

**MEDIA RELEASE**

*For immediate release*

**SINGAPORE'S NATIONAL COLLECTION INSPIRES AN ALL-NEW  
CONTEMPORARY MUSEUM MERCHANDISE**



*National Heritage Board partners ABRY to launch the **FABRICS OF SOCIETY: PRINTS & MOTIFS** capsule collection inspired by traditional patterns and visuals from Singapore's National Collection (images courtesy of ABRY).*

**Singapore, 7 February 2024** – The National Heritage Board (NHB) and ABRY, an award-winning global distributor and retailer of luxury, fashion and lifestyle brands, have partnered for the first time to create a contemporary capsule collection – *FABRICS OF SOCIETY: PRINTS & MOTIFS*, inspired by artefacts in the National Collection of Singapore. Designed in Singapore by Singaporean artist and print matter designer Theseus Chan, the

collaboration aims to infuse meaning and celebration into history, while reimagining Singapore's National Collection for contemporary appreciation.

2 The partnership aligns with one of NHB's *Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0*'s key focuses under the *Heritage x Industry* track, which aims to cultivate a vibrant heritage ecosystem that connects industry partners, as well as increase accessibility to and awareness of our National Collection amongst Singaporeans and international visitors. Partnering with ABRY enables NHB to showcase our collections and their stories both locally and internationally through cultural merchandising. In addition, by leveraging ABRY's strong industry connections and overseas distribution and retail network, the collection can bring Singapore's heritage beyond our shores and to a larger audience.

3 Ms Chang Hwee Nee, Chief Executive Officer, NHB, said: "As the custodian of Singapore's heritage, we hope to make our National Collection – a source of pride for us Singaporeans – more accessible to all through cultural merchandising. This collaboration raises awareness of our National Collection by creating contemporary items that can be integrated and enjoyed in our daily lives. Through our partnership with ABRY and their extensive retail network, we look forward to sharing the richness of Singapore's heritage both within and beyond our shores."

4 Ms Adriana Lim Escano, Founder & Chief Executive Officer, ABRY, said: "The name "National Collection", by itself, is imbued with much richness, reverence, stature, expectation, and love and duty. It certainly gives us great pride and honour to be given the opportunity to deep dive into our nation's treasured collection to discover and uncover so many gems, with which we have used to create beloved gifts, objects of virtue and future heirlooms."

#### About *FABRICS OF SOCIETY: PRINTS & MOTIFS*

5 The capsule collection brings to life a harmonious blend of tradition and modernity, reflecting Singapore's unique history and its evolution into a vibrant, contemporary society. Each piece of merchandise was inspired by objects from the National Collection as their creative foundation, such as traditional garments, fabrics and photographs. Some of the artefacts

featured include Peranakan wedding cloud collars, *batik* reinterpreting a classic European fairy tale, traditional *saris* and a dragon robe from the Qing dynasty. Kaleidoscopic motifs and prints from each artefact were mirrored onto the merchandise through bold interpretation, reimagined colours and delightful juxtaposition.

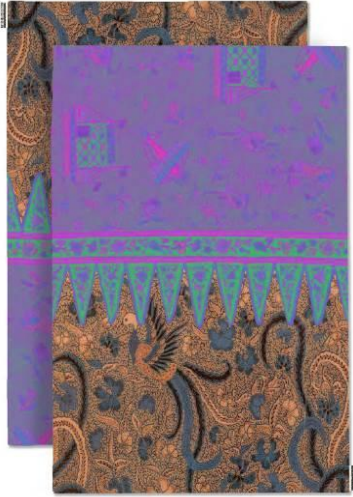
6 Theseus Chan said: “The idea was to capture the spirit of the past and infuse it with the energy of today. The bold, modern colour palette used both contrasts and complements the collection’s traditional roots. This not only revitalises the imagery but also aligns it with current artistic trends, appealing to a diverse audience. The colours are selected to echo the dynamism of Singapore’s culture, creating a striking visual language that speaks to both heritage and modernity. This artistic strategy ensures that the cultural narratives embedded within the National Collection continue to evolve and resonate in today’s global context.”

Tea Towels from <i>FABRICS OF SOCIETY: PRINTS &amp; MOTIFS</i> collection	Items in National Collection which inspired the design
	 <p data-bbox="803 1686 1227 1822"><b><i>Kantha Embroidery with Floral Motifs</i></b> West Bengal, India 20th century 2013-00525 Collection of Indian Heritage Centre</p>





National  
Heritage  
Board



**Batik skirtcloth with birds, boats and aeroplanes motifs**

*Pekalongan, northern coast of Java*

1960s

2010-03486

*Collection of Asian Civilisations Museum*



**Malay batik sarong**

*Singapore*

*Mid-late 20th century*

2000-07881

*Collection of the National Museum of Singapore*

7 Ms Lim Escano added: “Our aim is to open both our and our fellow countrymen's eyes to the richness and diversity of our culture and heritage, so we can come to love and cherish what has fundamentally become our collective cultural DNA. It is for this reason that we have named our first capsule the *FABRICS OF SOCIETY*. Like the breathtaking *batik*, *saris*, silk garments and accessories which we have based our capsule on, the nature of these textile artefacts illuminates and symbolises the interwoven characteristic of our contemporary society. We are also working on presenting *National Collection x Museummarket* on the world stage and aim to fly our flag high with pride.”

