Xiangqi (Chinese Chess) players near Chinatown Complex
Mobile ice cream vendor along the Singapore River
Our SG Heritage Plan was officially launched by Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Grace Fu on 7 April 2018 at the Singapore Heritage Festival 2018 at Jurong Town Hall. The launch followed two years of engagement and consultations with National Heritage Board’s (NHB) partners, stakeholders and members of the public, to review our achievements; identify areas of improvement; and seek feedback through interviews, focus groups and public engagement. Together, we worked to co-develop forward-looking strategies and initiatives for the future of Singapore’s heritage and museum sector.

As the first master plan for the sector, Our SG Heritage Plan sets forth NHB’s vision for a culturally vibrant nation through four pillars: Our Places, which refer to the preservation and appreciation of Singapore’s historic buildings, structures, sites and precincts; Our Cultures, which celebrate our intangible cultural heritage; Our Treasures, which refer to the artworks and artefacts in our National Collection, and the museums and institutions that house them; and Our Communities, which encompass the groups and individuals who promote and celebrate Singapore’s heritage.

Our SG Heritage Plan gives a broad overview of the current situation, takes stock of what has already been done, and outlines the way forward. For us at NHB, the plan is a demonstration of our commitment to, and aspirations for, the heritage and museum sector. Implemented over the next five years (2018 to 2022), environmental changes, unforeseen circumstances and other challenges will mean that tweaks and refinements will be made. The launch of the plan, therefore, is just the beginning of the work that has to be done.

Our SG Heritage Plan brings our heritage into focus, which is the theme of this year’s Annual Report. Our shared heritage is a legacy that we have been entrusted with, and we have a duty as stewards to value and celebrate it to the best of our ability. The plan is a means to achieve this, with clearly defined goals and objectives. It sharpens our resolve, and zeroes in on what is necessary and important to achieve our mission and vision as NHB.
Our Places, Our Cultures, Our Treasures and Our Communities – these are the four pillars of Our SG Heritage Plan, which will guide the work of Singapore's heritage and museum sector over the next five years. This plan is the result of much hard work including dialogues and consultations with fellow Singaporeans. It represents a major milestone in our heritage journey. Being the first master plan of its kind, it unifies different agencies, groups and communities to work together towards a single goal: securing the future of our heritage for the generations that will come after us.

In my time as Chairman to NHB, seeing the plan come to fruition has been one of my proudest and most memorable moments. It was that we had a clear heritage plan for our future. Amidst today's increasingly complex and divided world, the plan demonstrates how heritage can be a unifying force in challenging and polarising times. It is also important to plan ahead and make wise decisions about the resources that we have. Hence, the cultural “investment” that Our SG Heritage Plan is making, through the unrolling of its different strategies and initiatives, is critical to ensure that our rich and diverse legacy is protected for future generations.

This will be my last message as Chairman of NHB as I am stepping down after seven fulfilling years. I am proud of what we have managed to achieve together, and honoured to have been able to play a part in the momentous events that NHB has been involved in. The past few years have seen a remarkable surge in interest in heritage matters, the rapid growth of technology in the heritage sector, and several watershed moments in our journey as a nation, including SG50 in 2015. I feel privileged to have been part of the NHB team through all of this. Most of all, I am very happy to have been able to work with the great team at NHB, you will be hard-pressed to find a more passionate, dedicated group of people than you will in the NHB family.

I know that I will be leaving NHB in the very good hands of Ms Yeoh Chee Yan. She is very familiar with our work, as the former Permanent Secretary for MCCY, and her experience and intimate knowledge of both the public service and the cultural sector will certainly enhance NHB’s role as heritage custodian.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to my fellow board members, our partners, patrons, docents, volunteers and staff. You have enriched my time with NHB greatly, and I am humbled by your passion and commitment to our mission and vision. I am confident that NHB will continue to grow from strength to strength as the work continues, with fellow Singaporeans, to secure a legacy for our future. You can be certain of my unwavering support.

“Hence, the cultural “investment” that Our SG Heritage Plan is making, through the unrolling of its different strategies and initiatives, is critical to ensure that our rich and diverse legacy is protected for future generations.”

MR ONG YEW HUAT
CHAIRMAN
NATIONAL HERITAGE BOARD
Our SG Heritage Plan brings together areas we have done well in, so we can build on these, while identifying gaps we can plug, to deepen the impact of our work. To put it simply, Our SG Heritage Plan helps sharpen our focus on Singapore’s heritage, and provides a clear roadmap for its future.

This is my first message as Chief Executive of NHB, and while I am familiar with NHB’s work, having served on the board from 2009 to 2015, it is quite a different experience working every day in the thick of the action. I have been impressed by the attitude and commitment of my colleagues as we work together to reach our goals for the heritage sector.

While Our SG Heritage Plan was launched on 7 April 2018, the work actually started two years ago. Many have asked us, why the need for a plan, and why now? I think the answer is clear when we consider the rapid pace at which the heritage sector has grown in the past few years, and the increasing interest Singaporeans have shown in our museums and heritage.

Our SG Heritage Plan brings together areas we have done well in, so we can build on these, while identifying gaps we can plug, to deepen the impact of our work. To put it simply, Our SG Heritage Plan helps sharpen our focus on Singapore’s heritage, and provides a clear roadmap for its future. For this reason, we thought it only apt that this year’s Annual Report should be centred on the heritage sector. For this reason, we thought it only apt that this year’s Annual Report should be centred on the heritage sector. For this reason, we thought it only apt that this year’s Annual Report should be centred on the heritage sector.

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Under Our Cultures in the plan, NHB, together with the National Environment Agency and the Federation of Merchants’ Associations, Singapore announced the good news of the nomination of our beloved Hawker Culture for UNESCO’s Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. There are few things that bring Singaporeans together like our food, and we hope that this nomination will help bring Singaporeans over the celebration of our Hawker Culture. The results of the nomination will be known by end 2020, so this is only the start of a very exciting journey where Singaporeans will be called upon to show their support for Hawker Culture. So please pledge your support at oursgheritage.sg!

Work on Our Places, Our Treasures and Our Communities also continues. In the past year, our museums and institutions – Our Treasures – continued to celebrate our Singapore story, and demonstrate our connections to the world. The Asian Civilisations Museum staged its largest exhibition to date, Joseon Korea: Court Treasures and City Life, which told the tale of Korea’s last dynasty, one which had a profound influence on the modern Korea we know today. To commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Fall of Singapore, the National Museum of Singapore staged a special international exhibition titled Witnesses to War: Remembering 1942, featuring artefacts from both our National Collection and our overseas museum partners. To celebrate the special relationship we share with Brunei, the Singapore Philatelic Museum presented Abode of Peace & The Lion City: A Brunei-Singapore Exhibition, which commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Currency Interchangeability Agreement.

As for Our Communities, we received good news on the heritage education front, and I would like to congratulate the team behind the Heritage Explorers Programme, which won a Best Practice Award by the International Council of Museums International Committee for Education and Cultural Action! This follows the first award received for the Singapore’s Little Treasures programme. Our heritage education programmes, coupled with our philanthropic initiative HeritageCares, along with the efforts across our museums and institutions, demonstrate our continued commitment to making heritage inclusive and accessible to all.

Work on Our Places went beyond preservation to ensuring necessary and crucial work is done behind-the-scenes, such as the care and restoration of our National Monuments. The National Monuments Fund provides restoration and maintenance support for our National Monuments. This is important to ensure that these icons of our built heritage continue to stand the test of time. Promoting awareness of the spaces around us is also important and we have stepped up efforts with more heritage trails, such as the new Tampines Heritage Trail and Our Tampines Gallery. These initiatives are an indication of how we have grown in celebrating and honouring our built heritage.

