~ Recommendations ~

- **Paul Tan**  
  Paul Tan Kim Liang (b. 1970–) is a poet and winner of the Singapore Literature Prize in 1993 and 1997 for his collections ...

- **Haresh Sharma**  
  Haresh Sharma (b. 1965, Singapore–) is the resident playwright of The Necessary Stage, Singapore. A critically-acclaimed ...

- **Felix Cheong**  
  Felix Cheong Seng Fei (b. 1965, Singapore–) is a poet and recipient of the National Arts Council Young Artist Award ...

- **Gopal Baratham**  
  Gopal Baratham (Dr) (b. 9 September 1935, Singapore–d. 23 April 2002, Singapore) was a neurosurgeon and author. He won ...

- **Stella Kon**  
  Stella Kon (b. 1944, Edinburgh, Scotland–), a playwright, novelist, short-story writer and poet, is best known for her ...

- **Yong Shu Hoong**  
  Yong Shu Hoong (b. 1966, Singapore–) is an award-winning Singaporean poet and literary advocate. His collections of ...

- **Alvin Pang**  
  Alvin Pang (b. 1972, Singapore–) is considered as part of a new breed of young Singapore poets that emerged in the 1990s. ...

- **Rex Shelley**  
  Rex Anthony Shelley (b. 27 October 1930, Singapore–d. 21 August 2009, Singapore) was an award-winning Singaporean writer ...

- **Boey Kim Cheng**  
  Boey Kim Cheng (b. 1965, Singapore–) is widely regarded as one of the most promising Singapore poets to emerge in the ...

- **Kirpal Singh**  
  Kirpal Singh (b. 1949, Singapore–) is a poet, literary and cultural critic, and university lecturer in English language ...

- **Eleanor Wong**  
  Eleanor Wong Siew Yin (b. 6 February 1962, Singapore–) is a lawyer and playwright. She is best known for her trilogy ...

- **Dave Chua**  
  Dave Chua Hak Lien (b. 1970, Malaysia –), author of the novel Gone Case, was the recipient of the Singapore Literature ...

- **Philip Jeyaretnam**  
  Philip Jeyaretnam (b. 1964, Singapore–) is a senior counsel and an award-winning writer. He is the youngest son of veteran ...

- **Robert Yeo**  
  Robert Yeo Cheng Chuan (b. 1940, Singapore–) is a poet, playwright, novelist, essayist and librettist. He has written ...

- **Daren Shiau**  
  Daren Shiau Vee Lung (b. 1971, Singapore–) is a writer, lawyer and an environmental activist. He won the Singapore Literature ...

- **Ng Yi-Sheng**  
  Ng Yi-Sheng (b. 25 November 1980, Singapore–) is a fulltime writer whose controversial literary works have garnered ...

- **Ovidia Yu**  
  Ovidia Yu (b. 1961, Singapore–) is an award-winning novelist, short story writer and playwright. She is the recipient ...

- **Ghee Li Sui**  
  Ghee Li Sui (b. 22 August 1970, Singapore - ) is a writer and poet. Formerly an academic at the National University ...

- **Claire Tham**  
  Claire Tham Li Mei (b. 1967, Singapore–) is the author of several award-winning short story collections and two full-length ...

- **Cyril Wong**  
  Cyril Wong Yit Mun (b. 1977, Singapore–) is an award-winning poet and writer. He clinched the National Arts Council's ...

- **Koh Bock Song**  
  Koh Bock Song (b. 1963, Singapore–) is a writer, editor, poet and journalist. He has edited, co-edited and authored ...

- **Roger Jenkins**  
  Roger Jenkins (b. 1953, Singapore –), Singapore-born Briton turned Singaporean, drama educator, poet, playwright, storyteller, ...

- **M. Balakrishnan**  
  M. Balakrishnan (b. 18 September 1938, Singapore–), or Mayandiambalam Balakrishnan, is a prominent author popularly ...

- **Alfian Sa’at**  
  Alfian bin Sa’at (b. 18 July 1977, Singapore–), commonly known as Alfian Sa’at, is a prominent English- and Malay-language ...

- **Arthur Yap**  
  Arthur Yap Chioh Hiong (Dr) (b. 1943, Singapore–d. 19 June 2006, Singapore ) was a second-generation Singapore poet ...