8 The *FABRICS OF SOCIETY: PRINTS & MOTIFS* collection features 14 categories of items such as fans, coasters, trays, card holders and tote bags. The full collection is currently available online, and will soon be stocked in stores both locally and globally. Please refer to <https://abry.global/pages/national-collection-by-museum-market> for more information on the retail channels and stocklist.

9 *FABRICS OF SOCIETY: PRINTS & MOTIFS* is the first capsule collection from NHB and ABRY, and more capsule collections are in the pipeline.

Please refer to:

- **Annex A** for the full merchandise catalogue for *FABRICS OF SOCIETY: PRINTS & MOTIFS* and pricelist
- **Annex B** for the details of the National Collection used in the partnership
- **Annex C** for more information on artist and designer Theseus Chan

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### **About the National Heritage Board**

The National Heritage Board (NHB) was formed on 1 August 1993. As the custodian of Singapore's heritage, NHB is responsible for telling the Singapore story, sharing the Singaporean experience and imparting our Singapore spirit.

NHB's mission is to preserve and celebrate the shared heritage of our diverse communities, for the purpose of education, nation-building and cultural understanding. It manages the national museums and heritage institutions, safeguards and promotes intangible cultural heritage, and sets policies relating to heritage sites, monuments and the national collection. Through the national collection, NHB curates heritage programmes and presents exhibitions to connect the past, present and future generations of Singaporeans. NHB is a statutory board under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. Please visit [www.nhb.gov.sg](http://www.nhb.gov.sg) for more information.

### **About ABRY**

Dynamic home-grown fashion and lifestyle retailer and distributor ABRY creates innovative concepts and models of work that inspire infectious hope, affirm every individual, nurture talent and enrich communities.


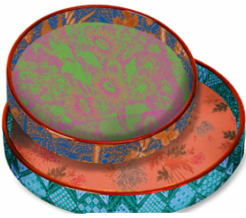



ABRY boasts collaborations with over 30 global brands, including SHANG XIA, Thomas Sabo, Les Néréides, and runs The Gallery Store by ABRY at National Gallery Singapore. ABRY's merchandise is carried in top-tier hotels and retail malls such as Marina Bay Sands, Takashimaya Department Store and ArtScience Museum. A winner of the 2020 and 2022 Champions of Good award, ABRY is known for its social impact with marginalised communities, including single mothers, special needs and the elderly, while delivering a track record of purpose and collaborative commercial sustainability.



**Annex A**

	<p>Auspicious Packets – Pack of 8 \$59.90 Launch: February 2024</p>
	<p>Noren, 100% Linen \$250.00 Launch: February 2024</p>
	<p>Tea Towel, 100% Linen \$38.90 Launch: February 2024</p>
	<p>Tote bag, 100% Cotton \$79.90 Launch: February 2024</p>

	<p>Scarf \$   TBC Launch: February 2024</p>
	<p>Fans \$   TBC Launch: first quarter 2024</p>
	<p>Postcard Box Set \$   TBC Launch: first quarter 2024</p>
	<p>Coasters \$   TBC Launch: first quarter 2024</p>



	<p>Rectangle Trays \$   TBC Launch: first quarter 2024</p>
	<p>Round Trays \$   TBC Launch: first quarter 2024</p>
	<p>Plates \$   TBC Launch: first quarter 2024</p>
	<p>Mini Baskets \$   TBC Launch: first quarter 2024</p>
	<p>Card Holders \$   TBC Launch: first quarter 2024</p>

	<p>Clutches \$   TBC Launch: first quarter 2024</p>
	<p>Enamel Bookmarks \$   TBC Launch: first quarter 2024</p>



## **Annex B**

*Please refer to the separate PDF file.*

**About Theseus Chan**

A Singaporean artist and print matter designer, Theseus Chan was the first Visual Communication designer in Singapore to be conferred Designer of the Year at the President's Design Award in 2006. In 2012, he was also the first Singaporean designer to have a solo exhibition at the prestigious Ginza Graphic Gallery in Tokyo and, eventually, the first Singaporean elected to be a member of AGI Alliance Graphique Internationale.

Theseus has many international accolades, including D&AD Yellow Pencils, New York Art Directors Club (ADC) and the Tokyo TDC Awards. He started WERK Magazine in 2000, a magazine that garnered international acclaim for pushing the boundaries of publication design. In 2020, Theseus was one of four overseas artists selected to produce artworks for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. This year, he was one of the 11 international artists to present work at Kunsthaus Göttingen, Germany, for the "*Printing Futures - Art for Tomorrow*" exhibition in conjunction with documenta fifteen held in Kassel. His work is in the permanent collection of ggg (Ginza Graphic Gallery) in Tokyo, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum in New York, and M+, Museum of Visual Culture in Hong Kong.

*"Theseus Chan is a rare designer who can radiate futuristic sensibility from printed media and who is always ready to embrace unprecedented ideas and inspirations."* – Kenya Hara