

NEWSLETTER #26



A scene from Year Zero, performed at
Singapore International Festival of Arts
Read the full story on page 6!

PROGRAMMES

Our structured pathway enables persons with disabilities (PwDs) to reach their fullest potential. ART:DIS Foundation programmes encourage arts exploration, with more tailored tracks for those who wish to pursue higher professional training.

Exploring Art Interest in a Supported Environment

Embedded within the community, ART:DIS (Arts & Disability) Singapore delivers weekly visual and performing arts programmes for persons with disabilities across three centres - Bedok, Changi, and Bukit Merah. These centres serve as inclusive, accessible spaces where individuals can engage in creative learning while building meaningful social connections.

Across our programmes, students develop not only artistic competencies, but also essential life skills such as movement coordination, time management and collaboration.

Through structured learning pathways for creative expression, we at ART:DIS seek to make arts education accessible, inclusive and progressive, to empower our students to participate fully in the arts and beyond.



Performing Arts

- Percussion
- Drums
- Piano
- Violin
- Guitar
- Choir
- Drama
- Vocal Music
- Creative Dance
- Hip Hop Dance

Visual Arts

- Fine Arts
- Ceramics
- Digital Illustration
- Stop Motion Animation

Join our quarterly group consultation to discover more of our offerings:

https://bit.ly/ARTDIS_GroupConsult

Parent Testimonial

Daniel Monteiro has been a foundation student at ART:DIS for 10 years, learning Fine Arts, Ceramics, Digital Illustration and Stop Motion Animation. His parents continued to enrol him after they noticed significant improvement in his skills and expression.

“The different levels of programmes available provide safe and happy learning spaces for children/adults like ours. We greatly appreciate the teachers’ structured yet patient approach.”
—Ms Wong, Daniel’s mother



Introducing Discovery Ceramics

We are delighted to introduce Discovery Ceramics, our third caregiver-accompanied programme in our Foundation Discovery series of Visual Art classes.

Our programme offers a gentle, sensory-rich introduction to clay, designed especially for learners with higher support needs. The programme features highly accessible activities that introduce learners to pre-clay textures like kinetic sand and slime, before building up to traditional clay to explore foundational ceramic techniques.

In each session, caregivers actively engage with the medium right alongside our learners. This shared experience provides a sense of safety from which our learners can discover, create, and build confidence in expressing their creative ideas. A child-led approach also ensures exploration and enjoyment are central to each child's highly individualised learning experience.



“Discovery Ceramics provides a wonderful opportunity to develop sensory awareness and fine motor skills. Every lesson inspires creativity.”
—Mrs Chong, parent



Digital Illustration Programmes Expands to Bedok

After being offered exclusively at our ART:DIS @ Bukit Merah centre for the past 3 years, our Digital Illustration Programme expanded to ART:DIS @ Bedok in April 2026.

Within just 6 months, the programme has grown to 4 classes at Bedok. This expansion gives more learners the opportunity to explore digital drawing, visual storytelling and creative self-expression through accessible digital tools and guided instruction.



PLATFORMS

Artists with disabilities lack access to capacity development programmes in pursuing professional careers. At ART:DIS, we provide aspiring artists opportunities to participate in projects and showcase platforms that help to develop their practice and confidence.

AIT Exhibition

Our annual Artist-in-Training (AIT) Exhibition, Quiet Frequencies, brought together the works of 35 Fine Arts and Ceramics faculty students from 4-12 July at Objectifs. Through drawings, paintings and sculptural works, the exhibition celebrated the distinctive ways artists with disabilities perceive and interpret the world, revealing deeply personal visual languages shaped by memory, intuition and lived experience.

Beyond presenting their work to the public, participating artists gained valuable experience exhibiting in a professional setting and engaging directly with audiences. A special curator-led tour on 11 July, joined by several exhibiting artists, offered visitors a deeper understanding of the creative process while giving the artists an opportunity to share the stories and ideas behind their work firsthand.



Boutiques Singapore

Our fifth collaboration with Boutiques Singapore at its Spring Summer Edition in May marked another milestone in bringing inclusive design to a wider audience. This season, ART:DIS Studio launched five new capsule collections, including a vibrant series of trendy acrylic keychains featuring illustrations by our Design Sprint students. Each original motif reflected the unique creativity and personality of its artist, and quickly became a crowd favourite.

Our signature Beads Bar also proved a hit with shoppers and KOLs, introducing the ART:DIS Studio brand to many first-time customers. Beyond showcasing their work, the collaboration created meaningful opportunities for artists with disabilities to connect with new audiences and experience their creations in a commercial setting.

