



WEAVING STORIES

National Heritage Board
Annual Report 2019/2020

SHAPING LEGACIES



National
Heritage
Board

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Annual Report 2019/2020

SHAPING LEGACIES

The theme of this Annual Report is inspired by NHB's refreshed brand identity, which is rooted in the concept of "interweaving heritage". As part of the refresh, NHB's updated logo features a weaving pattern that signifies the interconnectedness of our diverse cultures, traditions and stories that shape our multicultural heritage and identity. It also reflects our ties and partnerships with Singaporeans in the shared ownership of our heritage.





“ In our role as custodian, NHB strives to safeguard and promote Singapore’s heritage, and ensure that everyone can tap into the diverse strands that make us proudly Singaporean. COVID-19 presents the challenge of a generation, but it has also gifted us the opportunity to re-evaluate our role in Singapore society, how we will carry it out and reconnect with Singaporeans from all walks of life. ”



CHAIRMAN’S FOREWORD

In 2020 we have been presented with a crisis unprecedented in recent times. COVID-19 has had a profound impact worldwide, deeply affecting everything from national economies and international travel, to the way we work, socialise and live our daily lives.

What is the role of heritage in times such as these? I believe that it is two-fold. The first is that it enables us to glean practical lessons from the past, to learn what worked before and what did not, and to apply and adapt this knowledge to the rapidly evolving situation at hand.

The second is the ability of arts, heritage and culture to inspire and uplift spirits. This was well-demonstrated over the two-month Circuit Breaker period, when we saw artists, performance groups, museums and galleries band together to ensure our arts and culture remained accessible through digitalisation, even as we all stayed home. NHB museums, institutions and divisions worked hard to produce and share meaningful heritage content and activities online, so as to engage our audiences, help them draw on the ballast of our heritage and inspire hope for the future. Together with our colleagues at the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and the National Arts Council, we have been working to ensure all Singaporeans can continue to appreciate #SGCultureAnywhere.

In our role as custodian, NHB strives to safeguard and promote Singapore’s heritage, and ensure that everyone can tap into the diverse strands that make us proudly Singaporean. COVID-19 presents the challenge of a generation, but it has also gifted us the opportunity to re-evaluate our role in Singapore society, how we will carry it out and reconnect with Singaporeans from all walks of life. In fact, we have already started down new paths, our accelerated digitalisation drive being one example. How do we use this to enhance our physical offerings, post-COVID? Are there other modes of engagement that we need to look into? What new competencies do we need to build to stay ahead of the curve? And finally, how can heritage help us make sense of the challenges of our time? How can we at NHB truly make a difference in people’s lives, in good times and bad?

These are not easy questions to answer. I would challenge my colleagues at NHB to consider these questions as we plan for the future, post-COVID. I also welcome our stakeholders, donors and friends to share your ideas on how we can best move ahead.

This year, amidst the most challenging of circumstances, the team at NHB did well in rallying together and ensuring that we continue to work towards realising our mission and vision. We could not have done this without our partners, patrons, docents and volunteers who continued to stand by us, offering your unwavering support. I would like to express my deep gratitude to all, and I look forward to working with you in the exciting days ahead.

Ms Yeoh Chee Yan
Chairman
National Heritage Board

“... and yet it is by looking back that we realise our response to the challenges so far has been built on the foundations laid by our past efforts. We have been able to react nimbly and rapidly, using innovative ways to reach Singaporeans, because our museums, divisions and heritage institutions have a solid body of heritage content and resources available...”



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S MESSAGE

This year marks the mid-point of *Our SG Heritage Plan*, and we ended 2019 on a high by wrapping up the commemoration of the Singapore Bicentennial. As we began a new decade in 2020, we faced a situation that none of us has encountered before, and as NHB, we have had to respond and adapt quickly in a highly dynamic environment.

Looking back on our work pre COVID-19 feels like peering into a different world, and yet it is by looking back that we realise our response to the challenges so far has been built on the foundations laid by our past efforts. We have been able to react nimbly and rapidly, using innovative ways to reach Singaporeans, because our museums, divisions and heritage institutions have a solid body of heritage content and resources available; our digital strategy is adaptive and constantly evolving; and we have established and continue to nurture good relationships with our partners, stakeholders and communities.

The National Museum of Singapore, with *An Old New World: From the East Indies to the Founding of Singapore, 1600s–1819*, and the Indian Heritage Centre (IHC), Malay Heritage Centre and Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall with their special exhibitions, concluded NHB's bicentennial-focused exhibitions and programmes by expounding on the Singapore story, and our links to the region and the rest of the world. The Asian Civilisations Museum also explored the vibrancy of Chinese art and heritage through the award-winning and highly successful *Guo Pei: Chinese Art and Couture* exhibition and *Living with Ink: The Collection of Dr Tan Tsze Chor*.

Two of these exhibitions, *An Old New World* and IHC's *From the Coromandel Coast to the Straits – Revisiting Our Tamil Heritage*, have been digitised, and are available online on our heritage portal, *Roots.sg*, for everyone to access anytime, even though the physical exhibitions are no longer on display. These are just two examples, and we will continue to strengthen our digital offerings across our National Collection, National Monuments, heritage trails, elements in our intangible cultural heritage inventory, and more.

To celebrate our built heritage, we gazetted the Cavenagh, Anderson and Elgin Bridges collectively as our 73rd National Monument, recognising their historical and architectural significance, and their role in facilitating the growth of Singapore as a city and trading port.

Our efforts to promote and safeguard our intangible cultural heritage were boosted with the announcement of *The Stewards of Singapore's Intangible Cultural Heritage Award*, which recognises practitioners and encourages the transmission of their crafts, knowledge and practices. We also eagerly await the results of the nomination of our Hawker Culture for UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

On heritage education, I am excited that we have partnered with the Ministry of Education to make Museum-based Learning a part of cohort learning journeys for all Primary 6 and Secondary 2 students at the National Museum and Asian Civilisations Museum, which will help foster a greater understanding and appreciation of our history and heritage from a young age.

This year has been a roller coaster ride, and many of our plans have had to change. Still, we have a lot to be grateful for. We will continue to build on the solid grounding and reflect on our role and how we can best deliver our desired outcomes post-COVID. It has been inspiring to see the effort and commitment shown by everyone – my colleagues, board members, partners, volunteers and docents – especially when the going got tough. I would like to thank all of you. It is my privilege to be working together with you to instil Pride in Our Past, and a Legacy for Our Future.

Ms Chang Hwee Nee
Chief Executive Officer
National Heritage Board

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Chairman
National Heritage Board



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Chief Executive Officer
National Heritage Board



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Senior Lecturer
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ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute

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Ms Wendy Ang
Director
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and Design

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Principal Architect
Zahidi A R Arkitek

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Senior Lecturer
Republic Polytechnic;
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Department, Conservation and Urban
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Research Centre)
ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute

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(As of 31 March 2020)





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*The division joined the Ministry of Culture,
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Ms Sim Wan Hui
Director
Language



Ms Tresnawati Prihadi
General Manager
Singapore Philatelic Museum



Mr Alvin Tan
Deputy Chief Executive
Policy & Community



Mr Kennie Ting
Group Director (Museums) &
Director, Asian Civilisations
Museum & The Peranakan
Museum



Ms Cheryl Koh
Director
Strategic Communications
& Development



Ms Trudy Loh
Director
Heritage Institutions



Ms Loh Heng Noi
Director
Collections



Mr Mohamed Hardi
Director & Chief Information Officer
Information Technology



Mrs Wai Yin Pryke
Director
Education & Community
Outreach



Mr Gerald Wee
Director
International &
Museum Relations



Ms Jean Wee
Director
Preservation of Sites &
Monuments



Mr Yeo Kirk Siang
Director
Heritage Research &
Assessment



Our Places are tangible markers of our identity and reminders of our heritage. They are important physical links to our past, and harbour our shared memories and stories.

In FY2019, we gazetted the Cavenagh, Anderson and Elgin Bridges collectively as our 73rd National Monument, according them the highest level of protection for structures and sites in Singapore. Work continued on the preservation, restoration and care for our National Monuments, as well as research and documentation of our built heritage.

Our latest heritage trail, the *Pasir Ris Heritage Trail*, and the newly launched *Harmony Walks* and *Street Corner Heritage Galleries*, tell the stories of our neighbourhoods and community spaces, and celebrate our multiculturalism and everyday heritage.

Together, these efforts enable future generations to have a greater appreciation of our shared history, through the treasured places and spaces around us.





Gazette of Singapore River Bridges

The Cavenagh, Anderson and Elgin Bridges — Three most historic and architecturally impressive bridges spanning the Singapore River, collectively gazetted as Singapore's 73rd National Monument on 15 October 2019.



DID YOU KNOW

1. Cavenagh Bridge was fabricated in Glasgow by engineering firm, P&W MacLellan. When it was shipped to Singapore, it underwent a stress test where a troop of Madras Sepoys were commanded to march up and down to ensure it was safe for use.
2. Opened in 1910, Anderson Bridge was built to supplement the capacity of Cavenagh Bridge, which was unable to cope with the increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic at that time.
3. Elgin Bridge stands at the site of the first footbridge to be built in Singapore (in c.1820s). Over the years, other bridges followed before the present Elgin Bridge, the 5th bridge to be constructed on this site, was erected in 1929.



First time recipient: St Andrew's Cathedral
The grant will support the repair and refurbishment of the cathedral's iconic bell tower, among other things.



National Monuments Fund

\$2.6 million awarded to support the restoration and maintenance of 15 National Monuments

28 of 31 eligible National Monuments supported to date

Allocated \$15 million for third tranche; total close to \$32 million since 2008

Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple (top left), Al-Abrar Mosque and Thian Hock Keng (below) were repeat grant recipients, amongst others.





Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Grace Fu taking a photo of the art installation on Elgin Bridge, which was commissioned as part of *Milestones Through Monuments*.

B PROMOTING APPRECIATION OF NATIONAL MONUMENTS

Milestones Through Monuments

New outreach programme celebrating the roles and significance of our National Monuments was launched. The inaugural edition featured commissioned installations and public tours at Singapore's newest National Monument – the Singapore River Bridges.

Monumental Walking Tours

More than 2,000 members of public joined us for over 120 Monumental Walking Tours.

Education Programmes

More than 140,000 students have learnt about the significance of Singapore's National Monuments through special programmes since 2010.





Golden Palace Holiday Resort, 1970s



NHB's 19th Heritage Trail

The *Pasir Ris Heritage Trail* explores the rich history of Singapore's destination for leisure and recreation.

DID YOU KNOW

1. With its sea views, sandy beaches and laid-back vibe, Pasir Ris' long history as a destination for leisure and play stretches way back to the late 1800s.
2. Pasir Ris' architecture pays homage to its coastal heritage such as its maritime-themed public housing blocks featuring nautical motifs resembling a ship's portholes and lighthouse-shaped turrets.
3. The mangrove forest within Pasir Ris Park was an important source of timber for villagers in the past. Today, it is a popular site where nature lovers can spot Grey Herons, otters and the occasional estuarine crocodile.



Harmony Walks: Queen, Waterloo and Bencoolen Streets

First in a series of guided tours highlighting diverse communities that live out values of understanding and openness, which have allowed them to exist and thrive together.



“ The tour itself is a great idea and it really gives you an insight into how different communities peacefully coexist and interact in Singapore. **”**

Harmony Walks participant, December 2019



Kreta Ayer Heritage Gallery

Launch: 14 July 2019

170 artefacts and photos from the community
16 student guides trained

NHB's first community gallery focusing on intangible cultural heritage: Showcasing the vibrant Chinese cultural arts scene of Kreta Ayer and Chinatown, including Chinese opera, *Nanyin* and traditional tea houses.



(First row from right) Minister for Trade and Industry & Deputy Chairman of the People's Association Chan Chun Sing, Member of Parliament (MP) Dr Lily Neo, as well as (second row from right) Minister for Manpower Josephine Teo and MP Dr Yaacob Ibrahim, on a tour of the Gallery guided by a student volunteer from Anderson Secondary School.