I would like to express my thanks to Mr Ong Yew Huat for his seven years as Chairman of NHB. We will miss his wisdom and passion for our work, and his invaluable guidance and advice. He has contributed much to the heritage and culture sector in Singapore, and I am sure that his support will continue. I would also like to welcome Ms Yooh Chee Yan as our new Chairperson. I have had the opportunity to work and interact with Ms Yooh over the years we have served in the government together. Ms Yooh has a keen interest in culture and heritage, and was always very supportive of NHB in her time as Permanent Secretary for MCCY. As she moves even closer to our work as Chair of the board, I am looking forward to her leadership and guidance as we continue to advance NHB’s mission and vision, through Our SG Heritage Plan.
A nation’s memories will always be indelibly etched on its physical spaces; buildings, sites and structures that have witnessed great historical events, as well as the lives of men and women who lived through them. These places are markers of our identity, and beacons for our sense of belonging.

NHB works closely with other government agencies and stakeholders to properly honour Our Places — our built heritage. The safeguarding of our tangible heritage is carried out through the preservation, restoration and care for our National Monuments, alongside rigorous research and documentation. Heritage trails and their markers celebrate and give meaning to the spaces around us, reminding us of the importance of passing on these stories to those who come after us.
Singapore’s National Monuments require care and attention to keep them in a condition befitting their status. It is for this reason that the National Monuments Fund was created; to provide co-funding for the restoration and maintenance of National Monuments owned and managed by non-profit or religious organisations.

In FY2017, $2.2 million was disbursed to 17 National Monuments. $200,000 of this total amount was used to co-fund maintenance works. This is double the amount awarded under the Maintenance Fund last year, and reflects the growing awareness amongst monument owners of the importance of conducting regular maintenance works to restrain building deterioration. The Maintenance Fund was also further expanded in scope to include support for more types of maintenance works, such as the removal of vegetation close to the monument, and lightning protection.

Recipients of the fund for FY2017 included Abdul Gafoor Mosque, which was given close to $500,000 for its restoration and maintenance works. These works included the structural investigation of its roof and pinnacles, repainting of the sunburst ornamentation adorned with the names of 25 Islamic prophets in elegant Arabic calligraphy on the pediment, and restoration of the stained-glass windows around the dome, among other items. Chesed-EI Synagogue also received close to $400,000 to conduct structural enhancements to its front canopies, including the repair of its ornate floral plasterwork and cornices.

National Monument Technical Guide Books

The care of our National Monuments presents a unique set of challenges and requirements, and the Preservation of Sites and Monuments division’s (PSM) guide books share technical knowledge and general information with monument owners and stakeholders about how best to approach the preservation, repair, maintenance and management of these historic buildings and structures. Three titles have been published — A Brief Guide for Owners and Occupiers of National Monuments, Painting National Monuments, and Signage for National Monuments — and two more — Leaded, Stained and Coloured Glass in National Monuments and Shanghai Plaster on National Monuments — are planned.
Raffles Hotel Special Exhibition and Tour
1–12 Aug 2017

Raffles Hotel and PSM worked together to develop a specially curated exhibition, titled *A Last, Lingering Look at an Icon*, and guided tours of the historic building, offering members of the public and hotel guests a final look at the hotel ahead of its closure for the second phase of its restoration.

The tours, led by NHB’s volunteer guides, were very well received and included visits to the Hall of Fame, and exclusive suites within the hotel which have housed many illustrious guests, such as writer Rudyard Kipling, actress Ava Gardner and Queen Elizabeth II. Visitors were also encouraged to pen their memories of Raffles Hotel on postcards.

New Episodes of Eye in the Sky — National Monuments

Three new episodes of the heritage documentary series, *Eye in the Sky*, were produced for our National Monuments. Using aerial drones, the unique architectural elements of the Armenian Church, Sri Thendayuthapani Temple and Sultan Mosque were featured. Besides offering viewers never-before-seen views of these religious buildings, the videos also introduce the history and significance of the different communities who built them. The new episodes can be viewed on NHB’s heritage portal, Roots.sg and YouTube channel HeritageTV.
Hawker Centres’ Heritage Boards

To enable the public to learn more about the heritage of our beloved hawker centres, NHB embarked on a joint project with the National Environment Agency to conduct research and develop heritage boards at 12 hawker centres. These were selected based on their historical and heritage value, key architectural features, and social significance to the estates in which they are located.

The boards provide information about the hawker centres’ heritage, enhancing our knowledge of these community spaces that have become such an integral part of Singaporean life.
Tangible Heritage Survey and Inventory

The Heritage Research and Assessment division commissioned the first nationwide Tangible Heritage Survey in 2015 to identify and document historic buildings, structures and sites of architectural, historical and cultural interests. The fieldwork for the survey was completed at the end of 2017, and the findings will enable plans for future needs to be made with heritage considerations in mind. The survey’s findings are progressively shared on NHB’s heritage portal, Roots.sg.

NHB’s 16th Heritage Trail — Tampines Heritage Trail

Launched in September 2018, the Tampines Heritage Trail invites visitors to explore the historic boundaries of the Tampines district, which stretched from Punggol to Changi, as well as the bustling residential Tampines Town of today. The trail traces the district’s growth from a rural area into an award-winning residential town over the last two centuries through archival records and stories, contributed by past and present residents through an open call. One of the trail’s three bite-sized thematic routes is the Green Spaces trail, which is NHB’s first cycling heritage trail, bringing cyclists to heritage and scenic locales in Tampines.
Every nation has its own traditions, customs and practices that are passed down through the generations. Our Cultures — our intangible cultural heritage — are strong statements of our identity; they define us and make us unique as a people. This is the reason why our intangible cultural heritage must have a future. NHB spearheads various efforts to safeguard and promote the transmission of Singapore’s intangible cultural heritage. This is done through research and documentation, culminating in the recently launched intangible cultural heritage inventory, and also at our museums and institutions through festivals and programmes. Our traditions, rituals, crafts, knowledge and skills are living and breathing, and must adapt to remain relevant to our lives, so that they can be practised, appreciated and celebrated for years to come.
Singapore’s Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory
Launched in April 2017

The Heritage Research and Assessment division launched Singapore’s very own inventory of diverse intangible cultural heritage elements that are present and practised in multicultural Singapore. Establishing the inventory is a major step for the safeguarding of Singapore’s living heritage. Its goal is to document and make more information available on Singapore’s intangible cultural heritage, and also to promote greater understanding and appreciation of our diverse cultures, traditions and practices.

In this inventory, the intangible cultural heritage elements are grouped into six categories: Oral Traditions and Expressions, Performing Arts, Social Practices, Rituals and Festive Events, Knowledge and Practices concerning Nature and Universe, Traditional Craftsmanship and Food Heritage.

Our intangible cultural heritage is dynamic, evolving and constantly being adapted in response to our changing environments and lifestyles. The inventory will grow as work continues to identify and document living traditions, and to add more intangible cultural heritage elements over time.
Heritage Institution Festivals

DEEPAVALI CELEBRATION 2017
23 September—18 October 2017

The Indian Heritage Centre’s (IHC) Deepavali Celebration 2017 was themed Vanishing Traditions of Deepavali, and it aimed to foster a greater appreciation of traditional Indian practices during the festival of lights.

Workshops included Tanjore painting, flower garland making, Rangoli art, and Indian folk percussion, along with cooking demonstrations. These programmes provided an engaging experience on traditional Indian customs and practices for visitors.

INDIAN HERITAGE CENTRE CULTUREFEST 2017
6–16 December 2017

IHC’s third annual CultureFest celebrated the diversity of Indian culture, arts and heritage with the theme Rasa, a word that refers to aesthetic essence. CultureFest 2017 focused on craft traditions from the Indian subcontinent, an integral part of the Indian community’s diverse intangible cultural heritage.

Featuring interactive contemporary and traditional programmes such as craft workshops, lectures, talks, traditional cultural performances and Little India heritage trails, CultureFest 2017 opened with a live Jugalbandhi orchestra and a combination of Kathak and Bharatanatyam dances that provided an immersive multi-sensory experience.

15 master craftsmen from India were also brought to IHC to conduct demonstrations of their areas of expertise, which include calligraphy, leather work, painting, paper-cutting and embroidery. These crafts contribute to the rich material heritage of Singapore’s diverse Indian communities, and both CultureFest 2017 and the special exhibition, Symbols and Scripts: The Language of Craft, emphasised the importance of the safeguarding and transmission of these traditions for future generations.

