

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 2

MUSE SG



N•30

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 2
ISSN: 2424-7766

Publisher

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The exterior of
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Collection of National
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Epergne, 1860. Silver. Collection of the Tan family.
Currently on display at *Great Peranakans: Fifty Remarkable Lives* at the Peranakan Museum.

Foreword

A museum, in many ways, represents the heart of a community. Its artefacts are a collection of the people's memories; echoes of stories waiting to be told. The combined effect is a space filled with wonder and imagination. Some of the world's largest museums can take days, even weeks, to explore. In our hectic, hyper-connected lives, such opportunities to unplug and retreat deep within ourselves are not only rare, but treasured today more so than ever.

In Singapore, there are more than 50 museums — among them, the iconic National Museum and Asian Civilisations Museum. Their smaller counterparts — the Singapore Philatelic Museum and the MINT Museum of Toys, to name a couple — continue to draw niche audiences year after year. Take a look at the directory of museums at the back of this issue for unique and fascinating places to explore with your loved ones.

To some, it will seem as if Singapore's museums have undergone a proliferation of late. Apart from the new \$530-million National Gallery due to open in October, the year has already welcomed three new additions to the scene: The Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, the Indian Heritage Centre, and the Singapore Pinacothèque de Paris.

In fact the push to supercharge the nation's museums and arts scene could be said to have begun in 2006, when the National Museum was re-opened and re-positioned not only as a museum of Singapore history, but a space for major, international "blockbuster" exhibitions. Exhibitions from major museums including the British Museum and Musée du Louvre were showcased in our museums. Experts in related fields, including curatorship and conservation, were groomed. People started taking the "business" of museums more seriously. You can read more about this in our cover story, *Museums in Singapore — A Short History*, on page 18.

At the heart of it all is what these new museums and exhibitions have in common: the ability to draw people into an oasis of beauty, and a shared sense of the past. Museums are, as our Editor in his essay, *Stepping Through Museums* (page 26), puts it: where "knowledge, aesthetics and storytelling merge and meld into one".

MUSE SG team

WE LOVE THIS



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 \$79.00

The new Museum Label shop at the newly opened Indian Heritage Centre offers quality gifts showcasing Indian heritage and culture.

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Opening hours:
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 Closed on Mondays

*The Indian Heritage Centre is closed on Public Holidays that fall on a Monday unless otherwise stated.



Nazarbattu Coasters
Retail Price
 \$20.00

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National Heritage Board

GREAT PERANAKANS FIFTY REMARKABLE LIVES

Text by John Teo and Jackie Yoong

Tan Tock Seng, Goh Keng Swee and the late Lee Kuan Yew — all integral Singaporean icons, and all of them “Peranakan”. The Malay word “Peranakan” commonly refers to the creolized Chinese who lived in Southeast Asia. The community gained a reputation with its close ties to the British under colonial rule, but were also crucial players in Sun Yat Sen’s revolutionary activities and of course, our country’s rise since independence. In celebration of our country’s 50th anniversary, an exhibition showcasing the lives of 50 great Peranakans who contributed significantly to the development of our nation can now be explored at the Peranakan Museum.

‘Great Men’

In our reading of Singapore’s history, we must not forget the pivotal role Peranakans have played in shaping it — from the obscure *kapitans*, the *baba* captains of industry, to members of our first Legislative Council. We must also dispel the myths and misconceptions surrounding the community. The Peranakans were not merely rich, English-educated dilettantes who collaborated with the British and Dutch colonial masters, nor were they part of the large migration of Chinese who

came to Singapore to find a better life. Women are outnumbered in the selected group for the exhibition, which to a certain extent reflects the cloistered lives of *nyonyas* before the twentieth century. But while the lives of Peranakan women are not as well documented, their contributions are apparent in the community’s culture, including in the aspects of dress, food, residences, and social behaviour.

Crossing Boundaries

The Peranakans’ influence spread beyond the shores of Singapore. While the 50 featured in the exhibition were selected based on their contributions to Singapore, many were born and had made large impacts elsewhere. The community’s strong connections to Malacca, Penang, and Java highlight Singapore’s comparative newness as an independent entity. From 1819 to 1959, Singapore functioned as a British colony and the centrepiece of the Straits Settlements. Many of the individuals who found their way to the young nation also had connections and family networks throughout the region.

