# OUR SG HERITAGE PLAN

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## **CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE** CREATING A LEGACY FOR OUR FUTURE

Singapore may be a young nation, but our roots go back at least 700 years to the 14th century. Our history is closely tied to longstanding maritime trade links in the region and beyond. Even till today, our position at the crossroads between East and West continues to bring people of different cultures to Singapore, contributing to and evolving our vibrant and unique multicultural heritage.

Amidst a more dynamic and fluid global environment, and the emergence of new fault lines alongside visceral differences of race, language and religion, it has never been more important to strengthen our cohesion, resilience and identity as a society and nation. With the 200th anniversary of the founding of modern Singapore in 2019, it is also an opportune time to look back at our past, and consider the lessons that we can learn and apply for the future. Through a more in-depth understanding of our shared heritage, and active participation in keeping this alive, we will be better placed to seize opportunities to progress and prosper as a people and nation.

I am encouraged that more Singaporeans are learning about our culture and roots, as well as initiating heritage or cultural projects on their own. Our museums and heritage institutions saw an all-time high visitorship of over 8.36 million in 2016, while participation in heritage activities that year was over 6.47 million. These statistics point towards an increasing awareness and interest in our heritage, and provide a firm foundation for us to build on into the future. Our SG Heritage Plan is the first master plan of its kind to safeguard Singapore's heritage. It includes an initial, five-year strategic roadmap for 2018 to 2022. The Heritage Plan has also been co-developed with the community. Around 34,000 Singaporeans have shared their views, and helped to shape the Heritage Plan's policies and programmes. This is a demonstration of our shared commitment to better protecting and promoting the heritage and stories of Singapore, and making these even more accessible to all Singaporeans.

Our SG Heritage Plan sets us on the path to realising our vision of creating a caring and cohesive society, where pride in our nation will take us confidently into the future. I encourage all Singaporeans to actively contribute to the preservation, evolution, and transmission of this heritage to future generations.

#### **Grace Fu** *Minister for Culture, Community and Youth*

\* Cultural Statistics 2017 denotes statistics gathered for the period of January to December 2016.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Singapore, our heritage can be found all around us and experienced in our daily lives. Heritage is embodied in places such as historic buildings, sites and museums, objects such as artworks and artefacts, as well as practices such as festive celebrations, traditional crafts and food offerings.

Singapore's rich history and diverse multicultural heritage are defining traits of our country, and our identity as Singaporeans. Our heritage is what we have inherited from our forefathers, what inspires us in our lives today, and what we need to treasure and pass on to future generations.



# **OUR SG HERITAGE PLAN**

Our SG Heritage Plan is the first master plan for the future of Singapore's heritage and museum sector. The plan outlines the broad strategies and initiatives for the sector from 2018 to 2022 and beyond. It also takes into consideration the current achievements and developments in the sector.

#### Our SG Heritage Plan seeks to:

- Articulate the value and importance of heritage for Singaporeans, especially its role in connecting communities, strengthening identity and belonging, and improving our quality of life.
- Take stock of our heritage efforts in the past few years, highlighting the good work that has been done, but also noting the gaps that have yet to be addressed.
- Share our plans for the road ahead, so that people are aware of the efforts being made and future generations. how they can get involved.

# **CREATING THE PLAN TOGETHER**

#### ENGAGEMENT **SESSIONS**

When developing Our SG Heritage Plan, the After these focus group sessions, we sought views from the National Heritage Board organised over 30 focus wider public. We set up a dedicated website, oursgheritage.sg, in group sessions and consulted more than 730 December 2017 and launched an exhibition, which travelled around participants. Coming from diverse backgrounds, Singapore in January and February 2018. 34,000 people visited the the participants included heritage experts, members exhibition and website, and more than 7,300 provided their views of non-governmental organisations, academics, and feedback. This input helped to shape the vision and strategies practitioners, museum-goers, volunteers, educators, outlined in this report. youths and students. The input we received was crucial in the formulation of our heritage strategies and helped us to identify our focus areas over the next few years.

The plan was developed in response to the growing interest in heritage and museums among Singaporeans, and the increasing number of people who wish to play an active role in protecting and promoting our heritage. It was also formulated to deal with challenges facing heritage preservation in a globalised world with rapid changes to our social and economic environment.

Through the plan, we hope to foster pride in our heritage and in what makes us Singaporean, build a more cohesive and resilient society, and protect and promote Singapore's heritage so that it remains valued, and continues to be treasured by

#### WEBSITE & **ROVING EXHIBITION**







## WHAT WE HOPE TO ACHIEVE

# **OUR VISION**

Our rich and multicultural heritage anchors our Singaporean identity.

We aspire to create a cohesive society where we value and engage with our heritage.

This makes us proud of our nation and our connections to the world, and takes us confidently into the future.



#### The Vision of Our SG Heritage Plan will be achieved through initiatives grouped in four pillars:



Our places where we live, work and play in hold many shared memories, and we must care for them so that our stories can be passed on to future generations.

We will explore ways to enable people to better appreciate and understand our past by highlighting heritage in everyday spaces. We will also find ways to retain the history and memories of these places. while recognising that land is scarce in Singapore and there are competing needs.



#### **OUR TREASURES**

Our museums and their collections tell the story of Singapore, Asia and the world, and enable us to discover more about ourselves and the world we live in.

We will work on making these precious artefacts and institutions more inclusive and accessible to everyone by developing engaging programmes and reaching out to diverse communities. We will also find ways to better safeguard Singapore's rich archaeological heritage.

WHAT THE PLAN WILL DO



Our traditions and way of life are what make us a multicultural Singapore, and we must cherish these so that they will live on.

We will introduce initiatives to safeguard and promote our intangible cultural heritage, which comprises traditions, rituals, crafts, expressions, knowledge and skills. We will also document our intangible cultural heritage and facilitate its transmission to the next generation, while allowing it to grow and adapt with the times.



#### **OUR COMMUNITIES**

Our heritage that binds us is the legacy we share, and we can each play a part in shaping it.

We will strengthen our partnerships with communities, heritage groups and volunteers, and encourage greater ownership of Singapore's heritage. We will find new ways to empower our partners, and strive to reach out to new audiences through technology and digital platforms.

This report is the first edition of Our SG Heritage Plan that will shape the work for Singapore's heritage and museum sector from 2018 to 2022. After that, it will be reviewed to respond to the desires and aspirations of Singaporeans for our heritage, and future trends that may emerge.

# VALUE AND IMPORTANCE **OF HERITAGE**



# WHAT IS HERITAGE?

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has defined heritage as the legacy of physical artefacts and intangible attributes of a group, community or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations.

For the purpose of Our SG Heritage Plan, we have defined heritage as comprising two broad categories - tanaible heritage and intangible cultural heritage.

#### **TANGIBLE HERITAGE**



Tangible Heritage includes buildings, historic sites, monuments and landscapes that serve as physical reminders of our history and culture.

They are shaped by past events; economic, social and natural environments; as well as the contributions of individuals and communities. They invoke special memories and remind us of who we are and where we came from. In addition, tangible heritage includes objects that institutions and people create and/or collect. These objects, which form an important part of a nation's history and cultural identity, include artefacts, artworks, documentary records, photographs, films and other objects of significant historical value.

#### **INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**



Intangible Cultural Heritage comprises the practices, events, expressions, knowledge, skills and trades which communities recognise as part of their cultural heritage.

These different forms of heritage are passed down from one generation to another. Intangible cultural heritage, which includes our traditions and living expressions, will continue to evolve with the times and be constantly reshaped by communities in response to changes in their environment.



#### **TANGIBLE HERITAGE**





Artefects and Artworks



Books and Documents

Film, Photographs and Oral History Records



Archaeological Sites



**Historic Parks and Gardens** 

#### **INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

**Buildings**, Sites and Landscapes



Maps

**Oral Traditions and Expressions** 



**Knowledge and Practices** Concerning Nature and the Universe



**Performing Arts** 



**Traditional Craftsmanship** 



Social Practices, Rituals and Festive Events



Food Heritage

# WHAT IS SINGAPORE'S HERITAGE?

In Singapore, our heritage can be found all around us, and experienced as we go about our daily lives. From stately historical buildings, well-loved neighbourhood icons and museum artefacts, to festive celebrations, performing arts and food offerings, Singapore's rich and diverse multicultural heritage is one of the defining traits of our country, and of our identity as Singaporeans.



^ Singapore Botanic Gardens Bandstand, image courtesy of the Singapore Botanic Gardens

Our tangible heritage can be found all around Singapore. Singapore's intangible cultural heritage comes in the We have one UNESCO World Heritage Site – the Singapore form of our shared stories, knowledge, traditions and Botanic Gardens, 72 National Monuments, over 7,000 **practices.** It can be seen in the tapestry of cultures that conserved buildings and many different heritage trails. make up Singapore, such as our colourful festivals, foods These represent the rich architectural, historical, natural and vibrant array of traditional performing arts. and cultural heritage of Singapore and add to our country's distinctive identity. They give us a sense of our history and memory even as we move into the future.

Our tangible heritage is also embodied in our collections At the national level, we have heritage that defines the of historic documents, artefacts and artworks. These Singapore story, the Singaporean experience and our include objects about Singapore's history at the National Singapore spirit. However, just as important is the heritage Museum of Singapore, artefacts from our ancestral cultures shared by groups of people at the community level, as well at the Asian Civilisations Museum, artworks from Singapore as by friends and family at the personal level. and the region at the Singapore Art Museum and National Gallery Singapore, philatelic materials at the Singapore Philatelic Museum, publications, documents and oral history records at the National Library Board and National Archives of Singapore, as well as community collections at the Peranakan Museum and the heritage institutions comprising Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall, Malay Heritage Centre and Indian Heritage Centre.





^ Singapore Symphony Orchestra at the Singapore Botanic Gardens, *image courtesy of the Singapore Botanic Gardens* 

# WHAT IS THE VALUE **OF HERITAGE?**

Heritage is the sum total of our memories, experiences, records, artefacts and traditions that we have inherited from our past.

On a personal level, it contributes to who and what we are. On a collective level, it is responsible for how we came to be as a nation and as a people. Heritage also provides the building blocks for our nation-building efforts, and forms the foundation of what we can become.

Heritage plays a key role in building our national, community and personal identities, because it instils in us a sense of place and belonging, and expands the term "Singapore" beyond our geographical boundaries to encompass our way of life and a place we call home.





Heritage is also important because it brings together different groups of people from diverse backgrounds, such as families, seniors, youth and new citizens, and unites them through shared experiences.

It encourages us to put ourselves in the shoes of those with different histories and cultures, and helps us to The result is a more empathetic and cohesive society.

These common threads and shared experiences, which could include the trying times we have endured, Singapore's remarkable transformation, the physical changes to our living environment etc., can unite us in times of difficulty and make us more resilient as a nation. They can also inspire and shape the ways we meet new challenges, and help us to adapt and survive as the world around us changes.

#### WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Our SG Heritage Plan builds on the achievements and addresses the gaps in previous arts and culture master plans, which concentrated primarily on building up different aspects of the arts, culture and heritage sector in Singapore.

Singapore's heritage and cultural development started in the late 1980s and 1990s when the government, after successfully building the economy in the postindependence years, turned its attention to more aspirational aspects of nationbuilding, including creating a vibrant arts and culture scene, as well as a unique cityscape characterised by its heritage.

## **ADVISORY COUNCIL ON** CULTURE AND THE ARTS

The formation of the Advisory Council on Culture and the Arts (ACCA) in 1989 was a watershed in the development of Singapore's emerging cultural identity. It proposed a vision of Singapore as a culturally vibrant society where people were well-informed, creative, sensitive and gracious. The council's recommendations paved the way for initial capital investments in museum and heritage infrastructure, most notably, the formation of the National Heritage Board from the merger of the former National Archives, the former National Museum and the former Oral History Department in 1993.

