

# Asian Children's Writers & Illustrators Conference 2005

**17 & 18 November 2005**

**8.30am – 5.30pm**

**Furama RiverFront Singapore (former Novotel Apollo Hotel)  
405 Havelock Road**

The Book Council is proud to present the Asian Children's Writers and Illustrators Conference (ACWIC) 2005 for the fifth year!

ACWIC is the only event in Singapore, and possibly Asia that caters to a select group of individuals who have chosen to devote their creative energy to children's literature. This is an ideal platform for you to exchange tips with experienced professionals and gain insights into new and innovative ways of writing and illustrating for children.

Enjoy stimulating presentations and conversations and the opportunity to attend workshops on diverse topics where you can learn additional skills. This year, you can also look forward to a manuscript critique session and a book launch by a local author.

We invite you to join us at ACWIC 2005. This is where you will find the joy of writing and illustrating for children and discover the inspiration to take your work to a higher level.

## **Yusof Gajah (Mohamed Yusof Ismail)**

Mohamed Yusof Ismail, better known as Yusof Gajah because of his quirky and colourful elephant-themed paintings, was born in 1954 and graduated from the Indonesia School of Fine Arts and the Indonesia Academy of Fine Arts.

An artist and painter, he works at his atelier in the Folk Village in Malaysia, and is active in a broad range of fields including the production of picture books, painting and children's television programmes as well as project planning. He has held numerous exhibitions of his work in Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan and other countries. He won the Grand Prize in the 10th Noma Concours for Picture Book Illustrations for The Real Elephant in 1996.

## **Keynote Address**

### **Keynote 1**

#### **Books of their own - The Case for National Publishing of Children's Books**

**Patricia Aldana**

The majority of children in the world do not have books that reflect their own experience and reality. Patricia Aldana will examine why national publishing is the only way to guarantee that children can find their own reality reflected in the books they read. It is also a good way to help local authors and illustrators to attain the best possible work, which can then perhaps compete on the world stage. Patricia will explore what can be done to help stimulate local writing, illustrating and publishing even in countries of modest or limited means.

**Keynote 2**  
**From Behind the Bookshelf – Literature for Young Adults**  
**Carla Pacis**

Today there are many books for young adults that represent every conceivable genre and literary style. Faced with the changing face of young adult literature, writers and scholars are challenging the whole concept of what young adult literature is.

Carla Pacis will draw on her experience as a writer and literature teacher for young people and discuss the characteristics and peculiarities of a literary work for young adults. She will focus on the developments, trends and issues in young adult literature and publishing, drawing examples from the Philippines.

**Talk 1**  
**The World Language of Illustration**  
**Helle Vibeke Jensen**

As creativity and cross-cultural influences grow, there are many opportunities for illustrators to draw inspiration from various multi-cultural visual forms. Is there a “universal” code of visual language? Do we see the same thing in the same picture? What are the implications of mixing different visual traditions?

Helle Vibeke Jensen will show how adapting cross-cultural influences requires both knowledge of the diversity of visual arts and an understanding of visual perceptions across the world. This is a good opportunity to explore how illustrators from different cultures interpret familiar fairytales and make each story unique.

**Talk 2**  
**Adventures in Publishing - Growing Publications from Concept to Manuscript to Bound Books and Beyond**  
**Reni Roxas**

Manila-based children's book publisher Reni Roxas looks back at twenty years of publishing experience to share her insights on how publishers generate book ideas, commission works from authors and illustrators and shepherd books through all phases of production.

Reni will give a short overview of book printing and give technical tips for aspiring publishers and writers. She will also focus on the push to get books into retail and institutional markets. The talk will also cover emerging trends in book publishing, as well as humorous anecdotes about the joys and foibles of publishing.

**Talk 3**  
**Animation - A Refreshing Approach to Marketing Children's Books**  
**C.B. Lian and Serene Wee**

Children today are growing up immersed in many different forms of media. With interactive digital media becoming an integral part of their lives, it is perhaps timely to use a new approach to market children's books to this media-savvy generation.

Participants will be given the unique opportunity to explore the connections between words and images in telling a story through animation and to examine techniques involved in creating characters, scriptwriting

and storyboarding. Using examples from children's books, C.B Lian will highlight the creative process involved in producing animations from picture books and show you how interactive media can be a novel way to market children's books.

#### **Talk 4**

##### **Passion, Pain and Publication: The Journey of a Writer and an Illustrator David Seow and Lak-Khee Tay-Audouard**

This talk is a rare opportunity to hear from the team of David Seow and Lak-Khee Tay-Audouard who jointly produced the beautifully written and illustrated *Monkey: The Classic Chinese Adventure Tale*.

David will focus on the journey of writing from inspiration to publication and all the pitfalls in between and beyond. Let him take you through the process of creating a book - from getting your ideas to finding a publisher/agent as well as creative ways to promote your book. Lak-Khee will then share her experience as an illustrator, including how she plans her research and how she selects a theme for her project.

Writers and illustrators share many of the same creative struggles. David and Lak-Khee will give you an insight into what it's like to be a children's book writer and illustrator in Singapore and will give advice, tips and warnings for those aspiring to do the same.