The Peranakans were quick to adapt to changing political circumstances. During the colonial period, they

became powerful compradors and collaborators with the British and Dutch regimes. With the rise of Chinese nationalism in the late nineteenth century, some became crucial players in Sun Yat Sen’s revolutionary activities both within and outside China. Most leaders saw no contradiction in supporting both the British and the Chinese. World War II marked a turning point, after which some Peranakans began to champion for an independent Singapore and Malaya. The common caricature of Peranakans as “King’s Chinese” and their closeness to the British should not obscure their active engagement with Chinese culture and the Chinese community. Although many Peranakans lost their fluency and literacy in Chinese, they nonetheless supported Chinese or bilingual education, and founded Chinese newspapers. Some Peranakans converted to Christianity from around 1900, while others rediscovered Confucianism. Peranakans carefully balanced the two empires of British and Chinese. As they knelt loyally to receive visiting British royals, they also paid homage to Qing dignitaries. As some proudly received British decorations, they also purchased overseas Chinese honours.

The featured 50 Peranakans in the exhibition



School visitors looking at artefacts and learning about Peranakan contributions

Beyond their national contributions, a study of institutional histories and memories related to the selected Peranakans has also revealed individual legacies. These are documented in temples, associations, churches, schools, hospitals, and private families, as well as in libraries, archives, and museums. Many of the objects shown in the exhibition are hybrid in form and design. The exhibition does not attempt to represent or define a Peranakan aesthetic, but, rather, celebrates the variety and inconsistencies within the community. Memoirs, interviews, and private collections paint intimate images of these exemplary figures. The objects featured in this exhibition range from spectacular furnishings, personal belongings, and rare portraits, to humble images, handwritten papers, and objects of everyday use.

One notable aspect of Peranakan families today is the extent of their knowledge of their past and their relations, whether by blood, marriage, or friendship. The Peranakan Museum is grateful for their generosity in supporting this exhibition and has been impressed by the strong sense of community and connectivity among Peranakans — ties which seem to have strengthened in recent years with the revival of interest in Peranakan culture. The Peranakans remind us that Singapore has long been closely connected with family and trade networks with the region — not only Penang and Malacca, but Jakarta and the rest of Java, and elsewhere. Taken as a whole, the biographies and objects on display in the exhibition illuminate not just the history of the Peranakans in Singapore, but that of the wider nation as well.

TAN TOCK SENG

THE FIRST COMMUNITY LEADER
1798–1850

Born in Malacca, Tan Tock Seng moved to Singapore in the year it was founded by the British. He sold produce before building a fortune as a landowner in partnership with J. H. Whitehead of Shaw, Whitehead and Co. Tan was the first Asian to be appointed a Justice of the Peace in Singapore and is remembered principally for founding Singapore's first hospital for poor Chinese. At the request of the governor of Singapore, William Butterworth, Tan contributed \$7,000 to start a public hospital. In 1844, the foundation was laid for the Chinese Paupers' Hospital, which received its first patients in 1849. The hospital was named after Tan Tock Seng after his death in 1850.

Portrait of Tan Tock Seng, 1950s.
Oil on canvas. Collection of Tan Jiew Hoe.

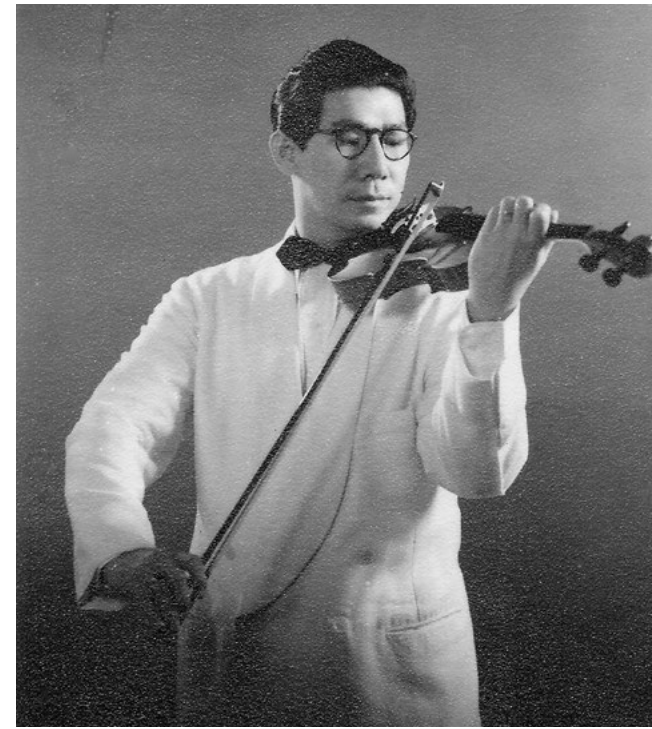


LIM NEE SOON

PINEAPPLE KING AND CHINESE
NATIONALIST PARTY SUPPORTER
1879–1936

In 1911, Lim Nee Soon started a rubber and pineapple company. His large plantations in the booming pineapple industry soon earned him the nickname of “pineapple king”. A close friend of Sun Yat Sen, Lim became deeply involved in Chinese Nationalist politics. In 1904, together with Teo Eng Hock and Tan Chor Nam, he founded the revolutionary newspaper *Thoe Lam Jit Poh* (图南日报). Lim also participated in the founding of the Singapore branch of the *Tong Meng Hui* (同盟会), the Nationalist underground organisation. The organizers met at Teo Eng Hock’s house, *Wan Qing Yuan* (晚晴园), which is today the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall. In 1925, Lim became an honorary advisor to the president of China. He was given a state funeral in Nanjing and buried near Sun Yat Sen’s mausoleum.