MONSTRESS

MONSTRESS is a powerful example of how ART:DIS worked closely with its artists to transform an emerging artist showcase into a professional theatre production. Created by visually impaired theatre-maker Claire Teo, the production emerged from years of artistic development with ART:DIS, where she was supported to incubate the work with different creative teams.

The production was first presented as MONSTRESS – The Reclaiming of Medea and Medusa under the ART:DIS Emerging Artist Programme in March 2025. Inspired by her lived experiences, the work explores how disability and caregiving often go unseen. The project was shaped through an extensive devising process involving caregivers, social workers and more, ensuring the work reflected diverse experiences with authenticity.



Key industry players were invited to watch the Emerging Artist showcase and as a result of its successful staging, Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay invited ART:DIS to co-produce a full-length theatre production for The Studios in September this year.

Accessibility was embedded from the very beginning, informing every creative decision across writing, direction, design and performance. It became a creative tool that enriched the theatrical experience, instead of just a production requirement.

Today, MONSTRESS reflects what is possible when pathways are created for emerging artists to develop original work and bring bold, inclusive stories to the stage.



COLLABORATIONS

Through strong partnerships, ART:DIS elevates the work of our artists in the public sphere, enabling more to experience new ways of seeing the world and strengthening the portfolios of our artists.

Year Zero at Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA)

For years, ART:DIS has worked alongside artists with disabilities to create opportunities for their stories, perspectives and creative voices to be seen and heard. In 2026, the Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA) commissioned ART:DIS to create Year Zero: Disability Redefined, marking a significant milestone for disability arts in Singapore. As ART:DIS' first production presented on the SIFA stage, the work brought disabled artists and their perspectives to one of the region's leading international arts platforms.

Co-directed by Peter Sau and Zhuo Zihao, Year Zero: Disability Redefined challenged audiences to examine what true inclusion looks like, while exposing the tensions, contradictions and frustrations that often accompany efforts to achieve it.

Presented from 20–22 May, the production reflected SIFA's commitment to amplifying diverse artistic voices and ART:DIS' ongoing work to champion disabled artists as professional practitioners with distinctive creative voices.



“A meta-theatrical act of frustration at how difficult diversity and inclusivity is to achieve in reality, and an argument of its impossibility.”
—Reviewer Bakchormeeboy



Raffles Hotel Mooncake Boxes

This year, our artist Nicole Koo was commissioned by Raffles Hotel Singapore to create the artwork featured on its 2026 Premium Mooncake Box.

Inspired by the hotel's iconic colonial architecture and Singapore's lush gardens, Nicole brought the design to life through her signature watercolour style. Graceful peonies, symbolising abundance and prosperity, frame the historic façade in soft, layered washes, reflecting both the timeless elegance of Raffles and Nicole's deep appreciation for nature.

This collaboration showcased how art can celebrate heritage while creating meaningful opportunities for artists with disabilities.

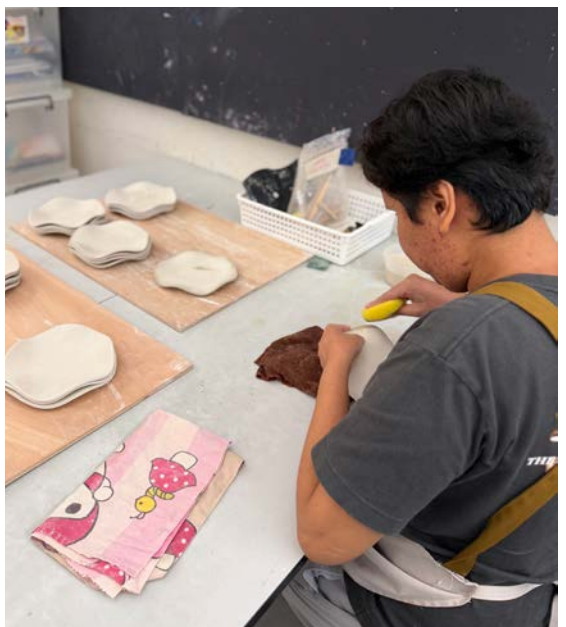


Handcrafted Ceramic Plates by Open Studio Ceramic Artists

Complementing the mooncake box is a set of handcrafted ceramic plates created by ART:DIS Open Studio ceramic artists in our second ceramics collaboration with Raffles Hotel.

Inspired by the waves along Beach Road when Raffles Hotel stood by the waterfront, each plate was carefully crafted through a collaborative studio process with volunteers from Raffles Hotel.

From shaping and glazing to the final finishing touches, every piece reflected the skill and dedication of our ceramic artists, resulting in beautiful and functional artworks that embody inclusion.