PONGAL CELEBRATION 2018
6–20 January 2018

The Indian harvest festival, Pongal, was celebrated at IHC with a slew of programmes, which included traditional Indian folk performances, cooking master classes, and a Kolam competition. These engendered a greater understanding and appreciation of the festival, its harvest traditions, and Indian culture.
MALAY CULTUREFEST 2017
13 to 28 October 2017

In celebration of the richness and diversity of Malay culture and heritage, the Malay Heritage Centre (MHC) organised its annual Malay CultureFest with the theme of Adat (Traditions & Customs) in conjunction with the launch of the Sirri na Pesse: Navigating Bugis Identities in Singapore special exhibition. The festival explored the manifestations of Adat not only in customary practices and traditions, but also how they are understood in a contemporary context. Visitors were treated to a host of programmes, including a silat demonstration, a Gendang performance, trails led by the community, Bugis language workshops and lectures on Bugis identity and Architecture.

A highlight of Malay CultureFest 2017 was also the sixth installation 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 Singapore, while the Indonesian provinces of Riau, South Sulawesi and Yogyakarta performed to the year’s theme of “Lawan Memikat – Opposites Attract”.

Heritage Institution Festivals
Heritage Institution Festivals

WAN QING DUMPLING FESTIVAL
27–28 May 2017
The Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (SYSNMH) held its sixth annual Wan Qing Dumpling Festival in conjunction with the launch of SYSNMH’s special exhibition Stitches of Love – Hidden Blessings in Children’s Clothing and Accessories. The two-day festival celebrated the well-loved Chinese tradition of dumpling-making, alongside other programmes which included musical performances, pouch embroidery workshops, mini dragon boat racing, and special exhibition guided tours.

WAN QING MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL
26 September—15 October 2017
Featuring five larger-than-life lantern art installations of animals crafted out of cellophane that made for Instagram-worthy moments, SYSNMH celebrated the Mid-Autumn Festival with a special weekend programme that included performances, mooncake and pomelo tasting, storytelling sessions, special guided tours, mooncake-making, and cellophane lantern workshops. The lantern art installations have become a much-anticipated highlight for visitors to SYSNMH, and make this one of the institution’s most popular programmes.

WAN QING CULTUREFEST 2017
4–11 November 2017
Wan Qing CultureFest 2017 marked the second partnership between SYSNMH and the Promote Mandarin Council, and featured storytelling sessions, outdoor film screenings, cultural and language workshops, heritage trails and guided tours, traditional games, and concert performances – all designed to promote greater awareness and appreciation of Chinese arts, culture and heritage.

WAN QING FESTIVAL OF SPRING
6 February—5 March 2018
SYSNMH’s annual Wan Qing Festival of Spring celebrations brought visitors of different ethnic groups and cultural backgrounds together to celebrate the Chinese New Year. A highlight was Canines Celebrate!, an installation of eight dog sculptures covered with decorative designs, inspired by the Chinese folk art of paper-cutting and featuring common Peranakan objects such as a wall tile, a tiffin carrier, a kerosang and a sarong kebaya.
Grooming The Next Generation Of Cultural Leaders

The Culture Academy Singapore (CA) was established in 2015 by the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) to be a centre of excellence for the development of culture professionals and administrators in Singapore's public sector. The Academy’s work spans three broad areas: education and capability development, research and scholarship, and promoting thought leadership in our arts and culture sector.

In FY 2017, 1,200 people attended professional development workshops and leadership programs, curatorial talks, a Plug-in session, and thought leadership conferences. CA’s reach was boosted further through the annual journal Cultural Connections.

Education and Capability Development

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

As part of the Professional Development Workshop series, CA collaborated with Museums Victoria to co-create a workshop on “Designing Engaging Exhibitions”, which covered exhibition design techniques from writing storyboards, to designing programmes and exhibitions for various age groups and people with special needs.

CA also developed a workshop for the Ministry of Education’s Heritage Centre on “Designing an Engaging and Meaningful Heritage Gallery in Schools”, which expounded the whys, what’s and hows of designing an engaging heritage gallery or corner in their schools.

CULTURAL ACADEMY LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

CA staged its inaugural run of the Culture Academy Leadership Programme, aimed at grooming middle managers in cultural institutions to move to the next level in their careers, and to build camaraderie and a common ethos among leaders in the sector. The programme included a 3-day overseas component to Yogyakarta and Jakarta to broaden participants’ view on culture, and to appreciate the soft power of culture in strengthening bilateral relations.

REGULAR PROGRAMMES

CA continued to cater to the intellectual and professional development needs of the sector through regular offerings such as Plug-in, CA’s networking session, hosted by The Esplanade. Ms Grace Low, Head of Community Engagement at The Esplanade, shared about their approach to reaching out to the underserved.

CA’s monthly Curatorial Talks featured curators from the MCCY family of institutions, who spoke about their curatorial research and ideas.

Research and Scholarship

CA published the second issue of annual journal Cultural Connections, to promote thought leadership in cultural work in the public sector. This issue looked at the role of arts and culture in making cities liveable, and featured articles by diplomats, academics, and professionals from MCCY institutions.

In 2017, CA started a knowledge repository to build up a bank of case studies from the arts and culture sector that document experiences and knowledge gained, which future generations of culture leaders can learn from. CA worked with the Civil Service College to conduct a workshop to equip 16 officers from the MCCY family of institutions with the skill of case writing. The case studies written by these officers have been used as learning and resource materials for our leadership programme and will be available for researchers of cultural policies and other related cultural projects.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

CA’s second international thought leadership conference on “Reviving and Revitalising Cities and Spaces through Arts and Culture” was held on 7 December 2017 and attracted 260 participants. Renowned speakers included Mr Douglas Gautier, Chief Executive Officer and Artistic Director of the Adelaide Festival Centre who delivered the keynote on the roles and responsibilities of arts and cultural institutions in creating a multicultural and creative city, and Mr Joe Sidek, Festival Director of the George Town Festival who shared about how place-making through arts and culture has brought about a stronger sense of belonging and identity among the locals.

Research and Scholarship

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

CA also jointly organised the Malraux Seminar 2018 with the French Ministry of Culture, MCCY and the Embassy of France – Institut Français Singapore. The seminar featured both French and Singaporean speakers, and was themed “Cultural Innovation in the 21st Century – Staying Relevant, Creating Value and Embracing Everyone.”

Clockwise from top left: Malraux Seminar 2018, ‘Designing an Engaging and Meaningful Heritage Gallery in Schools’ Workshop and Culture Academy Leadership Programme 2017

‘Reviving and Revitalising Cities and Spaces Through Arts and Culture’ Conference 2017
The word “treasure” is defined as “something of great worth or value”, and “a collection of precious things”. We call our museums, heritage institutions and the collections within them Our Treasures, because these places and artefacts are very important to us. More than just objects, they are imbued with stories of our culture, our heritage, and how Singapore came to be.

Besides being a link to our past, they also play a vital role for our future. They help us navigate an increasingly complex global environment by acting as anchors for our identity, and serve as a source of inspiration and pride to spur us onward. Here at the NHB, it is our duty and our privilege to be the custodian of these treasures, making sure that they are well taken care of, and are inclusive and accessible to all.

Asian Civilisations Museum

JOSEON KOREA: COURT TREASURES AND CITY LIFE
22 April — 23 July 2017

Joseon Korea: Court Treasures and City Life was a tour through 500 years of Korea’s last dynasty the Joseon (1392 to 1897) — a period that shaped modern Korea. This exquisite showcase featured more than 150 treasures from the National Museum of Korea and National Palace Museum of Korea that depict different facets of the vibrant Joseon era, highlighting its royal and religious patronage, life in the courts of power, as well as the everyday lives of the people.

JOSEON KOREA: COURT TREASURES AND CITY LIFE

Ghost Nets of the Ocean – Au Karem Ira Lamar Lu
1 June—14 August 2017

Ghost Nets of the Ocean was jointly undertaken by Australian Arts Centre- Erub Arts and ACM, and supported by the Australian Government and NHB. It was one of the first collaborations between both countries assisted by the Australia Singapore Arts Group, established under the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between Australia and Singapore. The exhibition transformed abandoned fishing nets, called “ghost nets”, into a marine-themed art installation that provoked reflection on human impact on the environment.

