

A CRITICAL
MONOLOGUE

Loretta Chen, the director of critically acclaimed plays like the *Vagina Monologues*, talks about courting controversy and promoting arts entrepreneurship.

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One should not court controversy just for the sake of creating a controversy, but it must be an issue that needs to be addressed and it takes research, time and commitment to create a coherent argument and then presenting it in a form of "entertainment".

Indeed, being a director takes guts. And being a controversial one at that requires a healthy sense of self, a supportive network system of family and friends who believe in you, a deep sense of humility, a keen appetite for adventure and an immense capacity for humour.

I hope to see the art equivalent of Spring Singapore which could be established to help younger artists. For starters, there could be the increasing use of "entrepreneurial" rhetoric in tandem with the arts to encourage young artists to see themselves as "arts entrepreneurs" as opposed to the perennial "starving artists". We have been very successful in creating a sexy, vibrant image of scientists in Singapore, and can do the same in highlighting artists as social or arts entrepreneurs.

I also hope to see greater competitiveness of small creative companies versus big corporate players. Various corporations also venturing into the "live" medium, thereby threatening the viability of these smaller theatre companies.

Finally, I hope the theatre audiences will keep growing, as it is their presence that spurs us on to greater altitudes. Is that too much to ask for five years? We always work towards and hope for the best. ☺



LORETTA CHEN
Artistic director of
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