# **RENAISSANCE CITY PLAN**

Some ten years after the formation of the ACCA, a second series of reviews called the Renaissance City Plan (RCP) were undertaken. RCP I to III aimed to transform Singapore into a "distinctive global city for arts and culture", making Singapore an attractive place to live, work and play in; contribute to the knowledge and learning of every Singaporean; and provide a cultural ballast for nation-building efforts. Building upon the recommendations of the ACCA, RCP's strategies were focused on software, and led to greater emphasis on the creation of original content, improvement of industry development programmes, as well as a greater focus on community outreach initiatives.



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#### С **ARTS AND CULTURE** STRATEGIC REVIEW

2010 and still ongoing today, shifts the focus for the next phase of master plans. Broadly, it aims to build on preceding of our cultural development to our people and society. The 2025 vision of the ACSR is "A nation of cultured and gracious people, at heritage-focused recommendations, such as efforts to home with our heritage and proud of our Singaporean identity". Under the ACSR, arts and culture will become a fundamental part of being Singaporean; Singaporeans will be able to relate to and draw from Singapore's past to take a stake in Singapore's future; and everyone will be able to enjoy and participate in arts and digitalisation. and culture.

#### D OUR SG **HERITAGE PLAN**

Finally, the Arts and Culture Strategic Review (ACSR), initiated in Our SG Heritage Plan is the next step in this unfolding series arts and culture master plans and provide more targeted, protect Singapore's tangible and archaeological heritage; strengthening the accessibility of our museums; safeguarding of our intangible cultural heritage; and enhancing our engagement efforts through the use of technology



Α **UNESCO WORLD** HERITAGE SITE В **MORE THAN** 50 MUSEUMS ISLAND-WIDE E **MORE THAN** CONSERVED **BUILDINGS AND** PRECINCTS



# **ABOUT OUR SG** HERITAGE PLAN

"Heritage is not something static, lying hidden to be discovered, admired and conserved. It is a part of the lives of a people, it shapes the ways a people meet new challenges and helps them adapt and to survive."

- Mr Lee Kuan Yew

Founding Prime Minister of Singapore *Chinese Heritage Centre's* 10th Anniversary Fundraising Dinner, July 2005

Our heritage forms an integral part of our national identity.

Historic buildings and sites, our urban landscape, as well as our festive celebrations and food, tell stories of where we come from, who we are today, and guides us into the future.

At the same time, we recognise that our heritage is fragile. Economic, social and environmental factors, as well as competing needs will continue to generate pressures on

# CHANGES IN OUR SOCIAL

it is vital that we know our history as a nation, and take pride in what we have achieved together as a people, so and opportunities.





advocacy groups.

preservation and promotion of our heritage.

resources and collaborate with partners to ensure that our mind, the development of Our SG Heritage Plan commenced in heritage can and will be protected and celebrated with a deep late 2016.

our diverse and rich heritage including both our built heritage, as well as the traditions and cultural practices that we hold dear.

Recent trends in the heritage landscape have presented both challenges as well as opportunities for us to do more to protect and to deepen our understanding and appreciation of Singapore's heritage.

## WHAT IS OUR **HERITAGE PLAN?**

Our SG Heritage Plan is the first master plan for Singapore's heritage and museum sector which outlines the broad strategies and initiatives for the sector over the next five years (2018 to 2022) and beyond.



It builds on the efforts of past and current cultural master plans including the Advisory Council on Culture and the Arts, Renaissance City Plan I to III, and Arts and Culture Strategic Review.

Through the plan, we hope to chart strategies and initiatives that will raise awareness and pride in our heritage and in what makes us Singaporean. This will help us in strengthening our identity, improve our quality of life, and foster our sense of belonging.

When developing the plan, we have taken stock of our past heritage efforts, engaged our stakeholders and members of the public on their views, and incorporated their suggestions.

This report serves as a map of the road ahead, and a reflection of our commitment toward the safeguarding of Singapore's heritage. We hope that our partners will join us in this journey and work with us to protect and promote our heritage so that we can leave behind a legacy for future generations.



#### **OUR VISION**

Our rich and multicultural heritage anchors our Singaporean identity.

We aspire to create a cohesive society where we value and engage with our heritage.

This makes us proud of our nation and our connections to the world, and takes us confidently into the future.



## **OVERVIEW OF** THE FOUR PILLARS



#### Our Places refer to Singapore's historic buildings, structures, sites, landscapes and precincts.

Our SG Heritage Plan sets out recommendations to further protect and promote Singapore's tangible heritage by improving our research and planning efforts, and outlines efforts to encourage people to appreciate our past and the history of different places in Singapore. It also highlights how we will work with partners to develop ways to commemorate different aspects of our tangible heritage, while acknowledging the need to balance heritage preservation with future



#### OUR TREASURES

Our Treasures refer to over 200,000 artworks and artefacts in our National Collection. and the museums and institutions which house these objects.

Our SG Heritage Plan aims to safeguard our archaeological treasures, make our museums more accessible to Singaporeans, commemorate key milestones in our history through projects such as the Founders' Memorial and Singapore Bicentennial celebrations, develop exhibitions that reach out to diverse communities, and transform our museums into inclusive spaces.

Our SG Heritage Plan comprises four major pillars, each coverina a key area of Singapore's heritage.



#### **OUR CULTURES**

Our Cultures cover Singapore's intangible cultural heritage, which comprises the traditions. rituals, crafts, expressions, knowledge and skills that we practise and pass on from generation to generation.

Our SG Heritage Plan will seek to safeguard these practices, encourage the transmission of our intangible cultural heritage to future generations, and increase public awareness and appreciation of our intangible cultural heritage, while allowing it room to evolve and adapt to changes in our society.



#### **OUR COMMUNITIES**

Our Communities encompass the groups and individuals who protect, promote and celebrate Singapore's heritage.

Our SG Heritage Plan will focus on extending and enhancing our engagement efforts with these communities through the use of technology and digitalisation. It will also include efforts to encourage co-creation of content, empower our partners, support more ground-up projects, as well as provide new platforms and volunteering opportunities for people to contribute to heritage causes.

# WHAT WE HAVE HEARD





Traditional performing arts

B

C

18%

8%

**I7%** Traditional trades and crafts

Folktales, myths and songs





# QUOTES FROM PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- from visitors to Our SG Heritage Plan Travelling Exhibition



"Safeguarding and promoting our heritage should definitely include the younger generation, through education or even through social media platforms. Stories, which are usually more captivating, could be shared through short videos. Besides, interactive exhibitions could be held at public spaces, or even at schools – places where people would frequently go."

"I would like to see more experiential and interactive programmes that make use of museum spaces better. The Night Festival is a great example and I recalled a night tour that was conducted at the National Museum of Singapore a long while back that took you to the spooky, less visited areas of the museum. Maybe even sleep-in camps for kids would make the museum a more fun and engaging place and space."











"I feel that intergenerational engagements are key in both promoting and safeguarding our heritage. Interest amongst the young must be piqued through new forms of media tools and the wealth of our heritage (traditions, stories, recipes, etc.) lies in our older generation whom we should actively engage to share/inspire. Bringing these groups together on a common platform is key!"

"In many ways, our daily life is already our heritage – we are shaped by our urban and social environments, and a key element of incorporating heritage in our daily lives is by engineering opportunities for recognising this. Ways of creating such touchstones could be through increasing awareness of historical places, but beyond that to increase sensitivity to the heritage that is around us. We need to create a society where heritage and history are available and attractive to the everyman, instead of making it the realm of the specialist."

"We have many different kinds of heritage amongst our different races but we have a shared heritage too, and the two are what bind us together. Experiencing each other's heritage is something that can bring us together even more, such as inviting friends and neighbours of different races to each other's festivals. Creating community events, as well as inviting the community to participate in welcoming the underserved segments to their homes and events."

# OUR PLACES



Our places, or tangible heritage, comprise the historic buildings, sites and structures that contribute to our sense of history, place and identity. These include our National Monuments, conserved historic buildings, historic precincts, landscapes, heritage sites and structures, which all form part of Singapore's rich and diverse tangible heritage.

Our places are important because they serve as critical markers While we acknowledge the importance of preserving and of identity, and strengthen our sense of belonging. They also conserving our places, we also recognise that there will create distinctive personalities for neighbourhoods, contribute always be a need to balance heritage preservation with to cultural tourism, and enhance the character of Singapore's future developments, especially given Singapore's land urban landscape. Most importantly, they serve as physical constraints. To ensure a balanced approach, we will continue reminders of our history and as anchors of our memories as to work closely with relevant parties, such as heritage we move into the future. groups and other government agencies, to facilitate robust discussions and ensure desirable outcomes.

Singapore has expended considerable efforts to preserve and promote our tangible heritage. We have one United Under Our SG Heritage Plan, we will increase efforts to Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation safeguard Singapore's tangible heritage through research, (UNESCO) World Heritage Site - the Singapore Botanic planning, documentation and promotional efforts. We will Gardens. We have also gazetted 72 National Monuments also work closely with stakeholders to develop new and and conserved more than 7,000 buildings. Many of these meaningful ways to commemorate different aspects of our buildings have been put into adaptive reuse so that they can tangible heritage, so that Singaporeans and visitors can continue to serve current and future needs. better appreciate our buildings, sites and structures, and their significance.

# WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF **TANGIBLE HERITAGE IN SINGAPORE?**



World Heritage Sites are places of National Monuments are buildings, outstanding and universal value to humanity. Countries can nominate sites, and their nominations will be evaluated by a committee. The successful sites will be listed on the Preservation of Monuments Act. **UNESCO's World Heritage List.** 

The Singapore Botanic Gardens was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site on 4 July 2015, making it the first site in Singapore to be conferred the status. It is also the first and only tropical botanic gardens in Asia on UNESCO's Jurong Town Hall. World Heritage List.

To date, 72 buildings have been gazetted as National Monuments. They include the Cathedral of the Good Shepherd, Sultan Mosque, Sri Mariamman Temple, the former City Hall and Supreme Court, and



sites and structures of national significance as well as socio-historical. cultural or architectural merits. These monuments are legally protected by **CONSERVED BUILDINGS** 

The Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) oversees the conservation of buildings and areas. Conserved buildings need to follow the "3R" principles of maximum Retention, sensitive Restoration and careful Repair.

More than 7.000 buildings have been conserved, many of which are in the conserved historic districts, such as Chinatown, Little India and Kampong Glam.

# WHAT WILL OUR SG **HERITAGE PLAN DO?**

#### **INCORPORATE HERITAGE** CONSIDERATIONS INTO PLANNING

As Singapore continues to develop and grow, we will need to meet our housing, social, economic, and infrastructural needs as a nation. While planning how to best use our limited land resources, we need to recognise heritage as an important factor. This is because heritage contributes to our sense of belonging and makes Singapore a place we call home.

Striking a balance between our development needs and preserving our heritage can be challenging. To achieve this, we have to plan early with heritage in mind. We need to meet our future development needs while maintaining the character of our places so that they continue to anchor our collective social memories.

#### **EARLY PLANNING -**CONSIDER HERITAGE IN EARLY STAGES OF PLANNING

#### Understanding Our Heritage

To better understand the history, architecture and social memories of our historic buildings, sites and spaces, efforts have been expended to improve our knowledge of Singapore's tangible heritage through extensive research and documentation.

In 2015, we commissioned the first nationwide Tangible Heritage Survey to identify and document historic buildings, structures and sites of architectural, historical and cultural interests. The fieldwork was completed at the end of 2017, and the findings from the survey will enable urban planners to plan for future 🕑 Infusing Heritage into Our Environment needs with heritage considerations in mind. We have also been progressively sharing the survey's findings on our heritage portal, Roots.sg.

#### Early Planning

Singapore is unique in being one of the few cities in the world to have a long-term plan that guides our land use. The Concept Plan and the Land Use Master Plan allow agencies to take an integrated approach in optimising land use, and heritage is considered in these planning processes. We will continue to work together with agencies such as the URA to conduct research and documentation, and plan with heritage in mind.

