



ASSOCIATION FOR MUSIC THERAPY  
(SINGAPORE)

## MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

2 November 2025

### SINGAPORE HOSTS FIRST-EVER CREATIVE ARTS THERAPIES SYMPOSIUM: A BREAKTHROUGH FOR HOLISTIC WELLBEING



*Participants holding their folded origami hearts at the closing experiential led by Art Therapist Ng Jue Ann and Music Therapist Jacqueline Chow*

**Singapore, 3 November 2025** – The Creative Arts Therapies Symposium 2025, held on 1 November 2025, marked a historic milestone as Singapore’s **first national symposium dedicated to creative arts therapies**. The event brought together over 240 individuals from the vibrant community of professionals, educators, students and advocates at **LASALLE College of the Arts, University of the Arts Singapore (LASALLE-UAS)** setting a new benchmark for the field and catalysing a movement for holistic wellbeing through the arts.



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**Leaders and organisers of the Symposium pose with the Guest-of-Honour.** Pictured from left are: *Eliza Han, President, ATAS; Dr Ronald P.M.H. Lay, Programme Leader, MA Art Therapy, LASALLE-UAS; Abdul Rashid Jailani, Deputy Director, Allied Health, NUHS; Guest of Honour, Professor Kwok Kian Woon, Vice-Chancellor, UAS; A/Prof Tan Bee Yee, Group Chief Allied Health Professional, SingHealth; Dr Tan Xueli, President, AMTS; and Dr Indra Selvarajah, Programme Leader, MA Music Therapy, LASALLE-UAS.*

### **A Historic Gathering of Leaders and Innovators**

The Symposium was graced by Guest of Honour, Professor Kwok Kian Woon, Vice-Chancellor, University of the Arts **Singapore** (UAS), whose opening address underscored the growing recognition and institutional support for creative arts therapies in Singapore's healthcare and education sectors. Professor Kwok's presence, alongside several VIPs from leading institutions—many of whom are actively hiring and supporting creative arts therapists—signaled a strong commitment to integrating the arts into mainstream practice.



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*Left: Guest of Honour Professor Kwok Kian Woon delivered his opening address, affirming the role of LASALLE-UAS in supporting creative arts therapies in Singapore.*



*In his welcome video message, Dr Venka Purushothaman, Deputy President & Provost, LASALLE College of the Arts congratulated ATAS and AMTS for spearheading the nation's first Symposium advocating for creative arts therapies.*



*In their individual welcome remarks, Eliza Han (left) and Dr Tan Xueli (right), Presidents of ATAS and AMTS respectively, welcomed the Symposium attendees with a brief history and introduction to art therapy and music therapy in Singapore.*

### **Welcome by Education Partner and Hosting Associations**

The programme, detailed [here](#), featured warm welcomes from the **PROVOST**, programme leads of Art Therapy (AT) and Music Therapy (MT) at LASALLE College of the Arts, who shared insights on the evolution and impact of their pioneering programmes. The **Presidents of**



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**the Art Therapists' Association Singapore (ATAS) and the Association for Music Therapy Singapore (AMTS) delivered visionary addresses, emphasising advocacy, professional standards, and the future of creative arts therapies in Singapore.**



*The Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges: Current Landscape and Future of Creative Arts Therapies in Singapore* panel featured (from left): Eliza Han, Art Therapist; Chan Shi Han, Dance Movement Therapist; Ambre Lee, Dramatherapist; and Dr Tan Xueli, Music Therapist.



Alongside Guest of Honour Professor Kwok (left), the *Journeying as Kindreds: Interdisciplinary Witnessing in Creative Arts Therapy* panel featured (2nd from left): Adj A/Prof Michael Ong, Diagnostic Radiographer & Chief, Allied Health & Pharmacy, National University Hospital; Dr Ong Eng Koon, Senior Consultant, National Cancer Centre Singapore; Sim Bee Hia, Executive Director, Singapore Hospice Council; and Dr Tim Xu Tianma, Associate Professor, Occupational Therapy, Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT).



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The speakers of the two panels received tokens of appreciation from the Symposium co-organisers. Pictured (from left) are: Eliza Han, Adj A/Prof Michael Ong, Dr Ong Eng Koon, Sim Bee Hia, Dr Xu Tianma, Dr Tan Xueli, Professor Kwok Kian Woon, Ambre Lee, and Chan Shi Han.

### **Key Highlights: Dynamic Panels and Community Engagement**

The Symposium's panels showcased the depth and diversity of the field:

- **Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges: Current Landscape and Future of Creative Arts Therapies in Singapore:** Practicing art, music, dance movement, and drama therapists shared real-world experiences, innovative approaches, and best practices, sparking lively discussions on the challenges and opportunities in the profession.
- **Journeying as Kindreds: Interdisciplinary Witnessing in Creative Arts Therapy:** Esteemed allies—including educators, healthcare leaders, and community partners—explored collaborative models and the broader impact of creative arts therapies on health, resilience, and social inclusion.



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Presidents of Dr Tan Xueli, President, AMTS (left) and Eliza Han, President, ATAS (right) signed a Memorandum of Understanding, strengthening collaborations between the two associations.

### **A Breakthrough for Singapore**

As the **first event of its kind in Singapore**, the Symposium represents a watershed moment for the profession. It has catalysed new partnerships, inspired future practitioners, and positioned Singapore as a regional leader in creative arts therapies. The event's success reflects a growing recognition of the arts as a vital component of holistic care and community wellbeing.



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Symposium attendees actively participated in the *Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges: Current Landscape and Future of Creative Arts Therapies in Singapore* panel.



Informal networking sessions were held during the breaks, fostering engagement among Symposium attendees.

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*“The inaugural Creative Arts Therapies Symposium is the culmination of the joint efforts of The Art Therapists’ Association (Singapore) (ATAS), co-organiser Association for Music Therapy Singapore (AMTS) and educational partner LASALLE College of the Arts, to celebrate the transformative power of the creative arts therapies and create an inclusive and multi-disciplinary platform for culturally grounded professional discourse. As we curate evidence-based best practices in healthcare and community settings, we showcase the efficacy of creative arts therapies and honour the communities that we serve.”*

—Ms. Eliza Han, President, Art Therapists’ Association Singapore (ATAS)

*“The Association for Music Therapy Singapore is proud to co-organise this historic symposium. The Creative Arts Therapies Symposium represents a vital intersection of clinical practice, academic inquiry, and cultural expression of our work. By convening creative arts therapy practitioners across disciplines, we aim to deepen our collective understanding of the therapeutic modalities as profound means of meaning-making, human connection, and creative*



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*expressions.”*

— Dr. Tan Xueli, President, Association for Music Therapy Singapore (AMTS)

*“LASALLE has a long and proud tradition of leading the way in creative arts therapies education for the region, starting with Southeast Asia’s first MA Art Therapy programme in 2006, followed by Singapore’s first MA Music Therapy programme in 2024. Over the past decades, we have trained close to 300 qualified art therapists and seen significant growth and maturity in the sector. It is timely that we now bring together practitioners and advocates in this first-of-its-kind symposium at LASALLE. As the education partner, we seek to elevate the field in Singapore and the region, and to be a nexus for research, discourse and collaboration.”*

— Dr. Venka Purushothaman, Deputy President & Provost, LASALLE College of the Arts

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### **About the Creative Arts Therapies Symposium**

The Symposium is a biennial gathering dedicated to advancing the field of creative arts therapies, fostering professional development, and promoting mental health and wellbeing through the arts.

### **For Media Enquiries, Please Contact:**

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