The exhibition included a contemporary interpretation of traditional Korean cultural motifs by award-winning South Korean artist Ran Hwang, Becoming Again; Coming Together at the Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM) was Ran’s largest mixed-media installation to date. The exhibition’s outreach included partnerships with eight schools (Torres Strait schools, and local, international, and special needs students from schools in Singapore). The students worked with Erub Arts and ACM to create Tiny Turtles, an installation of over 700 handmade turtles using recycled plastic ocean debris on the ACM Green.

Joseon Korea: Court Treasures and City Life

ANCIENT RELIGIONS GALLERY AND SINGAPORE RIVER GALLERY
From November 2017

FY2017 saw the opening of two new galleries at the ACM – the Ancient Religions Gallery and Singapore River Gallery– as part of its long-running revamp. The new Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple Gallery of Ancient Religions features the grand religions of India – Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism. The gallery displays over 200 masterpieces of sculpture, painting, and ritual objects. The story traces the spread of these religions via trade routes from India to China, and on to Southeast Asia, and shows how artworks were changed and adapted to cater to different cultures.

The Singapore River Gallery, a new space at ACM overlooking the river, explores the history and development of the lifeblood of the city for the last 200 years. From busy port and go-downs to the vibrant cultural and dining destination of today, the story of the river is told through photographs and narratives. Visitors can gain an understanding of the early days of trade and commerce in Singapore, and learn how the area has changed over the years.
DigiMuse
From December 2017

The DigiMuse programme is an initiative by the National Museum, aimed at building a vibrant cultural sector that is invested in digital innovation. DigiMuse seeks to engage the wider digital-technology industry to encourage creative experimentation in cultural spaces. The programme invites artists, technologists and culture professionals to co-create digital projects that demonstrate the possibilities of integrating culture and technology.

Witness to War: Remembering 1942
23 September 2017–25 March 2018

To commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Fall of Singapore, the National Museum of Singapore staged a special international exhibition titled Witness to War: Remembering 1942. It explored the complexities of the events that led to the Fall of Singapore, paying homage to the extraordinary courage and tenacity of the men and women who lived through those times.

The exhibition featured artefacts from 10 overseas museums, including the Australian War Memorial and the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, and examined how Singapore’s fall was part of a wider campaign waged by the Japanese Empire across the Pacific. These overseas artefacts, many of which had never been displayed in Southeast Asia before, highlighted a shared regional history.

The exhibition was complemented with an array of programmes that included film screenings, talks and guided tours. The Student Archivist Project was also launched to allow students to co-create exhibition content with the museum; six stories submitted by secondary and tertiary students were exhibited at the exhibition.

Also presented in conjunction with the exhibition, After the Fall: Artworks by Angela Tiatia and Debbie Ding reflected on how World War II in the Pacific is remembered, while Exhibiting the Fall: Remembering and Representing War and its Aftermath in Asia brought scholars and practitioners together to discuss the ways that Asia’s violent mid-20th century history is understood and represented.

National Museum of Singapore

130th Anniversary Celebrations
13–15 October 2017

On Wednesday, 12 October 1887 at 5pm, the 14th Governor of the Straits Settlements, Sir Frederick Weld, ceremoniously opened the Raffles Library and Museum at Stamford Road. The museum was established to spur intellectual inquiry in the region, and was the first of its kind in Singapore. It has grown alongside the country, survived the Japanese Occupation and has transformed into a well-loved socio-historical and cultural institution.

As the National Museum celebrated its 130th birthday, visitors were invited to discover its fascinating history, the building itself, its galleries and the people who keep it going, through art installations and guided tours by the museum’s curators and docents.

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WITNESS TO WAR: REMEMBERING 1942
23 September 2017–25 March 2018

To commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Fall of Singapore, the National Museum of Singapore staged a special international exhibition titled Witness to War: Remembering 1942. It explored the complexities of the events that led to the Fall of Singapore, paying homage to the extraordinary courage and tenacity of the men and women who lived through those times.

The exhibition featured artefacts from 10 overseas museums, including the Australian War Memorial and the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, and examined how Singapore’s fall was part of a wider campaign waged by the Japanese Empire across the Pacific. These overseas artefacts, many of which had never been displayed in Southeast Asia before, highlighted a shared regional history.

The exhibition was complemented with an array of programmes that included film screenings, talks and guided tours. The Student Archivist Project was also launched to allow students to co-create exhibition content with the museum; six stories submitted by secondary and tertiary students were exhibited at the exhibition.

Also presented in conjunction with the exhibition, After the Fall: Artworks by Angela Tiatia and Debbie Ding reflected on how World War II in the Pacific is remembered, while Exhibiting the Fall: Remembering and Representing War and its Aftermath in Asia brought scholars and practitioners together to discuss the ways that Asia’s violent mid-20th century history is understood and represented.

National Museum of Singapore

130th Anniversary Celebrations
13–15 October 2017

On Wednesday, 12 October 1887 at 5pm, the 14th Governor of the Straits Settlements, Sir Frederick Weld, ceremoniously opened the Raffles Library and Museum at Stamford Road. The museum was established to spur intellectual inquiry in the region, and was the first of its kind in Singapore. It has grown alongside the country, survived the Japanese Occupation and has transformed into a well-loved socio-historical and cultural institution.

As the National Museum celebrated its 130th birthday, visitors were invited to discover its fascinating history, the building itself, its galleries and the people who keep it going, through art installations and guided tours by the museum’s curators and docents.
Peranakan Museum

PERANAKAN GALLERY AT CHANGI AIRPORT TERMINAL 4
From 31 October 2017

The Peranakan Gallery is the first-ever collaboration between the Changi Airport Group and NHB. Designed and developed by the Peranakan Museum, the gallery lets travellers learn about the rich culture of the Peranakans, and their influence on contemporary local design.

Located in the Departure Transit area, the Peranakan Gallery is part of Terminal 4’s Heritage Zone, where travellers can see a model of a Peranakan shophouse, an antique wooden wedding bed, beautifully embroidered sarong kebaya, and Peranakan nyonyaware porcelain. There is also a contemporary reinterpretation of traditional Peranakan porcelain – Spotted Nyonya by Singaporean artist Hans Tan.

Singapore Philatelic Museum

ABODE OF PEACE & THE LION CITY: A BRUNEI-SINGAPORE EXHIBITION
6 July 2017–18 March 2018

The exhibition celebrated the deep-rooted friendship and diplomatic relations between Singapore and Brunei, and commemorated the 50th anniversary of the unique Currency Interchangeability Agreement. It showcased the political, economic and social development, cultures, and flora and fauna of the two countries, and was staged in both Singapore at SPM and in Brunei Darussalam at the Art Gallery.

The Singapore leg of the exhibition highlighted colourful, interesting and informative facets of the Brunei Sultanate, Brunei’s history, its ethnic communities, and world-renowned flora and fauna. Treasures from the Royal Regalia were also displayed for the first time in Asia, outside of Brunei. It was complemented by cultural performances and activities conducted by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, Brunei Darussalam.

The Brunei leg of the exhibition enabled visitors to discover the unique city-state of Singapore that blends the East and the West, the old and the new, with nature right at the doorstep of our City in a Garden. Visitors could “enter” a Housing Development Board (HDB) flat, and experience the exciting Singaporean way of life, and ever-evolving “Singaporean” culture reflected in our cuisine, music and arts.
ANIME X STAMPS
16 November 2017–13 May 2018

Anime X Stamps exhibition marked the centenary of Japanese anime. The colourful and immersive exhibition featured a comprehensive collection of over 900 stamps and philatelic materials from Japan and Singapore that depict anime, which included 80 titles, limited edition collectibles toys, costumes, figurines and one-of-a-kind original production artworks specially put together for the exhibition. Covering the gamut of anime genres from comedy and action, to magic and mecha (mechanical), history, sci-fi and more, the exhibition was a discovery, where just like stamps, anime opened windows to new worlds.