Lim Nee Soon, China Studio, early 20th century.
Photograph. Collection of Ivy Kwa.



Goh Soon Tioe, 1940s. Photograph. Collection of Vivien Goh.

GOH SOON TIOE

MAESTRO AND IMPRESARIO
1911–1982

Goh Soon Tioe was a pioneer in the development of classical music in Singapore. Born in Padang, Sumatra, he came to Singapore at the age of 13 to study at the Anglo-Chinese School. Goh only started violin lessons at the age of 15 but showed great promise, and in 1932 he left for Switzerland to join the Conservatoire de Musique de Genève, where he studied for three years. During his time there, he was awarded the “Premier Prix” — first prize — in each annual exam.

In 1954, Goh founded the Goh Soon Tioe String Orchestra. In the 1950s and 1960s, he ventured into concert promotion by bringing internationally renowned musicians to perform in Singapore. However, he was not able to continue organising these concerts because, as he observed, “costs are heavy and work is hard”. In his studio above a garage in Oldham Lane and later in his home in Balmoral Crescent, he taught many of Singapore’s musical prodigies, including violinists Lynette Seah and Lee Pan Hon, pianists Seow Yit Kin and Melvyn Tan, and conductor Choo Hoey. Goh was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal in 1963 in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the music scene in Singapore.



Wedding Photograph of Teo Koon Lim and Lee Choo Neo, 1922.
Photograph. Collection of Vera Teo.

LEE CHOO NEO

SINGAPORE’S FIRST FEMALE DOCTOR
1895–1947

Lee Choo Neo was Singapore’s first female physician. Breaking away from the tradition of the cloistered *nyonya*, she used her privileged position to help enact social reforms. Lee was the daughter of Lee Hoon Leong, a Peranakan from Semarang who was manager of Oei Tiong Ham’s shipping business in Singapore. Educated at the Singapore Chinese Girls’ School, she was the first Straits Chinese woman to obtain a Senior Cambridge certificate in 1911. She studied at the King Edward VII School of Medicine in Singapore, and became the city’s first Chinese female doctor in 1920. These were remarkable achievements considering the general Chinese cultural expectations of women’s roles.

For more information about *Great Peranakans: Fifty Remarkable Lives*, please visit www.peranakanmuseum.org.sg

WE

DEFINING STORIES

Text by Priscilla Chua and Stefanie Tham

This is the second of four chapters in *WE: Defining Stories*, a travelling exhibition presenting photographs that captured significant moments in Singapore's history. A collaboration between the National Heritage Board and *The Straits Times*, these photographs were selected from the archives of *The Straits Times* and the collection of the National Museum of Singapore. It will be rotated monthly amongst various libraries across Singapore to celebrate our nation's 50th anniversary. For more information, turn to page 63.

Home

Our birth as an independent nation in 1965 was met with uncertainty about the future, and few would have imagined that Singapore would become the modern metropolis that we know today. With the general populace living in overcrowded slums, little infrastructure and lack of a national armed forces, there was much to be done. In spite of the odds, the people of Singapore forged ahead. Within a matter of decades, the face of modern Singapore began to take shape: families moved out of their rural homes and into new Housing & Development Board (HDB) flats, and young men were enlisted to serve their duty in National Service (NS). The ranks of the civil service swelled as the wheels of government began ticking along, and a nascent economic powerhouse started to emerge.

The development of urban infrastructure laid the foundation for this modern Singapore. Flats and satellite towns, such as Queenstown and Toa Payoh, were constructed to address a housing shortage in the 1960s, and the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) subway system eased gridlock on the roads and facilitated commuting between the city centre and the suburbs. New land was reclaimed for residential, industrial, and commercial uses, and the manufacturing and industrial sectors were also enhanced.

