

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AFCC to Light Up Children's Literature Industry

Hybrid festival to include new forums for publishing and translation



AFCC 2022 key visual by J.H. Low

SINGAPORE, 4 April 2022—The annual Asian Festival of Children's Content (AFCC) will be returning for its 13th edition from **26 to 29 May 2022** in a new hybrid format. The festival celebrates the theme “Lit Up!”, inviting participants to embrace a world made brighter with the illumination of literature, after more than two years in isolation.

AFCC 2022 brings with it new programmes, including the AFCC Publishing Forum that will gather publishers and industry experts to examine in vogue topics like publishing and book promotion in the metaverse, as well as

sustainability in publishing. Children's book translators can look forward to the AFCC Translation Forum, which will span two days from 28 to 29 May.

Featured international speakers include established children's literature translator and 2022 Carle Bridge Honoree 阿甲 (Aija); Caldecott Honor winner Jillian Tamaki; veteran South Korean children's fiction author Lee Geum-yi; Young People's Poet Laureate (2017-2019) Margarita Engle; Carnegie Medal shortlisted writer Piers Torday; and award-winning Canadian illustrator and author Sydney Smith. They are joined by Singaporean speakers Abhi Krish, founder of Tamil-English online platform Nool Monsters; Low Ying Ping, a bestselling author of the *Mount Emily* fantasy series; and 11-year old writer Hannah Goh. Participants can look forward to virtual sessions with them, with its on-site sessions taking place at the National Library.

This year's sessions will tackle many current topics, including environmental advocacy; humour in picture books; Southeast Asian history in children's literature; and addressing complex issues like war. Other highlights include:

- i) "Picture Books: Of Buoys & 'Strength-Finders'", an in-person session on utilising picture books to support children's social and emotional development;
- ii) "The Role of Stories: Why We Write for Children", a lecture by Piers Torday, an award-winning middle grade writer;
- iii) "Humour, Heritage and Hawkers", an in-person session exploring the marriage of Singapore's unique culture with children's literature;
- iv) "Interactive Multilingual Storytelling", an interactive workshop introducing children to code-switching and new mother tongue languages.
- v) "How to Talk to Children About War", a hybrid session featuring writers like Margarita Engle who have depicted the realities of war in children's literature

vi) “The Struggle with Loss: Books as a Coping Mechanism”, an in-person session examining how children’s books help its young readers deal with loss

Please refer to Annex B for more information about the programmes and Annex C for speakers’ bios .

The lead-up to the festival will feature a two-day virtual hackathon where Southeast Asian writers will work in groups to produce a picture book under the guidance of non-profit publisher Pratham Books. The public can also look forward to the Book Illustrators Gallery (BIG). BIG will return as a digital exhibition for the third year, showcasing the best picture book illustrations from Asia and around the world. It will feature a special section dedicated to female illustrators from Asia. BIG 2022 will be launched on the AFCC website from 20 May 2022.

The festival’s hybrid format will consist of more than 70 online sessions and select in-person programmes collectively, featuring more than 70 local and international speakers. Tickets are on sale now, with up to 25% discounts for group purchases during the Early Bird promotion until 17 April.

AFCC 2022 is supported by the Tote Board Arts Fund, U.S. Embassy Singapore, Embassy of the Republic of Korea and the National Translation Committee.

For more information, please visit afcc.com.sg.

Event details

Date: 26–29 May 2022. The complete schedule, including dates of in-person sessions; masterclasses and lectures will be announced by end April.



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Venue: Online (afcc.com.sg) and in-person. In-person sessions will take place at selected venues at the National Library.

For media related enquiries, please contact:

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Ticketing Information:

The Early Bird promotion runs from now till **17 April 2022**. Participants can enjoy 20%–25% discount off the festival passes.