- **Rebecca Chua**  
  Rebecca Chua (b. 1953, Singapore–) is a poet, writer and playwright whose short stories have been anthologised in a ...
Nicky Moey
Nicky Moey (b. 1964, Singapore–) is a writer who specialises in horror fiction and thrillers. His first book, Let's ...

Desmond Sim
Desmond Sim Kim Jin (b. 1961, Singapore–) is a playwright, poet, short-story writer and painter. He is best known for ...

Literary awards and prizes in Singapore
Singapore's array of literary awards and prizes recognises writers and works of literary merit. The honours are applicable ...

Leong Liew Geok
Leong Liew Geok (b. 1947, Penang, Malaysia–) is a renowned local poet. She was one of the 10 Singaporeans selected for ...

Chia Hwee Pheng (Xi Ni Er)
Chia Hwee Pheng (b. 1957, Singapore–) is an accomplished Chinese poet and novelist who writes under the pseudonym of ...

Bonny Hicks
Bonny Hicks (b. 5 January 1968, Malaysia–19 December 1997, Indonesia) was a model and writer. She published two books, ...

Edwin Thumboo
Edwin Nadason Thumboo (b. 22 November 1933, Singapore–), Emeritus Professor at the National University of Singapore's ...

Suchen Christine Lim
Suchen Christine Lim (b. 1948, Malaysia–) is the first winner of the Singapore Literature Prize (Fiction) in 1992 for ...

Ho Minfong
Ho Minfong (b. 7 January 1951, Myanmar–), is an award-winning author of literature for children and young adults. Ho ...

Tham Yew Chin (You Jin)
Tham Yew Chin (b. 1950, Ipoh, Malaya–), better known by her pseudonym You Jin, is a well-known local Chinese language ...

Isa Kamari
Isa Kamari (b. 1960, Singapore–) is a prominent figure in Singapore’s Malay literary scene. He has gained critical acclaim ...

Lau Siew Mei
Lau Siew Mei (b. 1968, Singapore–) is a Singapore-born writer best known for her acclaimed debut novel, Playing Madame ...

P. Krishnan
P. Krishnan (b. 1932, Johor, Malaya–), also known as Puthumaithasan, is regarded as one of Singapore's Tamil literary ...

Lee Tzu Pheng
Lee Tzu Pheng (b. 13 May 1946, Singapore–) is one of Singapore’s distinguished poets. A retired university lecturer, ...

Yeng Pway Ngon
Yeng Pway Ngon (b. 26 January 1947, Singapore–) is a well-known poet, novelist and critic in the Chinese literary scene ...

Mohamed Latiff Mohamed
Mohamed Latiff Mohamed (b. 20 March 1950, Singapore–) is a prolific poet and writer in Singapore’s Malay literary scene. ...

Tan Swie Hian
Tan Swie Hian (b. 5 May 1943, Pulau Halang, Indonesia–) is a multidisciplinary Singaporean artist known for his poetry, ...

Plastique Kinetic Worms (PKW)
Formed in 1998, Plastique Kinetic Worms (PKW) is a contemporary art collective co-founded by artists Vincent Leow and ...

Tan Lip Seng
Tan Lip Seng (b. 1942, Singapore–) is a prominent local photographer known worldwide for his slide and travel photography. ...

Elangovan
Elangovan (b. 1957, Singapore–) is a bilingual poet and playwright known for exploring controversial themes and the ...

Chew Kok Chang
Chew Kok Chang (b. 1934, Guangdong, China–), otherwise known as Zhou Can ( ), or other pen names such as Qiu Ling ...

Ho Poh Fun
Ho Poh Fun (b. 1946, Singapore – d. 12 March 2018, Singapore) was a poet and writer. Her poetry collection, Katong and ...

Foreign bodies
Andy, a hapless English lad abroad in Singapore, is arrested for masterminding a multi-million dollar soccer gambling ...

Mammon Inc.
Mammon Inc., the largest company in the world, is looking for a new Adapter: someone who can teach their executives ...

Tan Hwee Hwee (b. 1974, Singapore–) was the recipient of the National Arts Council’s (NAC) Young Artist Award in 2003. She is the author of Foreign Bodies (1997) and Mammon Inc. (2001), which won the Singapore Literature Prize in 2004. Her works have been published with Michael Joseph, part of the Penguin Group. She has also worked as a lifestyle journalist with Singapore newspapers The Business Times and Today.