Street Corner Heritage Galleries

“Mini museums” in local shops with at least 30 years of history

Strengthening partnerships with communities

Fostering deeper appreciation for heritage in everyday spaces

Five shops in Balestier in the first instalment





OUR CULTURES

Stitches of Diversity

Singapore is a multicultural society: home to a wealth of ethnicities, traditions and communities that live and thrive alongside one another. *Our Cultures* – our intangible cultural heritage – are everywhere we look, and they form the basis of who we are as Singaporeans.

Efforts to safeguard and promote the transmission of our intangible cultural heritage continued in FY2019 with the introduction of *The Stewards of Singapore's Intangible Cultural Heritage Award* and ongoing work to add to our *Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory*. Together with our partners and practitioners, we strengthened robust research and documentation of our trades, traditions, cultures and practices.

Our heritage institutions staged their annual *CultureFests* and signature programmes, engendering a greater appreciation of the festivals, practices and art forms of our diverse communities.

Our unity does not mean that we are identical. Instead, our differences and myriad cultural practices are what we appreciate and celebrate for the richness they bring to our lives.



Deepavali Celebrations

12 to 27 October 2019

Pongal Celebrations

11 to 18 January 2020

18 partners and community groups, and over 94 volunteers supported the programmes

Celebrations by the Indian Heritage Centre (IHC) cultivated awareness and appreciation of Indian festive customs and traditions, and added to the vibrancy of Little India.



IHC's *Deepavali Celebrations* allowed visitors to experience the festivities, while eco-friendly themed activities held during its *Pongal Celebrations* (far right) introduced the intangible cultural heritage of the harvest festival.



“ The farm tour was very well organised, and the team did an amazing job in explaining the significance of the Pongal Festival. ”

Farm tour participant as part of *Pongal Celebrations*, January 2020

Indian Heritage Centre CultureFest

22 November to 1 December 2019

Held in conjunction with the *From the Coromandel Coast to the Straits - Revisiting Our Tamil Heritage* exhibition

20 partners and community groups across 14 unique programmes

Welcomed more than 25,000 visitors over two weekends

The evolution of Tamil identity and culture in Singapore examined through the community's traditional and contemporary practices, across history, arts, cuisine, fashion and festive celebrations.



The opening show, *This is My Heritage*, featured a medley of Tamil dances, performed by Damaru Singapore, Omkar Arts, Manimaran Creations and Brahmastra.



Neighbourhood Sketches featured silat, angklung and wayang kulit performances. (Right) Malaysian artist Shooshie Sulaiman reimagined two Malay tales in this installation that commemorated Malay tradition and intellect.

Traditional and contemporary art forms presented by the Malay Heritage Centre (MHC) embodied the rich culture and heritage of the Malay community.

Neighbourhood Sketches

Quarterly

Aliwal Arts Night Crawl (by Aliwal Arts Centre)

13 July 2019



Kancil Menghadap Beringin (The Mousedeer Comes Before the Banyan Tree) art installation

From January 2020



A CELEBRATING OUR DIVERSE CULTURES

Hari Raya Open House

21 to 23 June 2019

MHC welcomed visitors to its grounds to enjoy a weekend of festivities with family and friends. Visitors were treated to performances, storytelling, craft activities, cooking demonstrations and classic Malay movies under the stars.



Malay CultureFest

11 October to
2 November 2019

Held in conjunction with
the *Seekor Singa, Seorang
Putera dan Sebingkai Cermin:
Reflecting and Refracting
Singapura* exhibition

Worked with 12 local and overseas partners
on 18 unique programmes

Enthralled more than 71,000 visitors and
participants over three weeks

Themed *Bangsa* (Nation), a myriad of cultural
activities, performances, talks and workshops
celebrated the richness and diversity of Malay
culture and heritage.



“Enjoyed the insightful and authentic
session, which gives an opportunity to
experience kampong life and cooking.
Fun and suitable for beginners! 99

*Pulau Ubin Cooking Class participant as part of
Malay CultureFest, October 2019*



A highlight was the eighth edition of *Lintas Nusantara*,
an annual cross-cultural exchange between MHC and
the Guntur Mataram Dance Company from Yogyakarta,
Indonesia. This year's edition saw a spectacle of dance,
music and martial arts from artistes based in Singapore,
Indonesia and for the first time, the Philippines.



Wan Qing Dumpling Festival

1 to 2 June 2019

Wan Qing Mid- Autumn Festival

*1 September to
8 October 2019*

Wan Qing Festival of Spring

4 January to 9 February 2020

28 partners and community groups,
more than 90 unique programmes

The Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (SYSNMH) celebrated well-loved traditions and culture of the Chinese community in Singapore through engaging activities.



The celebrations featured art installations, *Moonflowers of Mid-Autumn* (above) done in collaboration with local artist Lee Yun Qin and 25 youth volunteers from Beyond Social Services; and *Lunar Guardians* (right) designed in collaboration with Hongkong collectible label BigBoysToys, which juxtaposed tradition with modernity.





A CELEBRATING OUR
DIVERSE CULTURES

Wan Qing CultureFest

2 to 10 November 2019

Held in conjunction
with the *From Brush
to Lens: Early Chinese
Photography Studios in
Singapore* exhibition

18 partners and community groups,
45 unique programmes

Attracted more than 13,000 visitors

Visitors enjoyed and participated in Chinese cultural heritage at SYSNMH through a slew of immersive programmes, which centred around different aspects of intangible cultural heritage. These included discovering the origins of *Nanyang* coffee and learning to brew it at a live “kopitiam”, delving into the world of calligraphy, and grooving to a fusion of traditional Hakka folk music and contemporary genres.



“ I love that the trainer is [from a] social enterprise which does good to society, and impart kueh knowledge to locals and foreigners as well. ”

*Heritage Kueh Soap Workshop participant as part of
Wan Qing CultureFest, November 2019*





B AN INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE FOR GENERATIONS TO COME

Announcement of The Stewards of Singapore's Intangible Cultural Heritage Award

Presented from 2020, this Award aims to recognise the dedication and efforts of practitioners of intangible cultural heritage, promote awareness of their craft, and encourage the sustainability of these cultural practices and traditional knowledge.

Singapore's Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory

A repository of the diverse elements of intangible cultural heritage in multicultural Singapore

Comprises 88 elements currently

Includes Chinese calligraphy, traditional stonemasonry, birthing traditions, *sepak takraw*, *roti prata* and more

More elements will be added progressively through consultation with heritage experts and community groups

“ Our intangible cultural heritage (IOH) - our traditions, rituals and crafts - is very much part of everyday life, and defines who we are. Countries around the world have different ways of paying tribute to IOH practitioners. Singapore's award centres on the practitioners' dedication to the promotion and transmission of their respective IOH elements. ”

Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Grace Fu, 4 June 2020



B AN INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE FOR GENERATIONS TO COME

Intangible Cultural Heritage Symposium

30 to 31 October 2019

18 speakers and moderators representing 9 countries including Singapore

Titled *Intangible Cultural Heritage in Cities: Multiculturalism, Social Cohesion and Sustainability*, the symposium featured international and local intangible cultural heritage experts. It was the first time a dedicated roundtable discussion was organised as part of the symposium to facilitate dialogue on intangible cultural heritage, and in particular, traditional craftsmanship in Singapore.



(First row, third from left) Guest of Honour Senior Minister of State for Culture, Community and Youth & Communications and Information Sim Ann with speakers at the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Symposium*.

UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Non-Governmental Organisations (ICH NGO) Forum

7 to 8 December 2019

As part of the ICH NGO Forum at the 14th session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of ICH in Columbia, NHB was invited by the ICH NGO Steering Committee to co-organise a forum session, titled *ICH in Urban Contexts*. The session served as a valuable opportunity to share Singapore's diverse intangible cultural heritage practices with the international community.





OUR TREASURES

Heirlooms Across Time

Our museums, heritage institutions, and the National Collection are *Our Treasures*. They represent our rich and diverse heritage, which anchors our Singaporean identity, and also demonstrate the historical and cultural links we share with other nations.

For FY2019, our museums covered a wide range of subjects, from exhibitions that examined culture and traditions through the lens of fashion, to those that chronicled events in the region that led to Singapore's founding in 1819, and more recent developments, such as our nation's food packaging history.

The heritage institutions presented exhibitions about their respective communities, while exploring a common theme: the movement of people and cultures across geographical boundaries over centuries that ultimately gave rise to the Singapore we know today. These wrapped up NHB's bicentennial-focused exhibitions and programmes.

The value of *Our Treasures* lies in the stories that they tell, the memories that they hold, and the hope they represent for the future. They serve as physical reminders of our journey, and play a vital role in helping us – and those after us – navigate a rapidly changing world.

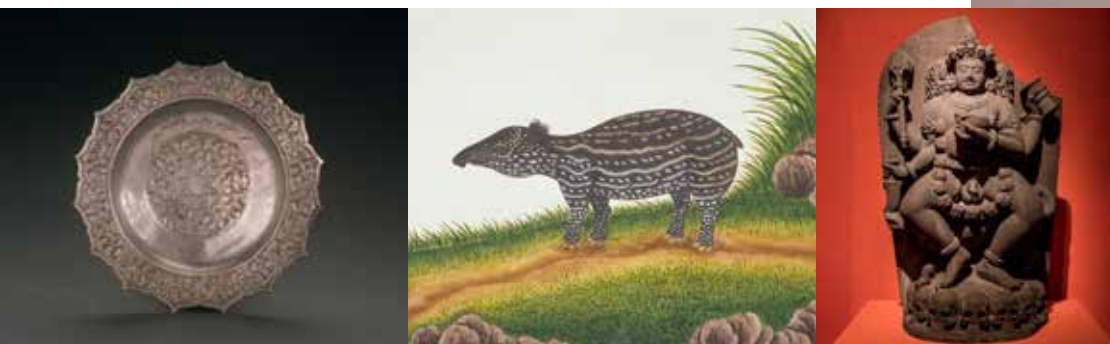
Demystifying Raffles, and offering insights to Singapore's past and its connections to the region.

**Raffles in Southeast Asia:
Revisiting the Scholar and Statesman**
Asian Civilisations Museum,
1 February to 28 April 2019

...

First Singapore co-presented exhibition with the
British Museum

Cultivated ties with 13 international partners, including
institutions from Indonesia, the Netherlands and the
United Kingdom



(From left) Dish (*pinggan*), Riau-Lingga Archipelago, around 1900, Silver, Asian Civilisations Museum • **Malayan tapir**, unknown Chinese artist, Malacca, 1803–18, watercolour on paper, gift of Mr. G. K. Goh, National Museum of Singapore • **Bhairava**, Eastern Java, Candi Singasari, 1275–1300, Andesite, Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen (Image courtesy of Stichting Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen. Coll.nr.)



“The exhibition has taken a common narrative that every child in Singapore has learned and turned it on its head. [It] has successfully provided a means to inquire further and embodies the museum as it should be – a custodian of history and a space for dialogue.”

Visitor from Oxbridge Society, February 2019

Uncovering two centuries
of international exploration,
trade and intrigue that
culminated in the founding
of Singapore as an entrepot
in 1819, through an experience
that mixes multimedia and
scholarship.

An Old New World: From the East Indies
to the Founding of Singapore, 1600s–1819

National Museum of Singapore,
21 September 2019 to 29 March 2020

CO-PRESENTED WITH SINGAPORE BICENTENNIAL OFFICE

...

Over 220 artefacts featured, including loans from
precious personal collections from the families of
Sir Stamford Raffles and William Farquhar, and
treasures from top museums such as from Indonesia,
the Netherlands and the United Kingdom



“It is enlightening to read about,
and see, the traces Singapore left
in other parts of the world. These
remnants help fill the gaps in
Singapore’s historical narrative.”

