

Indonesia Dramatic Reading Festival

**IDRF**

**Yogyakarta**  
Indonesia

**26 – 31**  
JULY 2026



# ASIAN PLAYWRIGHT MEETING

*Photo: B.U.K.T.U - The Gaza Monologue 2023 / Ashtar Theatre, Palestine (IDRF 2024)*

## Indonesia Dramatic Reading Festival



The **Indonesia Dramatic Reading Festival (IDRF)** is a premier platform dedicated to the public reading of new Indonesian plays and foreign works translated into Bahasa Indonesia. Since its inception, IDRF has served as a vital bridge, introducing fresh scripts to theater enthusiasts and providing a stage for playwrights—especially those independent of established theater troupes. Designed to evolve organically alongside the needs of Indonesia’s playwrights, IDRF thrives on the voluntary support of a dedicated artistic community. Based in Yogyakarta, the festival was founded by Joned Suryatmoko (Teater Gardanalla), Gunawan Maryanto (Teater Garasi), and Lusya Neti Cahyani (Teater Garasi). Today, the legacy is carried forward by Muhammad Abe, B.M. Anggana (Sakatoya), and Dina Triastuti (Kalanari Theatre Movement), who continue to nurture the founders' original vision.

Consistently held since 2010, IDRF remains the only performance festival in Indonesia that focuses on introducing plays. Throughout its 15-year journey, IDRF has presented more than 70 plays, involved around 500 actors and performers from various disciplines, organized collaborative programs in Yogyakarta, Jakarta, Lampung, Semarang, Surakarta, London, Thailand and Singapore, published one anthology of Indonesian play scripts, and published two anthologies of Indonesian play scripts in foreign languages. In 2019, IDRF also initiated the Asian Playwrights Meeting (APM), which was the third meeting following APM Tokyo 2009 and APM Australia 2011. APM is a gathering for Asian playwrights to exchange ideas on various developments in scriptwriting and an opportunity to distribute their scripts to other countries. Several scripts that were once read at IDRF have now been staged by theater groups both in Indonesia and abroad.



# ABOUT APM

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Asia Playwrights Meeting (APM) is an international gathering dedicated to playwrights and contemporary writing practices in Asia. Initiated in Tokyo in 2009 and followed by editions in Melbourne (2011), before it's getting organized by IDRf in Yogyakarta (2019), APM was conceived as a space for encounter, listening, and dialogue among playwrights across the region. Building on this lineage, APM 2026 returns to Yogyakarta at a moment when IDRf considers it urgent to reconvene the meeting, following a period of profound disruption and recalibration since 2019. The meeting renews its commitment to playwriting as the central event and positions playwrights at its core, not as content providers, but as thinkers who articulate the urgencies of their time.

In a world shaped by polarization, unequal access, and shifting cultural power, APM 2026 asks a fundamental question: **for whom, and for what, do we gather today?** The meeting foregrounds representation and access, approaching Asia not as a fixed identity but as a field of difference, translation, and negotiation. Conceived as a celebration of playwrights, APM emphasizes sustained attention, critical listening, and shared inquiry into how texts engage with social, political, and historical realities.

At the heart of APM 2026 is the dramatic reading format. It is valued for its auditory and text-centered nature and for its capacity to circulate playwriting across languages and contexts without demanding full production. Through readings, fragments, audio works, and contextual conversations, playwriting is encountered as a living and evolving practice. Structured as a dramaturgical ecosystem through its programs **PANORAMA, FOCUS, FORUM, and SPECIAL PRESENTATION**, APM 2026 affirms playwriting as a vital site of encounter where voices are heard, differences remain visible, and new ways of imagining the world can emerge.



# PROGRAM

## FOCUS

*Urgency, Dramatic Reading, Shared Questions*

**FOCUS** is the central program of Asia Playwrights Meeting 2026. Building on the legacy of previous APM editions, FOCUS foregrounds playwriting as an urgent and situated practice that responds to pressing social, political, and historical conditions in Asia. This program concentrates on a single dramaturgical question that resonates across different contexts with the keyword **'ENCOUNTER'**. Selected playwrights are brought together not by reputation, but by the urgency of the questions their works engage. The primary format of FOCUS is **full dramatic readings**, allowing the text to be heard in its entirety and given sustained attention. Through this format, writing is treated as the main event—spoken, listened to, and collectively reflected upon.

## PANORAMA

*New Plays, First Encounters, Emerging Voices*

Functions as a meeting point for new and emerging plays from across Asia, PANORAMA is dedicated to first encounters with texts that are newly written, in development, or still searching for their final form. Rather than prioritizing completeness or polish, the program emphasizes openness, risk, and experimentation, acknowledging playwriting as a process shaped by fragments, drafts, and unfinished thoughts. Positioned as a catalyst for the future of Asian playwriting, the program will be initiated through an open call, culminating in a play exhibition and moderated Q&A sessions.

