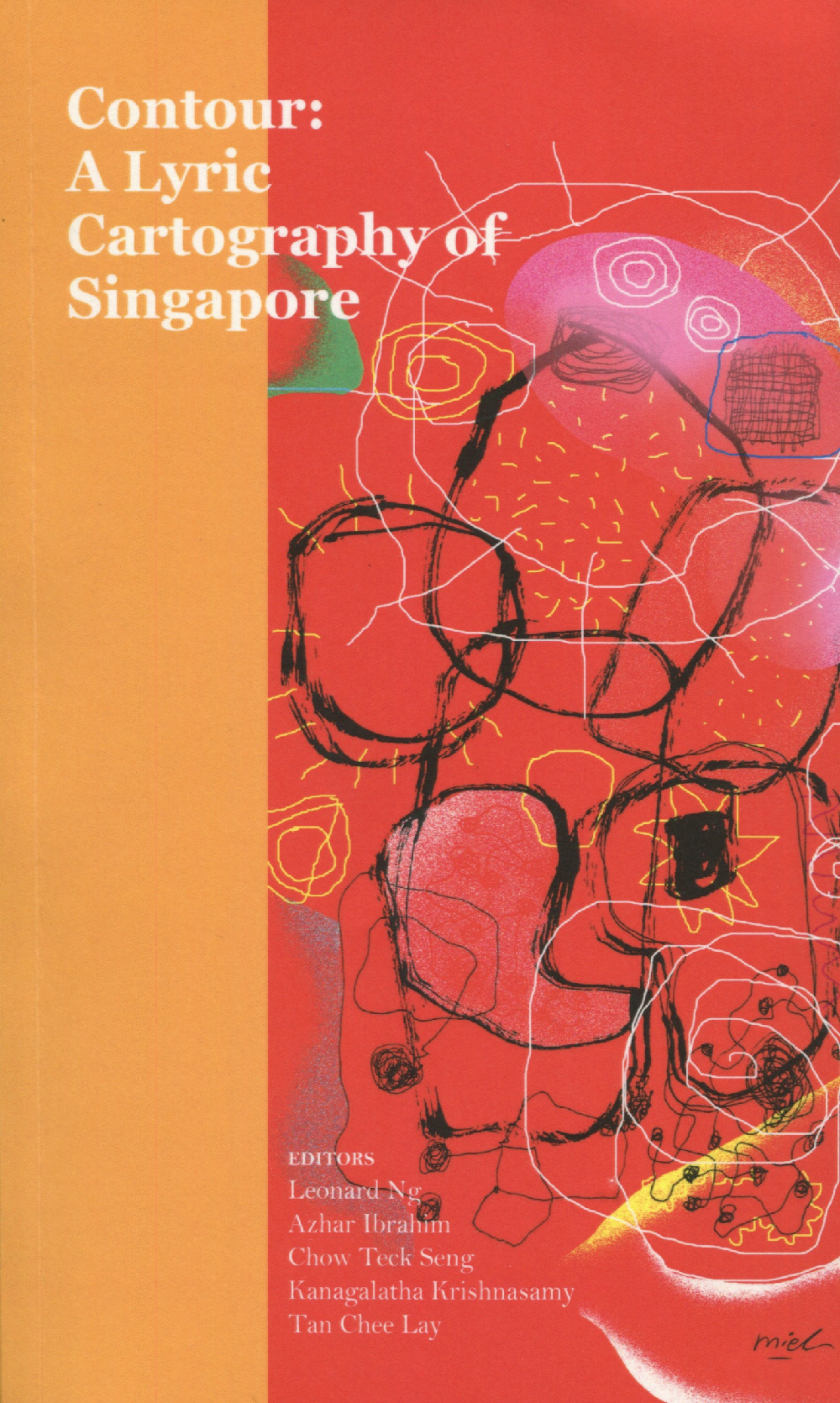


# Contour: A Lyric Cartography of Singapore

The background of the cover is a vibrant red. On the left side, there is a vertical orange-to-yellow gradient bar. The central and right portions of the cover are filled with abstract, hand-drawn white and yellow lines, resembling a map or a series of scribbles. A prominent feature is a blue-outlined grid pattern in the upper right quadrant. There are also several concentric circles and irregular shapes in shades of pink and purple. The overall aesthetic is artistic and expressive.

## EDITORS

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Azhar Ibrahim

Chow Teck Seng

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Tan Chee Lay

*miel*

Contour

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## My Grandmother Takes the M.R.T. for the First Time By Cyril Wong

I didn't fall down the escalator. This is good.  
Singapore has trains now. Everything moves faster.  
We're no longer young. I can't remember being young.  
I can reach each end of the island in under an hour.  
I don't need my sullen husband to accompany me.  
My sons are too busy fighting with their wives.  
My grandson is still in school. I can get away from them.  
I can just say I'm going to the market,  
but I won't tell them in which neighbourhood.  
This train is so shiny, clean and fast. Like this country,  
I'm sure it'll never break down. Outside the window,  
the city smashes into itself. So many new buildings;  
so many flats nicer than mine. Commuters look busy  
all the time. I'm not busy, but even I tremble with the urge  
to go. Being fast must mean that we're happy, successful,  
free. I'll enjoy my freedom, or the air-conditioning,  
while it lasts. I can get off at any station at any time.  
We all can. Or I may enjoy the ride till it reverses direction  
back to the home I left behind. Between nowhere  
and everywhere, I remember I don't have many years  
left in a country moving too fast to remember an old fool  
like me. I look out the window. I smile for no reason.  
I can laugh or cry; nobody cares. Or I may  
nap and wait to be woken up when the train  
finally stops. If I'm not dead, I'd smile and apologise.  
I'd thank them when they ask me politely to go.