

**Both  
Sides,  
Now**

*tides*

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**9 – 20 March 2024  
Exhibition Guide**

# About the Exhibition

## *tides* 潮

Standing in the waves of time, gazing at the horizon between life and death, one turns to another and breaks the silence: “How do you prepare to leave this world?”

This year, we sail with a band of brave elders to explore what it means to live well, and leave well. With an arts and asset-based community development approach, we are excavating the taboos of death, end-of-life conversations and choices.

In the ocean of this shared endeavour, the waves carry us toward places of light and dark, sorrow and joy. Join us in the Yishun community to intimately contemplate and celebrate lives, legacies, and transitions with an exhibition of artworks and programmes, including conversations with and tours by senior collaborators.

## About the Project

This exhibition is part of the Both Sides, Now programme by ArtsWok Collaborative, a non-profit arts-based community development organisation. By harnessing the transformative power of the arts and creative mediums, we aim to empower individuals to become agents for change, addressing the very issues that deeply resonate with them. To achieve this, socially engaged artist Salty Xi Jie Ng has been engaging seniors from the Wellness Kampung @ 765 Nee Soon Central since June 2023 through workshops, intimate conversations and co-creating artworks to invite wider engagement on living well, and leaving well. This exhibition with programmes is the culmination of the first year of this collaborative journey.

Visit our website to find out more:  
[www.bothsidesnow.sg](http://www.bothsidesnow.sg)

Follow us on [Instagram](#) & [Facebook](#)  
[@bothsidesnowsg](#)



From left (first row): Devi, Yim Fong, Soh Joo, Tong Cheng  
From left (second row): Salty, Magdalene, Shirley, Agnes, Michelle, Stacy

## Welcome Message

Welcome to *tides*, an intimate portal into what living and leaving well mean to eight seniors in Yishun. With an arts and asset-based community development approach, this year's edition of *Both Sides, Now* embedded in a beloved wellness centre turns it into a living site existing between art and life.

How can we support each other in creatively facing mortality? From mid-2023, we've explored remembrance, ageing struggles, end-of-life priorities, and more, while building trust and community. Driven to join *Both Sides, Now* by their desire to find connection over taboo subjects, the seniors are emerging on the other side to lead tours and end-of-life conversations.

Each of them is a precious jewel in her own right; the artworks reflect what truly matters to their creators, a generation of invisible women. And while you are witnessing the incredible fruition of our work, the tender and dynamic process of relating and making has been the art itself.

At the end of our first session, one of the women reflected, "Today is a turning point in my life." With immense gratitude, I thank everyone in this ecology of relations for opening the portals together.

**To our shared mortality,  
Salty Xi Jie Ng**

Lead Artist, *tides*  
*Both Sides Now*, 2023–24

# Exhibition Programmes

## Daily opening hours:

Monday – Friday, 10am – 6pm

Saturday & Sunday, 10am – 8pm

## Saturday, 9 & 16 March

### 2 – 2.15 pm

**Readings by  
Lim Soh Joo (Mandarin)  
& Magdalene Yap  
(9 March: Mandarin;  
16 March: English)**

Listen to one curious senior's existential questions and a full-time dementia caregiver's heartfelt address to fellow caregivers.

### 4 – 5 pm

**Cord of Life: See You Up There – Conversation Circle by Agnes Tan (English)** 🗨️

Chat with Agnes under the tree about saying goodbye and having end-of-life conversations.

### 2.15 – 2.45 pm

**Exhibition Tour led by Seniors**

Be led by *tides*' senior collaborators through the artworks and the stories behind them.

**9 March: Mandarin  
16 March: English**

**Feelings of a Dementia Caregiver: Pain and Joy in Caregiving Journeys by Magdalene Yap (English)** 🗨️

Caregiving for seniors has its ups and downs; join other caregivers in sharing your journey.

### 3 – 3.30 pm

**End-of-Life Conversations with Seniors**

Engage in a range of end-of-life conversations with *tides*' senior collaborators.

*\*Conversations will be in English and/or Mandarin during each session*

**Who Can Tell Me?: Existential Chats by Lim Soh Joo (Mandarin)** 🗨️

Circle the booth and pick your questions, then engage in friendly conversation with cosmic philosopher Soh Joo inside her peaceful space.