Malay Heritage Centre
SIRRI NA PESSE: NAVIGATING BUGIS IDENTITIES IN SINGAPORE
14 October 2017–24 June 2018

This community co-curated exhibition was part of the Malay Heritage Centre’s (MHC) Se-Nasantoro (Of the Same Archipelago) series of exhibitions that rediscover the diverse heritage and culture of the Malay community in Singapore.

Sirri na Pesse, which loosely translates to ‘honour and pride’ in the Bugis language, featured the history and development of the Malay-Bugis community in Singapore. It also showcased the ways through which they maintained their distinct cultural heritage whilst establishing a modern Bugis identity unique to their Singapore experience. The exhibition featured a diverse range of artefacts, including family heirlooms contributed by the community and loans from the Joor Bugis Museum, Malaysia.

Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall
CLOTHING AND ACCESSORIES
27 May 2017–4 March 2018

Co-presented by the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (SYSNMH) and the Memorial Museum of Generalissimo Sun Yat-sen’s Mansion from Guangzhou, China, this special exhibition showcased 89 artefacts with a wide range of motifs rich in symbolic meanings, employed to bestow good fortune, longevity, and success. The collection on display included clothing, hats, ear muffs, bibs and shoes adorned with a variety of motifs derived from the natural world, history, literature and folklore.
Travelling Exhibitions by the Heritage Institutions

PIONEERING RURAL SETTLEMENTS: THE LEGACY OF LIM NEE SOON
3 April–2 November 2017
SYSNMH collaborated with Singapore Chinese Girls’ School to produce this travelling exhibition, to promote a better appreciation of the life of Dr Lim Boon Keng, his relationship with Dr Sun Yat Sen and other Nanyang Revolutionaries, and his contributions to Singapore and the Nanyang community.

PASSION & KNOWLEDGE: SINGAPORE CHINESE PIONEERS IN EDUCATION
10 April–23 November 2017
This travelling exhibition was a collaboration between SYSNMH and Chung Cheng High School (Main), and showcased the contributions of Aw Boon Haw, Liew Yuen Sien, Tan Boo Liat and Tan Yoek Seong; four Singaporean Chinese pioneers in the development of education in Singapore.

MALAY PIONEER SERIES: PRINTERS & PUBLISHERS
21 April–31 October 2017
The Malay Pioneers Series: Printers and Publishers travelling exhibition told the stories of enterprising pioneers who battled convention to embrace the shift from an oral to a print culture, seeing within the technology the potential for advocacy, preservation, education and entertainment.

CELEBRATING HARI RAYA: STORIES FROM THE COMMUNITY
29 May–10 July 2017
MHC collaborated with student interviewers from Tanjong Katong Secondary School to produce a travelling exhibition focusing on the Hari Raya festival. The exhibition explored how Hari Raya is celebrated in Singapore, shared little-known facts, and featured interviews conducted by the students.

CRAFTS AND COMMUNITIES PRE-EXHIBITION POP-UP
17–26 November 2017
IHC collaborated with the Esplanade for their annual Kalaa Utsavam Festival of Indian Arts. The collaboration included a pre-exhibition pop-up at the Esplanade’s Festival Corner, featuring samples of and information about various Indian crafts, along with a photo-booth style display of Rajasthani puppets.

International Relations

International collaboration is essential to any agency seeking to be a world-class heritage organisation. Through the development of long-term, mutually beneficial partnerships with reputable international counterparts, NHB will be plugged into a vast network of resources, expertise and collections, and can also share the best of Singapore’s heritage with the rest of the world.

NHB-PALACE MUSEUM MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

A key objective of NHB’s international engagements has been to build a network of international partnerships with world-class counterparts for mutual benefit. An example of a worthwhile result of this was the signing in June 2017 of a five-year collaborative memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Palace Museum of China between NHB Chief Executive Ms Chang Hwee Nee and Palace Museum Director Mr Shan Jixiang.

The Palace Museum, based in the Forbidden City in Beijing, is one of the foremost museums in China. The MOU covers collaboration in numerous areas, including joint exhibitions, conservation and collection exchanges, capability development workshops, and research collaborations.

JOINT ICOM-SINGAPORE AND ICOM-CHINA WORKSHOP ON AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT
14–19 August 2017
NHB held its first ever International Council of Museums (ICOM) Singapore workshop at ACM, titled Future of Museums: Audience Engagement for Social Inclusion and Community Building. The workshop was jointly organised by NHB with the Palace Museum of China and the ICOM-China National Committee, and was a key commitment under the NHB-Palace Museum MOU. Attended by 30 local and international museum educators and programmers from Singapore, China and Southeast Asia, it featured eminent local and international speakers who shared their experiences at their respective museums and institutions on the titular subject.

FUNDING FOR INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION WORKSHOP

In 2017, NHB successfully obtained Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) funding support for HCC to organise an International Conservation Workshop in Singapore in 2019. Funding was approved by the ASEAN Committee of Permanent Representatives for the workshop, which will allow HCC to expand its list of invitees beyond Singapore, to cultural counterparts in ASEAN member states.
Heritage Conservation Centre

The Heritage Conservation Centre (HCC) is the repository and conservation facility for the management and preservation of Singapore’s National Collection. HCC is at the heart of NHB’s expertise in preventive and interventive conservation, and supports NHB’s museums and institutions for exhibitions and artefact rotations. These included exhibitions such as Witness to War: Remembering 8½2 at the National Museum, and Symbols and Scripts: The Language of Craft at IHC.

COLLABORATION WITH THE SINGAPORE GENERAL HOSPITAL

HCC’s four-year long collaboration with the Singapore General Hospital’s (SGH) Department of Diagnostic Radiology for radiological imaging of artefacts continued, with more than 70 artworks and artefacts examined to date. X-ray examinations are carried out four to six times a year at SGH on objects that include paintings, furniture, sculptures, textiles, and ethnographical and archaeological objects. These examinations help show the internal construction of objects, the extent of structural damage and deterioration, compositional changes and other hidden details, enabling curators and conservators to better understand the National Collection, and design the most appropriate conservation treatments.

CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT

HCC’s Paper Section organised a five-day training workshop on preventive conservation and photograph identification in February/March 2018. The comprehensive programme covered identification, deterioration & preventive conservation of photographs, and concluded with a public lecture at the National Gallery Singapore.
We are all connected to others, through a complex network of family and friends, which knit us together into communities. Our Communities shape us and mould our identities, and provide us with a sense of belonging to something greater than ourselves.

At NHB, we work closely with different communities – Singaporeans from all walks of life – to preserve, promote and celebrate our heritage. This is done through our festivals, language campaigns, community events, education programmes and grant schemes. We have, over the years, built strong partnerships with a special group of people who form the backbone of what we do – fellow museum professionals in the Museum Roundtable (MR), industry experts, teachers and educators, dedicated volunteers, and patrons of heritage.

Together, their efforts contribute to securing the legacy of our shared heritage for future generations. With Our Communities’ support, heritage is also made more accessible and inclusive for all.
Festivals

SINGAPORE HERITAGE FESTIVAL 2017
28 April–14 May 2017

100 partners for this “Festival for the People, by the People”

The 14th edition of NHB’s signature heritage festival continued to highlight the lesser-known stories of our shared spaces and ways of life in Singapore. With over 100 partners and approximately 190 programme offerings spanning three weekends, the festival enabled different communities to share their stories in a celebration of our diverse cultural heritage.

With four festival highlight venues, island-wide exhibitions and guided tours, the Singapore Heritage Festival 2017 reached out to over 1.6 million visitors. For the first time, the National Museum of Singapore’s façade by French artists EZ3kiel, and highlight show Globe by Dutch street theatre company Close-Act at the Cathay Green.

SNF 2017 featured a strong line-up of Singaporean artists who have grown alongside the festival, including flow arts collective Starlight Alchemy, percussion group Bloco Singapura, performing group Peranakan Sayang and the ZingO Festival Drum Group.

After its successful first run, the Night Lights Open Call returned for a second year, with festival-goers flocking to immerse themselves in the magic of Phosphene and Tessellations of Time by tertiary student groups Praxis+ and LiteWerkz respectively, and Dream City Window by budding design studio Untitled Project.

