



Blithe Spirit

## BLITHELY FUNNY

It may be one of Noël Coward's legendary comic plays, but in *Blithe Spirit's* current rendition by the Wild Rice theatre group, the setting is distinctly Singaporean. Last staged in 2001, this new and improved version features the nation's favourite comedienne, Selena Tan playing Madam Arcati, a histrionic, eccentric psychic medium.

Real life husband and wife duo team up as stage spouses with international film star Lim Kay Siu playing Charles Koh and Neo Sweet Lin playing his second wife, Ruth.

Desperately seeking inspiration for a ghost story he's writing, Koh engages flamboyant Madam Arcati to perform a séance in his Bukit Timah home. Unwittingly, she summons the mischievous ghost of his first wife, Eliva,

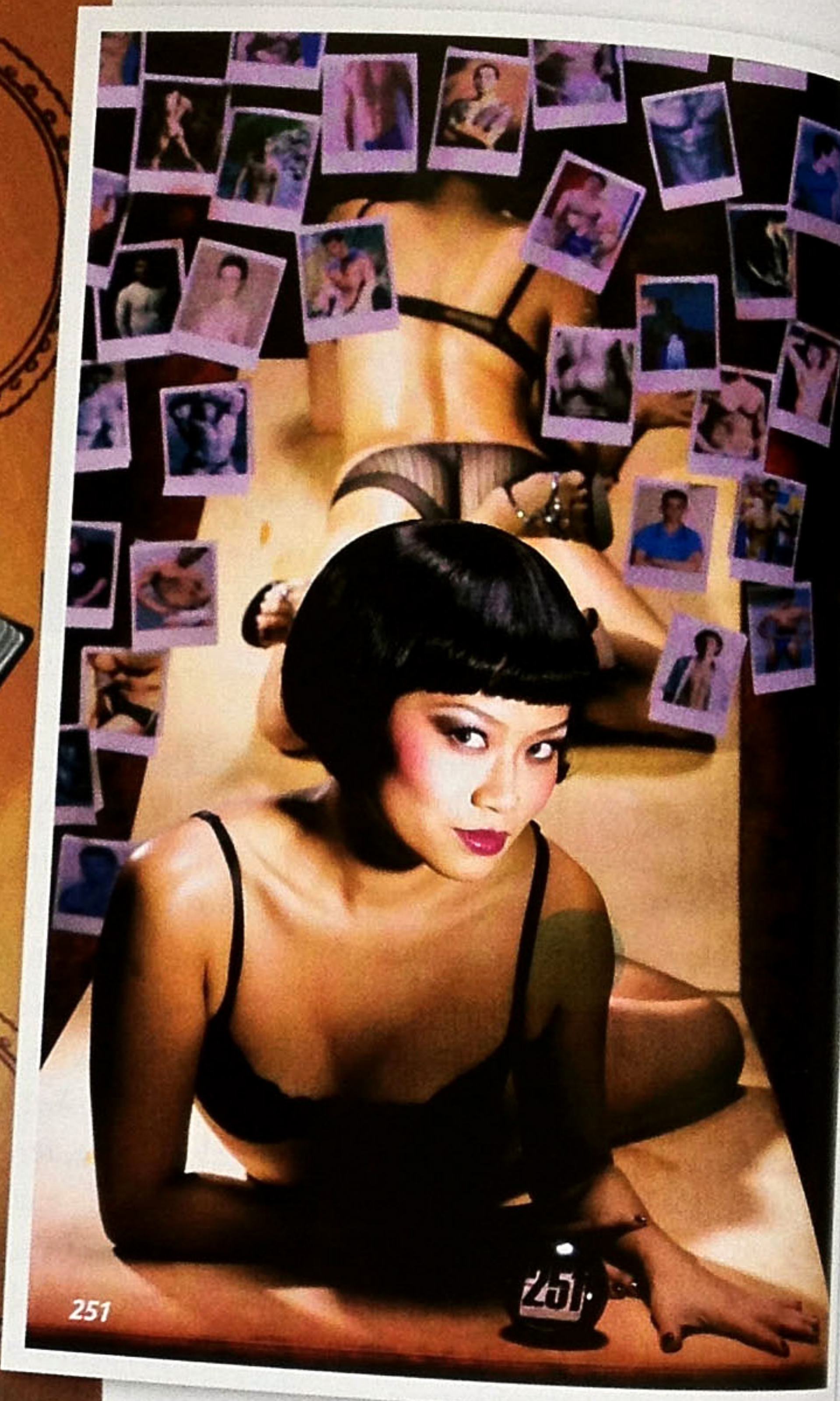
played by Tan Kheng Hua of PCK Pte Ltd fame and all hell breaks loose. Together with their friends, the Queks (Gerald Chew and Celine Rosa Tan), and their maid Edith (Pam Oei), they face the supernatural challenge of taming Elvira's blithe spirit in a comedy which literally brings the house down.

