

**ANNEX**

**Highlight orchids of the Orchid Stories of Singapore display**



***Phalaenopsis cornu-cervi***  
**Year described: 1860**  
**Described by: (Breda) Blume & Rchb.f**

*Phalaenopsis cornu-cervi*, also known as Deer Antlered *Phalaenopsis*, is widespread from northeast India through Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Sumatra, Java and Borneo. This species is usually epiphytic, but they are also found growing on rocks or tree roots on steep hillsides. Flower spikes are evergreen and will elongate or branch, producing blooms for many years. The blooms are waxy, star-shaped,

and dull yellow-green, variably marked with reddish brown spots and transverse bars. Each flower lasts for about two weeks, and is produced singly in succession over several months. It was presumed nationally extinct in Singapore but is now being re-introduced and conserved. To date in orchid hybridisation, this species is the ancestor of more than 480 registered hybrids.



***Papilionanthe Miss Joaquim 'Agnes'***  
**Year of registration: 1893**  
**Registrant: H. N. Ridley**

In 1893, a flowering *Vanda Miss Joaquim* was presented by Agnes Joaquim to then director of the Singapore Botanic Gardens, Henry Ridley. Ridley registered *Vanda Miss Joaquim* as a newly created hybrid. Most importantly, it was recognised as Singapore's first orchid hybrid and the world's first *Vanda* hybrid. Around 1894, cuttings were shipped from Singapore to England, where it was nurtured by Sir Trevor

Lawrence and his orchid grower W.H. White. Sir Lawrence's plant became the first to flower in Europe in 1897. It was displayed at the Royal Horticultural Show in London and awarded the prestigious First Class Certificate by the Royal Horticultural Society for its outstanding growth qualities.



***Papilionanda* Tan Chay Yan**

**Year of registration: 1952**

**Registrant: Robert Tan Hoon Siang**

Originated by Tan Hoon Siang, a well-known entrepreneur and hybridiser, who named this hybrid after his father, Tan Chay Yan, a Peranakan rubber plantation merchant and philanthropist. Tan Hoon Siang pollinated a *Vanda dearei* with pollen from *Papilionanda* Josephine van Brero in 1948. On 25 May 1954, a select cultivar of *Papilionanda* Tan Chay Yan, was air-flown from Singapore and exhibited at the

Chelsea Flower Show. This resulted in it winning its famous award – a Gold Medal and a First Class Certificate. *Papilionanda* Tan Chay Yan also won a trophy for the best *Vanda* in the second World Orchid Conference in Hawaii in 1957. These sensational achievements firmly established Singapore on the world orchid map.



***Aranthera* Anne Black**

**Year of registration: 1957**

**Registrant: Singapore Botanic Gardens**

Since 1956, orchid hybrids with qualities that were considered special and desirable enough were set aside to be named after politicians and dignitaries who visited Singapore. This hybrid is the first VIP orchid registered by Singapore in 1957, and was named after Lady Black, wife of Sir Robert Brown Black, former governor of Singapore. It is an outstanding cut flower as older blooms in a spray do not fade when the

subsequent flowers open.



***Aranda* Bertha Braga**

**Year of registration: 1957**

**Registrant: Singapore Botanic Gardens**

First flowered in August 1956 from seeds sown in August 1950, it is the largest and most striking of the four Braga *Aranda* hybrids and most often found in cultivation today. A repeated cross using *Vanda tricolor* var. *suavis* as a parent was subsequently produced in the Singapore Botanic Gardens, which improved the appearance of the original cross. Its long inflorescence produces many long-lasting flowers, which under optimal

care and conditions, can last up till a month. Its pollen parent, *Arachnis* Maggie Oei, is claimed to be Singapore's first orchid grown commercially for the cut flower trade and on one occasion, its flower sprays were flown around the world in 3.5 days to demonstrate its durability before being exhibited in the British Overseas Airways Corporation offices in Singapore.





**Aranda Christine (alba form)**  
**Year of registration: 1963**  
**Registrant: Federal Orchids**

*Aranda Christine* is a historically significant vandaceous hybrid, notably well-known for garden landscaping and commercial cut flowers throughout the 1970s. Wong Leong Fatt of Federal Orchids in Penang is best remembered as the breeder of this fabulous hybrid from which several clones were very sought after during the Christine craze of 1972. He was also the only breeder who won the Eric Holttum Gold Medal

twice in two consecutive years from the Orchid Society of South East Asia. On display is the alba (or white) form of *Aranda Christine*.