Ticketing website: <https://afcc2022festpasses.eventbrite.sg/?aff=PressRelease>

Category	Price	Early Bird Price	Entitlements
1-Day Hybrid Pass (26, 27, 28 or 29 May)	S\$60	S\$48 per ticket (20% discount) S\$45 per ticket for group purchase of five or more tickets (25% discount)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Access to in-person sessions, inclusive of workshops (with prior registration, by day) for the date of the pass ii. Access to video-on-demand recordings of the digital sessions for 30 days for the date of the pass iii. Access to exclusive AFCC 2022 conference materials, including presentation slides, handouts and reading materials from the speakers iv. Access to online sessions, inclusive of workshops and lectures for the date of the pass

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> v. 15% discount to separately ticketed events at AFCC 2022 vi. 10% discount at AFCC 2022's Festival Bookstore vii. 10% discount on all SBC Academy programmes for 2022[^] <p>[^]Discount codes will be sent in the confirmation email after passes are purchased</p>
1-Day Virtual Pass (26, 27, 28 or 29 May)	S\$50	<p>S\$40 per ticket (20% discount)</p> <p>S\$37.50 per ticket for group purchase of five or more tickets (25% discount)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Access to video-on-demand recordings of the digital sessions for 30 days for the date of the pass ii. Access to exclusive AFCC 2022 conference materials, including presentation slides, handouts and reading materials from the speakers iii. Access to online sessions, inclusive of workshops and lectures for the date of the pass iv. 15% discount to separately ticketed events at AFCC 2022 v. 10% discount at AFCC 2022's Festival Bookstore vi. 10% discount on all SBC Academy programmes for 2022[^] <p>[^]Discount codes will be sent in the confirmation email after passes are purchased</p>
4-Day Hybrid Pass (26-29 May)	S\$200	S\$160 per ticket (20% discount)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Access to in-person sessions, inclusive of workshops (with prior registration, by day)

		<p>S\$150 per ticket for group purchase of five or more tickets (25% discount)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. Access to Translation Forum and Publishing Forum iii. Access to video-on-demand recordings of the digital sessions for 30 days iv. Access to exclusive AFCC 2022 conference materials, including presentation slides, handouts and reading materials from the speakers v. Access to online sessions, inclusive of workshops and lectures vi. 15% discount to separately ticketed events at AFCC 2022 vii. 10% discount at AFCC 2022's Festival Bookstore viii. 10% discount on all SBC Academy programmes for 2022[^] <p>[^]Discount codes will be sent in the confirmation email after passes are purchased</p>
<p>4-Day Virtual Pass (26-29 May)</p>	<p>S\$160</p>	<p>S\$128 per ticket (20% discount)</p> <p>S\$120 per ticket for group purchase of five</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Access to Translation Forum and Publishing Forum ii. Access to video-on-demand recordings of the digital sessions for 30 days iii. Access to exclusive AFCC 2022 conference materials, including presentation slides, handouts and reading materials from the speakers



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		or more tickets (25% discount)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">iv. Access to online sessions, inclusive of workshops and lecturesv. 15% discount to separately ticketed events at AFCC 2022vi. 10% discount at AFCC 2022's Festival Bookstorevii. 10% discount on all SBC Academy programmes for 2022^ <p>^Discount codes will be sent in the confirmation email after passes are purchased</p>
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Annex A: About Singapore Book Council and AFCC

The Singapore Book Council (SBC) is an independent charity with IPC status. Established in 1968 to support Singapore authors and literature, SBC aims to Build Our Imagine-nation by developing creativity, imagination, original thought and empathy.

Vision: International recognition for quality, diverse Singapore literature.

Mission: To develop, support and advocate a multicultural literary arts sector.

SBC is currently chaired by Ms Claire Chiang, co-founder of Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts.

SBC is supported by the National Arts Council of Singapore under the Major Company Scheme for the period from 2022 to 2024. For more information, please visit www.bookcouncil.sg.



The Asian Festival of Children's Content (AFCC), organised by the Singapore Book Council, is the leading festival in Asia focusing on literature. AFCC offers a series of exciting panel discussions, workshops, lectures, masterclasses, and more events that promote the creation and appreciation of quality children's literature and YA with a focus on Asian themes.

AFCC will run in a hybrid format from 26-29 May.

For more information, please visit www.afcc.com.sg.