Ong Sor Fern, The Straits Times (Life),
October 2019



Delving deep into Singapore's past before the British and Dutch occupation of the Malay Archipelago.

Seekor Singa, Seorang Putera dan Sebingkai
Cermin: Reflecting & Refracting Singapura
Malay Heritage Centre,
12 October 2019 to 26 July 2020



Minister for Education Ong Ye Kung on a guided tour of the exhibition.

Spotlighting the key role the Chinese community played in the flourishing of photography studios in pre-war Singapore. These gave a precious snapshot into the lives, hopes and dreams of the diverse communities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

From Brush to Lens: Early Chinese Photography Studios in Singapore

Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall,
2 November 2019 to 3 May 2020



Minister for Manpower Josephine Teo on a guided tour of the exhibition at the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall.

Exploring the transformation of the Singapore River from colonial times to the present.

A Harbour and Home:
The Singapore River through Time

@ River Hongbao,
3 to 10 February 2019

CO-CURATED BY THE SUN YAT SEN NANYANG MEMORIAL
HALL AND STUDENTS FROM HWA CHONG INSTITUTION AND
NANYANG GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL



Students from Catholic High School, Chung Cheng High School (Main), Singapore Chinese Girls' School, CHIJ St Nicholas Girls' School and River Valley High School provided guided tours to visitors and Guests of Honour, including Senior Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam (pictured), Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Grace Fu and Minister for Education Ong Ye Kung.

A celebration of Singapore's Tamil community. Revealing new facets of Tamil heritage through a more than 800-year journey of the experiences and evolution of Tamil diasporas in Singapore and the region.

From the Coromandel Coast to the Straits
— Revisiting Our Tamil Heritage

Indian Heritage Centre,
23 November 2019 to 30 June 2020

(Second from left) Mrs Indra Iswaran E S Muthu shares about the display of her family's collection with Guest of Honour Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat.



“Excellent! I had no idea that Tamil(s) had such an influence in Singapore. A well laid-out and easy-to-follow exhibition... I recommend it.”

Visitor, January 2020



230 artefacts from local and international collections, including 88 objects from the community

Winning Design for the Founders' Memorial Unveiled

To be located at the Bay East Garden, the Founders' Memorial will commemorate the values and ideals exemplified by the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew and Singapore's first generation leaders, and other key personalities who played important roles in our Singapore story.

In January 2019, the Founders' Memorial Committee, through NHB, launched an international architectural design competition for the Founders' Memorial, which received more than 190 submissions from both local and overseas firms. Of these, five designs were shortlisted.

From November to December 2019, these five shortlisted designs were shared online as well as through a design showcase that travelled around the island, inviting Singaporeans to choose their favourite design and contribute their views. More than 51,000 votes were received, and public feedback garnered was shared with the competition Jury for their evaluation. In March 2020, the Memorial's winning architectural design by Kengo Kuma & Associates, in collaboration with K2LD Architects, was announced.



“ The winning design is sensitive and functional, and embodies the spirit and values of Singapore's founding team of leaders. It is a unique design, incorporating landscape and architecture, that brings visitors on a journey of discovery. ”

Chairman of the Founders' Memorial Committee Lee Tzu Yang, March 2020

Landscape renderings courtesy of Kengo Kuma & Associates and K2LD Architects



In a collaboration with world famous couturière Guo Pei, ACM presented, for the first time, art through couture in a juxtaposition of masterpieces created centuries apart. The exquisite showcase inspired newfound appreciation for Chinese artistic traditions and craftsmanship.

Guo Pei: Chinese Art and Couture
Asian Civilisations Museum,
15 June to 15 September 2019

...

Won Best Design Exhibition at 2019 *Global Fine Art Awards*, emerging on top against internationally renowned institutions

Highest visited exhibition with over 197,000 visitors in the history of the museum!

More than 400 media articles; over 1,000 social media public posts



Photograph by Russel Wong

Tracing Singapore's food heritage through the design evolution of iconic local food brands – a trip down memory lane and a step forward to a sustainable future.

Packaging Matters: Singapore's Food Packaging Story from the Early 20th Century
National Museum of Singapore,
6 April to 15 September 2019



“
This show is definitely one for the nostalgia buffs out there, especially the beautiful display of soft drink bottles; that hit us in the heart. ”

Junk Asia (online magazine), April 2019



Experience the passion of Chinese art, connoisseurship and its creative expressions amidst the turbulent 20th century – all through a monumental showcase of close to 100 masterpieces from the late Dr Tan Tsze Chor's esteemed Xiang Xue Zhuang Collection.

Living with Ink: The Collection of Dr Tan Tsze Chor
Asian Civilisations Museum,
8 November 2019 to 26 April 2020



The refreshed space highlights the leadership, values and contributions of the early Chinese business community to Singapore, and features 45 new artefacts from both the National Collection and contributions from the community.

Revamp of Gallery 4
(Chinese Business Pioneers)

Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall,
from 1 February 2020



Adventures in Nusantara allows children to step into the shoes of three young historical characters – Hang Nadim, Ali Wallace and Wah Hakim – in a multisensory space to learn more about Singapore’s history through fun and exploration.

Opening of new children’s space
— Adventures in Nusantara
Malay Heritage Centre,
from 12 October 2019





ACM and Peranakan Museum Artefacts on Display in China

Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM) travelled 18 artefacts to the National Museum of China, Beijing, where they were part of a display of over 400 objects from more than 40 countries that highlighted the historic and continuing connections and interactions between different Asian countries and cultures.

THE SPLENDOR OF ASIA: AN EXHIBITION OF ASIAN CIVILIZATIONS

National Museum of China, Beijing,
13 May to 11 August 2019



Groundbreaking Collaboration with the British Museum

Following the *Raffles in Southeast Asia* exhibition held in Singapore to commemorate the nation's bicentennial, this exhibition at the British Museum included seven objects from ACM, which marked the first time Singapore's National Collection was showcased at the British Museum.

SIR STAMFORD RAFFLES: COLLECTING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA 1811-1824

British Museum, London,
19 September 2019 to 12 January 2020



Uncles Love Monuments From May 2019

As its name implies, this is an exhibition on monuments presented by uncles who love them! This exhibition shines a spotlight on our National Monuments, painstakingly and beautifully sketched by retirees Mr Francis Theo, Mr Steven Seow and Mr Tony Chua. This is part of NHB's *Silver Hubs* initiative, which seeks to create opportunities for the silver community to contribute through heritage.



A Little Magic May 2019 to Oct 2020

Young visitors were treated to a vast array of beautiful fairy tale-themed stamps from all over the world in this interactive travelling exhibition by the Singapore Philatelic Museum.



Guest of Honour Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Culture, Community and Youth Baey Yam Keng on a tour of the *Chinese Business Pioneers – Supporting Singapore's Education* travelling exhibition guided by students from Hwa Chong Institution.



OUR OTHER TRAVELLING EXHIBITIONS

SUN YAT SEN NANYANG MEMORIAL HALL

1. Chinese Business Pioneers – Supporting Singapore's Education
Co-curated with students from Hwa Chong Institution

2. Early Chinese Newspapers in Singapore: 1881 – 1942

3. The More We Get Together: Festivals and Festivities in Singapore
Co-curated with students from Chung Cheng High School (Main) and River Valley High School

4. Pioneering Rural Settlements: The Legacy of Lim Nee Soon
Co-curated with students from River Valley High School

5. Dr Lim Boon Keng: His Life & Legacy
Co-curated with students from Singapore Chinese Girls' School

MALAY HERITAGE CENTRE

6. Malay Pioneer Series: Women in Action!

7. Ke Makkah: Kampong Gelam and the Pilgrimage Industry

DigiMuse 2: Astrolabe — whakaterenga
5 December 2019 to 5 January 2020

In collaboration with New Zealand collective Good Company Arts, this multimedia project presented at the National Museum of Singapore transported audiences to an immersive space voyage with virtual reality, film, dance and sound elements; and built on the New Zealand – Singapore Enhanced Partnership.

DigiMuse seeks to build a vibrant cultural sector, and engage with the wider technology industry to spur creative experimentation in cultural spaces.



**Digital Interactives for
An Old New World exhibition**
21 September 2019 to
29 March 2020

Digital interactives were created for two star pieces on display – *Laurie & Whittle's 1799 Oriental Pilot* and *Thomas and William Daniell's 1810 publication "A Picturesque Voyage to India by the way of China"*.

The interactives also featured many artefacts that were not physically exhibited and demonstrated the potential of digital documentation and cataloguing, making more of our National Collection digitally discoverable and accessible to visitors.

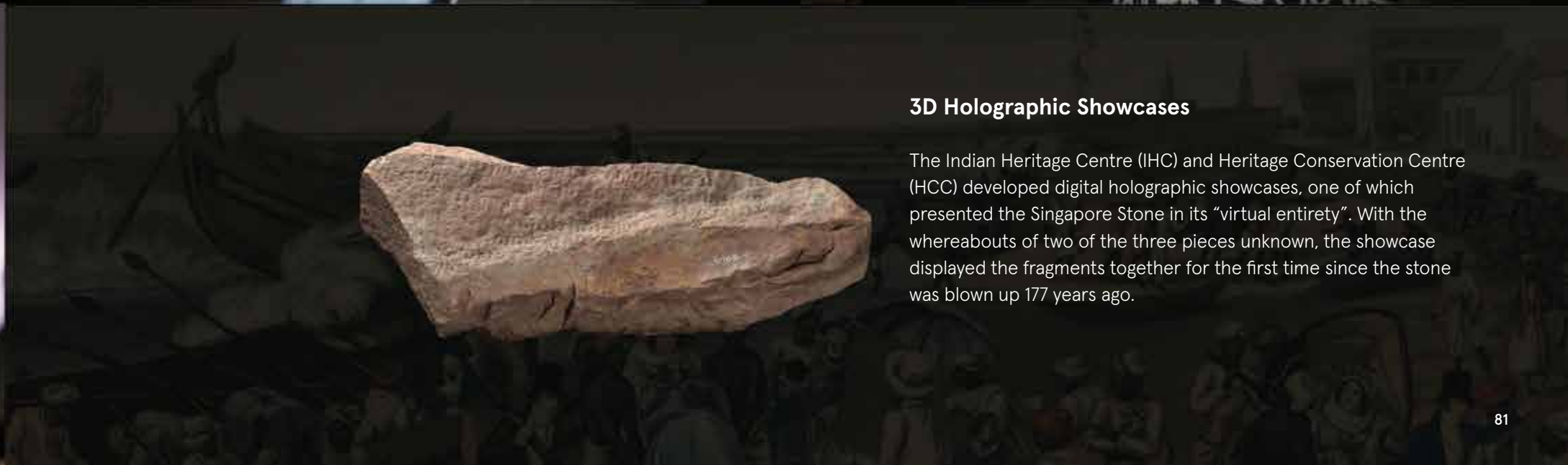


Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Grace Fu trying out the digital interactive.



3D Holographic Showcases

The Indian Heritage Centre (IHC) and Heritage Conservation Centre (HCC) developed digital holographic showcases, one of which presented the Singapore Stone in its "virtual entirety". With the whereabouts of two of the three pieces unknown, the showcase displayed the fragments together for the first time since the stone was blown up 177 years ago.





International Conference on Collections Care 23 to 25 October 2019

HCC's first international conference – *Collections Care: Staying Relevant in Changing Times, ASEAN & Beyond* – facilitated the exchange of knowledge and best practices amongst conservation and collections management professionals from around the world.

Guest of Honour Senior Minister of State for Culture, Community and Youth & Communications and Information Sim Ann addresses participants from the cultural and heritage sector, ranging from museums, archives, galleries, libraries to institutes of higher learning.



Research Collaboration

HCC signed a second agreement with the Shaanxi Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage on 23 October 2019, reaffirming their commitment to continue research collaborations and outlining new projects to study ceramics, gold and silver objects in the Tang Cargo Shipwreck collection.