**Aranda Peng-Lee Yeoh**  
**Year of registration: 1966**  
**Registrant: Yeoh Bok Choon**

The pod parent of this fragrant hybrid, *Aranda Lucy Laycock*, was produced by John Laycock in 1950 and is the parent of several outstanding hybrids including *Aranda Peng-Lee Yeoh*, registered in 1966 by Yeoh Bok Choon. Bok Choon was an avid orchid grower and promoter, the longest serving member of the Orchid Society of South East Asia, and the elected president of the Malayan Orchid Society in 1962. He is remembered in the quadrigeneric genus *Bokchoonara*, which constitutes *Arachnis*,

*Paraphalaenopsis*, *Ascocentrum* and *Vanda*.



**Aranda Noorah Alsagoff**  
**Year of registration: 1972**  
**Registrant: S.Y. Alsagoff**

*Aranda Noorah Alsagoff* was bred by Syed Yusof Alsagoff, one of the most notable orchid hybridisers in Singapore who has bred almost 200 orchid hybrids for more than 50 years. This large and handsome hybrid which was registered in 1972 is the best known of the Alsagoff Arandas, and rose to become one of the top quality crosses that put Singapore on the regional growers' map. Thirty years later, many growers

still claim that it is very difficult to find an *Aranda* that matches its blue shading, substance and floral arrangement.



***Renanstylis Bangkok Beauty***

**Year of registration: 1975**

**Registrant: Koh Keng Hoe**

Spectacular bright red sprays of star-shaped flowers with faintly striated markings on the petals and sepals, this hybrid is a cross between Singapore's *Renanstylis* Azimah (1970) and Thailand's *Renanthera* Bangkok Flame (1973), bred by Syed Yusof Alsagoff and P. Laksanaphuk respectively. *Renanstylis* is the nothogenus for intergeneric hybrids between the genera *Renanthera* and *Rhynchostylis*.



***Aranda Chark Kuan***

**Year of registration: 1976**

**Registrant: Lum Chin Orchids**

*Aranda Chark Kuan* is an example of a triploid *Mokara*, which is characterised by generally more vigorous growth than diploids, with rounder and larger flowers measuring 8 to 10cm across. The spotted delicate flowers come in many colours such as orange, purple, pink and red. Its genus was then known as *Mokara*, an intergeneric hybrid between *Ascocentrum*, *Arachnis* and *Vanda* orchids, and was first established in 1969 in Singapore.



***Mayara Mandai Glow***

**Year of registration: 1977**

**Registrant: Singapore Orchids Pte Ltd**

A local hybrid registered by Singapore Orchids Pte Ltd in 1977, the flowers feature the vibrant glow of an art-shade colour. The nothogenus *Mayara* is a composition of three genera – *Vanda*, *Papilionanthe* and *Renanthera*. The pollen parent, *Renanthera coccinea*, is a striking old species (described in 1790) with many hybrids unmatched for its flowering characteristics, thus making it highly valuable.





**Papilionanda Obama**  
Year of registration: 2009  
Registrant: E.M.K-A. Chew

Building on Singapore's orchid hybridisation programme, *Papilionanda Obama* was bred from the renowned *Papilionanda Josephine van Brero*. *Papilionanda Obama* is a vigorous, floriferous and beautiful hybrid created by a Singaporean breeder, Emrys Chew, who had named it after former US President Barack Obama. According to the breeder's own description of his plant, it features a variation in the colour of the flowers, ranging from blue-mauve to lilac and apricot, which Obama's hope of neither red nor blue

states but a blend of both in the United States.



**Dendrobium Kiat Tan**  
Year of registration: 2015  
Registrant: Gardens by the Bay

This hybrid is a cross between Queen Victoria's *Dendrobium*, a native to the Philippines and Singapore's native Pigeon orchid (*Dendrobium crumenatum*). The pod parent, *Dendrobium victoriae-reginae*, features clusters of beautiful violet-blue flowers which do not usually bloom in outdoor tropical conditions. However, this hybrid is able to bloom in both outdoor tropical and indoor cool climates. *Dendrobium Kiat Tan* has

three variations in colour so far; ranging from violet-blue, partially violet-blue and white (semi-alba), as well as pure white (alba). This hybrid succeeded in increasing the blooming duration of the Pigeon Orchid from one day, to between five and seven days when outdoors. Blooms in cool indoor conditions can last between seven and nine days.



