ling is raised in a wealthy family in pre-war Singapore, waited on by <i>Amahs</i>. Her world is shattered when an air-raid kills her sister, and the Japanese invade Singapore. To help Bee Ling through this difficult time, her sister's ghost returns. The new challenges take Bee Ling on a</p>	

journey of self-discovery that will bring her a newfound appreciation of the *Amahs* and her family.

Author: Josephine Chia	
Manuscript Title: Queen of the Sky	
Country: Singapore	
<p>Bio:</p> <p>Peranakan author, Josephine Chia, is published internationally in both fiction and non-fiction. Josephine has won literary prizes and awards in UK and Singapore. Her books have been translated into Bahasa Indonesia, Malay, and work-in-progress in Chinese.</p>	
<p>Synopsis:</p> <p>Fauziah is a modern, nine-year-old Malay girl. She adores her Great Grandmother whom she nicknamed GGM. GGM has lots of exciting tales to tell her about old Singapore. She took Fauziah to see the site of her old kampung, an attap-thatched village along the Kallang River where she had met famous aviatrix, Amelia Earhart. GGM is very active and does not behave like a doddering Senior. She started skiing at sixty and wants to do something adventurous for her 90th birthday. But the entire family does not approve.</p>	

Author: Varsha Seshan	
Manuscript Title: Red Eyes	
Country: India	
<p>Bio:</p> <p>Varsha Seshan is a children's author with thirteen books to her credit. She was shortlisted for the 2016 Scholastic Asian Book Award. She enjoys working with children and facilitates workshops both independently and with the British Council. In addition, she conducts a Writers' Club for pre-teens in Pune.</p>	
<p>Synopsis:</p> <p>Eleven-year-old Veer Prann runs away from boarding school to his parents in Suryanagar, a village at the gate to a wildlife sanctuary. When he catches sight of a pair of red eyes in the forest, he is pulled into a world where powerful people are engaged in a silent competition to capture a creature that is rumoured to have an evolutionary advantage over human beings. Veer knows he must save the creature from being captured as a lab specimen or a special attraction at a zoo. The problem is that he does not know how.</p>	

WINNER	
Author: Joel Donato Ching Jacob	
Manuscript Title: Wing of the Locust	
Country: Philippines	
Bio: Joel Donato Jacob grew up in a garlic farm in Cabuyao, Laguna before moving to Los Baños. He is currently taking up Creative Writing in Filipino in the	

University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City. His stories and poems may be read in many magazines and journals.

Synopsis:

Tuan is uplifted from his mediocrity and homeliness by the tutelage of the Muhen. Tuan is shocked that his apprenticeship requires him mutilate his body to gain power—to see through the eyespots of a moth at the cost of his eye; to inject life-saving venom through the sting of wasps that have eaten his kidney; command locusts that nest in the cavity of his collapsed lung. Then he learns of the craft's applications in espionage, sabotage and assassination. But when his friends are abducted, Tuan must consider giving up his humanity in order to save the ones he loves.