The first two MRT trains from Japan being unloaded in Singapore.
27 May 1987.
Photo: Simon Ker / The Straits Times





Commuters at Ang Mo Kio station on the second day of the opening of the MRT North-South line. 8 November 1987.
Photo: Michael Liew / The Straits Times

“I was one of the two first residents to move into Queenstown. At that time, the public flats in Queenstown attracted great interest. I waited for about 12 years for my flat in Queenstown. I approached the former Singapore Improvement Trust (SIT), the predecessor of the Housing & Development Board, about my application and when they informed me that it was approved, I was overjoyed... Imagine moving from a slum to a clean public flat with modern amenities. My happiness was indescribable.”

-Eric Kwa has lived in Queenstown since 1960.
(Source: “Queenstown: The First Satellite Town”, A *Nation Remembers* project by the National Heritage Board)



In the 1970s, Marine Parade became Singapore's first residential area built entirely on reclaimed land. The reclaimed area covers about 50 hectares. 14 September 1974.
Photo: Mak Kian Seng / The Straits Times



Families moving from their squatter huts to new homes such as terrace houses in Kim Keat Road and prefabricated homes in Thomson Road. 27 February 1963.
Photo: Kok Ah Chong / The Straits Times



A lion dance performance at a new Housing & Development Board estate in Toa Payoh. 1 October 1966.
Photo: Low Yew Kong / The Straits Times



Crowds queuing to ballot for units at the new 19-storey 'Y-shaped' block of flats at Toa Payoh Lorong 5. 1967.
Photo: The Straits Times



Fresh recruits being sent off by their loved ones as the military tonner carrying them moves off from Delta Community Centre. 18 March 1987. Photo: Lesley Koh / The Straits Times

Following Singapore's independence, Britain announced plans to retract its military bases by the mid-1970s. As a sovereign nation, Singapore needed to assume full responsibility for our nation's security.

This duty was enshrined in the National Service (Amendment) Act, which made it mandatory for Singaporean males to defend the country in the name of NS. Beginning with a two-year full-time commitment in the military, police or civil defence force, these NSmen — as they are called — are then summoned annually for training to maintain their operational readiness.

“They were very disciplined and never gave me any trouble. We were all like friends.”

- Loo Keng Hong was one of the platoon sergeants in charge of the pioneer national servicemen. (Source: The Straits Times, 29 June 1992, p.25)



Swearing-in ceremony of the first batch of NS recruits at Kallang Manpower Headquarters. 17 August 1967. Photo: Mak Kian Seng / The Straits Times



The first batch of 1,000 full-time NSmen returning to civilian life after two years of military service. 16 August 1969. Photo: Chew Boon Chin / The Straits Times



Sequence of construction of Changi Airport's iconic control tower, which was completed during Phase One of the airport's development. 1981. Photos: [L-R] Wong Kwai Chow, Tan Wee Him, Chew Yen Fook / The Straits Times



Workers at the Unitex garment factory in Commonwealth Drive. 2 May 1967. Photo: The Straits Times



Officers from the civil defence unit form a human chain to help bring down the body of a Malaysian man from the top of the rubble of the Hotel New World collapse. 16 March 1986. Photo: Yap Yew Piang / The Straits Times

However our journey was not without its challenges. During these decades of rapid building, Singapore experienced one of its worst construction disasters: the Hotel New World collapse on March 15, 1986. The building's collapse was as total as it was swift. With little time to react many were consequently trapped under the rubble.

It took a gruelling week-long rescue operation to successfully recover 17 people whilst 33 tragically lost their lives. Later determined to have been due to poor structural design, the incident served as caution in our strive for progress and more importantly, in building the place we call home.

PROFILE // NEIL HUMPHREYS

SAVING A SEXIER ISLAND

NEIL HUMPHREYS, OUR FAVOURITE RESIDENT ANGMOH, IS BACK WITH HIS LATEST BOOK, *SAVING A SEXIER ISLAND*, WHERE HE SEARCHES FOR 50 SIGNIFICANT PLACES WORTH PRESERVING IN SINGAPORE.

What drew you to Singapore?

Back in my Manchester University days, there was a Singaporean guy living in my university hall and we became friends. Like most people after graduation, I had no idea what to do but I did know that I wanted to travel. So when he said that he had an empty flat in Toa Payoh, I came over on a 30-day social visit pass in 1996. At the time, I only knew two things about Singapore: the Singapore Sling and Raffles Hotel. It was only meant to be a holiday and then I stayed for 10 years!

What prompted you to write *Saving A Sexier Island*? How did you come to be interested in Singapore's heritage?

I was a history major, with First Class Honours. I'm still very proud that I got the highest degree in the whole department and my thesis was on social history and public housing. I've always had a fascination with history and culture and I'm trying to instil it in my daughter now. I grew up in Dagenham which was the world's biggest housing estate at the time. When I came over to Singapore, I basically moved from heartland to heartland so of course, I was interested in its history. The two great things Singapore doesn't get enough credit for are its heritage and greenery. We have a complaint culture and don't always appreciate what we have. In one day, I can go to Kampong Silat and visit Baba House then get a bus to Bukit Timah to explore primary rainforest. Amazing!