## SPECIAL PRESENTATION

*Text, Performance, and Sustainable Collaboration*

SPECIAL PRESENTATION showcases performances born from rigorous writing practices, where the written word demands physical embodiment. These works are not framed as mere spectacles or festival highlights; instead, they emerge as dramaturgical consequences—activated only when performance becomes a necessary vessel to further interrogate the text. Rather than being one-off appearances, these productions are developed in tandem with performing arts institutions and cultural organizations across Asia. This collaborative model is a deliberate effort to foster sustainable ecosystems, affirming that performance is both a deep artistic inquiry and a shared responsibility.

In line with this spirit of ongoing dialogue, the program is currently exploring potential future collaborations with:

- **Opening Performance: Mark Teh – Fragments of Tuah** (Malaysia)\*
- **Japan** \*

Both projects are currently in the prospecting stage, as we look to integrate their unique investigative processes into our regional network.

*\*in the process of confirmation*

## FORUM

*Circulating Ideas, Practices, and Questions*

**FORUM** is a process-oriented program dedicated to the exchange of ideas, methods, and questions surrounding contemporary playwriting & contemporary performing arts practices in Asia. Rather than presenting outcomes, FORUM emphasizes shared thinking and mutual learning. The program combines presentation forums, studio visits, and moderated discussions as part of a single cycle of exchange—offering ideas, opening practices, and reflecting collectively.

Co-programmed with **Shizuoka Performing Arts Center** and **Virgin Labfest**, FORUM highlights institutional models and collaborative strategies that support the sustainability of playwriting ecosystems across Asia.

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# PROGRAM

## Potential Participants & Works Featured

Playwrights and Theatremakers from:

**Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan, Thailand,  
Australia, China, Taiwan, Vietnam, The Philippines,  
India, South Korea, Iran, Papua New Guinea**

## Potential Program Partners

Shizuoka Performing Arts Center  
Virgin LabFest, Manila  
Prologue Center, Taipei  
Taiwan Cultural Agency  
Jakarta International Theater Platform  
Bangkok International Performing Arts Meeting (BIPAM)  
Art Council Korea

## Potential Supporters/ Co-Production:

Manajemen Talenta Nasional, Ministry of Culture of Indonesia  
Japan Foundation  
Djarum Foundation



# APM SCHEDULE

## ASIAN PLAYWRIGHT MEETING 2026 DRAFT PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Date	7/26/2026	7/27/2026	7/28/2026	7/29/2026	7/30/2026	7/31/2026
Day	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Time						
9:00 - 10:00	<i>Arrival</i>					<b>DAY TRIP</b> VISIT PLESUNGAN
10:00 - 11:00		<b>FORUM 1</b> _____	<b>EXCHANGE 3</b> _____	<b>EXCHANGE 5</b> _____	<b>EXCHANGE 7</b> _____	
11:00 - 12:00		<b>FORUM 2</b> _____	<b>EXCHANGE 4</b> _____	<b>EXCHANGE 6</b> _____	<b>EXCHANGE 8</b> _____	
12:00 - 13:30		<i>LUNCH</i>	<i>LUNCH</i>	<i>LUNCH</i>	<i>LUNCH</i>	
13:30 - 15:00		<b>PANORAMA (Talk 1)</b> _____	<b>PANORAMA (Talk 2)</b> _____	<b>PANORAMA (Talk 3)</b> _____	<b>PANORAMA (Talk 4)</b> _____	
15:00 - 16:00		<i>BREAK</i>	<i>BREAK</i>	<i>BREAK</i>	<i>BREAK</i>	
16:00 - 17:30	<b>WELCOME RECEPTION</b>	<b>FOCUS 1 (Reading &amp; QnA)</b> _____	<b>FOCUS 3 (Reading &amp; QnA)</b> _____	<b>FOCUS 5 (Reading &amp; QnA)</b> _____	<b>FOCUS 7 (Reading &amp; QnA)</b> _____	
17:30 - 19:30		<i>BREAK</i>	<i>BREAK</i>	<i>BREAK</i>	<i>BREAK</i>	
19:30 - 21:30	<b>SPECIAL PRESENTATION</b> <i>Mark Teh (MALAYSIA)</i> @ _____	<b>FOCUS 2 (Reading &amp; QnA)</b> _____	<b>FOCUS 4 (Reading &amp; QnA)</b> _____	<b>FOCUS 6 (Reading &amp; QnA)</b> _____	<b>FOCUS 8 (Reading &amp; QnA)</b> _____	<b>SPECIAL PRESENTATION</b> <i>*JAPAN</i> @ _____
21:30 - 23:30	<i>Networking Night</i>	<i>Networking Night</i>	<i>Networking Night</i>	<i>Networking Night</i>	<i>Networking Night</i>	

**PANORAMA EXHIBITION** : The Panorama Exhibition will take place daily from 26 July at the main venue, IFI-LIP Yogyakarta, and will be open from 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM.

# APM TEAM



**Director**  
MUHAMMAD ABE



**Artistic Director**  
B.M. ANGGANA



**Managing Director**  
RAHAYU SULASTI

## Curatorial Team



**Jarunun 'Jaa' Phantachat** (Thailand)

Jarunun “Jaa” Phantachat is an award-winning Thai playwright, theatre-maker, and dramaturg, and a core member and co-artistic director of **B-Floor Theatre**. Her writing practice is deeply informed by physical theatre, drawing on training in modern dance, Laban, Butoh, and Viewpoints. Through embodied research and collaborative creation, her texts emerge at the intersection of movement, space, and language.