#### Public Consultation

Public engagement and consultation are necessary to ensure well-thought through and robust policies and plans. We have undertaken efforts, together with agencies such as the URA, National Parks Board (NParks) and Housing & Development Board (HDB), to consult subject matter experts and key stakeholders on issues concerning heritage. We will continue to conduct consultation exercises on a regular basis to gather feedback from our key stakeholders, and are committed to improving our consultation efforts.

Planning with heritage means finding new ways of retaining historic buildings, sites and spaces, and also allowing people to connect meaningfully with these buildings, sites and spaces. Recognising heartland heritage as an important component in the planning and shaping of the built environment, many HDB towns have kept elements of their area's history and become iconic places with strong and unique identities.

For instance, under the *Remaking Our Heartland* (ROH) programme, in which the celebration of heritage is a key component, we have been collaborating with the HDB on heritage proposals in the ROH towns/estates such as Dawson, Yishun, Punggol, Hougang, East Coast, Jurong Lake, Toa Payoh, Woodlands and Pasir Ris. An example is the conservation of the former Commonwealth Ave wet market under Dawson ROH, which will be refurbished to house shops for the residents

We will do more to incorporate heritage into our future developments and living environment.

#### **BIDADARI ESTATE:** A NEW ESTATE WITH A RICH HISTORY



#### **PUNGGOL:** FROM FARMING VILLAGE TO ECO-TOWN



Punggol has come a long way from its days as a village where into a heritage trail within the existing Punggol Waterway Park. poultry, pig and vegetable farms were located. Over the years, Some interesting features along this trail include the Kelong it has become a vibrant new town with distinctive districts, Bridge, a heritage wall and an old bus stop. each with a unique identity and character. Throughout its transformation journey, it has kept elements of its rich The remaining stretch of Old Punggol Road leading to Punggol heritage through the retention of historic landmarks, as well Pointwill be progressively pedestrianised and kept as a heritage as the design of new infrastructure and features that draw trail for leisurely strolls, jogging and cycling. The heritage trail inspiration from the area's history. will also be integrated with adjacent developments, such as the future Singapore Institute of Technology campus in the An important historic landmark is Old Punggol Road, which Punggol Digital District and residential developments and used to be a key transportation route for farm and fishing schools in Punggol Point District.

goods, serving the many farms and kampongs in the area. A short stretch of Old Punggol Road has been pedestrianised





The upcoming Bidadari housing estate became one of the most popular new housing areas when the first batch of Built-To-Order flats was launched in 2015.

The design of the estate capitalised on its existing greenery and rich heritage, and one of its key features is the pedestrianisation of the Old Upper Aljunied Road into a *Heritage Walk* to better preserve the canopy of mature trees along this road. The *Heritage Walk* will also incorporate stories of the history of Bidadari and the contributions of prominent figures in the neighbourhood.

The existing memorial garden that acknowledges the former Bidadari Cemetery, along with a number of Singapore's prominent pioneers, will be integrated into the future Bidadari Park.

In addition, to recreate the sense of tranquillity and capture the memories of the former Alkaff Lake Garden, a new Alkaff Lake will be created in a garden-like setting within the Park for the enjoyment of the Bidadari community.

#### DAKOTA CRESCENT: A MILESTONE OF SINGAPORE'S HOUSING HISTORY

Dakota Crescent area comprises rental flats previously developed in 1958 by the Singapore Improvement Trust, predecessor to HDB. In 2014, it was announced that Dakota Crescent was to be redeveloped. Residents were able to relocate to a nearby estate of new HDB flats as the flats in Dakota Crescent had aged over time.

concern that the neighbourhood and its iconic Dove playground could be lost. As an attractive mixed-use area with vibrant stakeholders and the wider community, such, government agencies involved began spaces and convenient amenities. working with the community to study





that the estate will be redeveloped while were members of the grassroots and to enjoy the estate's heritage alongside its the central cluster of buildings around the various heritage groups such as Save modern housing amenities. courtyard and the Dove playground will Dakota Crescent, which submitted be retained and repurposed for civic and a comprehensive and thoughtful community uses. This solution will create conservation plan. With the support of

the refreshed Dakota Crescent will now function as a community hub where past,

#### HISTORIC FORT CANNING PARK



The 18-hectare Fort Canning Park serves retrace the history of Singapore across the heritage trails to better showcase the rich as a green oasis, and offers respite from 14th century, through to the 19th and 20th history of Fort Canning Park. boasts a rich and long history, which the upcoming enhancement plans.

Following consultations with stakeholders. the significance of Fort Canning Hill and Park, and the re-curation of existing its surroundings.



restoration of heritage landscapes, programmes, and enhance accessibility including three historical gardens within to Fort Canning Hill, and repurpose Fort and around Fort Canning Park – the First Canning Centre as a gallery for visitors to community, the NParks will highlight Botanic Garden, Royal Garden and Jubilee learn more about the history of the hill and





In addition, the NParks will introduce a NParks aims to bring to life through its Some of the key projects include the wide variety of education and outreach

#### В **CREATE A TANGIBLE HERITAGE INVENTORY**

Our places are important markers of identity. While efforts information on historic buildings and sites in the city of Los have been made to preserve as many buildings, sites and Angeles. The website lists places of social importance, historic districts, bridges, parks and streetscapes. Its users structures as possible, some may be lost over time due to competing needs and new developments. There is therefore include students, urban planners, researchers and nona need to document and share information about our tangible governmental heritage organisations. heritage in an accessible manner, so that the public can learn and develop a deeper appreciation of our buildings, We are working on developing a similar inventory for Singapore, which will serve as a comprehensive database sites and structures.

Many cities have been using technology to document and promote public interest in heritage. The Historic Places Los Angeles database is an online information and management system created to inventorise and present

# STRENGTHEN RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION

We will continue to strengthen our research and documentation of historic buildings, sites and structures. More importantly, we will publish our research findings in technical reports and organise workshops for stakeholders, such as the owners or occupiers of our National Monuments. These efforts will equip them with the necessary knowledge and techniques on restoring and maintaining their historical properties.



accessible to all. The inventory will feature buildings, sites and structures of architectural, historical and cultural interests, and it will be updated on a regular basis with inputs from heritage experts, heritage groups, as well as members of the community.

> **EMPOWERING NATIONAL** MONUMENT OWNERS **AND OCCUPIERS**



Monuments better understand how to manage and maintain historic buildings, and the formal compliance necessary when carrying out restorative works. The three publications are A Brief Guide for Owners and Occupiers of National Monuments, Painting National Monuments, and Stained Glass in National Monuments.

Occupiers of National Monuments, and Painting and easy-to-understand manner and seek to the ways to maintain their monuments, the need for professional help to restore special features, and the importance of gaining approval from the relevant authorities before work commences.

#### D **ENLIVEN OUR** HISTORIC PRECINCTS

We will collaborate more closely with the relevant agencies and precinct partners to introduce ways to showcase the unique characteristics of our colourful and historical precincts such as the Civic District, Little India, Kampong Glam and Chinatown. Our museums and heritage institutions located in or around these precincts will continue to inject more cultural vibrancy and buzz through their festivals and programmes.



#### E **INCORPORATE HERITAGE** INTO PUBLIC PLACES

We will partner other public agencies such as the HDB, as well as heritage and community groups to showcase the history and heritage of our different estates and neighbourhoods, and create endearing places with unique identities. In addition, we will continue to develop new heritage trails and work with agencies such as the National Environment Agency and Land Transport Authority to incorporate heritage in public spaces, such as hawker centres and MRT stations.

#### **PLAYGROUNDS:** WELL-LOVED LANDMARKS OF OUR ESTATES



Located at Toa Payoh Lorong 6 and Ang Mo Kio Avenue 3, former Keat Hong Camp, and the 'Ship Discovery' playground the two dragon playgrounds are popular playtime icons that at Compassvale Cape, which was inspired by Sengkang contribute to the unique identity of their estates, and feature Town's history as an old fishing village. prominently in the minds of past and present residents.

playgrounds, such as the fruit-themed playground in programme, which involved residents in the design and Tampines Central Park and the recent military-themed building of their neighbourhood playground. playgrounds in Choa Chu Kang, which were inspired by the

#### **ENLIVENING** PUBLIC SPACES



creative street décor. Through these efforts, the STB seeks experience for visitors to the park at Kampong Glam. to promote interest in the history, culture and architecture of these precincts.

Deepavali, have become iconic events for locals and tourists to and personal stories of the Little India community. enjoy. The light-ups not only beautify the streets but also tell the stories behind the festivals.

Over the years, the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) has been Similarly, the URA has introduced *Our Favourite Place* programme making historic precincts more vibrant by working with that supports community-initiated projects, such as Under the stakeholders to organise festive events and introducing *Gelam Trees @ Sultan Gate*, where a giant swing introduced a fresh

In addition to street light-ups, public art initiatives help enliven historic precincts. For example, *ARTWALK Little India*, which has The annual street light-ups in historic precincts during major been part of Singapore Art Week since 2015, uses wall murals, cultural festivals, such as Chinese New Year, Hari Raya and storytelling, workshops and performances to share the history









In Sembawang, the HDB has gone a step further to foster Through the years, the HDB has designed other distinctive a sense of ownership by introducing the *Build A Playground* 

F

#### **PROMOTE GREATER** AWARENESS OF NATIONAL MONUMENTS

entitled *Milestones Through Monuments*, to introduce outreach programmes that will showcase Singapore's National including travelling exhibitions and social Monuments and highlight how different media campaigns to make monuments resilience, generosity, care and love." monuments have played important more interesting and accessible to the roles during significant episodes in general public.

We will introduce a new programme Singapore's history. We will continue

"I would like to learn about how a heritage building came about: the inspirations it expresses through the colour, shape and décor of the building. I also would like to learn about the lives conducted in the building through both peaceful and turbulent years, especially stories that manifest

- Visitor to Our SG Heritage Plan Travelling Exhibition

#### NATIONAL MONUMENT RESTORATION PROJECT - CATHEDRAL OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD



were completed in November 2016.

the restoration reinstated many of the original paintwork was also adopted Architectural Heritage Award. original architectural elements in the after detailed examination of the 170-year-old building. These included layers of paint coating. To ensure the the distinctive chequerboard-patterned building's durability, the ground floor

restoration works with support from glass windows, installed in the early fibre-reinforced polymer wrapping. the National Heritage Board's National 1900s, were meticulously documented Monuments Fund. The restoration works and dismantled for restoration off-site. The cathedral was conferred an before careful reinstatement on-site.

The Cathedral of the Good Shepherd, floor, green glass louvered windows, as slab was reinforced with elaborate gazetted as a National Monument well as the oldest surviving pipe organ underpinning works, while the existing in 1973, has undergone successful in Singapore. The cathedral's stained building fabric was strengthened with

UNESCO Asia Pacific Awards for Cultural Guided by a conservation specialist, A lighter colour scheme inspired by the Heritage Conservation and the 2017 URA

## IN SUMMARY

Our places comprise physical landmarks that remind us of Singapore's historical legacy and how far we have come as a nation.

They ground our national identity and remind us of our diverse shared heritage. We therefore need to document, preserve and celebrate our historic buildings, sites and structures, and in some cases, restore or adapt them for new uses.

To achieve our goals, we need to work closely meaningful ways to protect and commemorate different aspects of our tangible heritage. Singapore is a land scarce nation with competing needs which requires us to strike a balance between protecting our historic buildings, sites and structures, and catering to our country's



# OUR CULTURES

Our cultures cover our intangible cultural heritage, which comprise the traditions, rituals, crafts, expressions, knowledge and skills that we practise and pass on from generation to generation. As it is part of our living, everyday heritage, it is important that we document and safeguard it for future generations.