One of the things that led to me writing this book was the *Masak Masak* exhibition at the National Museum of Singapore. My daughter loved the inflatable Toa Payoh bouncy castle but that was nothing compared to later when I took her to see the real playground. Human beings like to touch and feel things. That tactile experience is so important.

If some terrible disaster occurred and you could only save one of the 50 spots on your list, which one would you pick and why?

Haha, that's a good one! I'm going to pick the last *kampong kopitiam* in Singapore. I'm proud that I found it and had a Eureka moment because I thought it had been knocked down. It's in Seletar estate and the man who runs it started in the late 60s and is still there with his wife. It's got zinc roof and walls, plastic furniture, even the electrical works are the same! It's not a replica of the 1960s *kopitiam*, it's the actual one. It feels like you've just gone back in time.

What would you say to someone keen to learn more about heritage but is unsure how to go about it?

You do it. Just go there and experience it. Find it. Feel it. The point I want to stress is that I want people to debate — it's a personal list, so make your own! This is the age of BuzzFeed! What would you save and why? It's a passionate plea to readers out there.



Photo by Alvin Loh, CraftsmanSG

MUSEUMS IN SINGAPORE

A SHORT HISTORY

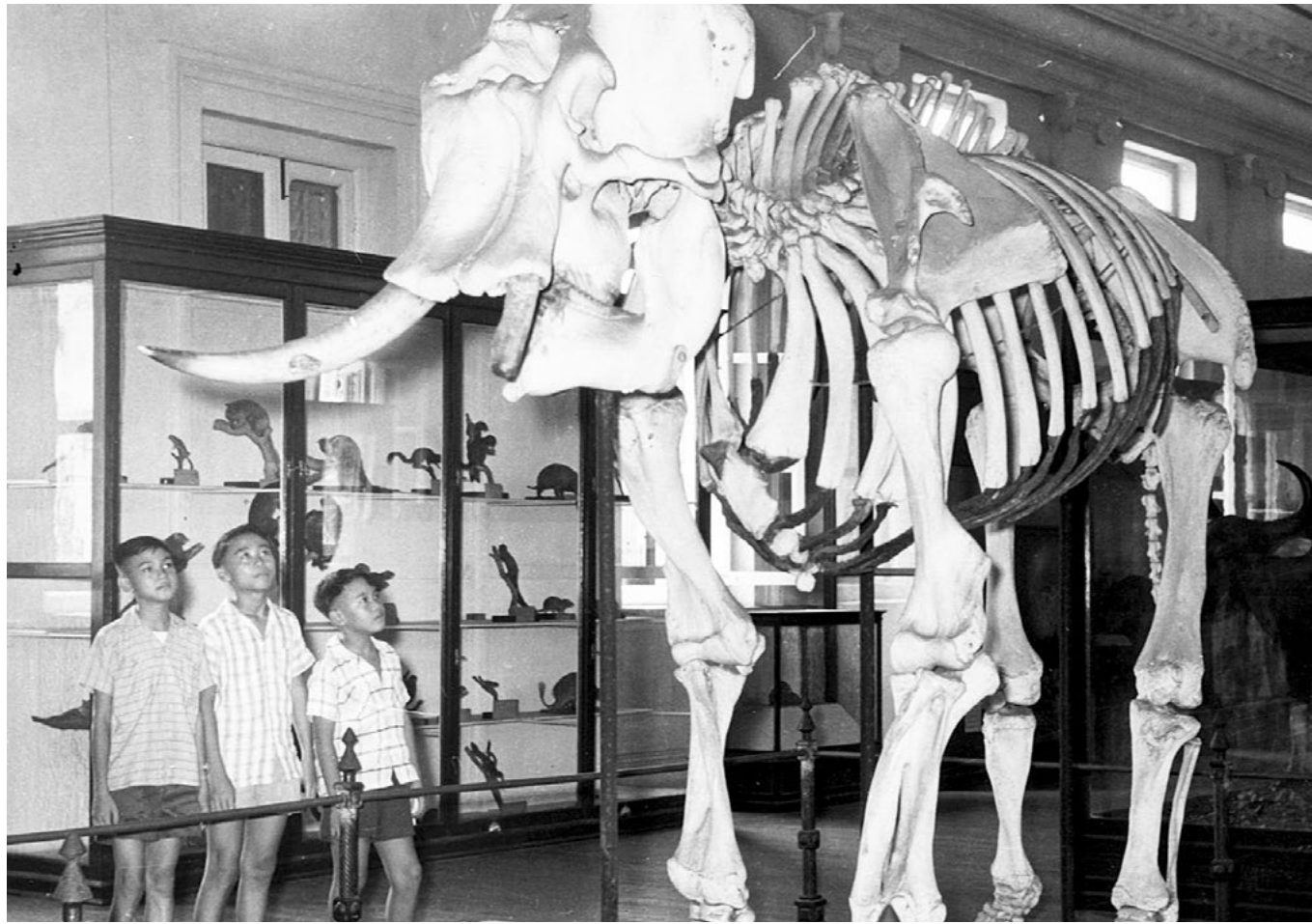


Text by Kennie Ting

The story of museums in Singapore begins with the Raffles Museum. Initiated by Raffles himself in 1823, and established in 1874 as part of a joint Raffles Library and Museum before it moved to its present Stamford Road premises in 1887, its purpose was to acquire specimens from and undertake research into Peninsular Malaya's wealth of natural history, ethnology, and archaeology. The British believed that knowledge was power. As such, the establishment of a museum to document and research colonial territory was part and parcel of the British colonial effort, and a physical symbol of British sovereignty over alien lands. The museum's predecessors included the Indian Museum in Calcutta and today's National Museum of Indonesia, established by the Dutch, but briefly under Raffles' supervision during an interregnum from 1811 to 1815 when Java was ruled by the British.

The Raffles Museum lost both its original purpose of being the collecting institution of the colonial apparatus and its collecting hinterland of Peninsular Malaya after Singapore attained self-government in 1959. Renamed the National Museum a year later, in 1960, it continued to flounder for the next few decades; critical questions as to what its role would be in the new nation were never satisfactorily answered. Management