Dr Sun Yat Sen and the Miyazaki Brothers in Japan and Singapore

The Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall collaborated with the Miyazaki Brothers Museum in Arai, Japan, on a research publication titled *Once Upon a Revolution: Dr. Sun Yat Sen and the Miyazaki Brothers in Japan and Singapore*, which was launched on 1 September 2019 at a joint symposium in Japan. The publication and symposium focused on the relationship between Miyazaki Toten, Dr Sun and Singapore, and explored the possibilities and feasibility in regional development.



Sojourners to Settlers

IHC collaborated with the Institute of Policy Studies to publish *Sojourners to Settlers: Tamils in Southeast Asia and Singapore*, which featured 29 authors from Singapore, Southeast Asia, USA, Europe, and India. The publication was launched on 7 December 2019 at a conference of the same name, which featured several of the authors as speakers.

(Above) Launch of the *Sojourners to Settlers* publication by Minister for Communications and Information & Minister-in-charge of Trade Relations S Iswaran.

Collaborations with the International Council of Museums

The International Council of Museum's (ICOM) General Conference is a triennial event involving international and national committee meetings, parallel themed conference panels, and cultural programmes. The 2019 edition provided NHB with a platform to profile Singapore's heritage policies and best practices at an international setting, and to benchmark itself against museum sectors around the world. Malay Heritage Centre General Manager Asmah Alias was elected to the Board of ICOM CECA (International Committee on Education and Cultural Action).

In addition, NHB profiled its work at various international events such as the: — Japanese Association of Museums Annual General Meeting, where NHB Chief Executive Chang Hwee Nee gave a keynote address on *Our SG*

Heritage Plan and efforts in enlivening the museum landscape in Singapore; — Joint Session between ICOM ASPAC (Regional Alliance of Asia-Pacific countries) and CAMOC (the International Committee for the Collections and Activities of Museums of Cities), which saw NHB Deputy Chief Executive (Policy & Community) Alvin Tan share about NHB's Heritage Institutions as community hubs and cultural rejuvenators; and — ICOM China International Museum Day Forum, where ACM Director Kennie Ting shared about the museum's exhibition strategy, its role as a community hub, and how it explores Singapore's intercultural ties with the region.

I AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

NHB Bagged Green Mark Awards

Four NHB museums and institutions were conferred Green Mark awards by the Building and Construction Authority for their exemplary efforts in reducing energy and water consumption, as well as ensuring good and comfortable indoor environmental quality standards. These buildings contribute towards NHB's corporate social responsibility in ensuring environmental sustainability.



Asian Civilisations Museum
Goldplus Green Mark status



Heritage Conservation Centre
Platinum Green Mark status



National Museum of Singapore
Goldplus Green Mark status



Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall
Goldplus Green Mark status

Gifts and Acquisitions



Horsburgh Lighthouse
by John Turnbull Thomson
1851

This painting of the Horsburgh Lighthouse is a key work of John Turnbull Thomson, Government Surveyor of colonial Singapore in the mid-19th century. Thomson oversaw the design and building of the lighthouse on Pedra Branca.



Collection of Photographs by Lui Hock Seng
1960s – 1970s

This collection of photographs by Lui Hock Seng captures Singapore’s landscapes and forgotten trades of Singapore in the 1960s and 1970s. These photographs are Lui’s modern response to the social changes he witnessed; a poignant and personal perspective through his lens.

Tang Holdings Collection of the Letters, Books and Memorabilia of Sir Stamford Raffles and Lady Raffles

Early 19th century
Gift of Tang Holdings

The Tang Holdings collection was the largest collection of Raffles-related letters, books and memorabilia in private hands before it was donated to the National Museum. The collection fills an important gap in piecing together and presenting Raffles’ role in the founding of Singapore.



Kelingkam Shawl
Early 20th century

This shawl of blue-purple satin has been heavily embroidered with flat, ribbon-like gold metallic thread in a style known as *kelingkam*. This shawl is similar to that of the *Tulle bi telli*, also known as *Assuit*, a textile marrying cotton or linen mesh with small strips of metal which was made in Egypt. Such textiles were brought to Southeast Asia by Muslim pilgrims from their Hajj pilgrimages.



Heidelberg “Windmill” Letterpress

1950s

This Heidelberg “windmill” letterpress machine was previously used by Kuon Ying Press, a printing shop based in Kampar, Perak, Malaysia. With the machine, Kuon Ying Press printed a wide variety of materials, ranging from cinema posters to wedding invitation cards and name cards. Produced in Germany, this model was one of the fastest platen printers produced for letterpress printing.



Garuda-shaped Brass Oil Lamp

Early 20th century

This brass lamp in the form of the mythical *garuda* bird was cast, chiseled and engraved. Such oil lamps, also known as a *blencong*, formed an essential part of a *wayang kulit* or shadow puppet performance and were suspended over the puppeteer’s (*dalang*) head behind the screen (*kelir*) to light it up so that the shadows of the leather cut-out puppets would be projected onto the reverse side of the screen: the side that faces the audience.

Changi Airport’s Flight Information Display Flip Board

4.5 x 15 x 0.3 m

Gift of Changi Airport Group

Changi Airport Group (CAG) donated one of its two iconic analogue flight information display boards to NHB, to form part of Singapore’s National Collection.

DID YOU KNOW?

The deinstalled board consists of over 2,000 pieces, which include capsules, panels and casings. CAG and NHB will explore future opportunities for its display. It took 63 hours and 36 personnel to deinstall the structure at Changi Airport.



“

Working on the deinstallation project of the flight information display flip board held particular significance for me as it brought about a serendipitous connection with my father who used to work at the old Paya Lebar Airport. After he found out about my involvement in the project, he shared stories about his experiences with the flip boards. It was a poignant moment for us, and it’s amazing to find that the flip boards could spark an incredible connection between father and daughter across time. His stories deepened my affinity for the project, and made me appreciate my job even more!

”

Marilyn Giam, Collections Manager
at the Heritage Conservation Centre

Plum Tree with Figures

China, Dehua, 19th century
Porcelain, height 55 cm
Gift of Dorothy Chan in honour of her godmother
Mrs Pamela Hickley

Plum trees were popular pieces created by Dehua potters during the 18th and 19th century. This example is one of the largest and most complex, with gnarly roots, a craggy rock, and two women enjoying themselves.



Beaded Crest

Penang, 1897
Canvas, glass seed beads, 31 x 26 cm
Gift of the family of Wu Chang-sheng, Fred

This crest was beaded by the mother of Wu Lien Teh (1879–1960) when he was a medical student at Emmanuel College, Cambridge University. She changed the lion rampant and wreath on Emmanuel College crest into a Chinese lion with a ball here.

A recipient of the Queen's scholarship, the Penang-born Wu is best known for having contained and eliminated a pneumonic plague in Manchuria between 1910 and 1911. He is credited with initiating the modernisation of healthcare in China.



Puchikudu Earrings

India, Tamil Nadu, 20th century
Gold, each 2.5 x 2.6 cm

On the Indian subcontinent, jewellery is an important aspect of dress for men and women. The size and design of the ornament denoted the social background of the owner; and jewellery styles and patterns indicated the geographical roots and regional diversity of the migrants.

This pair of earrings was acquired together with a collection of South Indian earrings, ceremonial footwear and textiles that point to the rich crafting and design traditions of specific regions of the subcontinent that Singapore's Indian communities trace their roots to.



Tile Panel

Iran, 18th century
Fritware, glazes, 133 x 232 cm

Islamic ceramics represent one of the pinnacles of artistic achievement in the Islamic world. Comprising 45 tiles, this composite panel features a colourful, animated scene that refers to an incident in the life of the prophet Yusuf (Joseph) recounted in the 12th Quranic chapter, *Surah Yusuf* (verse 31).



Wooden Dayak Baby Carrier

Borneo, Sarawak, 19th century
33 x 31 cm
Acquired with funds from
the Cultural Matching Fund

In Borneo, baby carriers have the dual purpose of physical and spiritual protection. This wooden example is carved with squatting figures with heart-shaped faces, and barred teeth, serving as 'guardians' of a new born. Baby carriers are one of the more important expressions of artistic creativity in the Dayak traditional arts.



(From right) A *Rakan Bahasa* (Friend of the Language) shares with Guest of Honour President Halimah Yacob about some of the exquisite works of religious art on display at the Asian Civilisations Museum's *Islamic Art* gallery during the launch of *Bulan Bahasa* 2019.

OUR COMMUNITIES

Threads that Bind

At NHB, we believe that Singapore's heritage belongs to every Singaporean. The work of safeguarding and promoting Singapore's heritage cannot be done in isolation, and the relationships that we have developed over the years with fellow professionals, enthusiasts, educators, volunteers, patrons and Singaporeans themselves are crucial as we strive to celebrate our heritage, and to make it accessible for all.

FY2019 saw ongoing efforts to co-create more content and programmes with the community, through platforms such as the *Singapore Heritage Festival* and *Singapore Night Festival*, which featured special bicentennial editions. Our language campaigns also continued to collaborate with partners and communities on signature events and programmes.

Efforts to make our heritage more accessible and inclusive advanced with the *HeritageCares* and *Silver Hubs* initiatives, along with new offerings from the National Museum of Singapore and Asian Civilisations Museum, and the ramping up of our digital resources.

In the area of heritage education, Museum-based Learning as a part of cohort learning journeys for all students of selected levels in primary and secondary schools was added to our existing programmes, which together will help foster a greater understanding and appreciation of our history and heritage in children and youth.

Our shared heritage binds us together as a nation, and it is the responsibility of all of us to ensure that it remains valued, and continues to be treasured by future generations.

16th Singapore Heritage Festival

15 March to 7 April 2019

- Over 130 partners
- Over 1.7 million visitors
- Special Singapore Bicentennial edition
- Highlight weekends at Armenian Street, Bedok, Telok Blangah and Kranji
- New and immersive experiences: island-wide *Ride and Discover* exhibition and *Buses and Roads* bus theatre experience

“

Being a venue partner with NHB for *Singapore Heritage Festival (SHF) 2019* has allowed Temenggong 18/20 to further engage with the community, as well as raise greater awareness of the rich and diverse history of these black and white bungalows on Temenggong Road through arts and culture activities.”

The RICE Company Limited, which co-presented the *Black and White Voyage* theatrical experience as part of SHF, March 2019



(From left, anti-clockwise) Armenian Street Party 2019: Living Peranakan; Tour of Bedok South Market by chef Annette Tan; Ride and Discover exhibition; and Black and White Voyage theatrical show.



12th Singapore Night Festival (SNF)

23 to 31 August 2019

- Close to 80 precinct stakeholders
- More than 600,000 visitors
- Special Singapore Bicentennial edition
- Featured a line-up of creative works with a Southeast Asian connection, drawing on folklore and traditions, as well as ideas and talents from around our region.

Inspired by the Indian epic poem, *The Legend of Ramayana* by famed French group Spectaculaires featured a projection work on National Museum of Singapore's Banyan tree complemented by a *gamelan* instrumental performance by Gamelan Asmaradana.



SNF's headline act by Argentinean troupe Fuerza Bruta gave festivalgoers an adrenaline rush with their high energy and immersive aerial acrobatics performance.



(Background) *Keep Dreaming* by Spectaculaires, a family-friendly illumination showcase on the iconic façade of the National Museum, enthralled festivalgoers with an adventure through a whimsical wonderland.