Early life
Tan's father is an engineer and her mother, a teacher. She studied at Raffles Girls' School before moving to the Netherlands with her parents at the age of 15. Tan lived there for three years, after which she pursued her Bachelor of Arts at the University of East Anglia in England, graduating with first-class honours. She then went on to obtain her master's in English studies at the University of Oxford. In 1997, supported by a New York Times Fiction Fellowship, she completed her Master of Fine Arts degree in creative writing in New York University.

Tan stayed on New York and worked as a journalist with Adweek Magazine’s Technology Marketing magazine from 2000 to 2001. In 2001, she returned to Singapore because she had received a bursary from the NAC. Upon her return, she joined The Business Times as a lifestyle and arts reporter, and then became a senior writer for Twenty4Seven, a lifestyle and entertainment magazine. She also worked as a freelancer for publications such as Time, Harper's Bazaar, Elle, The Straits Times and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

Literary achievements
Tan decided to embark on fulltime writing when she was 16. She received between 200 to 500 rejection slips from publishers for her early writing efforts. However, her
Tan’s first novel, *Foreign Bodies*, was published when she was just 23, and still doing her graduate studies at the University of Oxford. Her manuscript reportedly caused a price war between Michael Joseph and Hodder & Stoughton, two major London-based publishers. The book was finally published by Michael Joseph as part of a two-book contract. The novel explores the anxieties and tensions of living in a postmodern world. Originally written as a series of short stories, it was later reworked into a novel. The book, which features elements from Eastern, Western, popular and religious cultures, garnered positive reviews from the critics. *The Economist* called it “a novel of distinction... almost indelently accomplished for a 23-year-old”, whereas *Kirkus Reviews* described it as “one of the strangest and most original works of the year”. *Asiaweek* named it as one of the best books of 1999.

Tan wrote her second novel during her stay in New York from 1997 to 2001. Published in 2001, *Mammon Inc.* also received glowing reviews. Punch magazine called it “a remarkable novel that is stylishly written and well argued, with a story that is light, witty and yet dazzling in its details”. The *Wall Street Journal* hailed Tan as “the most important female fiction writer in English to emerge from Southeast Asia.” The novel, which follows *Foreign Bodies* in its eclectic mix of East and West, is a story of how materialism consumes the soul. It was adapted into a play by Action Theatre for the 2002 *Singapore Arts Festival*. In 2005, excerpts from *Mammon Inc.* were featured as part of the first staging of *Second Link* during the Singapore Writers Festival. For her artistic achievements, Tan received the National Arts Council’s Young Artist award in 2003, and *Mammon Inc.* won the Singapore Literature Prize in 2004.

**Influences**

Tan’s tales about the dichotomised global citizen are influenced by her own personal experiences living in Singapore, the Netherlands and New York. *Foreign Bodies* deals with the evils of child abuse, which relates to Tan’s own childhood when she suffered molestation and violence. The story also relates to her work with rape victims while serving in the University of East Anglia’s student counselling service.

An avid reader since young, Tan explores a wide array of genres, from science-fiction, fantasy, plays, comics to football writing. On the literary front, she credits works by the Beat Generation writers, metaphysical poets, Ernest Hemingway, John Steinbeck, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Arthur Miller as influences. She also names Amy Tan, Michael Ondaatje, Robert Olen Butler and Rudyard Kipling as writers whose works have influenced the portrayal of Asians in books.

**Awards**

- 1997: Montblanc-NUS Centre for the Arts Young Writer’s Fellowship
- 2002: Singapore Internationale Award, *Singapore International Foundation*
- 2003: Young Artist Award, National Arts Council
- 2004: Singapore Literature Prize, for *Mammon Inc.*

**Works**

- 1997: *Foreign Bodies*

**Author**

Gracie Lee

**References**


Chia, A. (2008, June 1). Spirituality is her new calling. The Straits Times, p. 73. Retrieved from NewspaperSG.

The information in this article is valid as at September 2018 and correct as far as we are able to ascertain from our sources. It is not intended to be an exhaustive or complete history of the subject. Please contact the Library for further reading materials on the topic.
Tan Hwee Hwee provides award-winning freelance writing and editing services in Singapore. Freelance Writer, Copywriter, writer, writing, editor, journalist, editing, copywriting, Singapore. 19843. Tan hwee hwee – freelance writer, journalist, copywriter and editor from Singapore. My mission is to live the life of my dreams by helping others achieve their