

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

**THE NATIONAL HERITAGE BOARD APPOINTS SUPERMAMA AS ITS RETAIL PARTNER FOR
ASIAN CIVILISATIONS MUSEUM AND NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SINGAPORE**



Supermama, The Museum Store at the Asian Civilisations Museum (top) and National Museum of Singapore

Singapore, 6 August 2021 – If you're a fan of museum shops, you might have already noticed the new **Supermama, The Museum Store** shops and a refreshed range of merchandise at both the Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM) and the National Museum of Singapore!

2 On 1 June 2021, the National Heritage Board (NHB) inked an agreement with Supermama Store Pte Ltd (Supermama) to appoint the local outfit as its retail partner for ACM and the National Museum. Founded in 2010, Supermama is a Singapore design and lifestyle goods brand which produces and sells locally designed homeware and souvenirs, ranging from signature cobalt blue and white porcelain collection to contemporary tableware.



3 Bernard Tan, Deputy Director of the Retail and Merchandising Division at NHB, said, “We are delighted to embark on a long-term partnership with one of our finest local retail flagships that proudly champions Singaporean design. We are looking to work together with Supermama to rally local creatives to create tangible reminders of our shared Singaporean identity, and will be embarking on various projects – collectively and individually – that will distinctly express the rich artistic heritage of Singapore and the region.”

4 Edwin Low, the founder of Supermama, said: “We are extremely excited to come on board as our national museums’ retail partner. Since our inception in 2010, Supermama has been taking a keen interest in capturing and translating aspects of Singapore’s diverse heritage into design and craft. We have already been working with local designers, illustrators and artists to create a body of work that has resonated with many Singaporeans, but we believe that working with the museums can provide us with an even richer context to develop new products which can reflect our roots and culture more deeply. Ultimately, the museum stores are extensions of the museums, and our hope is to be able to enrich the museum-going experience and offer even more meaningfully designed products to both Singaporeans and visitors.”

5 As the retail partner of ACM and the National Museum, Supermama will not only retail its own merchandise but will also develop and jointly design co-branded retail merchandise inspired by Singapore’s National Collection, on a royalty-free arrangement. Upcoming projects include a pop-up showcase titled *Takumi Next* (working title) held in conjunction with ACM’s *Life in Edo | Russel Wong in Kyoto* exhibition, that spotlights next-generation traditional craftsmen from Japan. Another project slated

for next year is *Souvenirs from Singapore* (working title), a collaborative product line aimed at deliberating the future of souvenirs in a post-pandemic world.

6 Supermama will also work closely with NHB to jointly develop programmes at the museums to support our exhibitions and festivals, such as customised workshops. MUSEUM LABEL and Supermama are also working towards organising an annual festival revolving around ceramicware and the art of ceramic making, with the first *Of Cups and Crafts* (working title) planned to be held in end-2022, which will bring together local ceramicists and feature bespoke art objects created by local creatives.

7 NHB will continue to design and create MUSEUM LABEL merchandise, inspired by Singapore's National Collection. These merchandise will be retailed at Supermama, The Museum Store in a *shop-in-shop*¹ format. It recently released a range of merchandise inspired by the iconic *William Farquhar Collection of Natural History Drawings*, with lifestyle items such as canvas tote bags, name card holders, watches and more featuring motifs based on the watercolour drawings of the flora and fauna of the Malay Peninsula. Another new product line inspired by ACM's trade and export wares is also in the pipeline.

8 Chung May Khuen, Director of National Museum of Singapore, said: "We warmly welcome Supermama to be part of our National Museum family, and look forward to collaborations with our homegrown creatives to co-present the museum's rich collection as meaningful and memorable keepsakes. The exciting line-up of projects are wonderful opportunities to invite thoughtful conversations on Singapore's identity and history. The redesigned space will allow a seamless experience in engaging visitors as they extend their visit to the museum into the Supermama store."

9 Kennie Ting, Director of ACM and Peranakan Museum, said, "As Singapore's national museum of Asian antiquities and decorative art, ACM champions aesthetic excellence, and we celebrate Asia and Singapore's talented community of artisans, designers and craftspeople. With Supermama on board, ACM looks forward to a new museum retail experience, and new lines of merchandise grounded in Singapore's pan-Asian cultural roots, while furthering innovation in the space of tradition. I invite everyone to safely visit the ACM and its new store to enjoy and be inspired by our collection and the merchandise on offer."

¹ A term used in retail when the brand owner takes space in another retailer's store and fits it out to provide selling space to show its products.

Celebrate National Day with us

10 In celebration of the two new shop openings and National Day, museum-goers who shop at Supermama, The Museum Store between 9 to 31 August 2021 stand to receive Singapore-themed gifts from Supermama or MUSEUM LABEL, while stocks last!²

Visit our new museum stores at:

- **ACM Learning Gallery, Level 1** (1 Empress Place. Singapore 179555)
- **National Museum of Singapore Concourse Gallery, Level 1** (93 Stamford Road. Singapore 178897)

Please refer to:

- **Annex A:** Project Highlights for MUSEUM LABEL and Supermama
- **Annex B:** Newly launched and upcoming MUSEUM LABEL collections

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For media enquiries, please contact:

Fiona Mei Robinson

Mobile: 8138 3650

Email: fiona.robinson@tateanzur.com

Cherell Soon

Mobile: 8102 9131

Email: cherell.soon@tateanzur.com

² with minimum purchases of \$20, \$30, or \$50.

About MUSEUM LABEL

In 2010, National Heritage Board established MUSEUM LABEL to create cultural products inspired by Singapore's National Collection. Through vivid storytelling, relatable cultural experiences, and close collaboration with our community and partners, MUSEUM LABEL gives life to Singaporean heritage, art and culture and special exhibitions through design-centric merchandise.