# WHAT IS INTANGIBLE **CULTURAL HERITAGE?**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has defined intangible cultural heritage as comprising the following categories:



**Oral Traditions, Expression** and Language





**Knowledge and Practices Concerning Nature and the Universe** 

During the focus group discussions people of different backgrounds and public engagement efforts for Our and ethnicities. As a result, we will SG Heritage Plan, many Singaporeans adopt the five UNESCO categories, highlighted the importance of our food with an additional sixth category heritage as it represents our diverse on Food Heritage to acknowledge cultures and the traditions of our Singaporeans' strong support for our forefathers, and also serves as a form food heritage. of cultural heritage that can connect





Performing Arts





Social Practices. **Rituals and Festive Events** 



"My favourite element of intangible cultural heritage is food culture, because food brings people together. With the many different cultures, recipes and dishes, it helps create a sense of familiarity and fosters a community."

- Visitor to Our SG Heritage Plan Travelling Exhibition

## WHY IS INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPORTANT TO US?

Heritage extends beyond physical forms, such as An understanding of the intangible cultural heritage of our monuments and artefacts, and includes the intangible different communities can also foster greater inter-cultural aspects of our heritage that have been passed down from dialogue, and encourage mutual respect for different ways one generation to another. Intangible cultural heritage of life, especially in the face of globalisation, rapid changes contributes to our sense of identity and rootedness, to our lifestyles, and technological advancements. and shapes our multicultural identity as Singaporeans.

## HOW CAN WE SAFEGUARD **INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERTAGE?**

"To be kept alive, intangible cultural heritage must be relevant to the community, and continuously reinvented and transmitted to the next generation. It does not mean fixing or freezing the practices in the ways that we remember, or on how they were practised in the past." Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage does not just mean merely documenting and conducting research on practices, rituals, festivals, crafts, art forms, etc., but also transferring the knowledge and skills critical to these elements to the next generation. These safeguarding efforts include public education and outreach programmes that increase the awareness and appreciation of our intangible cultural heritage.

#### WHAT WILL OUR SG **HERITAGE PLAN DO?**

Under Our SG Heritage Plan, more efforts will be devoted to safeguarding and promoting Singapore's intangible cultural heritage. However, it is equally important that we give our intangible cultural heritage room to grow, evolve and adapt, or it may lose its relevance and meaning to its respective communities, and to society in general.

Our cultures provide us with a sense of who we are, and offer us avenues to better understand and appreciate the heritage of different communities. We hope that Singaporeans will come together to work with us and do their part to safeguard, promote and facilitate the transmission of Singapore's unique intangible cultural heritage.



# STRENGTHEN RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION

Intangible cultural heritage is often passed down by word of mouth from one generation to another, and it may be lost over time without proper documentation. Robust research and documentation are therefore important in ensuring that the knowledge is retained. Under Our SG Heritage Plan, more efforts will be devoted to the research and documentation of our intangible cultural heritage and they will include the following strategies and initiatives:

#### Intangible Cultural Heritage Survey

The National Heritage Board (NHB) launched the Intangible Cultural Heritage Survey in November 2016. The survey involves research and documentation of cultural practices, trades and traditional knowledge found in Singapore. It also involves interviews with practitioners as well as photography and video documentation. The survey's findings will guide future initiatives in safeguarding and promoting Singapore's intangible cultural heritage. The survey will be completed in late 2018.

#### Partnerships with Institutions of Higher Learning

We will step up efforts to partner our universities and other institutes of higher learning (IHLs) to conduct in-depth research on Singapore's intangible cultural heritage through our Heritage Research Grant, which seeks to encourage our IHLs to embark on heritage-related research for the documentation and preservation of Singapore's heritage.

#### MYTHS AND TABOOS IN SINGAPORE

Different communities have different taboos when it comes to These are some of the practices studied by Jesvin Puay-Hwa attracting good luck and/or repelling bad luck. For example, Yeo, Associate Professor from the Nanyang Technological the Chinese do not use the broom on the first day of Chinese University (NTU), and her team in a project on myths and New Year for fear of sweeping away good luck. The Malays do taboos amongst Singaporean Malays, Indians and Chinese. not like their heads touched and the Indians like to add an extra dollar to an entire sum of gift money (for example, \$101 or \$51) The project, which explores the underlying factors behind for luck. Singapore's multicultural and hybrid myths, is supported by NHB's Heritage Research Grant. For their project, the team will make oral recordings of interviews in historic ethnic enclaves.

#### Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory Co-created with Singaporeans

We will develop a new Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory that will draw on the findings from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Survey. It will serve as a comprehensive repository to showcase the diverse, multicultural elements of intangible cultural heritage that exist in Singapore, and help us better understand the diverse cultures that make up Singapore.

The development of the inventory will be an ongoing and long-term process. A draft list will be made available in 2018, and we will co-create the inventory with heritage experts and practitioners by getting them to contribute information. The inventory will also be made available to the public to raise greater awareness and understanding of Singapore's intangible cultural heritage, and updated on a regular basis with input from heritage experts, practitioners and the public.

It should be noted that the inventory does not aim to offer a "definitive" catalogue of Singapore's intangible cultural heritage elements as cultural practices often vary and evolve over time. It does, however, aim to document and share information on the diverse intangible cultural heritage found in Singapore without creating hierarchies or according levels of importance to the various elements.

#### **ENCOURAGE GREATER** AWARENESS AND TRANSMISSION OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Under Our SG Heritage Plan, we will leverage existing platforms, work with partners, and introduce new initiatives to raise public awareness and appreciation of Singapore's intangible cultural heritage. We will also expend more efforts to facilitate the transmission of different aspects of our intangible cultural heritage to future generations of Singaporeans.



#### ^ Image courtesy of the Singapore Tourism Board.

#### Leverage Existing Platforms and Showcases

We will continue to use exhibitions, festivals and programmes, such as the Singapore Heritage Festival and Singapore Food Festival, to showcase and promote greater appreciation of different aspects of Singapore's intangible cultural heritage. We will also conduct talks and workshops by experts and practitioners to facilitate the transmission of knowledge and skills about Singapore's intangible cultural heritage.

#### Promote Traditional Performing Arts

Singapore's traditional arts are made up of deeply-rooted cultural and artistic expressions linked to our major ethnic groups. These form part of our intangible cultural heritage and contribute to Singapore's rich cultural diversity. The National Arts Council (NAC) administers various programmes and initiatives to promote traditional arts in Singapore, including traditional arts showcases and educational programmes for schools. A major initiative of the NAC is the re-opening of the Stamford Arts Centre in 2018, which will have a strong focus on the traditional arts.

#### Promote Traditional Trades in Historic Precincts

Many traditional trades and interesting stories still exist in our historic precincts such as Chinatown, Kampong Glam and Little India. We will bring a spotlight on these interesting trades by working with other agencies such as the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and precinct partners such as the Chinatown Business Association, One Kampong Gelam, and Little India Shopkeepers and Heritage Association.

One example is the efforts of the STB in promoting heritage businesses and clan associations by encouraging them to conduct demonstrations, workshops and tours for the public. The STB also funds heritage brands keen to diversify their products and sharpen their marketing efforts while retaining their heritage charm.

#### Develop a New Recognition Scheme

We will introduce a new scheme to recognise intangible cultural heritage practitioners who are dedicated to promoting and transmitting Singapore's intangible cultural heritage. We will work with the practitioners recognised under the scheme to increase public awareness and transmit their skills and knowledge to the next generation of practitioners.

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#### CHAMPIONING OUR FOOD HERITAGE

Singapore's *Kueh Appreciation Day* takes place in July every year and celebrates our local culinary heritage. During the event, Singaporeans can sample and buy local snacks, including Hakka abacus seeds, *sugee cake* and *kueh salat*, and attend workshops by specialist *kueh* makers. This event is part of STB's *Singapore Food Festival*, which recognises our culinary talents and includes events that celebrate our vibrant culinary cultures.

Kueh Appreciation Day is organised by Slow Food (Singapore), a non-profit community organisation that promotes gastronomic heritage in Singapore. A champion of local food heritage, Slow Food (Singapore) also runs the Heritage Hero Awards which recognise food businesses that play a part in promoting our culinary heritage. Past awardees include local bakeries that produce traditional *kueh*, cakes and pastries, as well as restaurants whose cuisines reflect the identities of their respective ethnic communities.

#### STAMFORD ARTS CENTRE AS A CENTRE FOR TRADITIONAL PERFORMING ARTS



are artists' impressions only. Actual developments may differ.

The Stamford Arts Centre (SAC) will be developed as an arts space that is dedicated to the development of traditional arts content, and as a destination for the public to enjoy and appreciate traditional arts. It will house arts groups, artists-in-residence, a multi-purpose hall, as well as spaces for of the Arts. Having these arts schools and religious and cultural eateries. The centre aims to keep the rich and diverse forms institutions all in one space makes it conducive for the meeting of intangible cultural heritage alive in Singapore, make them of the young and old, as well as those from different cultures. relevant, and transmit them to future generations.



The centre is centrally located in the Arts and Heritage District and Waterloo Arts Belt, and its neighbours include the Sri Krishnan and Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temples, as well as arts schools such as the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and LASALLE College Accessible to people from all walks of life through its diverse range of arts offerings, SAC will bring the traditional arts closer to the community to discover and participate in.

#### HAWKER CULTURE - OUR HAWKER CENTRES AND HAWKER FOOD IN MULTICULTURAL SINGAPORE



Hub Hawker Centre



street food heritage, hawker centres house enjoying tasty and affordable food at important role hawker centres play in our rich and diverse culinary traditions passed convenient locations. down through generations. They offer a various communities.

evolved to become an integral part of our hawker centres. These markers outline way of life, where people from all walks the history of the hawker centres, their

With roots that can be traced to Singapore's of life gather, interact and bond, while distinct architectural designs, and the

glimpse of Singapore's multicultural society, To celebrate Singapore's hawker centres which aims to enhance hawker centres as with stalls that offer a rich array of food from and food culture, the NHB has partnered social spaces and improve the vibrancy at the National Environment Agency (NEA) hawker centres by encouraging the public on various initiatives including the to regularly organise community-centric Through the years, hawker centres have installation of heritage markers at 12 programmes and activities at the centres.

community. The NEA has also introduced the Vibrant Hawker Centres programme.

#### NINE EMPEROR GODS FESTIVAL



begins on the eve of the ninth lunar of Southeast Asia. month and runs for nine days, is one of the major religious events in the With the support of the NHB's Heritage Chinese lunar calendar. The festival Research Grant, Dr Koh Keng We and his is commonly associated with Taoism, team from NTU studied the festival to with syncretic elements from Buddhism document its associated rituals, structures and Confucianism. It involves diverse and activities. The project included oral institutions, temples, dialect communities interviews with organisers and devotees,



The Nine Emperor Gods Festival, which only in Singapore but also in various parts

and ritual systems, and it is practised not as well as photography and videography.



and networks', supported by the NHB

#### **RATIFY THE UNESCO 2003** CONVENTION

С

On 22 February 2018, Singapore As a member state of the UNESCO Singaporeans, and that best reflects ratified the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. The main goal of the cultural heritage element to be listed convention is to safeguard the practices, on UNESCO's Representative List of expressions, knowledge and skills of communities and groups, as well as to promote awareness of and respect for which comprises intangible cultural intangible cultural heritage.

By ratifying this convention, we signal of cultural heritage across the our commitment to safeguard and world and raises awareness about promote Singapore's intangible cultural heritage. The convention also provides be safeguarded. a framework to guide our safeguarding efforts and facilitates collaborations We will work with heritage experts, with our international counterparts. practitioners and the public to identify

#### EXAMPLES FROM THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION ON UNESCO'S REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF HUMANITY

diversity of the world's intangible cultural heritage. It also raises awareness of their importance to humanity, and encourages

dialogue and respect for the cultural

diversity of the world.

It is worth noting that the successful listing of an element on UNESCO's Representative List by a country does not imply that this element belongs to, originates from, or exists only in the submitting country. Since the South Korea Representative List was developed in 2008, a total of 399 elements have been inscribed as at December 2017.

