

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

JOIN US FOR A FUN-FILLED CLOSING FESTIVAL BEFORE THE TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF THE SUN YAT SEN NANYANG MEMORIAL HALL FOR RESTORATION WORKS AND GALLERY REFRESH



Singapore, 19 August 2024 – The storied grounds of the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (SYSNMH) is set to close from 16 September 2024 till 2027 as the National Monument will be undergoing restoration works – more than a decade since its last major redevelopment in 2011. As a “final” hurrah before the temporary closure, SYSNMH invites all to immerse in Singapore Chinese culture and heritage with ***Wan Qing Closing Fest***, which includes the Memorial Hall’s signature ***Wan Qing Mid-Autumn Festival***.

Rejuvenating the Memorial Hall and its Galleries

2 SYSNMH, also fondly known as Wan Qing Yuan, has played various pivotal roles throughout its history. Built in 1902, its double-storey villa became the residence and base for Chinese revolutionary Sun Yat Sen who was instrumental in overthrowing the Qing dynasty to establish a Chinese republic in 1912. Three uprisings in Qing China were devised and launched at the villa. SYSNMH has also established itself as a cultural destination, popular especially amongst families, through its well-loved cultural festivals such as the *Wan Qing Festival of Spring*, *Wan Qing Dragon Boat Festival* and *Wan Qing Mid-Autumn Festival*, amongst others. In 1994, it was gazetted as a National Monument and established as a heritage institution managed by the National Heritage Board (NHB) when it reopened in 2011.



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3 Mr Winston Lim, General Manager of SYSNMH, said: “Since its last major redevelopment in 2011, the Memorial Hall has committed itself to the celebration and promotion of Singapore Chinese culture and engaging diverse audiences through vibrant offerings made possible through collaborations with our partners. As we prepare for the upcoming closure for the Memorial Hall’s restoration which will mark the next chapter in the historic building’s story, we are excited to gather everyone together for our *Wan Qing Closing Fest* celebration. While we will miss welcoming people to our lawn and into our galleries, we are excited about what lies ahead and look forward to welcoming visitors again when we reopen.”

4 During the closure, the building will be upkept through restoration and repair works, as part of ongoing efforts to preserve the National Monument. These works include restoration treatments to the Memorial Hall’s facade; artisanal works to the ornamental features of the building, as well as necessary repairs for areas such as the roof. These are important in safeguarding our built heritage against physical deterioration beyond the regular maintenance works, and will further enhance the experience for visitors.

5 In addition, the Memorial Hall will use this time to revamp its permanent galleries with the enhancement of gallery content and rotation of artefacts, to remain relevant to visitors and reinforce its place as an important marker of history as well as a heritage institution.

Transforming the SYSNMH Grounds with a Celebration of Legends and Legacy

6 *Wan Qing Closing Fest* will take place across the weekends of 7 to 8 September and 14 to 15 September, spotlighting Singapore Chinese culture and traditions through a line-up of performances, activities, workshops and tours for visitors of all ages. Visitors can also kickstart the celebrations earlier from 20 August with the light-up of the outdoor lantern installation, titled *Moonlit Legends*, which will transform the Memorial Hall into a celestial wonderland. Featuring legendary characters associated with the Mid-Autumn Festival – the elegant moon goddess Chang’e, the immortal woodcutter Wu Gang and the lovable jade rabbits, this year is the 10th edition of the festive installation and covers the largest area of SYSNMH’s premises to date. As part of the closing celebrations, admission to the Memorial Hall is free for all from 20 August.



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7 Programme highlights include *Secrets in the Moon Palace*, a mystery puzzle adventure set in SYSNMH's galleries where participants will unravel cryptic clues to save the day as they undertake the mission of ensuring the safe return of Chang'e and her royal entourage to the Moon Palace. For those looking to immerse deeper into Singapore Chinese culture, *Timeless Elegance* will offer them the opportunity to dress up in beautiful *hanfu* (Chinese traditional wear) and capture memories with family and friends using the Memorial Hall as a backdrop. They can choose from a photoshoot-style studio setting on the first weekend or opt for a rent-and-roam experience to explore the Memorial Hall grounds freely in the traditional attire.

8 *Wan Qing Mid-Autumn Festival 2024* will anchor the closing festival's second weekend with an array of themed activities, including drop-in craft stations, performances on the lawn and a festive food fair. Another highlight for the second weekend is the premiere of an original Chinese skit by local playwright Teo Pei Si inspired by the Memorial Hall's legacy and upcoming closure. Titled *Moonlit Memories*, the skit unfolds in a realm where mythical beings stumble upon a mysterious treasure box amidst unexpected renovations of the Moon Palace, sparking a quest for its secrets. Please see **Annex A** for the full list of programmes as part of *Wan Qing Closing Fest*.

Continuation of SYSNMH's Offerings

9 The restoration of SYSNMH and revamp of its galleries are projected to span approximately 2.5 years, with the reopening estimated for 2027. During its closure, SYSNMH will continue to engage Singaporeans through offsite programmes and outreach initiatives such as travelling exhibitions, festival events and joint programmes held with partners, as part of continued efforts to spotlight Singapore Chinese culture and heritage to Singaporeans. Members of the public can stay tuned to more updates at www.sysnmh.org.sg and SYSNMH's Facebook and Instagram (@sysnmh).

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For media enquiries, please contact:

Say Hua Lee

Jiaxuan Seah

Tate Anzur

Tate Anzur

9668 4605

9617 4343

sayhua.lee@tateanzur.com

jiaxuan.seah@tateanzur.com



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About the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall

Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (SYSNMH), a heritage institution owned by Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry and managed by the National Heritage Board, traces Dr Sun's revolutionary activities in the Southeast Asian region and highlights the impact of the 1911 Chinese Revolution on Singapore.

The SYSNMH re-opened to the public on 9 October 2011. The Memorial Hall features a storyline that introduces key community leaders in the early 20th century; highlights Nanyang as a base for Revolution; and explores the impact and influences of the 1911 Chinese Revolution on the Chinese Singaporean community. It will also continue to promote the understanding of our history through research and publication; work with the community in outreach and education programmes as well as organise Singapore Chinese cultural events for all Singaporeans and visitors.

Please visit www.sysnmh.org.sg for more information.

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 for more information.