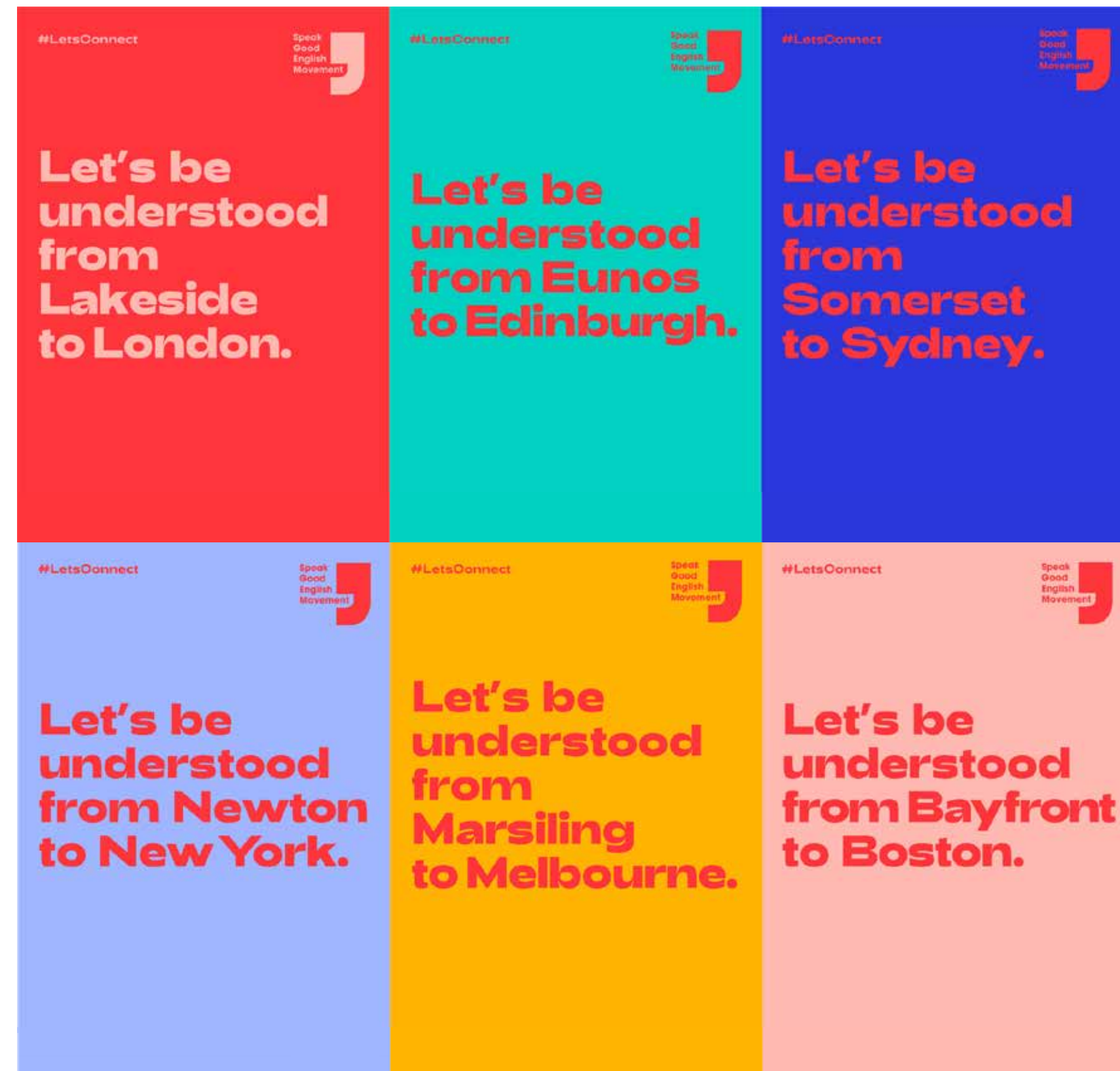
Anjaneyam – Hanuman's Ramayana by internationally renowned Indian dance-theatre company Apsaras Arts was a cross-cultural production involving artists from Singapore, India and Indonesia.

Speak Good English Movement

***Let's Connect.
Let's Speak Good English.***

Year-long

- Encourages Singaporeans to appreciate the value of good English in connecting with people across cultures and borders
- 115 partner-led programmes engaged 57,000 participants and raised awareness on the importance of using standard English
- The *Inspiring Teacher of English Award* 2019, presented with The Straits Times and supported by the Ministry of Education, recognised nine exceptional English teachers



Speak Mandarin Campaign

讲华语，我可以。
Speak Mandarin? Yes, I Can.

Year-long

- *Speak Mandarin Campaign's 40th Anniversary Celebration and SMC 40 Carnival* engaged 6,490 participants
- 37 partner-led programmes encouraged the use and appreciation of Mandarin, and engaged more than 24,000 participants
- The Singaporean Mandarin Database made its debut online with local terms that reflect and celebrate Singapore's unique Chinese identity
- The seventh edition of the *Speak Mandarin Campaign Family Talent Competition* was presented with CHIJ St Nicholas Girls' School (Primary), the Committee to Promote Chinese Language Learning and PCF Sparkletots. It received 500 family team registrations and saw grandparents participating for the first time



Guest of Honour Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at the *Speak Mandarin Campaign's 40th Anniversary Celebration*.



Young Bilingual Professionals identified in collaboration with Business China, to inspire confidence in others to use Mandarin.

Bulan Bahasa

(Malay Language Month)

Cita. Citra. Cinta. Bahasa Kita.

(Relevance, diversity and love of the language)

17 August to 13 October 2019

- 119 *Bulan Bahasa* programmes presented by 63 community groups, Malay Activity Executive Committees and schools, and heartland celebrations in Bishan-Toa Payoh, Chua Chu Kang, Jurong, Marsiling, Nee Soon, Sembawang and Tampines reached a total of 40,540 participants
- Appointment of three *Duta Bahasa* (Malay Language Ambassadors) to champion and promote the use of the Malay language



Guest of Honour President Halimah Yacob with the appointed *Duta Bahasa* at the launch of *Bulan Bahasa*.

Anugerah Guru Arif Budiman

(Malay Language Teachers Award)

16 November 2019

- Recognised six outstanding teachers for their contributions to the learning and teaching of the Malay language
- Co-presented by the Majlis Bahasa Melayu Singapura (Malay Language Council, Singapore), Persatuan Guru Bahasa Melayu (Malay Language Teachers Association), Berita Harian and the Malay Language Learning and Promotion Committee

Rakan Bahasa

(Friends of the Language)

Year-long

- A record 302 students across 150 schools appointed as *Rakan Bahasa* to cultivate their love for the Malay language, and inspire their friends and families
- These students were given opportunities to hone their Malay language skills and participate in programmes such as *Pertandingan NewsMaker* (Newsmaker Competition), *Penterjemah Pintar* (Translation Competition) and the *Kembara Rakan Bahasa Activity Cards*. They were also given training and took on roles such as reporters and museum guides during the official launch of *Bulan Bahasa 2019*





Tamil Language Festival

தமிழை நேசிப்போம், தமிழில் பேசுவோம்
Love Tamil, Speak Tamil

23 March to 28 April 2019

- 46 Tamil language programmes presented by 43 partners engaged over 18,000 participants. They encouraged the use and love of Tamil through drama, music, dance, literature appreciation sessions, competitions and lectures
- Capacity Building Programmes in the form of theatre and production training, acting classes and writing workshops were supported beyond the festival period, to further deepen appreciation for the language



Guest of Honour Minister S Iswaran at the launch of the Tamil Language Festival.



B SPOTLIGHTING OUR HERITAGE CHAMPIONS

Volunteer Engagement

- NHB's volunteers guided 8,500 tours for 98,300 visitors in 2019
- 280 new docents recruited in 2019
- Our family of volunteers includes: docents from the Friends of the Museums, Japanese Docents, Mandarin Docents, Mandarin Guides and Museum Volunteers, as well as volunteers from Museum Hosts, Preservation of Sites and Monuments Volunteer Guides and Heritage Conservation Centre Volunteer Guides
- There are also other passionate individuals who volunteer at NHB events, programmes and festivals, such as *HeritageCares'* volunteers who serve as guides, befrienders and facilitators
- Over the years, new volunteer roles have also been created, such as youth-at-risk programme volunteers and Care Facilitators at the National Museum of Singapore who support its care initiatives
- Held annually since 2015, NHB's *Heritage Volunteers' Appreciation and Awards* has recognised the contributions of 509 long-serving docents, including two 20-year Long Service Awards presented to Ms Elaine Cheong and Ms Sabine Silverstein in 2019

Patron of Heritage Awards 2019

- Recognised the generosity of 88 individuals and organisations who contributed to Singapore's heritage sector, museums and institutions

Heritage Grant Projects

- Over \$9.9 million awarded
- More than 450 grant recipients to date

Notable projects:

- *Jinjiang and its Singapore River Affinity: Stories from the Coolie Quarters* (publication)
- *Singapore Tamil Muslims* (publication)
- *Lion Dance: A Century of Singapore's Intangible Heritage* (publication)
- *A Reverent Journey: Masjid Omar Kampong Melaka 1820 to 2020* (publication)
- *2020: 60 years of Singapore's Olympic Success* (website and documentary film)
- *Hinduism in Singapore* (publication and permanent exhibitions)





Singapore's Little Treasures

- More than 10,000 pre-schoolers from over 500 pre-school centres engaged through classroom activities and museum learning journeys to date
- More than 750 teachers trained since 2014
- Conducted in Malay, Mandarin and Tamil, Singapore's Little Treasures promotes Singapore's multicultural heritage



Heritage Explorers Programme

- More than 82,000 students from over 100 primary schools have participated since 2016
- Creative role-playing creates enjoyable experiences to raise awareness of Singapore's heritage
- Complements the school curriculum, and emphasises school-parent partnerships and greater parent-child bonding



Museum-based Learning at NHB Museums

- New programme for all Primary 6 and Secondary 2 students to visit the Asian Civilisations Museum and National Museum of Singapore respectively
- Part of the Ministry of Education's cohort learning journeys
- Trained museum educators conduct storytelling, role-playing and hands-on activities
- Provides the younger generation greater access to our heritage to deepen their appreciation of Singapore's history, and our links to the world



“ I learnt that Singapore's history is rich with memories, connections and culture. No matter how modern we get, these connections and memories should always be remembered. **”**

Student from River Valley High School who participated in the Museum-based Learning pilot, August 2019



SG Time Travellers and Assembly Programme

- More than 10,000 upper primary, secondary and tertiary school students have experienced the thematic trails, and close to 38,000 primary and secondary school students have watched the assembly show since 2018
- Develops students' appreciation for Singapore's history and heritage, and inculcates key values to foster individual and national identity



Tertiary Partnerships

- NHB has been actively engaging post-secondary education institutions and pre-universities to integrate heritage content into existing modules and co-develop heritage-focused modules
- Enable youths to rediscover our shared heritage
- Cultivate heritage advocates from young



National Heritage Badge

- More than 1,100 students from about 50 secondary schools participated since the programme's refresh in 2018
- Awarded to deserving secondary school students in uniformed groups who have completed a heritage project



NHB continues to develop programmes for audiences with different needs and backgrounds. In FY2019, over 12,000 participants were engaged through more than 300 targeted programmes.

Training programmes to equip staff, volunteers and Museum Roundtable members were also rolled out to support accessibility.

During the Financial Year, the National Heritage Fund received a \$1.1 million donation from the Lien Foundation towards the co-creation of a social space for seniors at the National Museum of Singapore. There were no fundraising expenses incurred in this project.



Museums' Accessibility Initiatives

Programmes and resources for persons with different disabilities developed with a variety of partners



Engaging Seniors

The National Museum of Singapore partnered with the Alzheimer's Disease Association (ADA) to offer tours and programmes for seniors from ADA. The museum reached out to families of seniors with dementia to offer monthly tours conducted by Care Facilitators. It also worked with a group of seniors from ADA to co-create art from recycled materials that was displayed at the *Packaging Matters* exhibition.



The National Museum collaborated with St Luke's ElderCare and LaSalle College of the Arts to present *Shared Narratives: Museum, Memory Boxes and Art Therapy*, where seniors and students spoke about their memories and explored the social history of Singapore through heritage and art.

Museums' Accessibility Initiatives

Children & Intergenerational Programmes



The National Museum's annual *Grandparents' Day* encourages family bonding, while its regular programme *GosTan Back*, an inclusive moving theatre performance through the Singapore History Gallery, is usually fully subscribed.