The brand was named one of the World's Coolest Museum Gift Shops by Travel+Leisure magazine. Its *Great Singapore Souvenirs* project clinched the Best Merchandise Design Award at the International Design and Communications Awards held in Stockholm (2013), reaffirming the work and the vision of the brand.

Taking inspirations from our museums, and our customs and practices, MUSEUM LABEL invites everyone to take home a slice of or shared Singaporean heritage and culture today!

About Supermama

Supermama is a Singapore design and lifestyle goods brand. Founded in 2010, they seek to provide a museum-like respite to the busyness of urban life. What started off as a couple's decision to steal time away from work for their young children has evolved into Singapore's go-to source for locally designed homeware and souvenirs.

The concept of giving is central in Supermama. We believe that good stories, good design and good crafts make good gifts. From our classic "Made in Arita Japan" blue white porcelain, to contemporary tableware, every piece Supermama produces is made by some of the finest craftsmen in Asia, whilst exhibiting a distinctly Singaporean design approach. In 2013, Supermama's signature cobalt blue and white porcelain collection titled "Singapore Icons" was awarded the President's Design Award - the foremost design accolade in Singapore.

Project Highlights for MUSEUM LABEL and Supermama

Here are some of the project highlights for both brands:

- **MUSEUM LABEL range inspired by the *William Farquhar Collection of Natural History Drawings***

Recently launched

National Museum of Singapore

The patterns in this product line-up are inspired by the National Museum's iconic *William Farquhar Collection of Natural History Drawings*. This set of 477 watercolour drawings of the flora and fauna of the Malay Peninsula was commissioned by William Farquhar in Melaka before he became the first Resident and Commandant of Singapore (1819 – 1823). Farquhar brought this set along with him when he left Singapore, and subsequently donated it to the Royal Asiatic Society in London in 1827. It was put up for auction in 1993 and purchased by Mr G.K. Goh, who donated the entire collection to the National Museum.

- **Takumi Next** (working title)

23 August to 19 September 2021

Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM)

Held in conjunction with the *Life in Edo | Russel Wong in Kyoto* exhibition, *Takumi Next* is a pop-up showcase by Supermama, its first museum-specific curated offering that spotlights the next-generation traditional craftsmen from Japan. The term *Takumi* (匠), refers to an “artisan” or “craftsman” in Japanese. As social norms and lifestyles evolve, we ponder the future of traditional crafts and the existential role of the craftsmen through a fine selection of everyday goods. Through the eyes of these craftsmen, you can get a glimpse into the inner workings of a nation, Japan's history and the industries that drive its economy.

- **Social Wares** (working title)

Late 2021 / Early 2022

National Museum

Porcelain, plates and pants. These objects seemingly serve only everyday functions, but they also shape how we socialise at dinner, and our perceptions of the users and their cultures. Such invisible outcomes can create more value than the objects' apparent attributes.

Designers must, therefore, keep in mind how their creations interact with people and the larger society. What kinds of conversation should we encourage among them? What social outcomes are we hoping for? In our five collections, *Social Wares* is an inclusive project by Supermama, where we explore the designers' role in society and the positive changes we can bring about.

- **MUSEUM LABEL range inspired by ACM's trade and export wares collections**

End 2021

ACM

For hundreds of years, Singapore has been at the crossroads of global trade, and a site of interaction for cultures, civilisations and goods from across the globe. Many works of art showcased in the museum's galleries, show global demand and evidence of shifting tastes as people move from region to region. Inspired by fascinating objects and their stories, MUSEUM LABEL will be creating a series patterns for our contemporary audiences that are applied onto functional lifestyle products of today.

- **Home(making)** (working title)

Early to Mid-2022

ACM

As working-from-home remains the default business norm, we see a proliferation of social chatter on homemaking in Singapore. MUSEUM LABEL's *Home(making)* project is an extension of ACM's #innovationintradition and #sgartisan initiatives, where we invite local creatives to co-create furniture, tableware and *objet d' arts* for our homes, inspired by the wealth of collection at the museum.

- **Communal Dining** (working title)

May 2022

National Museum

Communal Dining is a pop-up exhibition that celebrates Singapore's living hawker culture heritage – a unique reflection of our multicultural identity as a people and as a nation. MUSEUM LABEL partners the students and staff of Raffles College of Higher Education in the fields of Product Design, Interior Design, Graphic Design, Digital Media, Animation, Gaming, Jewellery Design and Fashion, to create designs celebrating the inscription of Singapore's Hawker Culture on UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Selected entries

created by the students will have the opportunity to have their designs materialise into museum merchandise.

- **Souvenirs from Singapore** (working title)

August 2022

National Museum

Souvenirs from Singapore is a collaborative project by MUSEUM LABEL and Supermama that deliberates the future of souvenirs in the post-pandemic world, where new behaviours and social norms are prevalent, such as the acquired practice to scan a QR code, the normalcy of working from home or the rise of the resident (domestic) tourists. The project introduces the concept of “everyday souvenirs” - objects created for everyday use within the context of the common Singapore home, as meaningful artefacts for keepsake.

- **Of Cups and Crafts** (working title)

End 2022

ACM

MUSEUM LABEL and Supermama aim to put together an annual festival revolving around ceramicware and the art of ceramic making. The first instalment of project aims to bring together ceramicists based in Singapore to interpret the wares we drink from and the way we drink. *Of Cups and Crafts* will feature bespoke art objects created by Singapore ceramists inspired by our drinking wares, as well as a ceramic market where cups designed by local creatives will be on sale at ACM.