SINGAPORE NIGHT FESTIVAL 2017
18–26 August 2017

Record 740,000 visitors to festival’s 10th edition

The Singapore Night Festival (SNF) celebrated its first decade with the theme “10 Magical Years in August 2017. A record 740,000 visitors delighted in a mix of local and international festival offerings over two weekends, with crowd pleasers Convolutions, a mapping work on the National Museum’s façade by French artists EZ3kiel, and highlight show Globe by Dutch street theatre company Close-Act at the Cathay Green. SNF 2017 featured a strong line-up of Singaporean artists who have grown alongside the festival, including flow arts collective Starlight Alchemy, percussion group Bloco Singapura, performing group Peranakan Sayang and the ZingO Festival Drum Group.

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ANUGERAH PERSURATAN 2017

The biennial Anugerah Persuratan (Malay Literary Award) recognised 19 writers across four award categories in 2017, to encourage the publication of high quality works and promote Malay literature in the community. The top Tun Seri Lanang Award was presented to Rashiah Hill for her contribution to literary arts.

ANUGERAH GURU ARIF BUDIMAN 2017

Five exceptional Malay Language teachers were awarded the Anugerah Guru Arif Budiman (Malay Language Teachers’ Award) for their contributions to the learning of the Malay Language.

BULAN BAHASA 2017

Bulan Bahasa (Malay Language Month) is the annual signature celebration by the Malay Language Council, Singapore. Anugerah Persuratan 2017 was launched at the Malay Heritage Centre (MHC) in Kampong Gelam, where visitors were treated to a day of festivities and programmes. Throughout the day, guided tours by Rakan Bahasa (Friends of the Language) were held for visitors within MHC’s galleries.

Two months of exciting programmes and activities followed, showcasing the Malay language as Bahasa Ilmu (knowledge), Bahasa Budaya (culture) and Bahasa Meura (relationships). Bulan Bahasa was also brought to the heartlands of Chua Chu Kang, Jurong, Nee Soon, Sembawang and Tampines. Organised by residents of the respective constituencies, the celebrations were held to promote awareness and engage the wider community to appreciate and encourage the use of the Malay language.

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SPEAK MANDARIN CAMPAIGN 2017

A signature event of the Speak Mandarin Campaign, the annual Parent-Child Talent Competition was held for the fifth time in 2017. The competition provided opportunities for parents to bond and have fun with their children in Mandarin, with teams putting up stunning performances around the theme “Childhood Memories”.

The campaign’s “My Story” Public Speaking Competition, aimed at students from 13 to 18 years of age, encouraged participants to express themselves in Mandarin, through the sharing of personal stories and experiences. For the finals, participants had to put their quick-thinking skills to the test during the improvisation segment.

Throughout the year, the Speak Mandarin Campaign supported numerous partner and community led initiatives, and organised pocket programmes at schools, libraries and other public spaces. The Campaign also conducted Mandarin programmes during Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall’s festival celebrations and Wan Qing CultureFest.
The Speak Good English Movement presented its first ever symposium, titled “English in Singapore”, at The Arts House. Participants shared different perspectives and thoughts on the English language, and posed various questions to the panelists. The importance of using Standard English and the need for the conscious learning of the language were brought up during the discussions, which featured topics such as “English in the Singaporean Home”, “Effective English at Work” and “English, Singlish and Broken English”.

At the symposium, Chairman of the Speak Good English Movement, Mr Goh Eck Kheng, announced the launch of a funding support scheme for programmes that encourage the use of Standard English in fun and creative ways.

At the Inspiring Teacher of English Award 2017, seven English teachers were recognised for their passion in making the English language relevant and interesting to their students, and were presented the Teaching Award. Two Heads of Department were awarded the Leadership Award for their outstanding efforts in leading their team of teachers in the development and implementation of an effective English programme.

Tamil Language Festival

To encourage Tamil-speaking Singaporeans to “Love Tamil, Speak Tamil”, the Tamil Language Festival 2017 presented a month of Tamil language programmes such as dramas, music and dance performances, literature appreciation sessions, competitions, and lectures on various topics. Festival highlights included the staging of the popular novel Ponniyin Selvan for three sold-out nights at the Esplanade, and the presentation of traditional epic Silokkam/yin Sabatham at the Umar Pulavar Tamil Language Centre (UPTLC). In a continuing collaboration with the UPTLC, the third edition of the “Living Language, Living Heritage” notebook was also published.

Beyond the festival, the Tamil Language Council also supported partner-led programmes and capacity building initiatives, to deepen the appreciation of the Tamil language. Groups including the Traditional Music of Tanjore, Avant Theatre and Language, Athipathi International Theatre and 2 Tango Dazzle conducted weeks of training and workshops, where participants gained valuable skills and knowledge in various art forms as they boosted their confidence in their use of the Tamil language.
HeritageCares is a philanthropic initiative that reaches out to families-in-difficulty, persons with disabilities and/or special needs, youth-at-risk and senior citizens, through programmes at NHB museums and heritage institutions. Part of NHB’s overall community outreach efforts, the initiative is supported by donations from Patek Philippe and Cortina Watch Pte Ltd. HeritageCares also provides volunteering opportunities for corporate organisations and members of the public. Since its launch in March 2016, HeritageCares has organised over 200 programmes, served more than 8,000 participants and engaged 1,600 volunteers.

In 2017, HeritageCares organised Kids’ Day Out, a school holiday programme that provides quality educational experiences for children from low-income families. The inaugural run engaged 400 children on enriching activities that included traditional Malay games, craft and storytelling. Over 90 volunteers, including NHB staff, contributed as facilitators and befrienders for the programme.

HeritageCares also remains a key collaborator with Youth Corps Singapore on A Walk to Remember, with more than 100 children and 150 youth volunteers participating in activities along Jubilee Walk sites annually, as well as Creative Hands, Curious Minds, a pilot initiative that promotes international bonding through shared conversations on heritage. Such partnerships and initiatives serve the long-term goal of enabling heritage to be progressively inclusive and accessible to all.

Heritage Grants

Over $7.9 million awarded to more than 280 grant recipients

NHB’s Heritage Project Grant and Heritage Participation Grant support ground-up heritage initiatives by individuals and heritage groups to foster capability, ownership and promotion of our shared heritage. Since their launch in 2013, NHB has awarded over $7.9m to more than 280 applicants.

The grants have benefitted a wide range of projects, including publications, exhibitions, documentaries and events, adding to the variety of heritage touchpoints and offerings. A highlight was the documentary film Revising Our Forefathers’ Disappearing Foods, which showcases Cantonese and Hakka food as a way to encourage a deeper understanding of the heritage of the two cultures. Notable publications supported include Jean Marshall’s Pahang Letters, a compilation of personal letters by Jean Marshall, the widow of Singapore’s first elected Chief Minister David Marshall, which sheds light on life during the Malayan Emergency.

Heritage Education for Our Young

HERITAGE EXPLORERS PROGRAMME
Awarded Best Practice Award by ICOM

The Heritage Explorers Programme enables primary school students to experience life as a curator, historian, designer, educator and heritage ambassador. Through creative role-playing, the programme creates enjoyable experiences with the aim of raising awareness of Singapore’s heritage amongst the young.

The programme complements the learning of Social Studies, National Education, and Character and Citizenship Education in schools, while also emphasising school-parent partnerships and greater parent-child bonding. To date, the programme has reached out to 94 primary schools, and more than 57,600 students have signed up to be young Heritage Explorers.

The Heritage Explorers Programme was conferred the Best Practice Award by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) International Committee for Education and Cultural Action in 2017, which is given to ‘best practice’ museum education projects around the world.

SINGAPORE’S LITTLE TREASURES

More than 300 pre-schools and 300 teachers trained

Singapore’s Little Treasures is NHB’s first heritage education programme dedicated to pre-schoolers. The programme aims to provide pre-schoolers the opportunity to discover our multicultural heritage through creative, engaging and purposeful classroom activities, and meaningful learning journeys at the museums. The programme also promotes Singapore’s multicultural heritage in the three official Mother Tongue Languages – Malay, Mandarin and Tamil.