Annex B: Selected AFCC Programmes

1. Picture Books: Of Buoys & “Strength-Finders”

Date and Time: 26 May, 1330 (GMT +0800)

Programme type: In-person session

Picture books can be a source of strength and a channel to build resilience as they communicate positive messages and knowledge in navigating crises. In this session, be introduced to a range of children’s literature that can support the social emotional development of young children. Explore age-appropriate play-based activities for toddlers and pre-schoolers that can accompany the use of these picture books and get some general tips on how to select book genres and formats for different age groups.

2. The Role of Stories: Why We Write for Children

Date and Time: 28 May, 18:00 (GMT +0800)

Programme type: Online Lecture

Join award-winning middle grade writer Piers Torday as he unpacks the importance and function of stories in nurturing the development of children in this lecture. Hear from him as he delves into the creative process of writing stories with a purpose.

3. Humour, Heritage and Hawkers

Date and Time: 27 May, 13:30 (GMT +0800)

Programme type: In-person session

Imagine Humpty Dumpty enjoying kaya toast, Jack and Jill grilling satay on a hill and the Three Blind Mice eating chicken rice at the hawker centre. Join Lianne Ong and Janice Khoo as they discuss the role children’s authors play in preserving parts of Singapore’s heritage with the incorporation of heritage

themes in children's literature. They will also share about how they use humour and rhyme to engage their young readers.

4. Interactive Multilingual Storytelling

Date and Time: TBC, visit afcc.com.sg for latest updates

Programme type: In-person workshop

Partner up with an author-illustrator in this workshop to put up a storytelling performance in multiple languages! Let your children have a hand at translation and even code-switching as part of cultivating their love of the mother tongues.

5. How to Talk to Children About War

Date and Time: 29 May, 09:30 (GMT +0800)

Programme type: Hybrid session

Conflict and strife have been existent since the beginning of time, but that does not mean that it is easily understood or even talked about. How can adults communicate this difficult topic to children? Learn more in this session how each of the speakers have tackled this issue through their works and their approaches to depicting the realities of war to children.

6. The Struggle with Loss: Books as a Coping Mechanism

Date and Time: 28 May, 15:00 (GMT +0800)

Programme type: In-person session

Dealing with loss is never easy—whether it is of a loved one, a treasured item or priceless possession, it is a crucial part of life and imparts important lessons. Learn more in this session how children's books have sought to communicate this difficult topic to children, and how books can be a helpful coping mechanism in difficult times.

Annex C: Selected AFCC Speakers



Name: Abhi Krish

(Singapore)

Catch Abhi Krish in: சேர்ந்து உருவாக்கலாம்! -
குழந்தைகளுக்கான படப் புத்தகங்கள்

(Let's Create Together! — Children's Board Books)

Abhi is the founder of Nool Monsters—a bilingual platform sharing contemporary stories, songs, and approaches for children to learn Tamil playfully. Through laughter, music, and utter silliness, she's raising a generation of wee magical guardians who will protect and usher their mother tongue into the future.



Name: 阿甲 (Aja)

(China)

Catch 阿甲 (Aja) in:

《绘本为何有帮助孩子爱上阅读的魔力？》

Why Are Picture Books Useful in Developing a Love for Reading in Children?

阿甲，出生于 1971 年，现居北京。中国的童书作家、翻译家、阅读推广人，也是一位颇受欢迎的说故事人。作为独立研究者，他曾著有《图画书小史》、《帮助孩子爱上阅读：儿童

阅读推广手册》等；作为图画书创作者，其作品有《李娜：做更好的自己》（郁蓉 绘）、《画马》（戴敦邦 绘）、立体书《哪吒闹海》（刘琦 绘）等。他还译有多本童书参考书，如《亲爱的天才》（伦纳德·马库斯 编著）、《写给未来的艺术家》（艾瑞·卡尔 编著）等；近 20 年间他还译有 200 多本英文图画书，包括“比得兔的世界”、米菲系列、《晚安月亮》、《野兽出没的地方》，等等。

Ajia (阿甲) is a Chinese author and translator of children's books, a promoter of reading, an enthusiastic storyteller and a 2022 Carle Honors Bridge Honoree. As an independent researcher, he has written several books including *A Little History of Picture Books* and *Passion for Reading – A Handbook on Reading Promotion*. Picture books authored by Ajia include *Li Na: Be an Even Better You* illustrated by Yu Rong and *Drawing a horse* illustrated by Dai Dunbang. He has also translated several reference books like *Dear Genius* by Leonard S. Marcus and more than 200 picture books from English to Chinese, such as the *Peter Rabbit Series*, *Goodnight Moon*, and *Where the Wild Things Are*.