While *Blithe Spirit*, directed by Glen Goei, promises to be naughty, *251* staged by the Toy Factory takes a risqué bent and carries an RA (18) rating. Based on the true story of Grace Quek, hailing from an elite Singaporean background, she became the country's first and only international porn star, Annabel Chong, when she responded to an advert for a nude model in the *LA Weekly*.

One day, Grace decides she's had enough and

kills her second self, emblazoning "Annabel Is Dead" on her alter ego's website. The plot traverses Grace and Annabel's journeys with re-enactments, reconstructions and imagined conversations between Grace and her world, Grace and her father and, finally, Grace and Annabel. In the process, attitudes towards adult films, alternative lifestyles, sex and individuality are exposed. Confronting our hypocrisies, fears and hidden desires, the play questions our humanity and what we are left with at the end of the day.

*Blithe Spirit* is staged at the Drama Centre Theatre at the National Library, Victoria Street on April 12 and 13 from 8 pm. *251* is staged at the Esplanade Theatre Studio from April 5 to 15. Obtain tickets for both shows from Sistic.



251

## the arts

Nothing – part of the Esplanade's Theatre Studio season



Exquisite Pain

## WHAT'S ON WHERE

### PLEASURE AND PAIN

Can pain ever be exquisite? Possibly, when it comes to emotions associated with lovers' breakups and certainly, according to Britain's leading experimental theatre company, Forced Entertainment UK.

*Exquisite Pain* explores the aftermath of breakups. When a lover fails to meet Calle as promised in a hotel in New Delhi, after she's completed a 92-day journey through the Far East, she's devastated. Returning to Paris, she asks friends, "When did you most suffer?" Tales of pain interplay with Calle's own story as she gradually deals with rejection and her equilibrium is restored.

Two plays staged as part of the Esplanade's Theatre Studio season – *Exquisite Pain* and *Nothing* – explore the highs and lows of love. *Nothing* goes further, delving into aspects of death as well.

Forced Entertainment UK present *Exquisite Pain* on April 20 and 21 from 8 pm. *Nothing* is staged by Cake Theatrical Productions on April 26 and 28 from 8 pm. Both plays are at the Esplanade Theatre Studio. Obtain tickets from Sistic.

### SINGAPORE TYLER PRINT INSTITUTE Exhibition of works by Lin Tian Miao

Recognised for her installations of domestic tools covered in thread, Lin Tian Miao uses embossing to create the appearance of thread meandering across a human face. Lin is one of China's most widely exhibited installation artists. Her trademark is twine or cotton thread which she uses to wrap objects or integrate them into two-dimensional works. Until April 21. Free admission.