Since its launch in May 2014, the programme has reached out to more than 300 pre-schools, and trained close to 500 teachers. To date, NHB has engaged close to 7,000 pre-schoolers through the programme at both our museums and heritage institutions.

NATIONAL HERITAGE BADGE

Launched in 1989, the National Heritage Badge is awarded by NHB to deserving secondary school students in uniformed groups who have completed a heritage project. It aims to raise students’ awareness of Singapore’s heritage, and encourage them to promote heritage through their projects. The programme has been refreshed in 2018 to include a new National Heritage Badge design, accompanying guidebooks for teachers and students, and more interesting project tasks relevant to the young today.

200 programmes organised
8,000 participants reached
1,600 volunteers engaged

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Travelling Exhibitions

PIONEERING LEGACIES

Pioneering Legacies features eight pioneers – Edmund William Barker, S. Rajaratnam, Edwin Tessensohn, Eunos Abdullah, Ee Peng Liang, V. Pakirisamy Pillai, Tan Kah Kee and Munshi Abdullah – who made significant contributions to Singapore in areas such as politics, education and the community. Through their lives and actions, they helped shape Singapore, and made a difference in the everyday lives of the people.

SINGAPORE SNAPSHOTs

Singapore Snapshots has been adapted from the National Museum’s Singapore History Gallery, which focuses on the development of the island over the past 700 years, as it evolved from ancient Singapura to a Crown Colony, Syonan-To, and finally, Singapore. The exhibition highlights our nation’s defining moments, and examines challenges and achievements throughout our history.

FROZEN IN TIME: TIME CAPSULES IN SINGAPORE

Frozen in Time: Time capsules in Singapore is the first exhibition of its kind to explore the history of time capsules in Singapore, and the rich trove of objects and stories they contain. Time capsules are meaningful because of the stories and memories they hold for Singaporeans. Many of the objects featured in the exhibition are familiar to visitors, who are able to touch and interact with them, and through them, exchange stories with friends and family.

Volunteers

Guided 9,000 tours for 92,000 visitors in 2017

NHBC’s family of volunteers across our museums, heritage institutions and divisions are a pillar of support for our mission of celebrating Singapore’s heritage. Together, our family of docents guided over 9,000 tours and 92,000 visitors in 2017.
**MUSEUM ROUNDTABLE**

The Museum Roundtable (MR) is a network of 54 public and private museums and galleries chaired by NHB to support the development of Singapore’s museum-going culture, by nurturing a museum community which includes audiences, museum practitioners and emerging professionals. MR focuses on supporting the training of people who work in museums, and connecting members with each other to encourage discussion, collaboration and partnership.

**BUILDING CAPABILITIES: TRAINING AND NETWORKING**

On-going professional development and training is key to supporting museums in their efforts to serve their communities. Regular workshops and meetings also provide opportunities for peer engagement and learning.

MR organised workshops by the Thinking Museum from Amsterdam and Carol Rogers from National Museums Liverpool. **Visible Thinking in the Museum** by the Thinking Museum introduced participants to thinking routines to help facilitate and guide visitors’ visits to the museum. Carol Rogers, a well-known advocate for access and social inclusion for museums, led two workshops on community engagement for inclusive museums, including the award-winning **House of Memories** programme for people living with dementia, their carers, families and communities.

The year ended with the **Museum Roundtable Networking Night**, held at the newly relocated Red Dot Design Museum.

**BATTLE FOR SINGAPORE**

The **Battle for Singapore** marked the 76th anniversary of the Fall of Singapore in 2017, and NHB partnered community groups and museums to present Singapore’s war stories through a series of guided tours to World War II sites and special museum programmes.

This year’s edition saw groups such as MyCommunity, All Things Bukit Brown and Sentosa Development Corporation lead the ever-popular World War II walking trails, including a new guided tour at Bukit Brown focusing on the fruits and vegetables that provided wartime sustenance.

**ISTANA ART EVENT**

Presented by NHB and the Singapore Art Museum, the 17th edition of the Istana Art Event featured an exciting line-up of arts and heritage activities for the family, held in conjunction with the Istana Open House in celebration of National Day. Programmes included all-time favourites such as the On-the-Spot Art Competition and the Museum Roundtable Arts and Heritage Village.

*Members such as the Tan Heritage Centre showcased kinship words in English and Chinese so visitors could construct their own family trees, while STPI introduced relief printing to participants.*

**Patron of Heritage Awards 2017**

The **Patron of Heritage Awards 2017** honoured the generosity of 67 organisations and individuals who gave over $5.5 million toward the museum and heritage sector in 2017. The contributions of these donors enabled our museums and heritage institutions to present world-class exhibitions, organise well-loved festivals, introduce engaging public programmes, and launch insightful publications. Their gifts are vital to the growth and development of Singapore’s heritage sector, ensuring that what has been left to us from the past will become a legacy for the future.
The grant aims to develop and strengthen curatorial and conservation related competencies and knowledge for our officers. It also provides our officers with the opportunity to network and foster partnership opportunities with other museums and institutions.

Roger Lee Chee Choon
Assistant Conservator (Paper)
Heritage Conservation Centre

Senior Officer (Programmes & Heritage Conservation Centre

Assistant Conservator (Paintings)

副教授黄家言

Assistant Conservator (Paper)

Assistant Conservator (Paintings)

Professor Tommy Koh.

from NHB’s Honorary Chairman,

The Prof Koh Award was established in 2011 to recognise and reward individuals who have delivered quality service. It seeks to develop service models for staff to emulate and to create service champions.

EXCELLENT SERVICE AWARD 2017

The Public Sector Transformation Awards (PST) Awards recognise and reward outstanding public officers and agencies for excellence in service delivery, organisation practices and innovation. The awards applaud officers and agencies to pursuit PST outcomes, and showcase best practices to support learning across the Public Service.

PSD PST Awards

Star Service Team
NHB Heritage Grants Team 2017

Star Service Individual
Nurulnida Binte Abdul Halid

Tashauhna Amida Dais

ExCEl Innovation Champion
Chua Pei Jun Jerome

Soh Pang Ching

EXCEL Innovation Champion

Soh Pang Ching

EPIC Award
Chong, Joon Wei Jeffrey
Lee Kah Fang Carine
Mohamed Hariz Bin Mohamed Shariff
Ratnawati Erlimus
Soh Pang Ching

5-year Service
Ye Ng Peng
Chung May Khuan
Tan Chay Xiang Adeline
Mohamad Nazly Bin Yusof

25-year Service
Ishak Bin Ahmad

30-year Service
Karthikeya, Thangamma

Special Appreciation Award for Retired Officers
Sebastian Emmanuel Victor

PUBLIC SECTOR TRANSFORMATION AWARDS 2018

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PSD PST Awards

Star Service Team
NHB Heritage Grants Team 2017

Star Service Individual
Nurulnida Binte Abdul Halid

ExCEl Innovation Champion
Soh Pang Ching

MCCY/PST Awards

Star Service Team
NHB Heritage Grants Team 2017

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#TampinesMemories Open Call

Mobile Trail Experience

#TampinesM
Gifts & Acquisitions

Official robe
Thailand, 1902.
Cotton tulle, gold netting, gold bullion threads, sequins, and soutache. 104 x 58 cm

King Rama V of Thailand bestowed a royal title and rank, and with them this official robe (sua khrui), upon the Danish ‘father of the Thai navy’ Andreas du Plessisde Richelieu (1852–1932). This elaborately embroidered garment is customised with ship’s anchors, wheels, and other nautical motifs.

Shanghai Bund with regatta in progress
China, 1849–51.
Oil on canvas. 40.5 x 139 cm

This panoramic painting is one of the earliest known views of the Shanghai Bund. From the buildings visible, we can guess that it was made between 1849 and 1851. The artist included several landmarks, including the first European-style buildings in the settlement and the Chinese Custom House. As Shanghai grew in stature as a British and European settlement, paintings like this were important records of the development of the port and the increasing volume of international ships in the harbour. The city became a gateway for interactions between East and West.