Name: Hannah Goh

(Singapore)

Catch Hannah Goh in: *The Struggle with Loss: Books as a Coping Mechanism*

Hannah is 11 and has always been an avid reader. She enjoys going to school and writing short stories with her best friend. *Steps to Heaven* is her first book. She was inspired from witnessing how her godmother bravely fought cancer and gracefully lived her last days. She hopes that children will enjoy reading the book and parents can explain difficult concepts such as death to their children.



Name: Jillian Tamaki

(Canada)

Catch Jillian Tamaki at AFCC 2022, visit [our website](#) for latest updates.

Jillian Tamaki is an illustrator and comic artist living in Toronto, Canada. A professional artist since 2003, she has worked for publications around the world and has taught in New York City at the undergraduate and graduate level. She has created books for people of all ages, from picture books to webcomics and adult graphic novels. She is the co-creator of *Skim* and *This One Summer*, which won a Caldecott Honor and Printz Award.

(Photo credit: Justin Aranha)



Name: Lee Geum-yi

(Korea)

Catch Lee Geum-yi in:

- i) Depicting the 'Unspeakable'
- ii) Of Women and Girls: A Study of the Female Figure in Korean Children and YA Literature

Lee Geum-yi is an author of children's and young adult fiction. Since her debut in 1984, Geum-yi has published more than 50 titles that contributed to an explosive progress in South Korean Children's Literature. Her Young Adult fictions have brought about the birth and the expansion of its genre in South Korea. Her work has also been adapted into a TV mini-series, a musical, and a webcomic. Her short stories and excerpts have appeared in various school textbooks, and many of her books have been selected for the One City One Book Campaign and the One Semester One Book Campaign.



Name: Low Ying Ping

(Singapore)

Catch Low Ying Ping in: *A New Spin on Singapore Stories*

Ying Ping is the bestselling author of the *Mount Emily* novels, a middle grade/young adult fantasy series featuring time travel and friendship, as well as *Prophecy of the Underworld*, a quirky and full-filled middle grade adventure story. Her novels have won the Singapore Book Awards and have been shortlisted for other prizes such as the Hedwig Anuar Children's Book Award and the Popular Readers' Choice Award.



Name: Margarita Engle

(US)

Catch Margarita Engle in:

- i) *Finding the Light: Hope and Despair in Children's Literature*
- ii) *How to Talk to Children About War*

Margarita Engle is the Cuban-American author of many verse novels, memoirs, and picture books, including *The Surrender Tree*, *Enchanted Air*, *Drum Dream Girl*, and *Dancing Hands*. Awards include a Newbery Honor, Pura Belpré, Golden Kite, PEN U.S.A., and NSK Neustadt, among others. Margarita served as the national 2017-2019 Young People's Poet Laureate. She is a three-time U.S. nominee for the Astrid Lindgren Book

Award. Her most recent books are *Your Heart, Light for All*, *Rima's Rebellion*, and *Singing With Elephants*.

Margarita was born in Los Angeles, but developed a deep attachment to her mother's homeland during childhood summers with relatives on the island. She studied agronomy and botany along with creative writing, and now lives in central California with her husband.

(Photo credit: Shevaun Williams)



Name: Piers Torday

(UK)

Catch Piers Torday in:

- i) *The Animal Allure*
- ii) *The Role of Stories: Why We Write for Children*

Piers Torday began his career in theatre and then television as a producer and writer. His first children's book, *The Last Wild*, was shortlisted for the Waterstones Children's Book Award and nominated for the CILIP Carnegie Medal. His second book, *The Dark Wild*, won the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize. Piers completed an unfinished novel by his late father Paul (author of *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen*) and adapted *The Box of Delights* for stage.

Images of all the speakers at AFCC can be found [here](#).