Bringing Inclusivity to National Day Packs

This year, ART:DIS partnered with National Day Parade Committee and SG Enable to lead the creative journey behind the official NDP Packs. Through a series of collaborative workshops, participants from the disability community, SPED schools and preschools came together to co-create the pack designs. From concept development to the final production artwork, every contribution was woven into a collective visual story. This partnership created a meaningful opportunity for our artists to showcase their practice in the public sphere and invite Singaporeans to experience new perspectives through art.

“It feels surreal. This is my first time doing design for NDP Fun Pack”
—Phoebe Chua (ART:DIS artist)

Celebrating International Women’s Day with Bloomberg

ART:DIS marked International Women’s Day by facilitating a creative coffee art workshop for Bloomberg’s women leaders. Led by our artist Abraham, the session invited participants to explore painting with coffee while reflecting on their own leadership journeys.

To make each experience personal, Abraham hand-drew more than 70 floral line art templates, which participants transformed into artworks using layered coffee washes before adding written reflections.

Beyond supporting programmes for artists with disabilities, Bloomberg has partnered with ART:DIS over the years to create opportunities to showcase our artists’ talents and build sustainable creative careers.



FUNDRAISING

The generosity of corporates, foundations, donors and sponsors enable us to continue running programmes that empower persons with disabilities in the arts.

Supporting Artists with Discovery Shop

This year, we were pleased to welcome Discovery Shop into our growing community of supporters. Through the sale of quality pre-loved items, proceeds directly support ART:DIS in providing persons with disabilities access to quality arts education and livelihood opportunities.

Inspired by our ART:DIS artists' creativity and resilience, Stamford Tyres Executive Chairman Dawn Wee saw an opportunity to create meaningful platforms for artists to be seen, celebrated and supported.

Today, ART:DIS artists are regularly engaged in a few in-store art experiences for their festive celebrations, engaging shoppers and sharing the stories behind their creations.



“We can use our resources to upcycle people’s treasures for a greater good... while empowering persons with disabilities through the arts.”

—Dawn Wee, Executive Chairman of Stamford Tyres



MapleTree Community Batik Painting

ART:DIS was also honoured to partner with Mapletree as part of its Community Month 2026 through the “Paint for Good: Community Batik Painting” initiative, held at Mapletree Business City on 3 August.

Bringing together Mapletree staff and tenants, the event offered a hands-on batik painting experience where creativity became a way to connect and give back. The batik design was specially created by renowned batik artist Mr Kamal Dollah.

Donations collected through the event supported ART:DIS’ efforts to provide access to arts education and livelihood opportunities for persons with disabilities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Through exhibitions, festivals and public programmes, we create more organic moments for people to engage with our artists and challenge their perceptions on disability.



Pocket Fest

Pocket Fest returned for its second edition from 4–5 July, welcoming more than 1,600 visitors for a weekend celebrating inclusive arts, creativity and community. The festival featured the works of over 42 artists with disabilities through exhibitions, performances and hands-on experiences. Six artists also led 10 ticketed workshops, offering deeper insights into their creative practices while showcasing more than 95 artworks.

New community experiences such as My Community, where visitors contributed self-portraits to a collective tapestry, and the Imaginative Garden, a collaborative life-sized art installation, encouraged people of all ages and abilities to create together. These were complemented by interactive workshops and festival passport activities that made the festival accessible, engaging and welcoming for everyone.



The festival was made possible with the generous support of our partners: Cultural Matching Fund, UNIQLO, Objectifs, Discovery Shop and Trio Packaging.

We are thankful for our dedicated corporate volunteers from GIC, Bloomberg and Citibank, as well as our individual volunteers who helped facilitate activities and create a warm experience for festival-goers throughout the weekend.

Pocket Fest received overwhelmingly positive feedback, with many visitors highlighting its inclusive atmosphere and opportunities to connect directly with artists. While others appreciated learning more about the creativity of artists with disabilities and welcomed the addition of inclusive social enterprise food vendors.



“I’m impressed by how well the activities were planned and how inclusive it was for all. My 7-year-old child and 70-year-old mum enjoyed it alike.”
—Attendee



ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

Our artists are at the heart of all we do. We are proud to support their professional arts journeys, celebrate their achievements and share their incredible stories.

March on with Sky Shen

Singer-songwriter Sky Shen has built a growing following through heartfelt songs that resonate far beyond disability. Diagnosed with muscular dystrophy at the age of five, his journey with ART:DIS began after his performance at a fundraising concert. Recognising his potential, he was invited to join Beyond Dis:play, our two-year performing arts industry training programme.

Through mentorship, artistic guidance and professional development, ART:DIS encouraged Sky to move beyond performing covers and develop his own creative voice. That support led to the release of his debut EP, *Wheel You Love Me?*, before opening doors to larger opportunities.