(Right) Hakka–Malay Dictionary
1927, Singapore

This thread-bound Hakka–Malay dictionary was printed in Singapore. The name written on the front cover indicates that it was owned by a man named Tao Qifeng. Such publications, available in the main Chinese dialects such as Cantonese, Hokkien, Hakka and Hainanese, show the way the local Chinese community was eager to learn the indigenous language and adapt to local culture.

(Far right) Singapore Hua Pao
1929, Singapore

Although Dr Sun Yat Sen passed away in March 1925, he was only buried in the Nanjing mausoleum in June 1929. Singapore Hua Pao issued a special commemorative issue in June 1929 to mark this event. This particular magazine found its way to Canada, evidenced from the stamp on the front cover which states “Wah Sun Book Shop, Vancouver, B.C.” This could indicate an international distribution of Hua Pao to Chinese communities in North America.
Ossuary figure
Eastern Borneo (Indonesia), 19th century, Wood, height 61.5 cm

This figure would have decorated an ossuary, a box used to store the remains of revered ancestors. It was found hidden deep inside a cave. The figure is probably meant to represent an ancestor, now acting as a protecting spirit to frighten away thieves and evil spirits. Ancestor figures carved in the form of a squatting man are found all over Southeast Asia.

Daoist immortal
China, 16th or 17th century, Bronze, height 47 cm

The double-gourd hanging from a cord fastened around the figure’s waist suggests that he is probably an immortal. The gourd was associated with longevity, as well as protective and magical properties in Chinese culture. The figure could be Lü Dongbin, a Tang dynasty (618–907) poet and scholar who came to be venerated as one of the Eight Immortals in Daoism. Lü is regarded as the most influential of the Eight Immortals and is also revered as the Patriarch of the Daoist Quanzhen (Complete Perfection) sect.

Gilded Wedding Crown Set with Diamantes
First half of the 20th century
Singapore

This silver-gilt crown is set with dozens of diamantes and features a floral centerpiece typical of decorative traditions in the Malay peninsula and archipelago, alongside wing-like scrolled bands that recall the headgear of princely characters in the Ramayana. This elegant hybridism showcases the rich decorative heritage of the Malay world.

Malay Brass Rose Water Sprinkler
18th Century
Northern Malaysia

This artefact is an elegant and beautiful example of the sprinkler that commonly features in important Malay ceremonies, including the cukur rambut ceremony which marks a Malay child’s first haircut, and the berinai ceremony which marks the day before a Malay wedding.

Pair of Chased and Gadrooned Silver Bowls
Circa 1900, Brunei

The rim of these silver bowls are decorated with a floral border whilst the base of each bowl displays a cartouche engraved with jawi. Originating from Brunei, the ornamentation and jawi script indicates the country’s shared linguistic and decorative heritage with the rest of the Malay archipelago.

GIFTs & ACQUISITIONS
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Baruttan (Powder Flask)
19th century, Rajasthan, India
Wood, Mother of Pearl and Ivory

Powder flasks were used to store and carry gun powder, and to prevent the powder from getting wet. Indian powder flasks often feature intricate carving, and are sometimes covered with leather or fabric. These flasks were produced by craftsmen of the Khatri caste in the Kotah state during the 19th century, and were popular in Europe after they were featured in exhibitions such as the Colonial and Indian Exhibition held in London in 1886. This baruttan or powder flask is made of wood and comes in the form of a mollusc or nautilus shell.

Ivory Figurine of a Sri Lankan Nobleman
18th–19th century
Sri Lanka, Ivory

This ivory figurine is a depiction of a Sri Lankan nobleman or dignitary standing on a small pedestal. He wears a benevolent expression, with closed eyes and a magnificent handlebar moustache. His facial expression denotes a devout aspect. Statuettes of kings, other royalty and the nobility – as well as ordinary men and women – are common in ivory dating from this period. The model for this piece might have been a member of the royal family, perhaps a prince or king.

British Empire Marketing Board poster promoting Malayan pineapples
1931, colour lithograph

This poster was acquired together with other colonial and travel posters related to Singapore. Printed in 1931 and based on the artwork of Edgar Ainsworth, it was part of a series of five posters by the British Empire Marketing Board that promoted different colony commodities.

Two-part panoramic view of Telok Ayer Bay from Mount Erskine
(c.1870, Albumen print)

This is a photographic view from Mount Erskine, looking down Amoy Street. The roof of the Chinese temple, Thian Hock Keng, features in the foreground, while St Andrew’s Cathedral, the Court House and the Empress Place Building are faintly visible in the background. Telok Ayer Bay is shown on the right of the image, with the old Telok Ayer market along the coast, and a scattering of ships further out at sea.

Singapore from the Roadstead
(c.1850, Oil on canvas)

This is a mid-19th century oil on canvas view of Singapore from the sea, with Telok Ayer basin on the left and the European town on the right, and with Government Hill in the centre, with the Governor’s bungalow and flagstaff visible. Several Malay prahu and sampan are depicted in the foreground.

Map of Singapore Town
1881

This map of Singapore town was produced by Acting Colonial Engineer H. E. McCallum in 1881. It features a highly detailed building allotment and topography of Singapore town from Tanjong Pagar to the left and Kallang to the right. Owned by Collector of Land Revenues and Registrar of Deeds H. T. Haughton, this map shows the preliminary plans for the use of the land to be reclaimed along the Telok Ayer Basin.

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NEW PUBLICATIONS

Witness to War: Remembering 1942 Catalogue
This exhibition catalogue and companion features key artifact highlights and 14 moving stories of ordinary men and women who braved the fall of Singapore in extraordinary ways.

Entertainment: Forms of Leisure in Singapore, 1920s–1970s
Published to coincide with the National Museum’s 130th anniversary, this book offers a visual walk-through journey that explores early and popular forms of recreation in Singapore, through images from the museum’s rich collections. These include entertainment parks, cinema, radio and music from the early 20th century until the 1970s, with first-hand accounts that bring memories to life.

Peacetime Kitchen: War Recipes Restored
This special edition of the National Museum’s popular book Wartime Kitchen: Food and Eating in Singapore has been repackaged with 12 wartime recipes adapted for modern kitchens, and produced in conjunction with the Witness to War: Remembering 1942 exhibition. The recipes speak of the human spirit of creativity, fortitude and determination to eat (and live) normally in the darkest of times.

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Joseon Korea: Court Treasures and City Life

Published in conjunction with the exhibition of the same name at ACM, the book presents the story of how artisans from Erub Island in the Torres Strait, Australia, have turned “Ghost Nets” – abandoned plastic fishing nets – into works of art that raise awareness of ocean pollution, and specifically the harm that these nets can cause to marine wildlife. The book also documents how several schools in Singapore and Australia joined the project to create their own artworks from plastic ocean debris.

ACM Treasures: Collection Highlights

ACM Treasures: Collection Highlights features nearly 200 objects in full colour, each with a short explanation, and follows the structure of the permanent galleries of the ACM, with sections dedicated to Trade, Faith and Belief, and Materials and Design. Within each section, chapters mapping onto present and future gallery spaces present art objects from each gallery of the museum.

Wan Qing Yuan: A New Chapter

Wan Qing Yuan: A New Chapter provides readers with an insight into the content of the Sun Yat Sun Nanyang Memorial Hall’s permanent galleries and special exhibitions, which promote awareness of the local Chinese community’s contributions to the 1911 Revolution, the impact of the revolution on Singapore, as well as local Chinese culture and heritage. This coffee table book was updated for 2017.

Mereka Utusan: Imprinting Malay Modernity, 1920s – 1960s

Mereka Utusan: Imprinting Malay Modernity 1920s – 1960s showcased the dramatic growth and transformation of the Malay printing industry between the 1920s and 1960s. The catalogue features essays written by contributors from Malaysia and Japan, and includes a selection of full-colour advertisements and editorial cartoons reprinted for the first time since their initial print run in the 1960s.
Devotees observing the Nine Emperor God Festival at Tou Mu Kung Temple in Upper Serangoon Road
A statue of an angel blowing a trumpet above the porch of Our Lady of Lourdes Church.
A roadside barber at an alley near Boon Tat Street and Telok Ayer Street