**Dendrobium Moses Lee**  
Year of registration: 2020  
Registrant: Gardens by the Bay

An alluring orchid of fine pedigree, this high-quality cross was specially bred to embody the best of Singapore's orchid history as well as to incorporate worthy elements of foreign parentage. This befits the lifetime commitment and contributions of the former Chairman of Tote Board Moses Lee to Public Service. It pays tribute to his unwavering support to giving hope to vulnerable groups and improving the lives of

Singaporeans during his tenure from 2013 to 2020. The flowers are a bold dark-purple in colour, matching the flamboyance of the twists in the petals and sepals, and the flowering is prolific under tropical conditions, featuring an inflorescence of 12 to 18 flowers, each 7cm in diameter, beautifully arranged on a flowering stalk that rises above the plant.

## Prominent names in the local orchid industry

### Dr Kiat W. Tan

Pivotal to the evolution of the orchid breeding programme in the Singapore Botanic Gardens is Dr Kiat W. Tan. He was the Director of the Singapore Botanic Gardens (1988-1989) as well as Chief Executive Officer of the National Parks Board (1995-2006), and an orchid breeder himself. Under Dr Tan's leadership, the orchid programme bred exclusive hybrids for display, culminating in the creation of the National Orchid Garden in 1995.

Dr Tan's love for orchids conceivably arose from the same passion in his parents, Ong Siew Hong and Tan Chee Tong, the latter a distinguished orchid grower and breeder of *Vanda* and *Dendrobium* during the 1950s and 1960s. Dr Tan's parents contributed excellent cut flowers to the Malayan Orchid Society's exhibits at various internal shows, and correspondingly, raised many award-winning plants which bear the varietal name, Siew Hong. In particular, the Siew Hong variety of *Papilionanda* Tan Chay Yan was recognised by the late Dr Yeoh Bok Choon (avid orchid grower and promoter) as one of the loveliest. This sentiment was shared by the global audience as the variety was awarded the best *Vanda* cut flower at the 2nd World Orchid Conference in Hawaii.



As founding CEO of Gardens by the Bay, he also started the Gardens' orchid hybridisation programme in 2015.

### Robert Tan Hoon Siang

Former president of the Malayan Orchid Society Robert Tan Hoon Siang hybridised *Papilionanda* (Vanda) Tan Chay Yan, which marked a turning point in Singapore's orchid hybridisation efforts. In 1954, *Papilionanda* (Vanda) Tan Chay Yan was exhibited at the Chelsea Flower Show, and received a prestigious First Class Certificate (FCC) from the Royal Horticultural Society. Robert Tan Hoon Siang named this lovely golden pink-apricot hybrid after his father, Malayan rubber king Tan Chay Yan, who in turn was the grandson of businessman and philanthropist Tan Tock Seng.

There is an interesting family story related to *Papilionanda* Tan Chay Yan too, as recounted through Robert Tan Hoon Siang's son, John Tan Jiew Hoe, himself a prominent name in the local horticulture industry. During WWII, one of the hybrid's parents, *Vanda dearei*, indirectly saved the family's life from the Japanese. Robert Tan Hoon Siang had rejected the Japanese's request to listen to the BBC and translate codes, despite knowing their cruelty and mercilessness toward the opposition. When the Japanese saw a *Vanda dearei* growing beautifully in Robert Tan Hoon Siang's garden, it was proof to them that he had green fingers, and so instead of punishing him, they sent him and his family to Endau in Johor to grow rice as food was scarce during the war.

### **Syed Yusof Alsagoff**

Syed Yusof Alsagoff is a prominent Arab who made significant contributions to Singapore over the past 60 years through his breeding work on heritage orchids and sharing his expertise on orchid breeding. His *Aranda* Noorah Alsagoff, named after his daughter and registered in 1972, is a large and beautiful hybrid that is among the well-known Alsagoff Arandas – an outstanding collection of top quality crosses that put Singapore on the regional growers' map. It is also designated a heritage orchid.

To date, he has bred close to 200 hybrids. Recalling the struggles of orchid hybridisation in the 1950s, which was self-taught, and with very little available material and resources, he shared how patience and perseverance were the key drivers of his successes. These qualities echo the Singapore Spirit, as epitomised by our pioneers.

In addition, through Yusof, better quality stud plants for breeding were continually being sourced both locally and internationally for the Singapore Botanic Gardens – a key aspect in supporting hybridisation efforts toward growing the orchid industry.