*Kimjang*, the making and sharing of textiles in funerary rituals. *kimchi*, is recognised as an intangible cultural heritage element and an important part of Korean identity. The preparation of *kimchi* follows the cycles of the seasons, and the preparation technique is traditionally passed down from mothers to daughters.

Developed in 2008, UNESCO's Representative Here are some examples from the Asia-Pacific region: List is made up of intangible cultural heritage elements that demonstrate the **Japan** 

Washoku is the traditional dietary Traditional Balinese Dance is a involved in the preparation processes.

#### NOMINATE A SINGAPORE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE ELEMENT FOR **UNESCO'S REPRESENTATIVE LIST**

2003 Convention, Singapore will work towards nominating an intangible the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The Representative List, heritage elements from different countries, showcases the diversity their importance so that they can

an element that best resonates with

our rich, multicultural heritage. The successful listing of an intangible cultural heritage element from Singapore will allow us to share the multicultural aspects of our heritage with the international community, and contribute to the diverse cultures of the world.



#### Indonesia

culture of the Japanese, notably for performing art that simultaneously the celebration of the New Year. A expresses social beliefs and customs, social practice related to families and and embodies traditional craftsmanship communities coming together for the in its costumes and accessories. preparation and consumption of food, it Indonesian *batik* is significant not just is also associated with the knowledge of as a textile that involves workmanship, nature in the use of seasonal ingredients, but also because its role is related to and traditional culinary techniques social customs through the various stages of life of Indonesians. For instance, *batik* is used as baby slings, for traditional dresses, and as ceremonial

## **IN SUMMARY**

Our cultures are part of our intangible cultural heritage and are made up of the traditions, crafts, knowledge and skills that we value and practise.

They make us who we are and it is crucial that we document and safeguard them for future generations. However, our safeguarding efforts should take into consideration that some practices may disappear over time while new ones may emerge in response to the needs of the community. A delicate balance is therefore needed to safeguard and encourage the transmission of these social and cultural practices, while allowing them room to grow and evolve.

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# OUR TREASURES

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Our treasures refer to our museums and heritage institutions, as well as the more than 200,000 artworks and artefacts in our National Collection that represent the diverse cultural heritage of Singapore, and countries with historical and cultural links to Singapore. In addition, publications, documents, film records, audiovisual records and oral history recordings stored by the National Library Board (NLB) and the National Archives of Singapore (NAS) are also important treasures that tell the Singapore story. Collectively, they form an important part of Singapore's heritage, and help us to understand our past.

more efforts will be made toward Collection are important because they safeguarding our treasures and making tell the Singapore story and highlight them more accessible to the public. our links to the region and to the world. These efforts will include protecting our They are repositories of our heritage, archaeological heritage, making our as well as legacies we leave behind museums and their collections more for future generations. We hope that accessible to Singaporeans, presenting Singaporeans will continue to support our history and stories through a our museums and programmes, and Singaporean voice, and leveraging our contribute to the National Collection museums and their offerings as part of and its care. Singapore's cultural diplomacy efforts.

Under Our SG Heritage Plan, Our museums and the National



#### THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF SINGAPORE - A TREASURE TROVE OF HERITAGE

visual materials which include the first conducted with individuals who played commercial sound recordings made in roles in areas such as politics, World Singapore in 1903, the first parliamentary War II and the arts. Some 3,000 of these debates of an independent Singapore in recordings can be heard online, including 1965, National Day Rallies from 1966 and interviews with Singapore's Chief Minister entertainment programmes (such as the David Marshall, pioneer artist Liu Kang 1976 "Talentime").

To listen to a slice of history, people collection. This contains interviews with other types of archival materials including people who have played important roles photographs and maps, historical building in the history of Singapore, or experienced plans of National Monuments, posters, events or developments that have shaped and archival documents on Singapore our nation. These recordings are often from overseas. Many of these treasures used in exhibitions at the museums for are accessible at the Archives Online their ability to capture feelings, thoughts website, www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline. and emotions.

The NAS houses a treasure trove of audio- To date, 4,500 interviews have been and war heroine Elizabeth Choy, just to name a few.

#### THE ASIAN FILM ARCHIVE

The Asian Film Archive (AFA), a subsidiary of the NLB, has overseen the preservation of Singapore and Asian cinematic heritage since 2005. The AFA has in its collection the sole surviving copies of the Cathay Keris inscribed in the UNESCO Memory of the World Asia-Pacific Register. The AFA's public outreach programmes, including film screenings, talks, workshops, exhibitions and specialised tours, have attracted participation from Singaporeans of all ages and walks of life.

## WHAT WILL OUR SG HERITAGE PLAN DO?

#### BUILD AND CARE FOR THE NATIONAL COLLECTION

Collections are crucial to supporting any museum's mission in research, interpretation and display, and in differentiating museums from other knowledge institutions. Artefacts and artworks are necessary to tell different stories and generate conversations that enable us to discover or rediscover our shared heritage and identity; and in so doing strengthening our sense of self and belonging.

Under Our SG Heritage Plan, we will continue to acquire artefacts and artworks for, as well as encourage donations to, the National Collection so that Singapore is able to build up a world-renowned collection comparable to that of major collections in other global cities.

The National Collection is under the care of the National Heritage Board's (NHB) Heritage Conservation Centre (HCC), which serves as a repository and a conservation facility. The HCC ensures that these artefacts and artworks are properly cared for so that they can be displayed in our museums and heritage institutions, and passed down to future generations of Singaporeans.

Under Our SG Heritage Plan, we will continue to strengthen the HCC's capabilities, processes and facilities in the areas of conservation research, science and treatment, as well as collections management and storage, and some of the key initiatives are:

#### Enhance Collections Management and Cataloguing

When the HCC receives an artefact or artwork, it proceeds to catalogue it and assign it a unique number for identification and retrieval. We will therefore continue to leverage technology such as radio frequency identification to enhance collections management and cataloguing work. We will also organise international conferences to facilitate the sharing of best practices in collections management and cataloguing.

#### Strengthen Conservation Science

Conservation science helps us discover information about objects beyond what we can see with the naked eye. In the HCC's laboratory, conservation scientists analyse objects at the micro-level using specialised instruments. Through conservation science, it is possible to find out what an object is made of, how and when it was made, and what happened to it over time. These findings help conservators develop and determine conservation strategies and techniques.



We will seek to further develop the HCC's conservation science capabilities by establishing memoranda of understanding with international counterparts for capability development. The HCC will also seek to collaborate with partners such as the Singapore General Hospital to leverage new technologies to facilitate its conservation science work.

#### Strengthen Conservation Treatment

Conservation treatment gives our artefacts and artworks a new lease of life by preserving and restoring them, preventing further deterioration, and/or repairing damage. The HCC will continue to provide assistance for museum exhibitions, including providing advice on environmental conditions, light, temperature and humidity levels, and how to best mount objects and select the materials used in the showcases.

To strengthen and deepen the professional capabilities of conservation and collections care professionals, we will introduce a certification programme for conservation practitioners. We will also strengthen our research in the area of Southeast Asian cultural materials and seek collaboration opportunities with our Southeast Asian counterparts.

#### CARING FOR OUR NATIONAL COLLECTION

This Guan Gong sculpture, dating back to the Ming Dynasty (1368 to 1644), was donated to the Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM) in 1995. It was first exhibited to the public during the museum's inaugural opening in 2003 and again selected for permanent display in 2017.

When the HCC received the sculpture, it was in a bad condition. The wood was infested with insects and fungi, and the mud on the sculpture was affecting the original paint work. It took the conservators close to 800 hours to clean and restore it to its former glory.

The work of the HCC ensures that our treasures in the National Collection are well taken care of, and ready for display in our museums and heritage institutions. It also facilitates access to the collection for our curators and external researchers to carry out further studies.





#### B

#### **DEVELOP A NATIONAL REGISTER** FOR SINGAPORE-BASED COLLECTIONS

Many public agencies in Singapore have collections of artworks and artefacts, and it is timely to take stock of these collections so as to better identify important artworks and artefacts, and enable us to work with the relevant agencies to provide the necessary conservation care and advice for these artworks and artefacts.

Under Our SG Heritage Plan, we are working with public agencies to develop a National Register for Singaporebased collections, which will serve as a central record of these artworks and artefacts. In the longer term,



# IMPROVING OUR MUSEUMS AND INSTITUTIONS

SG50\* saw the opening of the National Gallery Singapore as well as the revamps of the ACM and the National Museum of Singapore. These developments strengthened the role of museums in interpreting and presenting Singapore art, history and heritage, and exploring Singapore's place in relation to Asia and the world. In 2013, entry to national museums and heritage institutions was made free for Singapore citizens and permanent residents, resulting in a record of more than 3.2 million visitors.

C

Under Our SG Heritage Plan, our museums and heritage institutions will continue to present quality exhibitions and programmes that showcase more diverse aspects of Singapore's history, society and identity.

At the same time, they will continue to support a vibrant research culture, be more inclusive to visitors from all walks of life, and work towards establishing better connections with regional and global museum networks and audiences through the following strategies and initiatives:

#### Enhance Museum Infrastructure and Content

Museums and heritage institutions play an important role in presenting Singapore and Asian history through their exhibitions and programmes. In the coming years, we will continue to strengthen and improve the infrastructure across our museums, heritage institutions and World War II interpretative centres.

For instance, the Changi Chapel Museum (CCM) will undergo a physical facelift, and its galleries will be revamped. Its facilities will be upgraded and exhibition content refreshed to better highlight the stories of Changi and the war. The CCM's narrative will also be more integrated with the overall World War II narrative presented by Reflections at Bukit Chandu, the Former Ford Factory, and related galleries within the National Museum. The museum is scheduled to reopen in 2020.

Our museums and heritage institutions will also continue to take advantage of the latest digital trends, and work with partners to present their content in innovative ways, to create rich, meaningful experiences for visitors. DigiMuse at the National Museum, for example, will serve as a platform to seek technology partners for the museum sector, with the aim of enhancing the visitor experience and/or generating new knowledge about our collection.



Singapore Philatelic Museum's Collecting Magic: From Stamps to Wands exhibition. Image courtesy of the Singapore Philatelic Museum.

#### Cultivate a Vibrant Research Culture

A museum functions as a "library" of knowledge and tells stories through their artefacts and artworks so that visitors can discover new facts and enjoy diverse perspectives. In view of this, our curators will devote more resources to conducting and publishing their research, and sharing their research through public lectures and talks.

In addition, our museums, such as the ACM, will continue to award research fellowship grants to deepen research on its artefacts and artworks, and we will facilitate access to the National Collection so that other researchers can study our artefacts and artworks, and generate new heritage related research.

#### Make Museums More Accessible and Inclusive

To turn our museums and heritage institutions into more inclusive social spaces, we will conduct an accessibility audit and review all aspects of accessibility, from the physical (e.g., how wheelchairfriendly our buildings are) to the intangible, such as how well our exhibitions and programmes cater to the diverse needs of our visitors.

Through the audit, we will also explore solutions, including the use of assistive technologies to improve physical accessibility and creative new ways of engaging audiences. The audit will complement existing programmes such as GosTan *Back*, a theatre roving performance in the National Museum's galleries for children with special needs, and upcoming programmes at the ACM that include audio-description tours for the visually impaired, and sign language tours for the hearing-impaired.

#### D

#### **DEVELOP AND PRESENT MORE** "CURATED-BY-SINGAPORE" CONTENT

We will focus on presenting more "curated-by-Singapore" exhibitions to showcase our stories, our National Collection and our Singaporean curators. These exhibitions will be told from a Singaporean perspective, and could incorporate audience input where appropriate. We hope that these exhibitions, that elucidate Singapore's history and its links to the region and the world as told through a Singaporean's voice, will better resonate with local audiences.



#### MEMORIES OF WORLD WAR II

exhibition at the National Museum that ran from September included members of World War II interest groups, academics, 2017 to March 2018.

public consultations to seek responses to questions such as the war. "What would you like to see and experience at this exhibition?" you would like answered through this exhibition?".