- ◆ Limited spaces available and subject to first come first admit
- ◆ Please gather at the entrance of the Wellness Kampung @ 765 for all programmes unless otherwise indicated
- ◆ Refer to exhibition map (pg. 17) for location of programmes marked with the ● icon

## Sunday, 10 & 17 March

2 – 3 pm

### Exhibition Tour led by Seniors with Q&A

Be led by *tides*' senior collaborators through the artworks and the stories behind them.

10 March: English

17 March: Mandarin

3.30 – 5 pm

### Talk: Demystifying End-of-Life Preparation

Come learn the difference between several end-of-life arrangements such as wills, Advanced Medical Directive (AMD), Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA), Advance Care Planning (ACP), and Do Not Resuscitate (DNR), as well as an introduction to palliative care for the terminally ill.

10 March: English

17 March: Mandarin

# Artworks

Following an intimate process of learning what matters to each senior collaborator, artists Salty Xi Jie Ng and Stacy Huang conceptualised and made these artworks with them, guiding the process over months. Staff members from Yishun Health also collaborated on several projects.

## From Atha to You

by Devi Maniam

In collaboration with Lim Feng Ling (Senior Graphic Designer)  
and KumKrish Photography

*Images on Vinyl*



Every weekend, Devi whips up a feast for her family when they visit – an expression of her love and devotion for them. *From Atha to You* is a series of images photographed by her daughter, featuring her grandchildren's favourite dishes of hers, with handwritten messages exchanged between grandma and grandchildren.

## Recollection

by Michelle Sim

*Film*



A friend of Michelle, whose husband had a sea burial, speaks to her beloved when she is by the sea or other bodies of water. *Recollection* is a poetic short film sharing poignant accounts and reflections on living and leaving, collected by Michelle and told through her lens.

## Float Free

by Chia Yim Fong, Koh Tong Cheng and Michelle Sim

In collaboration with Lee Sok Howang (Senior Staff Nurse), Naliny Narayanan (Community Care Associate) and Ng Zeming Benjamin (Executive)

*Film*



A collaboratively scripted short film portraying stories of three seniors who overcame their fear of water to learn swimming at an older age. They share the community they found at Yishun Swimming Complex, the freedom water provides in old age, and reflections on life and death.

## Single Seniors Club

by Chia Yim Fong and Koh Tong Cheng

In collaboration with Marilyn Chan Min (Senior Executive) and Agnes Low Si Ling (Executive)

*Private Programme\**



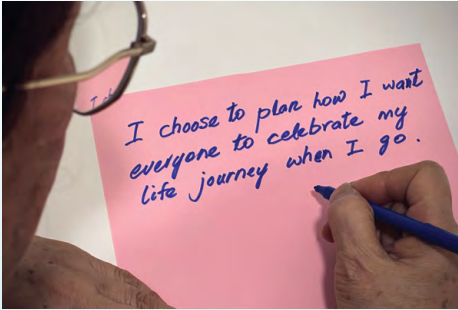
The Single Seniors Club is a peer support group for single seniors to stay active and well, support each other, as well as share stories and fun within their community. Activities include meals, sharing sessions, leisure activities, and discussions on social issues, health tips and world news.

*\*To find out more or participate, please contact Wellness Kampung @ 765 Nee Soon Central at 6257 4842*

## My Way

by Shirley Wong Kwai Cheng

*Images on Vinyl*



Shirley undergoes a journey to plan her end-of-life matters, focusing on the happy memories she will leave behind and how she wants to be celebrated. The brave result is an installation of remembrance, with a poignant statement on her end-of-life plans and grateful reflections.

## Cord of Life

by Agnes Tan

In collaboration with Fanny Hee (Senior Staff Nurse)  
and Ji Yanli (Senior Healthcare Assistant)

*Installation*



She gave life to her daughters through their umbilical cords; they are now her most precious belongings to pass down – from life to death, a journey to live, then to leave one day. *Cord of Life* is a mixed media installation on a tree inspired by her daughters' umbilical cords and the need for end-of-life conversations.

See You Up There: Conversation Circle (English)  
9 & 16 March, 4 – 5 pm



## Feelings of a Dementia Caregiver

by Magdalene Yap Choy Kam

In collaboration with Putri Nada'Billah Binte Mohamad Hisham  
(Community Care Associate)

*Images & Cards for Caregivers*



As a full-time caregiver to a parent with dementia, Magdalene pens a heartfelt letter to fellow caregivers to share the ups and downs of her journey—from burnout and helplessness, to gratitude and satisfaction. A series of images of her with her mother in everyday moments accompanies the text.