Installation by Lin Tian Miao



Watercolour by Sheetal Gattani

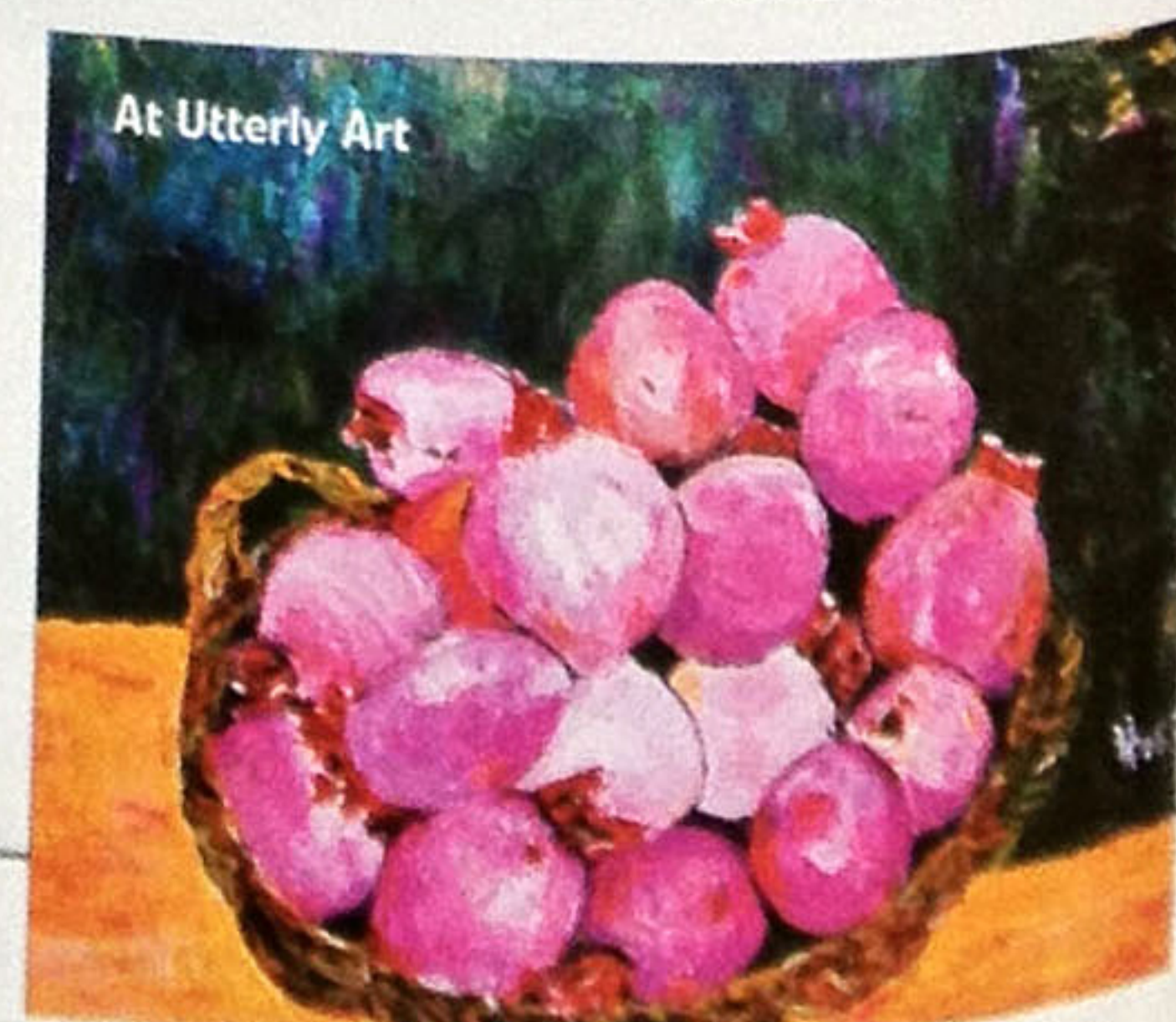
### BODHI ART Works by Sheetal Gattani

A solo exhibition by a well-established abstractionist from India using watercolours, Gattani's earthy, roughly textured paintings, with their highly reduced visual vocabulary, are built with several layers of watercolours which, in some places, erupt on the surface causing the paintings to resemble flaking, damp walls. Until May 12. Free admission.

### UTTERLY ART Trilogy of soloists

April at Utterly Art sees the staging of three separate exhibitions. From April 4 to 15, Hanoi film-maker Do Minh Tuan's first solo

exhibition in Singapore features canvas works presenting an interesting interplay of shapes, colours and forms. From April 17 to 22, Berlin-born Antje Labarthe presents fine-art photography. While the images may have been taken in Germany, the place is incidental in providing a backdrop for Labarthe's plays on shadow and form. From April 24 to 29, Taiwan-born artist Jean Lin presents oil paintings of flowers, fish and still life, reminiscent of the strokes of other Chinese painters but executed in bright hues. Free admission. Tel: 6226 2605.



At Utterly Art