of the museum shifted from the Ministry of Culture to the Ministry of Science and Technology, and back again in 1972. With the latter shift, its natural history collections were excised and transferred to a brand new Singapore Science Centre and to the then-University of Singapore, where they still remain today and form the basis of the new Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum. In place of its natural history displays, the National Museum introduced a new gallery dedicated to art from Singapore and the region.

The earliest known photograph of the Raffles Library and Museum, 1890. Collection of National Museum of Singapore.



Children viewing an elephant exhibit in the Raffles Library and Museum, 1950s. Collection of National Museum of Singapore.



Hawkers on the National Museum's grounds. Collection of National Museum of Singapore.

It was not until the mid-1980s that the Government finally decided that it was necessary to address the National Museum's long-term role in Singapore. A high-level Task Force on the Long-term Development of the Museum (also known as the Museum Development Committee, or MDC) was appointed by the Government to look into this. Almost concurrently, a larger Advisory Council for Culture and the Arts (ACCA) was initiated by then-Second Deputy Prime Minister, the late Dr Ong Teng Cheong. The ACCA's mission was to review Singapore's

entire cultural landscape, and to propose a comprehensive strategy that would boost the island's cultural vibrancy and preserve its heritage. Dr Ong wanted to turn around popular notions that Singapore was a "cultural desert".

The recommendations of the MDC were eventually packaged as part of the slate of recommendations announced by the ACCA in 1989. Chief among the recommendations was a proposal to split the museum into five major standalone galleries: a Fine Arts Gallery,

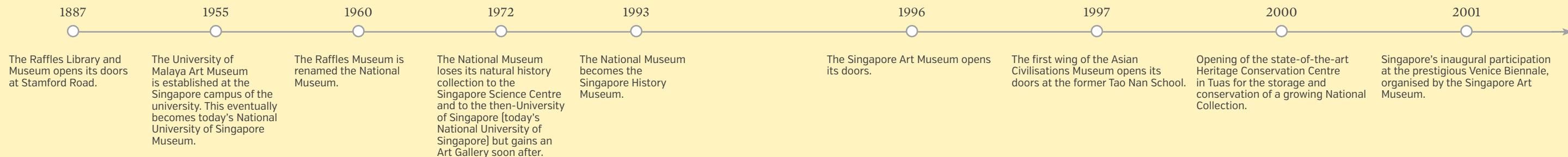
a Southeast Asian Natural History / Ethnology Gallery, a Singapore History Gallery, a Community Gallery, and a Children's Museum. These galleries would be located in a "National Museum Precinct" centred around Fort Canning Hill and Bras Basah.

The motivation behind this proposal was the recognition that it was vital for Singapore's continued economic success to engender in Singaporeans a deep understanding of the cultures and ways of living in the

Southeast Asian region and in Singapore. Singapore's increasingly cosmopolitan nature also made critical a deeper historical, cultural, and sociological exploration of Singapore society and identity. Moreover, the committee agreed that the existing museum premises were not large enough to accommodate works for all the new galleries, and that there was a need to expand significantly.