*Pain and Joy in Caregiving Journeys (English)*  
9 & 16 March, 4–5 pm

## Who Can Tell Me?

by Lim Soh Joo

*Mixed media*



Are we born with souls? What happens after death? Soh Joo is an everyday philosopher with a million existential questions, and no answers. *Who Can Tell Me?* is an installation and booth that poses inquiries about life, death and the universe in a public space, accompanied by images of the cosmic philosopher herself.

*Existential Chats (Mandarin)*  
9 & 16 March, 4–5 pm

# Our Journey



Devi and Shirley pass a message



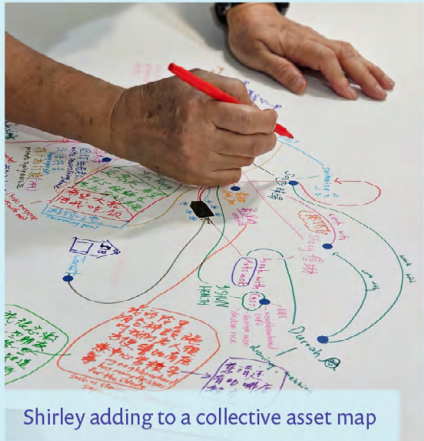
Field trip to the Japanese Cemetery Park



Michelle and Tong Cheng participate in a group discussion



Agnes and Magdalene engage in end-of-life conversation roleplay



Shirley adding to a collective asset map



Senior collaborators discuss life memories



Devi and Wellness Kampung Centre Coordinator Mary outside the Asian Civilisations Museum



Behind-the-scenes of shooting *Float Free* at Yishun Swimming Complex



Soh Joo's cosmic philosopher photoshoot



Agnes acts in Yim Fong's flashback about learning how to swim



Stacy and Magdalene discuss her project



Tong Cheng and Yim Fong engage in end-of-life conversation roleplay

# About our Senior Collaborators



My previous work in a factory, kindergarten and as a confinement nanny rewarded me with much satisfaction in spirit and everyday life. Semi-retired now, I work as a cleaner. At 70 years of age, I'm grateful to be active and financially independent. I hope to live out the rest of my life independently, staying peaceful and free from illness and pain until death.

*"Living well is freedom in the everyday."*



I was born in World War II. According to my grandma, my mother ran with everyone into the forest to escape the bombings, and birthed me under a tree. Suffering many disasters and the ravages of war, I was weak and sick. After graduating from higher secondary school, I became jobless and ended up as a Mandarin tuition teacher till retirement. Now, I teach *hanyu pinyin* (Mandarin romanisation) at the Wellness Kampung. Living alone is wonderful. I come and go as I please, my life is free and colourful.

*"The sunset is infinitely beautiful, but it's almost dusk. I hope to live and leave well."*



Born in Johor, Malaysia, I moved to Singapore at the age of ten for education. After graduation, I had several professions including that of salesperson, clerk and accountant, before retiring in 2013. I am a very curious person. I want to know where people come from, where they go after death, whether there is heaven or hell. Who can tell me?

*"To live well is to be carefree.  
To leave well is to be free of cares."*



**Devi Maniam**

I am aged 70 and a housewife. My husband and I have three daughters, four grandchildren and two sons-in-law, who come to see us during the weekends. My hobby is taking care of plants; my daughter likes to buy me new plants. I love my family and I like to cook for them.

*“Life is not permanent.”*



**Michelle Sim**

I have worked as a cashier, receptionist and promoter. Now retired, I keep busy learning languages and volunteering. My hobbies include gardening, flower arrangement, cooking, and sewing. I also love learning new things with my friends. Being positive is the driving force to life.