### **Concurrent Workshops**

#### **Workshop 1**

##### **Using History to Write the Novel for Young People Carla Pacis**

History and real-life events can be a rich source of inspiration for writers. How can a writer use history to dramatise the novel for young people? What challenges does a writer face when he writes for this target group?

This workshop will start you on the road to writing for young people. Whether you are a widely published author or an aspiring writer, the struggle to create compelling prose never ends. Let Carla Pacis show you how history can offer a rich fund of suggestions to develop a good story. This workshop will offer guidance on the craft of good writing and building a story, with special focus on identifying the conflict, creating the character and developing the plot.

#### **Workshop 2**

##### **Producing an Illustrated Story David Seow and Lak-Khee Tay-Audouard**

Producing a published book is a team effort – it requires the full cooperation of the writer, the illustrator and the publisher. Based on their experience working on *Monkey: The Classic Chinese Adventure Tale*, David Seow and Lak-Khee Tay-Audouard will present a role-playing workshop to guide participants through the initial steps of working on an illustrated book.

Participants will be grouped into pairs – a writer and an illustrator. Each team will come up with a story; once the writer comes up with a draft, the illustrator will interpret the story with pictures. Changes will be

made to the text and illustrations and participants will have to alter their work accordingly. You will learn the craft and planning behind a successful synthesis of words and pictures.

**Workshop 3**  
**Illustrating Hans Christian Andersen**  
**Helle Vibeke Jensen**

There are numerous publications and picture books illustrating various fairytales by Hans Christian Andersen. As the world celebrates the Hans Christian Andersen bicentenary this year, it is perhaps timely to examine how we can illustrate the Danish author in the 21st century.

How should illustrators visualise Andersen's world? How do illustrators outside Denmark illustrate him? Helle Vibeke Jensen, well-known for her illustrations of Andersen's fairytales, will discuss the various styles of illustration and techniques she uses to portray Andersen's fairytales.

**Workshop 4**  
**Writing Creative Non-Fiction - How Researching Your Own Life and Family Can Get You Published**  
**Reni Roxas**

Creative nonfiction is a relatively new genre in literature that originated in the 1970s and makes its foray into the field of children's books with interesting results. Publisher Reni Roxas opens the door on how researching one's own life can create "biography" that can be distilled into children's books. Her own picture book *The Miracle Years*, a true story about her father's family growing up in WWII, is one example. Participants will be asked to do a personal narrative essay-writing exercise designed to get their memory juices flowing from pen to the page.

**Workshop 5**  
**Research and Inspiration Through Travel**  
**Helle Vibeke Jensen**

Travel often introduces us to foreign lands, fresh experiences and a new way of seeing things. Travel can therefore be an important reference and a source of inspiration for developing concepts and ideas.

Helle Vibeke Jensen, who has travelled to Asia, the Caribbean, North Africa and most of Europe will share with you how the sketches, photos and objects collected during her travels have provided valuable research material for her illustration projects. Be inspired as she shows you how her scrapbook of postcards, maps and notes play a vital role in the development of her visual language. Whether you are an illustrator, writer or publisher, this workshop will inspire you to collect your own images when you travel and create your own scrapbook of ideas.

**Workshop 6**  
**How to Illustrate Your Own Children's Picture Book**  
**Yusof Gajah**

What makes a picture book really shine? How do you build a story with pictures that will engage the interest and capture the imagination of a child?

Join Yusof as he shows you how words and pictures combine to tell an engaging story and find out how he uses his illustrations imaginatively in relation to a text. He will offer insights and practical tips on the

techniques and the art of illustrating children's picture books. Share his inspiration as he talks about his experience as an artist, writer and illustrator. If you have unpublished illustrations of your own, bring them with you and Yusof may just give you the appropriate tips and guidance to transform them into a published book.

### **Manuscript Critique Session**

Are you an aspiring writer with a drawer full of manuscripts but you are not sure if it is worth continuing? Here is your chance to get a professional to critique your manuscript, offer ideas for improvement, and suggest markets where possible. Patricia Aldana, the publisher of Groundwood Books, will give professional advice and suggestions to your questions.

Is my manuscript good enough for publishing?  
What are my manuscript's strengths/flaws?  
How can my manuscript and my writing be improved?  
Am I on the right track with my manuscript?

If you would like Patricia to evaluate your manuscript, please note the following:

1. Send in one sample chapter on standard white paper, double-spaced, five to ten pages.
2. Email your manuscript to [acwic@bookcouncil.sg](mailto:acwic@bookcouncil.sg) by 17 October 2005 (Monday).
3. Due to time constraints, this service is on a first-come first-serve basis. Only eight manuscripts will be evaluated.

### ***Special News Flash!***

To all budding writers on the look out for opportunities! Don't miss the launch of three picture books by a local writer and a Filipino publisher. They met at ACWIC last year and got together to co-publish these three delightful children's picture books. Sign up for ACWIC this year and find out how you too can get started on a very successful partnership in publishing!