“ I got to make many friends and also learned a lot about Chinese art and culture. ”

Project Dream Weavers participant, June 2019

The Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM) launched its first inclusive children's fashion design camp, *Project Dream Weavers*. 33 children of all abilities gained exclusive behind-the-scenes access to the setup of ACM's special exhibition, *Guo Pei: Chinese Art and Couture*, met with world renowned couturière Guo Pei, as well as showcased their designs inspired by the exhibition on a runway show at the museum.



ACM in Motion is a movement-based workshop organised in partnership with the Asian Women's Welfare Association, and is designed to introduce visitors with disabilities and their caregivers to basic performance skills, inspired by objects in ACM's galleries.

“ I initially thought that it would be quite overwhelming working with the kids, and not having much experience with children also made me worried. However, the moment I met [the] kids, I was filled with happiness as they had warmed up to me really fast. Seeing their imagination come to life really made me overjoyed that I was able to be part of this experience. ”

Belinda Leong, camp facilitator from Temasek Polytechnic (Apparel Design & Merchandising) for *Project Dream Weavers*, June 2019



Museums' Accessibility Initiatives

Inclusive Space: Quiet Room at the National Museum

- Provides a safe and private space for visitors with additional needs who might experience sensory overload or social overstimulation, in particular children with autism
- Complements the museum's other care initiatives such as *Quiet Mornings*.

“

This was the first time I felt relaxed and confident in roaming the museum's grounds with [my child] all by myself, despite it being a weekend and not even during a *Quiet Morning*. ”

Bee Lan, parent from Friends of ASD Families, October 2019



“

The space is quite impressive... Five seconds after stepping in, my daughter tells me 'Mom, we're in a rocket!' It inspires her imagination. ”

Judy, parent from Friends of ASD Families, October 2019

HeritageCares

HeritageCares reaches out to the underserved, including families-in-difficulty, persons with disabilities and/or special needs, youth-at-risk and senior citizens. In FY2019, it organised school holiday programmes for over 1,000 children from low-income families.

It continued to explore partnerships, such as with Youth Corps Singapore, which introduced guided tours within heritage precincts for participants to experience our diverse and living intangible cultural heritage, and also trained more youth volunteers.

A new programme was piloted with the Singapore Management University's (SMU) Centre for Social Responsibility, which engaged 430 beneficiaries and 280 SMU student volunteers.

“

The children enjoyed and learnt about the Pongal festivities through this programme at the Indian Heritage Centre. The sweet and savoury foods were a treat for them! ”

Wendy Tan, Principal of MacPherson Sheng Hong Childcare Centre, January 2020



Silver Hubs

Through collaborations with partners from the health and social care sectors, the *Silver Hubs* initiative co-develops programmes with, and for seniors, to provide enriching heritage experiences and promote active ageing.

Programmes include: *Reminiscence Walks*, where senior volunteers are trained to lead guided tours along Singapore's heritage precincts; *Be My Robo Date*, which enables seniors or immobile visitors to remotely visit our museums and heritage institutions through the use of a mobile telepresence robot; and *Ageing Gracefully*, a first-of-its-kind programme

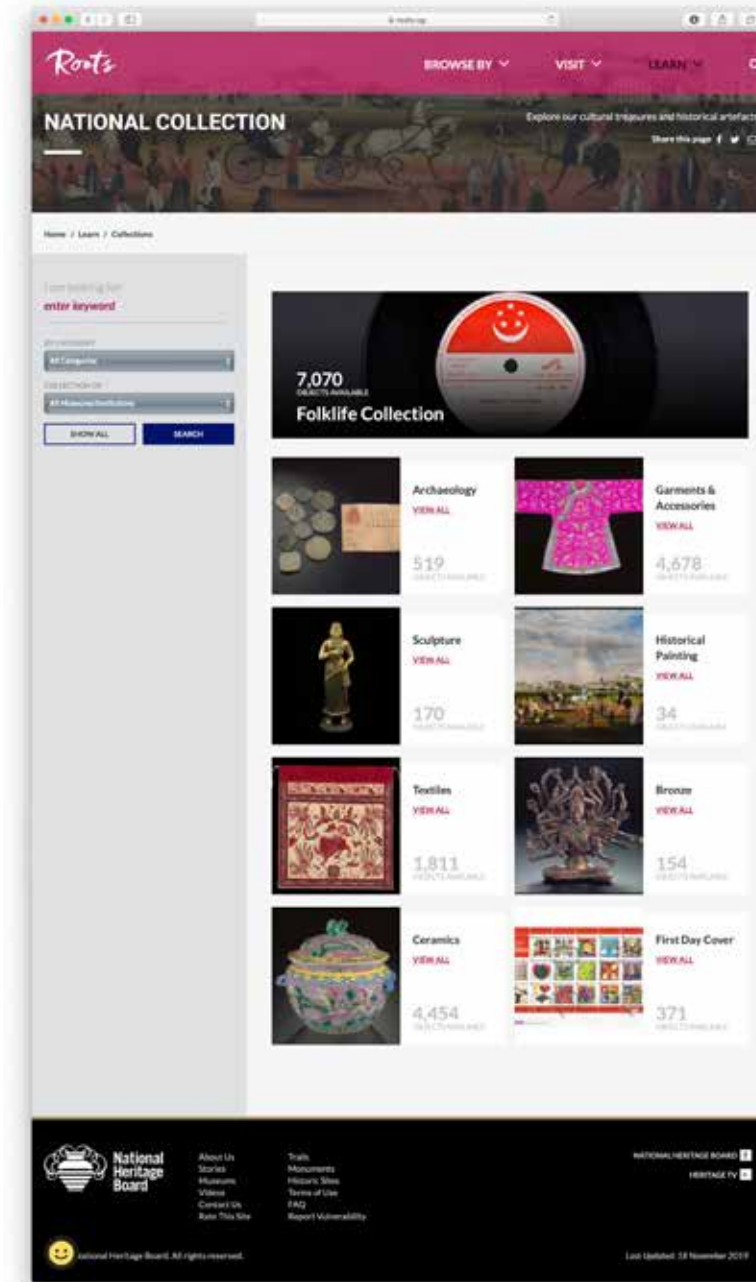


co-organised with SingHealth Community Hospitals, which supports patients' rehabilitation and recovery through reminiscence-based activities.

Other *Silver Hubs* resources include the thematic *Heritage Trunks*, which contain objects from the past to spark memory recall and conversations, and the *My House of Memories* app, a collaboration with National Museums Liverpool to improve the care experience for persons with dementia and their caregivers.

“
The Florida Water cologne in the trunk brought back memories of my time with my buddies when I used to dab it before going out after work. I'm excited about the programme and I feel it's meaningful because if we don't share our stories, the youths wouldn't know what our life was like before. ”

Chia Wang Chong, senior participant from St Luke's ElderCare on *Heritage Trunks*, May 2019



Digital Accessibility

- NHB's digital offerings feature our National Collection, National Monuments, heritage trails, elements in our intangible cultural heritage inventory, and more
- Over 100,000 artefacts from the National Collection, articles, videos, stories and resource items are published on *Roots.sg*
- The National Collection remains the most widely-searched content on *Roots.sg*; with Cultural Ontology in place, searchability and access will increase

Reaching Out to Youth-At-Risk and Offenders

- Engaged youth from the Singapore Boys' Home and Singapore Girls' Home through an National Day-themed activity and competition, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social and Family Development
- Provided guiding training for a group of female offenders as part of the *WE: Defining Stories* exhibition which travelled to the prison, in partnership with Singapore Prison Service



Istana Art Event

28 July 2019
(Part of *Istana Open House*)

NHB and five Museum Roundtable (MR) members put together a Bicentennial showcase, which charted 700 years of Singapore's history.



Activities included a paper making station using spices traded in Singapore by the STPI Creative Workshop and Gallery, and a giant lion jigsaw station reimagining Sang Nila Utama's sighting of the lion by the Singapore Art Museum.



Museum Roundtable Hongbao Initiative

4 January to 2 February 2020

- 20,000 zodiac-themed *hongbao* (red packets) distributed
- Popular initiative that saw some MR members report visitorship increases of up to 30%



6th Battle for Singapore

8 to 29 February 2020

Remembering the 78th anniversary of the Fall of Singapore with the highest-ever number of partners, the initiative explored Singapore's lesser-known World War II stories and sites.

Museum Roundtable Capability Development Initiatives

MR initiated the formation of four Communities of Practice (CoP) in the domains of Education, Access and Inclusion, Marketing, and Human Resources. NHB provided training to 15 CoP leaders, who eventually led the formation of the communities. These communities promote the exchange of best practices, encourage ground-up community leadership amongst MR members, and provide more opportunities for members to cultivate depth in their domain knowledge.



The Culture Academy Singapore* (CA) was established in 2015 to be a centre of excellence for the development of culture professionals and administrators in Singapore's public and private sectors.

*From 1 January 2020, the Academy has become a division under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth with its scope expanded.

Education and Capability Development

Culture Academy
Leadership Programme
22 July to 2 August 2019

Culture Academy
Senior Leadership
Programme
19 October 2019

In Conversation With
17 April & 19 September 2019

The leadership programmes for cultural leaders aim to strengthen camaraderie and collaborations. The third run of CA's *Leadership Programme* included a new module on *Cultural Innovations* and a study trip to Yogyakarta and Jakarta to broaden participants' views on culture, while the *Senior Leadership Programme* included a networking session with leaders in the arts and culture sector.

The *In Conversation With* lectures centred on *Cultural Diplomacy in the 21st Century*, and Singapore's history since 1819.

Acclaimed historian Professor Wang Gungwu and award-winning poet, academic and Cultural Medallion recipient Emeritus Professor Edwin Thumboo shared insights on Singapore's history at a special edition lecture to commemorate Singapore's Bicentennial.



Thought Leadership

International Conference:
The Future of Culture – Culture for the
Future: What Lies Ahead
5 December 2019

Distinguished Speaker Series Lecture:
Developing Our Arts and Culture for
the Future
17 September 2019

CA's fourth international conference discussed how innovation and digitalisation will change the way art and culture will be produced, collected, documented and disseminated, and how the sector should prepare for the new gig economy.

At the *Distinguished Speaker Series Lecture*, Senior Minister and Coordinating Minister for Social Policies Tharman Shanmugaratnam shared his thoughts on the arts and culture scene, and achieving Singapore's vision for the future.



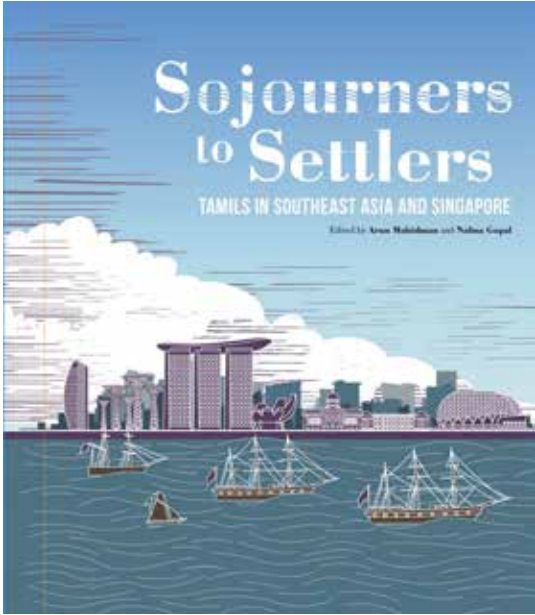
Research and Scholarship

Cultural Connections Volume 4

To commemorate Singapore's Bicentennial, *Cultural Connections* focused on Singapore's history and progress from 1819 through essays by notable personalities and culture professionals.