“To be able to write this song and be the voice of persons with disabilities is a huge gift.”

—Sky Shen on writing *March On*

In 2024, ART:DIS partnered with the Singapore National Paralympic Council and Singapore Pools, with Sky commissioned to write *March On*, the official theme song for Team Singapore at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. Produced by award-winning music director Evan Low, the anthem celebrated courage and the pursuit of dreams. The song’s impact continued to grow, earning Sky the chance to perform *March On With Me* at the 2026 National Day Parade, on one of Singapore’s largest stages.

Today, he is working on his next EP, *The Little Critters*, which explores mental health through storytelling and metaphor. At ART:DIS, we’re proud to have journeyed alongside him, supporting him in pursuing a professional career in music.





Jun Kai - Guiding Our Way

Koh Jun Kai, better known as JK, is the ART:DIS artist behind some of the nostalgic illustrations featured in Find Your Way, an initiative led by SBS Transit and Dementia Singapore to help persons living with dementia navigate bus interchanges and MRT stations with greater ease and confidence.

A young artist on the autism spectrum, JK works across both Digital and Fine Arts and is currently developing his practice through ART:DIS Artist-in-Training (AIT) programme. As a child, auditory hypersensitivity made everyday life overwhelming, but art became a place of calm, focus and self-expression. In his spare time, JK enjoys reading up about train lines and road networks around the world and drawing them too.



With continued mentorship and opportunities to apply his creativity to real-world projects, ART:DIS has supported JK in growing both his artistic confidence and professional practice. Through Find Your Way, JK's illustrations transform familiar Singapore icons into meaningful visual landmarks, demonstrating how art can foster independence, dignity and inclusion.

JK hopes to spread awareness and promote acceptance with his artistic creations by showing how everyone has the power to create something beautiful no matter their challenges. His journey is a testament to the power of nurturing talent and creating opportunities for artists with disabilities to make a lasting impact in the community.





Jade Ow: From student to advocate

Jade was born hard-of-hearing and found this to be a key challenge she faced in school. She joined our BEYOND DIS:PLAY Theatre Training Programme as a young person seeking confidence, identity and belonging. Through intensive training, mentorship and performance opportunities, she developed her artistic voice and a deeper understanding of her Deaf identity.

Jade graduated from the BEYOND DIS:PLAY programme with the creation of *Who Am I?*, a solo advocacy performance exploring self-discovery and acceptance. She was mentored to become an Assistant Trainer at AWWA School, teaching younger persons with disabilities, and was a co-writer in the landmark theatre production, *YEAR ZERO: Disability Redefined* at the Singapore International Festival of Arts.

In recognition of her leadership and dedication to inclusivity in the arts, Jade was chosen from among nine finalists in Singapore to become the nation's 31st Rhodes scholar. The prestigious postgraduate scholarship is given to exceptional students from around the world to study at Oxford.

“Be it a disabled artist or non-disabled artist, it’s the same. It is about being able to articulate what kind of art you want to create, and then staying true to the mission.”
—Jade Ow, ART:DIS Artist

Today, Jade is working on her own community touring solo work, *Cut Off Point*, a coming-of-age story about navigating systemic barriers, identity and belonging as a hard-of-hearing person.

From student to artist, educator and advocate, her journey demonstrates how sustained arts training and mentorship can empower disabled individuals to shape their own futures and contribute meaningfully to society.



BEHIND THE ACCESS

Ever wondered what accessibility looks like behind the scenes? Here's your peek at the thoughtful details that make a difference.

Behind the Access #1: Lighting Matters

Did you know that our classrooms feature adapted lighting to support students sensitive to bright or harsh light?

At our Bedok centre, lights are mounted on wooden boards and directed towards the ceiling, allowing it to reflect gently back down onto the students, reducing glare significantly.

At our Bukit Merah centre, we've gone a step further with dimmable lighting controls, letting educators adjust brightness to suit each student's needs.

Together, these features help to minimise sensory overload, creating a calmer and more comfortable space for our students to focus and thrive.



Behind the Access #2: Creative Access in the Arts

Did you know that accessibility isn't just about ramps and lifts. In the arts, it can include audio descriptions, captioning, sign language interpretation, sensory-friendly spaces and tactile experiences that help more people engage with creative work.

Behind the Access #3: Why d/Deaf

Did you know that the terms deaf and Deaf can mean different things. deaf (lowercase "d") often refers to a person's hearing level, while Deaf (uppercase "D") refers to people who identify with the Deaf community, culture and use of sign language. Using d/Deaf acknowledges and includes both identities.

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ARTS & DISABILITY
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