

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY MRS ROSA DANIEL, DEPUTY SECRETARY (CULTURE) MINISTRY OF CULTURE, COMMUNITY AND YOUTH AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, NATIONAL HERITAGE BOARD AT THE LAUNCH OF CULTURE ACADEMY ON 6<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2015, NATIONAL GALLERY SINGAPORE AUDITORIUM**

Ms Yeoh Chee Yan, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Welcome. Thank you all for coming to the official launch of Singapore's first Culture Academy, and in conjunction with this, an inaugural session under its Distinguished Speaker series. We are truly among colleagues, friends, partners and supporters of the arts and heritage in Singapore.

2 The Culture Academy has its roots in the NHB Academy which was set up in 2010. With this foundation and after five years, it is now re-positioned to serve the Ministry in reaching out to the wider culture sector.

3 The Academy has three parallel tracks that it will focus on. Firstly, it will focus on capability development where we will identify competency skills which should be upgraded among the professionals and administrators in the culture sector. Secondly, it will focus on thought leadership through sharing of expertise amongst cultural leaders within and outside Singapore. And thirdly, it seeks to promote through research and scholarship a deeper understanding of Singapore and Southeast Asian arts and culture.

4 In a nutshell, the Academy has very ambitious plans to support Singapore's arts and culture professionals in reaching new levels of excellence and to stand tall

among their international counterparts. However, we cannot do all this without forming strategic partnerships with our cultural and tertiary institutions locally, regionally and internationally.

5 We can only flourish with the active participation of institutions within the arts and culture sectors coming together to be trained and to be willing to upgrade your knowledge and skills. The Culture Academy is for you to hone your skills and also to form partnerships and networks to share ideas and best practices.

6 We will work with and serve our partners in MCCY such as the National Arts Council, The Esplanade and the Visual Arts Cluster which comprises the National Gallery, Singapore Art Museum and the Singapore Tyler Print Institute, as well as partners such as Laselle, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and the School of the Arts Singapore (SOTA). But we will also reach out to our network of friends in the Museum Roundtable of more than 50 museums and galleries, some of whom are here today.

7 In understanding your needs, and working with you, we can put together training courses for our cultural leaders and professionals to think out of the box and be innovative in running their respective institutions. While we put the training of our own professionals in Singapore first and foremost, there will be more opportunities while doing so to also share our experiences with counterparts in the region and beyond. This will contribute to Singapore's reputation as a cultural city of excellence.

8 To mark the launch of the Academy, we are very pleased that we have such a fitting and prominent speaker in Dr Neil Macgregor who is a luminary of the international arts and culture scene. The Dean of the Culture Academy, Dr Alan

Chong, will shortly introduce him and I know, like me, all of you are eagerly waiting for his lecture.

9 I would like to thank all of you for coming today and to especially thank our Guest of Honour Ms Yeoh Chee Yan for launching the Academy.

10 I hope that all of you will find today's programme stimulating, and that you will continue to participate and contribute to the Academy's objectives.

11 Thank you.

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