Publications



Sojourners to Settlers:
Tamils in Southeast Asia and Singapore

Co-published by the Indian Heritage Centre (IHC) and Institute of Policy Studies, the publication delves into lesser-known aspects of Tamil history and heritage in Singapore and Southeast Asia, examining Tamil connections with the region for more than 2,000 years. It marks IHC’s first collaboration with an academic institution to better document history and heritage. Over two volumes, the publication features the research of scholars from India, Singapore, Southeast Asia, the United States and Europe, put together for the first time to bring to light different facets of Tamil diasporas in Singapore and Southeast Asia.



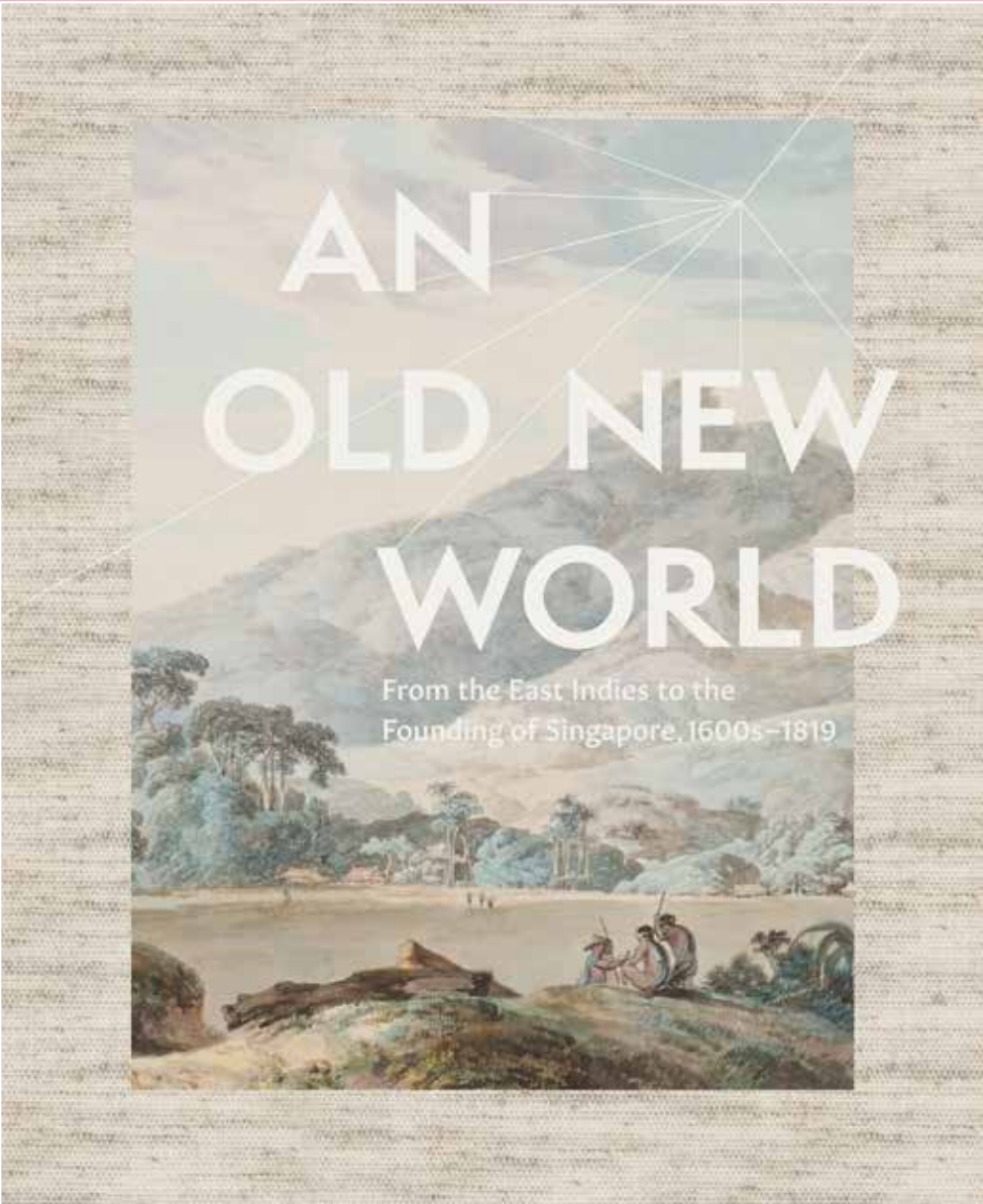
Once Upon a Revolution:
Dr. Sun Yat Sen and the Miyazaki Brothers in Japan and Singapore

Co-published by the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (SYSNMH) and the Miyazaki Brothers Museum in Arao, Japan, this research publication focuses on the relationship between Miyazaki Toten, Dr Sun and Singapore.



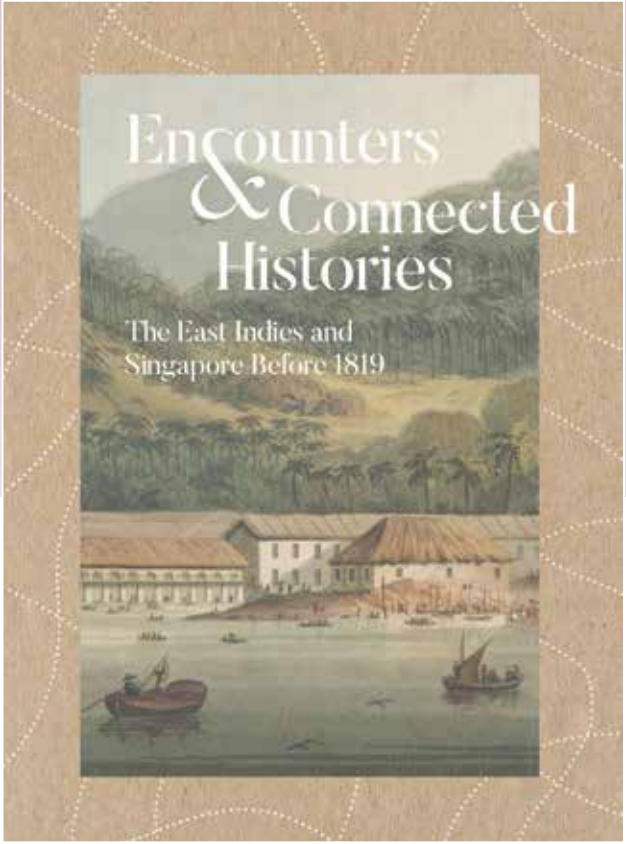
From Brush to Lens:
Early Chinese Photography Studios in Singapore

The catalogue produced for the *From Brush to Lens: Early Chinese Photography Studios in Singapore* special exhibition at SYSNMH features photographs from the exhibition, which provide an important visual record of the diverse groups of inhabitants in colonial Singapore.



An Old New World

This catalogue accompanies the National Museum of Singapore’s special exhibition, *An Old New World: From the East Indies to the Founding of Singapore, 1600s-1819*. It expands on the tensions between “old” and “new” – the European perspective of the East Indies as a “New World” ripe for discovery, and the local perspective of the “Old World” that had thrived long before the arrival of the Europeans. Featuring insightful essays by the exhibition’s curators and historian Peter Borschberg, it offers a broader perspective of the region two centuries prior to the founding of Singapore.



Encounters & Connected Histories

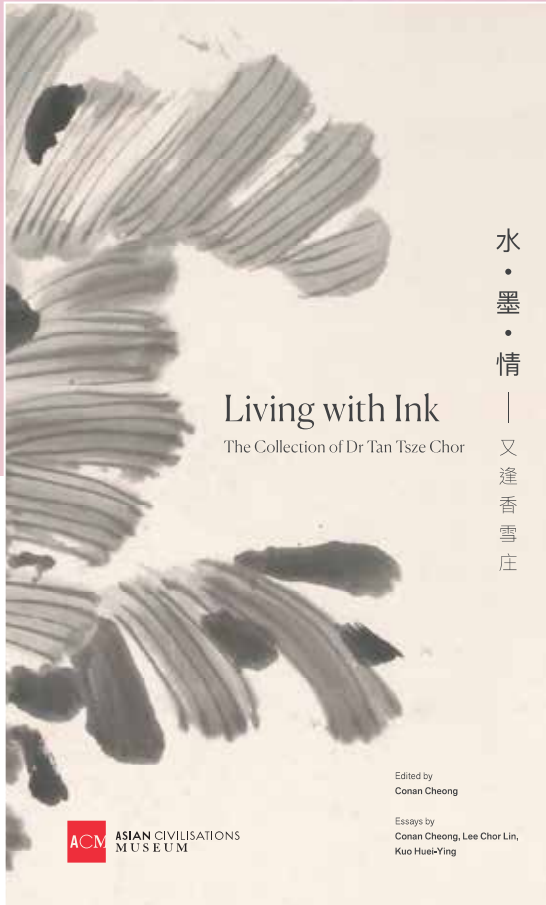
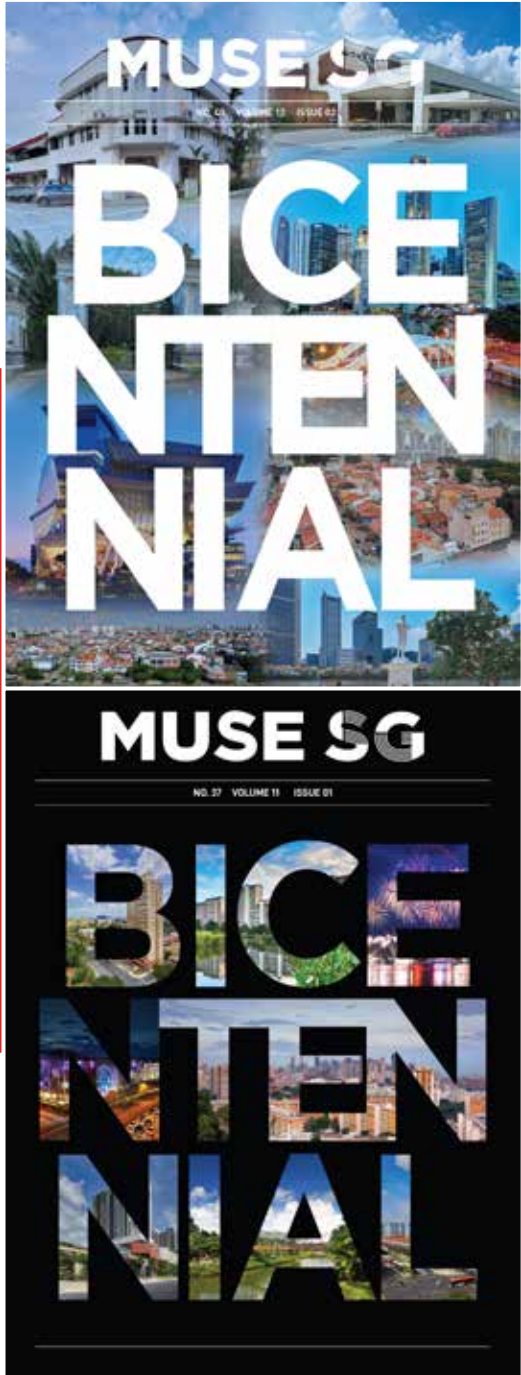
In conjunction with *An Old New World* special exhibition, the National Museum organised an international conference entitled *Encounters & Connected Histories: Prelude to 1819*. The conference brought international academics and museum practitioners together to explore Singapore’s founding as an East India Company entrepôt in 1819, within the overall theme of the sea as a historical passageway, and the interactions between the overseas trading companies and local communities in the two centuries before 1819. This book is inspired by *An Old New World* and the papers presented at the conference, and the discussions they generated.