Witness to War: Remembering 1942, organised in conjunction Over eight months, close to 120 members of the public with the 75th anniversary of the Battle for Singapore, is a major participated in five consultation sessions. These participants writers, media professionals, heritage enthusiasts and youths from tertiary institutions. Many participants also suggested A year before the exhibition opened, the museum conducted that the exhibition feature more narratives from survivors of

> were incorporated in the curation of the exhibition, and the exhibition featured first-hand accounts from people who had witnessed the start of the Japanese Occupation in Singapore.

#### THE TANG SHIPWRECK COLLECTION

fascinating collection of 9th century cargo recovered from the generous donation from the Estate of Khoo Teck Puat, Java Sea, southeast of Singapore. The gallery tells the story of in honour of the late Khoo Teck Puat. the exchange of goods, ideas, and culture in the region around Singapore more than 1,100 years ago.

Discovered in 1998, the shipwreck was found off Belitung Island in the Java Sea. It contained a remarkable cargo of more than 60,000 ceramics produced in China during the Tang dynasty (618 to 907 AD), as well as luxurious objects of gold and silver. Bound for Iran and Iraq, the ship provides early proof of strong Middle East.

The Tang Shipwreck reveals that the region lay at the heart of a global trading network in the 9th century. The success of Singapore as an exchange point of global shipping thus has ancient roots. As the wreck was submerged in the sea, objects were required to be de-salinated for two years before A Image courtesy of the Asian Civilisations Museum. they were fit for display.

The Tang Shipwreck collection at the ACM comprises a The Tang Shipwreck collection was acquired through a



#### **PROVIDE STRONGER STEWARDSHIP** FOR MUSEUM SECTOR

Under Our SG Heritage Plan, we will also strive to provide stronger stewardship for the larger museum sector, and focus on building up the skills and expertise of museum professionals in the Museum Roundtable.

We will also work towards strengthening our museums' broader economic and social landscape in Singapore. and heritage institutions' knowledge, intellectual and These skillsets include creativity and creative thinking, social capital, and using their research, exhibitions and story-telling and good communication, as well as programmes to develop valuable skillsets required in the cultural intelligence.

#### NURTURE A LOVE OF HERITAGE AMONGST OUR YOUNG

Corners Programme and Heritage Trail Adoption Scheme for both primary and secondary schools. the MOE's existing efforts to provide a holistic education by increasing the number of structured school visits to our on these visits with more interactive and enriching experiences. which contain self-guided worksheets for students. comprising retired teachers, freelance educators and museum docents, who will be trained to facilitate students' encounters with Singapore's heritage in a more engaging manner through first-hand observation and interaction with historical and cultural artefacts.

Education programmes are an important component of *Programme* for primary schools, and the School Heritage our museum activities, as well as our outreach efforts nationhood and identity through heritage and museum education, and lay the foundations for a lifelong interest Under Our SG Heritage Plan, we will continue to support We have worked with the Ministry of Education (MOE) to museums and heritage institutions and providing students integrate our museum collections with the core curricula of Social Studies at the primary level, and History at the lower secondary level. This is supplemented by field-based learning packages to the museums, We will also grow our pool of museum educator-guides, Since 2012, we have also introduced various education programmes targeting pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary students, and they include Singapore's

to schools. These programmes aim to foster a sense of in heritage and culture. *Little Treasures* for pre-schoolers, the *Heritage Explorers* 

#### **NEW MUSEUM EDUCATORS PROGRAMME**

Under the Museum Educators Programme, existing or retired collection of artefacts. The programme will also allow students teachers and educators will be trained as museum guides for to handle certain objects, and engage in conversations and the ACM and the National Museum. They will provide interactive discussions. The programme will be piloted with ten primary learning experiences for upper primary and lower secondary and secondary schools in 2018, and made available to all school groups, and share stories about each museum's schools from 2019.

G

#### SAFEGUARD ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

Singapore's archaeology helps us uncover our country's pre-colonial history, and fosters greater pride in our nation's past that, unknown to some, goes back to the 14th century. Under Our SG Heritage Plan, we will be introducing the following initiatives to safeguard and promote Singapore's archaeological heritage:



^ Archaeological excavation at Empress Place

#### Review Legislation

We will be reviewing the NHB Act with the aim to improve the protection of Singapore's archaeological heritage. We will strengthen the act and introduce a framework to govern archaeology in Singapore. These changes to the legislation will also be extended to cover the protection of Singapore's maritime archaeology within Singapore's territorial waters.

#### Conduct Survey to Identify Sites of Archaeological Interest

As part of the longer term protection of Singapore's archaeological heritage, there is a need to identify and map out sites of archaeological interest in Singapore. We have commissioned a nationwide survey, and the survey findings will help to ensure that sites with archaeological potential can be excavated and documented before they are redeveloped; excavations can be carried out in tandem with such works.

#### Develop Archaeological Capabilities

As interest in archaeology grows and archaeological projects gain momentum in Singapore, the demand for trained archaeologists and resources supporting archaeological research will also grow. To address this, the NHB will help build up local capabilities by partnering existing stakeholders such as the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute and the National University of Singapore, and supporting research and other capacity-building initiatives.

#### Reach Out to the Community

The protection of Singapore's archaeological heritage needs the participation of Singaporeans. We will work in partnership with research institutions to create greater awareness of archaeology in Singapore. We will also explore opportunities for Singaporeans to contribute to the discovery and protection of Singapore's archaeological heritage through volunteer programmes at archaeological excavations, and other related work such as the cataloguing and documenting of archaeological finds.

#### SINGAPORE'S YOUNG **ARCHAEOLOGISTS**

Natalie Khoo is a 22-year-old archaeology student from Natalie is no stranger to archaeological projects. In 2014, was once a medical facility.

# COMMEMORATE KEY MILESTONES IN OUR HISTORY

The unfolding of key events and the contributions of key figures in Singapore's history have shaped our nation, our society, and our people. These seminal events and figures offer important values, memories and lessons that anchor our identity, and often inspire us and give us the confidence to face the future. It is therefore important that we continue to commemorate the key milestones of Singapore's history and our pioneers, and we will do so through the following strategies and initiatives:

#### **Develop the Founders' Memorial**

1

In June 2015, a 15-member Committee led by Chairman Singapore's history stretches back at least 700 years, and the year 1819 marks a turning point in that journey Mr Lee Tzu Yang was established to seek the public's views on the idea of a Founders' Memorial. The memorial seeks as it was the year the island was founded as a British to honour the legacy of Singapore's founding generation colony by Sir Stamford Raffles. Throughout that journey, of leaders, and inspire future generations to reflect on Singapore's development was shaped by how it was the ideals and values upon which the nation was built. part of, and responded to, regional and global events. The values that have evolved with us on that journey - openness, multiculturalism and self-determination -From October 2015 to April 2017, a series of public are still relevant today.

engagement sessions were conducted and more than 32,000 people contributed their ideas and visions for the memorial. In August 2017, it was announced that the Founders' Memorial would be located at Bay East Garden at Gardens by the Bay.

The next phase of the project will see the Founders' Memorial taking shape in terms of its design and content. We will work with Gardens by the Bay to support the Founders' Memorial Committee in engaging stakeholders and the public on the concept and form of the memorial, determining the design requirements, and developing the content and programming approach for the memorial.

Singapore who was part of the team which made an important she was part of the team that recovered some three tonnes of discovery at an archaeological dig in Angkor Wat, Cambodia, artefacts from the Empress Place excavation, some of which in 2017. More specifically, she was part of the team that found are now on display at the ACM. She also regularly volunteers three 800-year-old Buddha statues, including a Buddha of on archaeology programmes with the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak healing and medicine. This discovery confirmed that the site Institute's Nalanda-Sriwijava Centre. In time, she hopes to join the ranks of a small but growing number of Singaporean archaeologists working to protect and promote Singapore's archaeological heritage.

## **Celebrate Singapore Bicentennial in 2019**

In 2019, we will work with other public sector agencies and key stakeholders to commemorate the Singapore Bicentennial with a year-long calendar of exhibitions and programmes. The Singapore Bicentennial commemorative events offer an opportunity for Singaporeans to participate in, and reflect on how our nation came to be, and how far we have come.

U

#### BUILD INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND SHOWCASE SINGAPORE'S HERITAGE TO THE WORLD

We have built, and will continue to grow, an extensive network of international partnerships with government agencies, museums and other heritage-related organisations from around the world, as well as with international governmental and non-governmental organisations that care for heritage such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Asia-Europe Museum Network, and the International Council of Museums.

Through these partnerships, we will learn from best practices to deepen the expertise and raise the capabilities of Singapore's museum and heritage sector. In addition, through the loan of artefacts, and the presentation of exhibitions and programmes from our international museum partners at our museums and heritage institutions, we will provide platforms for Singaporeans to learn more about regional and world heritage, as well as our links to the region and the world.

We will also continue to strengthen our cultural diplomacy efforts by building mindshare and winning hearts overseas, and we will do so by showcasing the best of Singapore's heritage to the rest of the world through travelling exhibitions, festivals and other initiatives. We will also collaborate with the relevant public sector agencies such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Singapore Tourism Board, as well as our heritage and museum partners from around the world to achieve our cultural diplomacy goals.



^ Image courtesy of the National Heritage Board.

## IN SUMMARY

Our treasures comprise our precious National Collection as well as the institutions that house them.

They include documentary heritage, artefacts and artworks, key commemorative milestones in Singapore's history, as well as the archaeological treasures buried in Singapore's soil. It is therefore important that we continue to collect and care for our treasures, and to provide access to these treasures to Singaporeans and visitors to Singapore.

Through the study and display of our treasures, we hope to tell more compelling and engaging stories about Singapore's history and our progress as a nation, to enable Singaporeans to better understand and appreciate our heritage and achievements. Through the sharing of our treasures and the stories they tell, we hope to cultivate a society of Singaporeans inspired by, and proud of, our museums and their collections, and who therefore view museumgoing as part of everyday life.



# OUR COMMUNITIES



Our communities comprise the individuals and groups who play a crucial role in preserving, promoting and celebrating Singapore's tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

They include our key stakeholders, non-governmental heritage programmes to engage underserved communities heritage organisations, interest groups, precinct partners, in a more meaningful manner. museum docents, heritage volunteers and enthusiasts.

The participation and support of our communities is Through Our SG Heritage Plan, we will step up our efforts to important because we depend on them to extend and engage and empower these communities through training amplify our efforts, and to improve and enhance our and co-creation, funding support, and project showcases. heritage assets and offerings. After all, Singapore's We also hope to provide physical and digital platforms, as heritage belongs to every Singaporean, and we hope our well as volunteering opportunities for people to contribute communities will join us and play a part in the preservation to heritage causes and projects. In addition, we will work and promotion of our heritage. with partner agencies and organisations to co-develop



6.47 MILLION ATTENDEES TO HERITAGE EVENTS AND PROGRAMMES ISLAND-WIDE IN 2016



30,140,000 **DIGITAL VISITORS IN 2016** 







# WHAT WILL OUR SG **HERITAGE PLAN DO?**



#### SUPPORT MORE **GROUND-UP INITIATIVES**

We will continue to support more ground-up heritage projects from our community partners through our Heritage Participation and Project Grants. These grant schemes support a wide range of projects from publications and documentaries, to exhibitions and events, and in doing so, encourage greater community ownership of our shared history and heritage.

Under Our SG Heritage Plan, we will also launch annual Heritage Grant Clinics to equip our community partners and grant applicants with the tools, knowledge and resources to kick-start their own heritage projects, and work with some of these partners to create public showcases for their projects.