The recommendations of the ACCA were collectively implemented in the 1990s, first with the renaming of the

TIMELINE OF MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES





The Heritage Conservation Centre opened in 2000



The Peranakan Museum opened in 2008



Light versus Dark Exhibition: Stamps and Collectibles at the Singapore Philatelic Museum in 2013

National Museum as the Singapore History Museum in 1993. Subsequently, the Singapore Art Museum was established in 1996, at the former Saint Joseph's Institution campus and so was the first wing of the Asian Civilisations Museum, in 1997 at the former Tao Nan School. Two other major developments took place during the same period – the first was the merging of the National Museum, the National Archives, and the Oral History Centre into the National Heritage Board (NHB) in 1993, charged to oversee the implementation

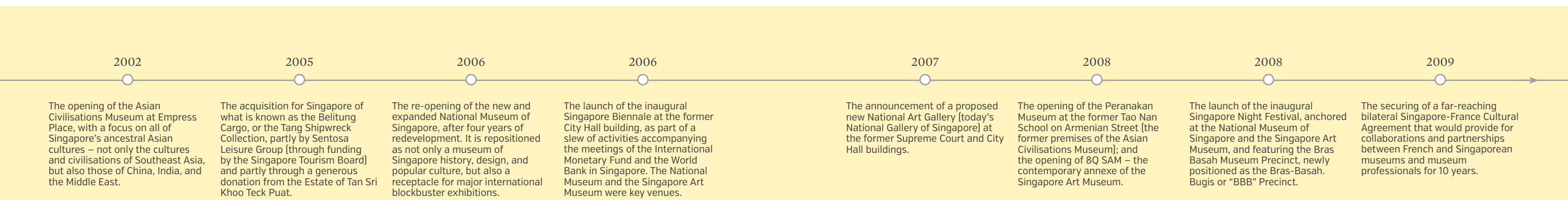
of recommendations made by the ACCA pertaining to museums and cultural heritage. The second was the formation of the Museum Roundtable three years later, in 1996 – a loose association, or “coming together” of existing museums and public art galleries in Singapore. Today, the Museum Roundtable has grown organically to more than 50 members, including the National Museums, and other popular and established museums, such as the National University of Singapore Museum, the Science Centre, the Singapore Discovery Centre, the Changi

Chapel and Museum, and the recently opened Art Science Museum at Marina Bay Sands.

The millennial decade saw an adrenaline-fuelled flurry of new developments in the museum landscape because of the Renaissance City Masterplans, which led to an emergence of a “business of museums”. This change was characterised by two paradigm shifts: the first was a recognition that museums – and the arts – were critical to urban vibrancy and quality of life, and thus an asset Singapore had to

invest in in order to attract new businesses and talent; the second was to recognise museums as an industry in its own right, requiring strategies for the development of specialised capabilities such as curatorship, audience development, and object conservation.

There was a level of activity in the museum landscape never before seen – within the space of 10 years between 2000 to 2009, no less than 12 major museum-related milestones were achieved. These included the





Terracotta Warriors: The First Emperor and his Legacy at the Asian Civilisations Museum in 2011



Princely Treasures from the House of Liechtenstein exhibition at the National Museum of Singapore in 2013

establishment of the Peranakan Museum, 8Q at Singapore Art Museum, and the Heritage Conservation Centre; the re-opening of the revamped National Museum of Singapore and the Asian Civilisations Museum at Empress Place; the announcements of the proposed new National Gallery of Singapore and Indian Heritage Centre; the inaugural Singapore Biennale and Singapore Night Festival; and finally, Singapore’s participation for the first time in the prestigious Venice Biennale. Every year during this 10-year period, Singaporeans were treated to two to three high-profile “blockbuster” exhibitions imported from major international museums including the British Museum, the Vatican Museum, the Palace Museum in the Forbidden City, and the Musée du Louvre in Paris; or exhibitions that featured major

artists and prestigious private collections in Singapore and the region. These exhibitions included *China Art NOW!* at the Singapore Art Museum in 2001, *Journey of Faith: Art & History from the Vatican Collections* at the Asian Civilisations Museum in 2005, *Greek Masterpieces from the Louvre* at the National Museum of Singapore in 2008 and *The Kangxi Emperor, Treasures from the Forbidden City* at the Asian Civilisations Museum in 2009. These blockbusters were often accompanied by two to three smaller, “boutique” exhibitions that presented Singaporean art, history, and popular culture, and explored Singapore’s role as a crossroads of art, cultures, and ideas across Asia. One such example was the *Beauty in Asia* exhibition at the Asian Civilisations Museum in 2009, which saw the museum taking on Asia

in its entirety through the medium of a single question: “What is Beauty?”. These efforts to partner regional and international counterparts as well as explore Singapore’s own culture and heritage established the museums as destinations in their own right – visitorship to the National Museums went from a few hundred thousand in the early 2000s to more than 2 million annually by the end of the decade. Total visitorship to museums in the Museum Roundtable went past the 8-million mark by the 2010s.