*“Making plans while alive will leave you with no worries in the afterlife.”*

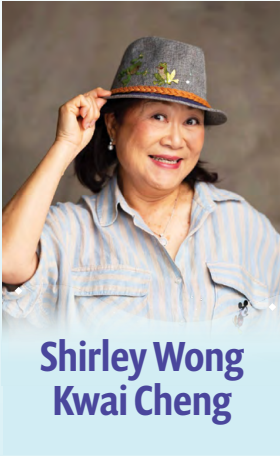


**Agnes Tan**

I'm 62 years old, married with two children and retired. I love gardening and cooking. Though I don't like meat, I'm proud to say I can cook delicious braised pork ribs. Sometimes at mealtimes, I joke with my children about whether my husband or I would pass on first, as well as share my funeral arrangements. I enjoy Wellness Kampung activities like handicraft, Tune Up, and exercise.

*“Not how long, but how well you have lived, is the main thing.”*

# About our Senior Collaborators



**Shirley Wong  
Kwai Cheng**

I am 70 years old, currently semi-retired from being an engineering designer, and work ad hoc as a senior security officer. My family consists of my husband, daughter and son, their spouses, and a granddaughter. I am happy as I keep busy with senior activities and travelling a bit with my husband, to hike, snorkel, cycle, and volunteer.

*“Living well is doing the things I like to do as I age, not suffering from illness or injuries, and not being a burden.”*



**Magdalene Yap  
Choy Kam**

I am 70 years old, retired since 2022. Currently, I live with and take care of my 90-year-old mum, aided by a helper. My mum and I both love bus rides and walks in parks and gardens. We also enjoy morning exercises at 765 Wellness Kampung and playing RUMMIKUB in the afternoon.

*“Appreciating whatever we have is the way to living well and leaving well!”*

# About the Artists



**Salty Xi Jie Ng**

Lead Artist

Salty Xi Jie Ng is an artist and educator working intimately with people and their lives in hopes of uncovering hidden selves and histories in kinship with the other-than-human. Her transdisciplinary practice proposes a collective re-imagining, and manifests as conversations, meals, performance, installation, writing, video, publication, and community space. She has worked extensively with elders and developed collaborative projects across cultures and contexts, including *The Grandma Reporter*, *Not Grey: Intimacy, Ageing and Being*, *The Inside Show*, *Singapore Minstrel*, and *Buangkok Mall Life Club*.

*“I would like to be reincarnated as a cloud or a ladybird upon a leaf.”*



**Stacy Huang**

Assistant Artist,  
Spatial Designer and  
Production Manager

Based in Singapore, Stacy identifies herself as an artist, educator and mediator. She combines art pedagogies, play, and process-based methodologies to facilitate conversations and individual expression in community-based settings. Her work often culminates in the form of installations, performance, and mixed media drawings. She most recently co-created a community floor mural with twelve youths as part of the Arts @ Macpherson Trail.

*“Without the reality of death, living will be a very different kind of game.”*

## About Both Sides, Now

Both Sides, Now is a programme by ArtsWok Collaborative (AWC) that develops spaces that encourage end-of-life conversations through arts practices and creative approaches. We work with and equip individuals, families and communities to explore, express, and enact what living well and leaving well might mean to them. A project that was originally commissioned by Lien Foundation and Ang Chin Moh Foundation, and co-presented with Drama Box (2013–2022), BSN has evolved through various editions, with different place-based and cultural communities. From 2023, BSN's evolutionary journey continues under AWC as a flagship programme as we deepen our community engagement and adopt community development approaches to working with communities.

Resources for Living Well, and Leaving Well are available at [bothsidesnow.sg/end-of-life-matters](https://bothsidesnow.sg/end-of-life-matters)

Connect with us at [bsn@artswok.org](mailto:bsn@artswok.org) and on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) at [@bothsidesnowsg](#)

## About Wellness Kampung

Wellness Kampung is an initiative comprising three wellness and care centres for residents in the North. Designed as 'community living rooms', the centres are spaces for residents to meet, participate and contribute. At the same time, the centres encourage health production via a 'stealth-health' approach. Wellness Kampung is a collaboration among Yishun Health, St Luke's ElderCare and People's Association.

## About ArtsWok Collaborative

The work of ArtsWok Collaborative focuses on arts connecting communities by harnessing the power of the arts to create dialogue, invite social participation and build bridges across difference. We have done this through the creative producing of innovative projects that demonstrate the power of the arts for change, the capability development of growing practitioners in our field, and researching and advocating for arts-based community development.

As a non-profit organisation with charity status, we rely significantly on donations to operate, and to produce programmes like Both Sides, Now. Your support is vital in expanding our reach, allowing us to extend arts-based approaches to community development through collaboration with dedicated artists, partners and communities. Donate today by scanning the QR code below!