#### CURATING WHAMPOA





In 2016, the Tsao Foundation, which champions eldercare and of the neighbourhood, the communities living there, and their involved creating a map and booklet that showcased the history Arts to facilitate inter-generational learning and bonding.

ageing issues, was awarded a heritage grant to set up a "living memories. As part of its project, the foundation worked with museum" in Whampoa. Titled "Curating Whampoa", the project senior residents in Whampoa and students of the School of the

#### THE PARSIS OF SINGAPORE: HISTORY, CULTURE AND CUISINE

In 2014, the late Mrs Suna Kanga had an idea to write a book first record of the Parsis in Singapore, to the pioneers and about the Parsi community in Singapore. A Parsi descendent families after whom our streets and buildings are named, herself, she wanted to raise awareness about the small and including Parsi Road in Singapore's Central Business District little-known community, and to celebrate its history, culture and the Mistri Wing of the Singapore General Hospital, which and cuisine. Through NHB's Heritage Grant Scheme, the book was named after the late soft-drink tycoon Mr Navroji Mistri. was published and launched in April 2017.

Titled The Parsis of Singapore: History, Culture and Cuisine, practices of the community who are of the Zoroastrian faith, it tells the story of the community, who are descendants of as well as traditional dishes which are a unique blend of Persians who moved to India in the 8th century from present- Persian, Indian and British influences. day Iran. It highlights the history of the community from the

#### В COLLABORATE WITH MORE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

We will continue to collaborate with the community to create and develop exhibitions and programmes that complement existing offerings at our museums and heritage institutions. Under Our SG Heritage Plan, we will work with the community to co-develop content for heritage trails and co-curate community galleries, to showcase the heritage of specific precincts or estates, as well as the stories and memories of residents living in these precincts or estates.



The book also looks at the social and religious culture, and



#### FESTIVALS BY THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE



^ Images courtesy of the Singapore Night Festival.

NHB's signature festivals - the Singapore and ways of life. Through trails, open Besides art venues such as The offering platforms to showcase the and heritage. contributions of our partners.

platform that presents lesser-known the Eurasian Heritage Centre, which a pasar malam stall along the Armenian



Heritage Festival (SHF) and the Singapore houses and performances, the festival Substation and Objectifs, businesses Night Festival (SNF) – are good examples enables Singapore's diverse communities such as Kapok and Campers' Corner, of how we are creating more co-creation to share their stories and showcase both more recent partners, presented and partnership opportunities, and different aspects of Singapore's culture their own light installations at SNF 2017.

stories about Singapore's shared spaces presented guided tours of spaces Street alleyway.

significant to the Eurasian community, and the Geylang Serai local council, which led guided trails on delicious dishes found in the neighbourhood.

SNF takes place in the Bras Basah. Bugis precinct over two weekends annually, and is well-loved for its light art installations, street performances and roving acts. In its first edition in 2008, the festival attracted six partners. By its 10th edition in 2017, the number of partners had grown to 73.

In addition, the PoMo mall organised a performing arts showcase by its The number of SHF partners grew from tenants while True Blue, a restaurant First launched in 2004, SHF is an annual 58 in 2014 to 120 in 2016. They include specialising in Peranakan Cuisine, set up

#### FOR THE LOVE OF PULAU UBIN



A site of rich history and natural heritage, stakeholders called the Friends of Ubin the island's natural environment and Pulau Ubin was previously a hive of Network (FUN), comprising naturalists, living heritage. Some of the efforts to economic activities, which included heritage experts, sports enthusiasts, retain Ubin's heritage include a cultural granite quarrying, and farming. Today, researchers, residents, students and mapping project documenting the Ubin serves as a distinctive reminder of various volunteer groups. In partnership memories of Ubin's residents, the annual Singapore's history and cultural heritage. with government agencies such as the Pesta Ubin festival organised by the To sensitively enhance the natural MND, NHB, Urban Redevelopment community, and a multi-year effort to environment of Pulau Ubin, and to keep Authority and National Parks Board, restore Ubin's kampong houses. its heritage and rustic charm alive for these volunteers brainstormed and future generations of Singaporeans, developed new ideas and initiatives for With the concerted efforts of the the Ministry of National Development the island. (MND) announced The Ubin Project in March 2014.





opportunities for the wider community history and biodiversity. Supporting The Ubin Project is a group of to contribute to the enhancement of

community in partnership with the various agencies, future generations Over the years, FUN has also created new can continue to enjoy Pulau Ubin's rich

#### **TELLING STORIES** OF THE COMMUNITY THROUGH HERITAGE TRAILS



NHB's heritage trails are part of our efforts to document, and increase awareness of the history and heritage of different precincts and estates in Singapore. From 1999 to 2017, we launched a total of 17 heritage trails around Singapore.

NHB started to work with communities more closely to enrich the content of our trails with stories and memories drawn from the people who live, work and play in the respective precincts and estates. The trail booklets now include personal collections of photographs, as well as the community's recollection of stories and social practices.

Launched in August 2017, the Tampines Heritage Trail is a good example of how the community contributed to the contents of the trail. It is the first heritage trail to feature stories that were crowd-sourced through NHB's Facebook page. The trail also incorporated stories from 25 members of the community, and more are featured in an exhibition at Our Tampines Gallery, a heritage gallery dedicated to the history and heritage of Tampines, located in Our Tampines Hub.

NHB will be taking a similar approach with its upcoming trails such as the new Orchard Heritage Trail, and the refresh of the Balestier Heritage Trail, as part of our efforts to feature more stories and perspectives from the community.



"When we first moved to Tampines, our neighbour, a Chinese family, was also from a kampong. So it was good that we still had that 'kampong-hood' feeling. During Chinese New Year, they would give my children ang paos ("red packets in Hokkien), and during Hari Raya, we would give their children the same. We still had that kind of kampong culture."

- Mr. Anwar Bin Haji Mawardee, long-time resident of Tampines.

#### C

#### REACH OUT THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

In line with the trends of digitisation worldwide and in museums overseas, a growing number of Singaporeans have been accessing our heritage resources digitally through roots.sg, NHB's heritage resource portal. We have also leveraged social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube and Instagram to extend our outreach, and reach out to new audiences.

Under Our SG Heritage Plan, we will expend more efforts to develop new heritage content, aggregate content across sites, and make our resources more readily available through our digital platforms. We will also improve the user experience across all our digital touchpoints, and develop a platform where people can share community and social memories on heritage topics.

As part of our digital engagement efforts, we will be embarking on the following initiatives:

#### Strengthen Our Digital Content

There are currently more than 100,000 artefacts and resource items from the National Collection published on roots.sg. We will increase the number of items from the National Collection to be made available online as part of our efforts to promote greater awareness of Singapore's cultural artefacts.

#### Facilitate Community Contribution

We will also work with the National Library Board to develop a platform that allows members of the community to share their stories and memories of heritage, which will in turn grow our repository of archival materials.

#### Develop Our Backend Capabilities

We will develop a new Singapore Heritage Ontology to establish a common content bank for heritage resources in the cultural industry in Singapore, to enhance digital resource management and the user experience.

The content bank will conform to international data standards to enable greater "shareabilty" of heritage resources amongst different organisations, in both the public and private sectors. We hope that the cross-sharing of resources will result in more innovative and collaborative projects, and increased public awareness and engagement. We will also keep track of the effectiveness of our digital strategy through the adoption of data analytics.

#### **ROOTS.SG:** THE "DIGITAL HERITAGE CONCIERGE" FOR SINGAPOREANS

Roots.sg is a one-stop online portal that consolidates content on our National Collection, National Monuments, heritage trails, historic sites, heritage grants and other heritage resources such as publications, videos and documentaries.

As an online extension of the museum and heritage experience, the portal features more than 100,000 artefacts and multimedia resources, and facilitates greater and easier access to our repository of heritage content.

To date, more than 2 million individuals have visited roots.sg, and the average amount of time each visitor spends on the portal has tripled from one minute to three minutes since it was launched in 2016.



# FACILITATE INTER-COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDING

While we continue to safeguard and showcase the distinctive heritage of the key communities in Singapore through our heritage institutions, there is also a need to highlight the common threads and shared experiences that bind Singaporeans across communities. We need to use our exhibitions, programmes and festivals to promote social bonding, and facilitate the integration of new citizens.

Under Our SG Heritage Plan, we will introduce policies and programmes that seek to address the abovementioned needs, and our key initiatives in this area will include:



#### Showcase the Heritage of Our Communities

The Peranakan Museum, together with the three heritage institutions – the Indian Heritage Centre (IHC), Malay Heritage Centre (MHC) and Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (SYSNMH) - will continue to work with their respective communities to showcase their histories, cultures and traditions through exhibitions, festivals and programmes. We will also step up efforts to promote greater cross-cultural participation and understanding through these exhibitions, festivals and programmes.

#### Promote Cross-Cultural Understanding

We will continue to develop new programmes to educate participants on the cultural diversity and significant milestones in Singapore history, and to promote empathy and understanding between different communities. We will be introducing a new programme called Neighbourhoods of Harmony, which takes participants on guided tours of neighbourhoods which feature diverse cultural and religious landmarks.

#### E **REACH OUT TO** UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Singapore is facing an ageing population, widening income disparity and deepening social divides.

In view of such challenges, it is important that we reach out to underserved communities such as the elderly, low-income families, youth-at-risk and individuals with special needs, and that we do so through heritage programmes that effect positive change and provide a channel for such communities to contribute back to society.

Under Our SG Heritage Plan, we will develop a targeted suite of programmes to engage these underserved communities in a more meaningful manner, and engage the relevant partners to co-own and co-administer these programmes. The initiatives focusing on underserved communities will include the following:

#### Promote Active Ageing at Heritage Institutions

The heritage institutions, comprising MHC, IHC and SYSNMH, will serve as Silver Hubs for seniors, and partner the relevant Social Service Organisations (SSOs) to co-develop and co-present age-friendly programmes, such as the recent Conversation Starter Kit for seniors as well as upcoming *Reminiscence Walks*.

#### Expand the Reach of HeritageCares

NHB's HeritageCares programme currently supports 80 SSOs under the Community Chest, to learn more about Singapore's heritage through guided visits to NHB's museums and trails. Over the next five years, we hope to reach out to non-Community Chest SSOs, as well as to introduce more *HeritageCares* programmes that are co-developed with other partners, such as A Walk to Remember and A Cruise to Remember.

#### F ENCOURAGE VOLUNTEERISM AND GIVING

In Singapore, volunteerism is growing, with one in three Under Our SG Heritage Plan, we will ride this trend to actively people volunteering in 2016, compared to one in 10 in 2000. The number of volunteers in the arts and culture sector has also multiplied in the last five years. Similarly, donations and sponsorships to the arts and culture sector have witnessed healthy growth over the years.

#### **Contribution to Arts and Culture**



^ National Arts Council and National Heritage Board.

Riding on this trend, NHB has been reaching out to various communities, including corporate organisations, as part of our efforts to increase volunteerism and philanthropic efforts that support the safeguarding and promotion of our heritage.

#### HERITAGE CARES

HeritageCares was launched in 2016 and seeks to bring In July 2015, the Peranakan Museum, in partnership with heritage to the beneficiaries of SSOs under the Community the Agency for Integrated Care, ran two cycles of a six-Chest. Since its launch, more than 7,000 beneficiaries have week pilot programme, Culture, Kopi and Kueh, involving 30 participated in *HeritageCares* programmes including guided residents and five staff members from Ling Kwang Home for tours of our museums and heritage trails, as well as hands- Senior Citizens. At the museum, the participants engaged in on workshops, and interactive programmes at the museums. facilitated conversations inspired by artefacts, participated in These programmes are possible only because of the help of art-making activities, and shared their personal stories with our more than 1,500 volunteers.

Youth Corp Singapore (YCS) is our partner for A Walk to The pilot programme was well-received by both the residents *Remember*, which offers children from low-income families an and staff members from the home, and many said they would opportunity to discover Singapore's history through outdoor like to take part in such an activity again. It also offered guided walks, accompanied by youth volunteers from YCS. many learning points, which will be used to design more These guided walks incorporate museum visits, and feature programmes that meet the needs of our senior citizens visiting heritage-related activities and games at historic landmarks NHB's museums and heritage institutions. along NHB's Jubilee Walk.

#### CULTURE, KOPI AND KUEH

each other.