As a playwright, her works—including *The Other Land*, *Demographic Survey*, and *Abstract of Dream*—examine social structures, identity, and political imagination through non-linear dramaturgy and performative language. Her texts are closely intertwined with staging and movement, often developed through processes of collective authorship. Alongside her writing practice, she has directed and produced numerous productions, contributing significantly to B-Floor’s international collaborations.

Jaa is a recipient of Thailand’s **Silpathorn Award** and multiple **IATC-Thailand** awards. She is currently developing a new play drawn from a published diary by a former political prisoner charged under Thailand’s lèse-majesté law.



### **James Harvey Estrada** (The Philippines)

James Harvey Estrada is a Filipino theatre-maker, playwright, and interdisciplinary performance artist whose practice centers decolonial inquiry, radical care, and transnational collaboration. Grounded in Babaylan-informed methodologies, he reactivates pre-colonial ritual and collective authorship within contemporary performance. His works have been presented internationally in Japan, South Korea, Indonesia, the United States, and Switzerland, including the Tokyo Festival, Gwangju and Suwon Fringe Festivals, Toyooka Theatre Festival, and Pro Helvetia-supported platforms. These projects explore hybrid dramaturgies that connect artists across Asia and beyond.

In the Philippines, Estrada is a member of **Filipino Screenwriter's Guild** and an award-winning playwright recognized for *Maikling Dasal*, *Mahabang Gabi* and other works staged at the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Pasinaya and national festivals. His writing also extends to film and broadcast, with internationally awarded television projects. Across theatre, media, and performance, his work foregrounds marginalized voices while positioning care as both artistic method and political gesture in a fractured global landscape.



### **ZHANG Yuan 张渊** (China)

ZHANG Yuan is a Shanghai-based contemporary performing arts curator who has been active in both the domestic and international scene over the past decade. Critically situated in the context of contemporary China, his practices explore the potential of alternative modes of producing theatre and its implications for cultural exchange. Apart from having served as the performing arts curator at Ming Contemporary Art Museum and as a theatre producer at Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center, he has participated in curating independent projects such as *2020: The Whole World Has Become a Theatre*, an archival exhibition on contemporary performance in China since the late 90's, and *Being in Asia*, a performance series initiating conversations between practitioners in China and various places across Asia. He is a founding member of the **Asia Contemporary Theatre Festival (ACT)** and the inaugural **Niao Niao Festival**, a platform for independent performance makers.

## ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Asia Playwrights Meeting 2026

Asia Playwrights Meeting 2026 began with listening. In November 2025, during IDRf, a preliminary Focus Group Discussion gathered playwrights, dramaturgs, and practitioners from several parts of Asia. What emerged was not agreement, but a shared unease. Asia appeared not as a coherent identity, but as a fragmented terrain shaped by absence, imbalance, and unequal visibility. Questions of representation surfaced immediately: *who is present, who is missing, and who is repeatedly asked to stand in for an entire context*. This conversation made it clear that Asia cannot be approached as a stable category, nor can playwriting be separated from the political and social conditions in which it is produced.

What also became evident was how vulnerable the position of the playwright has become. Across different contexts, playwriting is increasingly pushed to the margins of production-driven systems, expected to adapt to visual spectacle, institutional agendas, or market-friendly narratives. Plays are often valued only when they can be staged, circulated, or branded, while the act of writing itself is treated as secondary. This condition is what compelled me to ask a fundamental question: *for whom, and for what, do we gather today? Is the gathering meant to serve visibility, institutions, and circulation, or does it still make space for playwriting as a practice that thinks, doubts, and resists?*

The FGD revealed that playwriting across Asia is inseparable from risk. Participants spoke of censorship, uneven access, and the difficulty of sustaining writing practices outside dominant production models. Playwriting was described less as storytelling and more as a way of responding to local realities, negotiating power, and, at times, ensuring survival. International platforms were discussed not as neutral stages, but as potential spaces of safety, solidarity, and mutual support. At the same time, unresolved tensions remained: the impossibility of equal contexts, the problem of national representation, and the persistent marginalization within Asia itself.

Following this meeting, I reflected on how APM 2026 could take a clear artistic position. Centering playwriting and dramatic reading is not a nostalgic choice, but a deliberate one. Dramatic reading insists on listening, duration, and presence. It slows down interpretation and resists the demand for spectacle. It allows plays to circulate without being reduced to products, and reclaims listening as an ethical and political act. In this framework, the playwright is not a service provider for production, but a thinker whose work demands time, attention, and care.

Asia Playwrights Meeting 2026 does not offer solutions. It offers a space to stay with difficulty. It asks how we might gather without reproducing the hierarchies we critique, how we can listen across difference without forcing equivalence, and how playwriting can remain a site of inquiry in uncertain times. To gather, in this sense, is not to agree, but to take responsibility for how we listen.

**B.M. ANGGANA**

