

**A Fresh Look at Instant Photography**  
**National Museum of Singapore presents**  
***In an Instant: Polaroid at the Intersection of Art and Technology***

*The exhibition explores the history and cultural legacy of Polaroid photography and connects it to present-day social media through a creative interplay of art and technology*



*Images courtesy of the National Museum of Singapore.*

**Singapore, 5 November 2018** – The National Museum of Singapore is enabling museum-goers to rediscover the exciting, technological breakthrough of instant photography via fresh experiences that marry art, history and technology, in its upcoming exhibition *In an Instant: Polaroid at the Intersection of Art and Technology*, on view from 10 November 2018 to 31 March 2019.

*In an Instant: Polaroid at the Intersection of Art and Technology* showcases a curated collection of around 220 iconic artefacts and artworks produced at the height of Polaroid’s popularity in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It provides a fascinating look at the development of Polaroid photography, and its lasting influence on instant photography, enabling visitors to discover how the concept of creating and sharing moments “in an instant” began and has evolved.

An invitation for visitors to consider what “in an instant” means today, the exhibition offers food for thought on how social media today mimics the Polaroid experience of days past. As they encounter diverse observations of the social media landscape and interactive photography experiences in *In an Instant*, visitors are encouraged to consider the parallels between past and present developments of instant photography, and discover their personal potential for creative expression.

**Director of the National Museum of Singapore, Angelita Teo**, said, “We hope this exhibition will spark lively conversation among visitors and inspire the spirit of innovation – just as how Edwin Land, the artists and photographers dared to dream and pushed the boundaries to create impactful memories that will last a lifetime, and beyond.”

### **Discovering the cultural impact of Polaroid through art and archives**

*In an Instant* showcases art and technology at play, pairing Polaroid artworks with the Polaroid artefacts that made these creations possible, offering visitors a unique insight into the history of Polaroid photography through the lens of art and technology. The arrival of Polaroid inspired a generation of notable artists and photographers such as Andy Warhol, Ansel Adams, Lucas Samaras, Ellen Carey, David Hockney, Marie Cosindas and more, whose works are featured in the exhibition. Highlights include Oliviero Toscani’s duotone print comprising six images from the Andy Warhol portrait series, and Barbara Crane’s *Private Views*, which captured scenes of Chicago beaches and summer festivals, focusing on individuals who make the city so culturally diverse.

The advent of Polaroid photography was a technological breakthrough in its day, predating the digital and instant age – selfies included – in which we live today. The exhibition presents “the instant” of the past, tracing Polaroid’s iconic history of instant photography from its inventor Edwin Land’s inspiration for its development, to conceptual models and prototypes of notable camera models, and finally, the Polaroid camera as we know it today.

Recognising Polaroid’s international cultural significance and to offer visitors in Singapore a closer look at this pivotal chapter in the history of photography, the National Museum has collaborated with the Foundation for the Exhibition of Photography (FEP) to bring in a diverse range of Polaroid artefacts and artworks from the MIT Museum, WestLicht (centre of photography in Vienna), The Polaroid Collection and various artists. The featured works are also part of *The Polaroid Project* travelling exhibition, which will be making its debut in Asia through this exhibition. Artefacts featured in the exhibition include popular Polaroid classics such as the iconic SX-70 – dubbed the “the original magic camera” as it was the first camera that made truly instant photographs, as well as the first to use a single lens reflex. The uniquely-shaped Big Shot, which was popular in the early 1970s among photographers such as famed American artist Andy Warhol, will also be on display.

### **Connecting past and present to prompt reflection on social media**

*In an Instant* draws connections between the past and present by exploring the impact of instantaneity in today’s digital landscape, in which smart devices and social media platforms enable people to capture and communicate just about anything in an instant. The origins of the “instant” can arguably be traced

back to Edwin Land's invention of the first Polaroid camera in the late 1940s, which paved the way for people to share their photographs and special moments instantly, a familiar experience for many of us on social media platforms today.

The exhibition features a contemporary take on instant photography technology to connect past inventions to present-day developments, brought to life by diverse observations about the digital landscape from familiar voices in our local community such as Singaporean influencers SGAG, Jianhao Tan, Preeti, Jamie Chua, Life's Tiny Miracles and Yafiq and Yais Yusman.

**Curator of *In an Instant: Polaroid at the Intersection of Art and Technology*, National Museum of Singapore, Priscilla Chua**, said, "Social media today mimics the Polaroid experience in more ways than one, from the way it connects us with others, to the immediacy of the medium. Through the exhibition, we hope to welcome our visitors to embark on a journey to explore the history of Polaroid photography, and discover how past developments in instant photography continue to impact us significantly in the present day."

Interactive experiences featured in the exhibition – which include themed Polaroid photography opportunities, a photo-booth, and a selfie station – will provide opportunities for visitors to draw inspiration from the story of Polaroid photography and express their creativity through instant photography, mirroring the creations of artists in the past as they experimented with the possibilities afforded by Polaroid cameras.

### **Delving deeper into Polaroid and photography**

As part of efforts to extend the visitor experience beyond the exhibition space, the National Museum will also present public programmes that explore photography, in conjunction with the exhibition. Programme highlights include talks by photographers, collectors and enthusiasts; workshops on photography and alternative photographic processes; and a behind-the-scenes tour led by the exhibition curator.

*In an Instant: Polaroid at the Intersection of Art and Technology* is presented by the National Museum, an institution of the National Heritage Board, in collaboration with the Foundation for the Exhibition of Photography (FEP), the MIT Museum and the WestLicht museum, and supported by Polaroid Eyewear, FRANK by OCBC, TIME, Changi Airport Group, Polaroid Originals, MEGU Catering concepts and the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth.

The exhibition will be on view from 10 November 2018 to 31 March 2019 at the museum's Exhibition Gallery 2, Basement Level. Visitor admission charges apply.

**– END –**

Kindly refer to the attached media release and media factsheet for further details on the exhibition and accompanying programmes, as well as the [exhibition website](#). For event listings, please see listings write-up attached.

High-resolution images of the exhibition can be downloaded [here](#); kindly note that the pictures should be credited to the **National Museum of Singapore**.

**#InAnInstantAtNMS** | **FB** [national.museum.of.sg](#) | **IG** [natmuseum\\_sg](#)

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**About the National Museum of Singapore**

With a history dating back to 1887, the National Museum of Singapore is the nation's oldest museum with a progressive mind. Its galleries adopt cutting-edge and multi-perspective ways of presenting history and culture to redefine conventional museum experience. A cultural and architectural landmark in Singapore, the Museum hosts innovative festivals and events all year round—the dynamic Night Festival, visually arresting art installations, as well as amazing performances and film screenings—in addition to presenting thought-provoking exhibitions involving critically important collections of artefacts. The programming is supported by a wide range of facilities and services including F&B, retail and a Resource Centre. The National Museum of Singapore re-opened in December 2006 after a three-year redevelopment. It refreshed its permanent galleries and re-opened them in September 2015 for Singapore's Golden Jubilee. In 2017, it celebrated its 130th anniversary. For more details, please visit [www.nationalmuseum.sg](http://www.nationalmuseum.sg).

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