#### MR RONALD GOH, AUDIO-VISUAL EXTRAORDINAIRE HERITAGE VOLUNTEER AND HERITAGE PATRON

visual solutions provider Electronic & Engineering Pte Ltd, is cosmetics, became a docent because of her love for history. a long-time supporter of the National Museum of Singapore. In 2001, she completed docent training at the Singapore One of the company's most recent gifts went towards the installation of the museum's well-loved digital installation, *Story of the Forest*, where its subsidiary Broadcast Professional was the official system integration partner.

Launched in 2016, the installation by Japanese art collective TeamLab is inspired by the museum's William Farguhar Collection of Natural History Drawings. The work used art and technology to immerse visitors in the landscape of 19th on weekends and public holidays, and was its President century Malaya. Mr Goh's company brought TeamLab's ideas from 2011 to 2014. She is sought after for her insights on to life - designing, installing and supplying technologies to Singapore's museums and heritage, and has participated in present a spectacular show.

grow our volunteer base, and create new volunteering opportunities for people to give back to and through heritage. We will also actively reach out to various sponsors and donors, including corporate organisations, as part of our efforts to attract philanthropic contributions that support the safeguarding and promotion of our heritage.

DR MA SWAN HOO, AND CHAMPION

Mr Ronald Goh, Chairman and Managing Director of audio- Dr Ma Swan Hoo, a medical doctor involved in research on History Museum (today's National Museum). Since then, she has also guided visitors at the Peranakan Museum, IHC and the National Gallery Singapore. She keeps herself up to speed by attending the latest training sessions at these institutions, and serves as a mentor to fellow volunteers.

> In 2004, Dr Ma helped to set up Museum Volunteers, a group comprising working professionals who guide visitors dialogues such as Our Singapore Conversation and in focus group discussions for Our SG Heritage Plan.

# IN SUMMARY

Over the years, we have been actively working with various communities to increase participation and ownership of Singapore's heritage through co-creating content, supporting grassroots heritage projects, leveraging digital platforms and technology, taking heritage closer to the community, partnering schools for education programmes, and grooming more heritage volunteers and champions.

Moving forward, and taking into consideration Singapore's changing demographics and social divides, it is necessary to develop policies, programmes and partnerships that enable us to reach out to underserved communities and promote greater crosscultural understanding so that we can celebrate different aspects of Singapore's heritage as a nation and as a people.

BLK 05

# CONCLUSION







of retrospection, introspection and prospection as we huddled together to review our achievements; identify areas of improvement; seek feedback through To put this master plan together, we consultations; and co-develop forwardheritage and museum sector.

and people sectors for Our SG Heritage Plan, and succeeded in securing a budget of S\$66 million to develop and implement the However, our journey has just begun. various strategies and initiatives outlined in the master plan.

As the first master plan for the heritage sets forth our vision for the sector and represents a new chapter in Singapore's vibrant nation proud of our history. It also signifies our long-term commitment to, and aspirations for, the heritage and museum We hope that you will continue to be part sector.

plan, or because it will set new exciting and in doing so, secure a future for our past. trajectories for the heritage and museum sector, but because it is the first master Thank you.

The past two years have been years plan for the sector that adopted a multiagency and multi-stakeholder approach in its development and its implementation.

interviews, focus groups and public collaborated with different stakeholders, including public sector agencies, heritage looking strategies and initiatives for the NGOs, experts, academics, practitioners, educators, volunteers, youths, students, and interested members of the public who As a result of our efforts, we have strongly believe in the cause of heritage. garnered widespread support from our We would like to thank them once again key stakeholders from the public, private for their unwavering support, and for their invaluable contributions.

Over the next five years (2018 - 2022), we will be implementing the various strategies and initiatives outlined in Our SG Heritage and museum sector, Our SG Heritage Plan Plan, we will experience successes, we will encounter challenges and unexpected obstacles, but we will persevere and journey towards becoming a more culturally continue to refine these strategies and initiatives as we go along.

of this next stage in our journey, so that we can collectively champion the cause We are proud of Our SG Heritage Plan not of heritage and museums, and so that we only because it is the first such master protect our past, celebrate it in our present,

From everyone at the National Heritage Board



# WHAT OUR SG HERITAGE PLAN WILL DO

The first edition of Our SG Heritage Plan will shape the work for Singapore's heritage and museum sector from 2018 to 2022. Here is a summaru:



## **OUR CULTURES**

- Ratify the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.
- Develop an intangible cultural heritage inventory by 2019 to create greater public awareness and understanding of our diverse intangible cultural heritage.
- C Effect legislative changes to the NHB Act to better safeguard and promote Singapore's intangible cultural heritage.
- D Enhance efforts to promote our intangible cultural heritage, such as by leveraging our festivals, exhibitions and programmes.

- Introduce a recognition scheme for practitioners of intangible cultural heritage by 2019.
- **F** Strengthen research and documentation of intangible cultural heritage.
- G Nominate a Singapore intangible cultural heritage element for UNESCO's Representative List.



- A Build and care for our National Collection by continuing to acquire artefacts, and strengthening our expertise in the conservation of these artefacts.
- B Develop a National Register for Singaporebased collections across the public sector.
- c Enhance the infrastructure of our national revamp of the Changi Chapel Museum.
- D Celebrate key milestones in our nation's history and commemorate the efforts of our pioneers.
- **E** Cultivate a vibrant and productive research culture at our national museums and heritage institutions.
- Develop and present more "curated-by-Singapore" exhibitions that showcase original content told from a Singaporean perspective.



- A Support more ground-up initiatives through grants and training of our community partners.
- B Facilitate inter-community understanding through programmes that showcase the heritage and cultures of different communities.
- c Encourage more cultural philanthropy and volunteerism.



## **OUR TREASURES**

- G Nurture interest in our heritage in our young by enhancing the learning experiences of school visits to museums and heritage institutions. (H) Safeguard archaeological heritage by reviewing
- existing legislation, developing a framework to govern archaeological works, and developing local capabilities.
- museums and heritage institutions, such as the **1** Make our national museums and heritage institutions more accessible by conducting an accessibility audit to identify gaps, and following up with improvements to our museums and institutions.

#### **OUR COMMUNITIES**

- Serve diverse communities and reach out to different segments of society, including senior citizens and persons with special needs.
- **E** Promote greater access to our heritage by reaching out through technology and presenting new heritage content online.

# CREDITS

#### With Support From





Partners

We would like to thank our partners who have journeyed with us in developing Our SG Heritage Plan and charting the future of Singapore's heritage.



Land Transport Authority We Keep Your World Moving





Venue Partners













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#### Contributors

Our heartfelt thanks to the following organisations and individuals who have given their time and ideas to Our SG Heritage Plan.

#### Α

Asian Civilisations Museum ACM Advisory Board Agency for Science, Technology and Research aKt Creations All Things Bukit Brown Alzheimer's Disease Association AMKFSC Community Services Anderson Secondary School **APB** Foundation Apsaras Arts Armenian Church Art Logica Arts House Limited ArtScience Museum Artsolute Asia Film Archive Asian Culinary Institute Association of Chetti Melaka (Peranakan Indians) Singapore Attorney-General's Chambers Auditor-General's Office Autism Association Singapore Ayurveda Association of Singapore (AAOS)

#### В

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Bhaskar's Arts Academy Boon Lay CC Youth Executive Committee Boon Lay Garden Primary School **Building and Construction Authority** Bukit Timah Primary School

#### С

Casino Regulatory Authority Central Provident Fund Board Central Singapore Community Development Council Channel NewsAsia Chinese Theatre Circle/Pat Wo Wui Kun (Cantonese Opera Artistes Guild) Choo Yi Lin Jewellery CIAP Architects City Developments Limited City Gas Pte Ltd **CPG** Consultants Cyber Security Agency of Singapore (CSA)

#### D

Defence Science and Technology Agency Department of Statistics **Digital Resource Panel** DishtheFish

#### Ε

Eagle Eye Centre Epicurean World Epigram Books Era Dance Theatre Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay Ethnic Shadows Ethnographica Research Eunos Primary School Eurasian Association Explore Singapore

#### F

Fabcafe Fei Yue Community Services Food for Thought Food Playground Friends of the Museums Friends of Ubin Network (FUN)

#### G

Gan Heritage Centre Geylang Serai Integration and Naturalization Committee (INC) Gin Thye Cake Shop Global Indian International School **Grassroots Heritage Centre** Gritti Consulting Pte Ltd

#### н

Handson Learning Home Team Academy Housing & Development Board Hwa Chong Institution

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ICOMOS SG Immigrations and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) Indian Women's Association Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS) Institute of Mental Health (IMH) Institute of Policy Studies Intellectual Property Office of Singapore InterContinental Singapore International Journal of Comic Art **ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute** 

73

#### J

Jane's Singapore Tours JTC Corporation

#### Κ

Kim Choo Kueh Chang Pte Ltd Kristang Festival

#### L

Land Transport Authority (LTA) LASALLE College of the Arts Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum Lekker Design Lian He Zao Bao Lian Shan Shuang Lin Monastery

#### Μ

Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura (MUIS) Malay Heritage Foundation Malay Language Centre of Singapore Mandarin Guides (NHB) Manjusri Secondary School Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore Metta School Ministry of Communications and Information Ministry of Culture, Community & Youth Ministry of Defence Ministry of Education Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Health Ministry of Home Affairs Ministry of Law Ministry of National Development Ministry Of National Development Recreation Club Ministry of Social and Family Development MINT Museum of Toys Mneme Works Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) My Singapore Food

#### Ν

Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts Nanyang Technological University National Arts Council National Council of Social Service National Gallery Singapore National Kitchen by Violet Oon National Library Board National Museum of Singapore National Parks Board National University of Singapore News for Kids Nexus Ngee Ann Polytechnic North Spring Primary School Northeast Community Development Council (CDC) Nosh Trekker NTUC Income

#### 0

OFW Pinoy Star OnePeople.sg

#### Ρ

Paper Monkey Theatre People's Association Perennial Real Estate Holdings Limited Perkumpulan Seni Singapore PIA Conservation Studio Promote Mandarin Council Punggol Green Primary School

#### Q

Quentin's Eurasian Restaurant

#### R

Raffles Hotel Singapore Rainbow Centre Rare Disorders Society Singapore Republic Polytechnic Reta Transmedia Storytelling Rolleyes RT+Q Architects

#### S

Saint George's Church, Singapore Science Centre Singapore Select Books Pte Ltd Selera Rasa Nasi Lemak Sengkang Primary School Seletar Hills Estate Residents Association (SHERA) Shin Min Daily News Singapore Art Museum Singapore Civil Defence Force Singapore Corporation of Rehabilitation Enterprises Singapore Discovery Centre Singapore Federation of Chinese Clan Associations Singapore Heritage Consultants Singapore Heritage Society

Singapore Institute of Management Singapore Institute of Technology Singapore Kindness Movement Singapore Land Authority Singapore Management University Singapore Philatelic Museum Singapore Press Holdings Singapore Tourism Board Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) Skills Future Singapore Slow Food (Singapore) Society of Sheng Hong Welfare Services South View Primary School Speak Good English Movement Sport Singapore Sree Narayana Mission Sri Mahligai Sri Warisan St Luke's Eldercare Ltd STPI – Creative Workshop & Gallery Studio Lapis Sultan Mosque Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall Surbana Jurong

#### Т

Tamil Language Council Tan's Tu Tu Coconut Cake Temasek Polytechnic Temasek Secondary School The Federation Of Merchants' Associations, Singapore The Fullerton Heritage The History Workroom 75

The Intan The Straits Times THEO Arts Touch Community Services Traditional Arts Centre TSAO Foundation for Succesful Ageing

#### V

Victoria Junior College

#### W

Wheelock College Woodgrove Primary School Workforce Singapore World Green Building Council World Street Food Congress/Makansutra

#### Y

Yale-NUS College Yew Tee Primary School Youth Corps Singapore Yu Neng Primary School

#### Ζ

Zarch Collaboratives

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