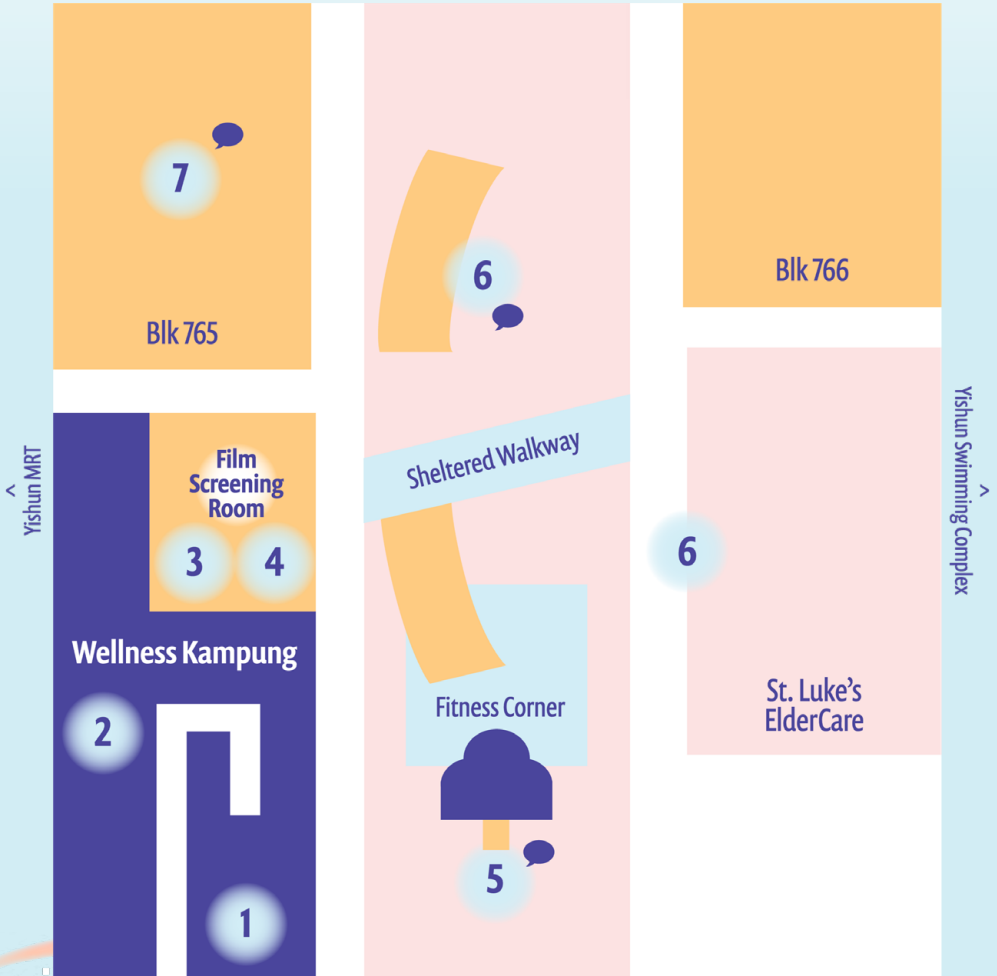
All donations \$10 and above qualify for a 250% tax deduction, and dollar-for-dollar matching through the Cultural Matching Fund from the Ministry of Community, Culture and Youth.

**Scan here  
to donate or visit**  
[bothsidesnow.sg/donate](https://bothsidesnow.sg/donate)





# Exhibition Map

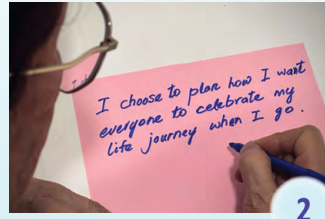




1

## From Atha to You

by Devi Maniam



2

## My Way

by Shirley Wong Kwai Cheng



3

## Recollection

by Michelle Sim



4

## Float Free

by Chia Yim Fong,  
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5

## Cord of Life

by Agnes Tan

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6

## Feelings of a Dementia Caregiver

by Magdalene Yap Choy Kam

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7

## Who Can Tell Me?

by Lim Soh Joo

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**kampung**

 **Yishun Health**  
National Healthcare Group

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