

SINGAPORE YOUTH AWARDS 2006
ARTS AND CULTURE (INDIVIDUAL)

MR TAN CHEE LAY



"Choose your love...Love your choice."

An exceptional writer and educator who has also gone the extra mile to mentor youths, opening up the worlds of Literature and the Arts to them. This is Mr Tan Chee Lay.

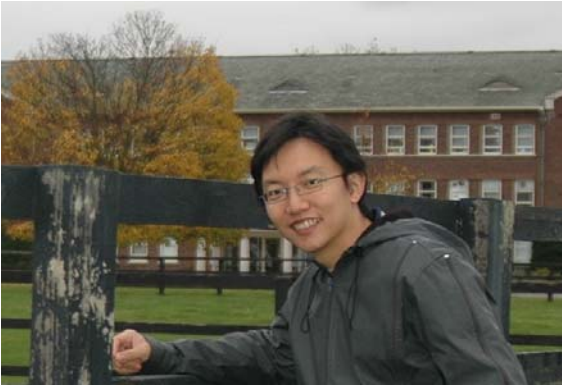
A versatile and prolific young Chinese writer, Chee Lay works in many genres, and also engages in cross-genre writing, including lyrical plays and prose-poetry.

He was among the first to bridge textual literature with theatrical performance with the staging of a performance literature in August 2005. In 2006, Chee Lay initiated the "Singapore Literary Archive", a multimedia, multilingual and multigenre digital literature archive to record the vibrant and multicultural nature of the local literary scene.

Deserving special mention is Chee Lay's instrumental role in establishing the bilingual "Singapore Student Literary Award", the numerous school-based "Artist-in-Residence Programmes" and the "Hwa Chong Literary Series" which publish books by student writers. Through these initiatives, youths were brought closer to the Arts and their talents recognised.



To help young people appreciate Chinese language and literature, Chee Lay employed youth-friendly platforms like email and SMS to help youths voice their fears and share their thoughts. Described by a student as “a teacher with the greatest impact in her learning journey”, perhaps the most evident display of his influence was his call to his students to critically examine his collection, “To Sir with Love”. From this, students were able to enhance their confidence in their critical and creative voices.



Although accorded numerous prestigious international and local awards for his outstanding talent and contributions, the ever humble Chee Lay attended, as a student, many classes conducted

by his colleagues. His positive attitude left an indelible impression on his students, inspiring them to greater heights of learning.

For his literary brilliance and unwavering dedication in fuelling passion for the Arts in youths, Mr Tan Chee Lay is conferred the Singapore Youth Awards 2006.