Publications



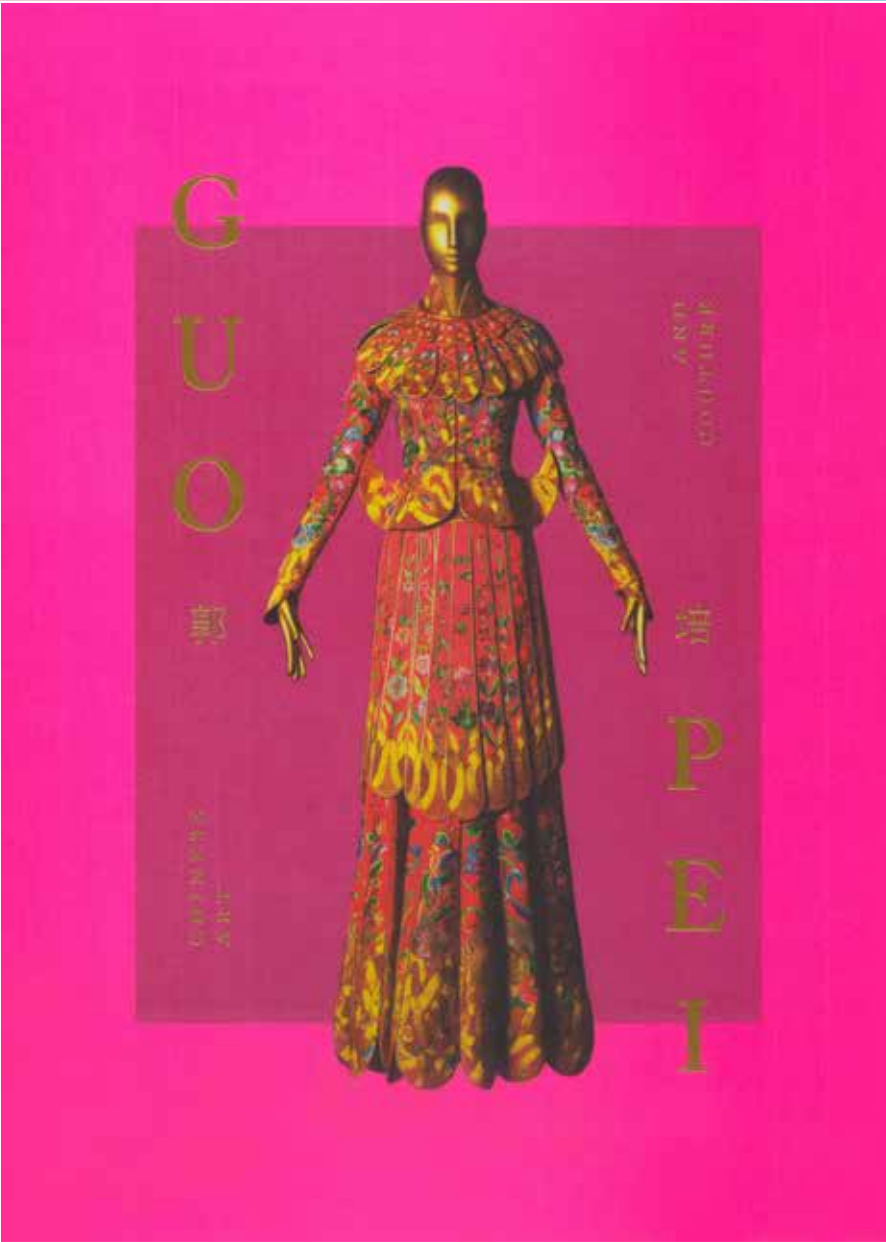
MUSE SG – Bicentennial Series

This commemorative series features a collection of research articles that explore how Singapore’s place history has shaped and contributed to the Singapore story. Published in collaboration with the National University of Singapore’s History Society, it features youths’ perspectives on Singapore’s heritage through the lens of 29 undergraduate writers. Highlighting the unique and varied histories of 30 towns, precincts and estates across Singapore, the series aims to deepen appreciation of Singapore’s urban heritage.



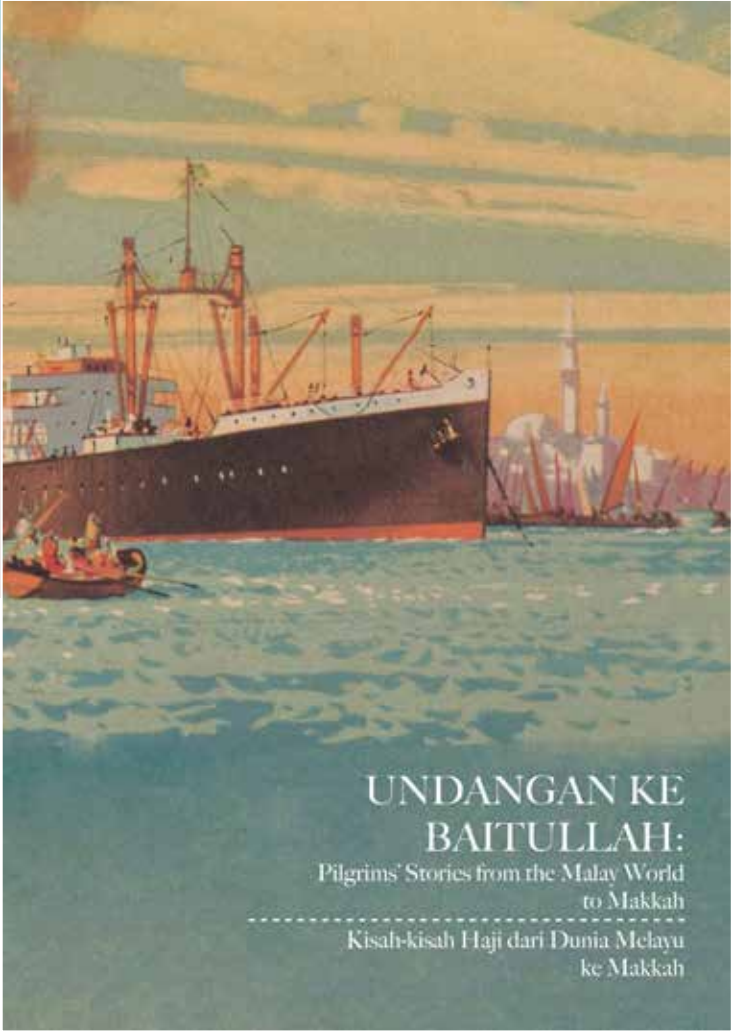
Living with Ink:
The Collection of Dr Tan Tsze Chor

Documenting the special exhibition of the same name at ACM, the book presents highlights from the museum’s Xiang Xue Zhuang Collection, amassed by renowned Singaporean art collector Dr Tan Tsze Chor. Since 2000, the Tan family has donated over 130 treasured Chinese paintings, porcelains, and scholars’ objects from the collection to ACM. Through essays, *Living with Ink* explores how Chinese art was appreciated by overseas Chinese collectors and philanthropists, and gives readers a glimpse into the Singapore art world in the turbulent 20th century.



Guo Pei:
Chinese Art and Couture

Guo Pei: Chinese Art and Couture includes full-colour images of everything in the exhibition. Highlights are the gorgeous images and closeups of Guo Pei’s dramatic, sculptural gowns made specially for this book by world-renowned Singaporean photographer Russel Wong. An essay by curator Jackie Yoong surveys Guo Pei’s career so far. The exhibition and catalogue invite contemplation on how Guo Pei references and re-imagines Chinese art and tradition for China and the world today.



Undangan ke Baitullah:
Pilgrims’ Stories from the
Malay World to Makkah

This is an accompanying publication to the Malay Heritage Centre’s eponymous special exhibition on the history of Hajj practices in Singapore and Southeast Asia. Consisting of four essays penned by the exhibition curators and invited academics, the publication provides a holistic view into this once-in-a-lifetime journey undertaken by Muslims around the world.

Merchandise



Guo Pei: Chinese Art and Couture Inspired Range



An Old New World: From the East Indies to the Founding of Singapore, 1600s-1819 Inspired Range



“

Without the hard work and dedication of all of you, the museum and heritage experience would be a very different one. Just imagine – there would be no guided tours in various languages; no friendly faces to greet our visitors as they enter our doors; and no heritage trail guides to show us that heritage exists all around us! On behalf of NHB, I would like to thank all of you for your contributions. ”

NHB Chief Executive Chang Hwee Nee addressing volunteers at the *Heritage Volunteers’ Appreciation and Awards* ceremony, 10 October 2019

OUR VOLUNTEERS

FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUMS

Abdol Hamid Safia Binte
Abdol Hamid Yasmin Binte
Agarwala Bahadur Nupur
Alamuru Jayasree
Arivan Durga
Ayer Soumya
Baik Chong Eun
Balasubramaniam Aparna
Bally Colombe
Bang Yeonsil
Behl Mona
Belyanina Olesya
Blanchard Constance
Boey Belinda
Boot Joanna
Brueren Maria
Carfantan Caroline
Carle Samantha
Carrasco Gabriela
Champendal Anne
Champion Sabrina
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HERITAGE AWARENESS SURVEY 2019

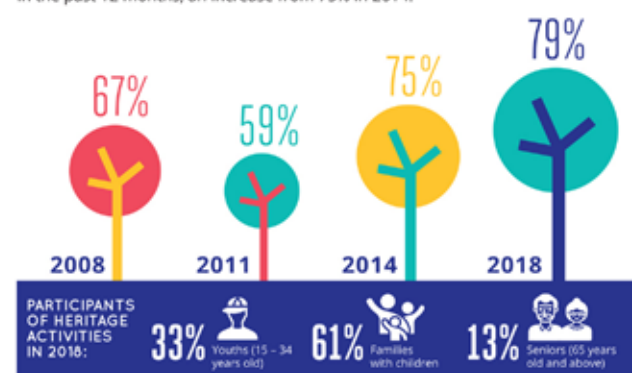
The Heritage Awareness Survey is a regular study conducted by the National Heritage Board to assess the level of interest, awareness, participation and attitudes towards heritage among Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents.

In 2018, the Heritage Awareness Survey was conducted with 2,020 respondents (aged 15 years and above). The survey sample collected was representative of population distribution. Media Research Consultants was the research consultancy for the study.

HERITAGE IS A WAY OF LIFE FOR MANY SINGAPOREANS



Close to 8 in 10 Singaporeans (79%) participated in heritage and cultural activities in the past 12 months, an increase from 75% in 2014.



INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMON IN DAILY LIFE

Our intangible cultural heritage, which comprises traditions, rituals, crafts, expressions, knowledge and skills, is part of many Singaporeans' daily lives.

66%

were involved in social and/or religious rituals and practices in the past 12 months



INCREASED PARTICIPATION AMONG YOUTHS

The participation level in heritage and cultural activities has increased among youths (aged 15 to 34 years old) from 78% in 2014 to 84% in 2018.



HERITAGE IS IMPORTANT TO SINGAPOREANS

More Singaporeans showed positive attitudes towards Singapore's heritage and history.



BENEFITS OF HERITAGE PARTICIPATION TO SINGAPOREANS



AFFIRMING OUR SG HERITAGE PLAN

The Heritage Awareness Survey is an important data source that aids NHB's efforts through **Our SG Heritage Plan** to safeguard Singapore's heritage through research, planning, documentation and promotional efforts. Findings help in our review and refinement of existing plans, and development of new and upcoming programmes. We will continue to:



01 Encourage family and intergenerational bonding through heritage activities, such as self-guided heritage trails and museum visits.



02 Safeguard and transmit our intangible cultural heritage (ICH). These include enhancing our ICH inventory; recognising practitioners through the *Stewards of Singapore's ICH Award*; and securing the nomination of Hawker Culture in Singapore for UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.



03 Nurture an interest in heritage among youths by enhancing their museum visits and learning experiences, introducing creative ways to present heritage (e.g. school heritage corners, heritage badges), and encouraging youth volunteerism and heritage ownership (e.g. *HeritageCares*).



04 Make our museums and offerings more accessible to diverse communities through tailored programmes (e.g. *Silver Hubs* and *Quiet Mornings*).



05 Increase community participation and ownership of Singapore's heritage through co-creating content, supporting community heritage projects, and grooming volunteers and champions.