Looking ahead, the future looks rosy for museums in Singapore. In 2013, entry to National Museums was made free for Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents, resulting in museum visitorship figures crossing the 3-million mark that year. 2014 saw major gifts amounting

to over \$50 million in cash and in-kind sponsorship to the National Gallery of Singapore, as well as \$46 million raised for the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum. Finally, 2015 will have four new museums opening – the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, the Indian Heritage Centre, the privately-run Singapore Pinacothèque de Paris, and the long-awaited National Gallery of Singapore. Concurrently, the National Museum of Singapore and the Asian Civilisations Museum are also undergoing major gallery revamps and are due to re-open their doors by year end. In the meantime, the Singapore Botanic Gardens has also just been successfully inscribed as Singapore’s first UNESCO World Heritage Site. All in all, there will be very vibrant and rich cultural heritage experiences for the general public in the years to come.

2009 Chinese contemporary artist Wu Guanzhong donates 113 of his works to the Singapore Art Museum (the collection now sits with the National Gallery of Singapore).

2009 Announcement of the establishment of Community Heritage Institutions, including the refurbishment of the existing Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall and Malay Heritage Centre; and a proposed new Indian Heritage Centre.

2011 Re-opening of the refurbished Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall, exploring aspects of the life of Sun Yat Sen.

2012 Re-opening of the refurbished Malay Heritage Centre, celebrating and promoting the cultural heritage of Singapore’s Malay community.

2013 Announcement of free museum entry to National Museums for Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents.

2013 The Singapore Art Museum leaves the National Heritage Board and is placed, together with the National Gallery of Singapore and the Singapore Tyler Print Institute, under the Visual Arts Cluster.

2014 Major donations from Development Bank of Singapore (DBS) and the United Overseas Bank (UOB) to the National Gallery of Singapore.

2015 Opening of the National Art Gallery of Singapore, the Indian Heritage Centre, the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, and the privately-run Singapore Pinacothèque de Paris.

STEPPING THROUGH MUSEUMS

A PERSONAL JOURNEY

Text by David Chew

The first museum that seared itself on my memory was the National Gallery — the mega British art museum located at the iconic and busy Trafalgar Square area in London. I visited it as a child, while on holiday with my parents. Even in the early 1990s, before the age of the blockbuster museum exhibition, the gallery already seemed larger than life to me. It was my first visit to a mega museum, and my first encounter up close and in real life of works of art that I had only ever seen in books. The colours and textures of famous paintings that came to life right before my very eyes were astounding to my then-10-year-old self. But what crystallised that experience in my mind was the gallery's overwhelmingly massive collection of artefacts — and what I saw were merely the pieces the gallery had on display, not counting the many more in storage. This was

my first taste of the idea that someone could amass and display such a thing as a collection of art, on such a scale, and to showcase it all breathtakingly under one roof. Collections, content, and knowledge certainly lie at the very heart of good museums. They serve as a very tangible and physical foundation on which a museum can build its reputation and expertise, as well as construct narratives of the past, present and future. To me, the National Gallery's collection on display epitomised the essence of Britain: its past, its shared values, its beliefs, and what it stood for.

I started going to the Singapore Art Museum as a student in junior college, mostly alone, spending silent but mesmerising Saturdays in its quiet corridors and galleries. I remember the sound and feel of the original wooden floor boards underfoot. That the museum was

always largely empty is the main reason my memories of those visits are filled with the echoes and cold temperatures of the museum and its spaces. I didn't wonder about the lack of museum visitorship back then (this was 1998 or so), or why people did not visit the museum more. I myself couldn't find anyone to go with me, as none of my friends were keen on museums. But that was also the reason I kept going back — the museum and its galleries became my teenage mental refuge, a quiet sanctuary to escape to, but also a place filled with thought-provoking art that piqued my curiosity and broadened my mind to other cultures and traditions.

When I was in university, a module on *ekphrasis* — the Merriam-Webster dictionary defines this as a literary description of or commentary on a visual work of art — taught by my

Ng Eng Teng, *Freedom Child*, 1978, Ciment-fondu, paint, lacquer. Collection of NUS Museum.

English Literature Professor Dr Yeo Wei Wei introduced me to the hidden treasure that was the National University of Singapore (NUS) Museum. One of her assignments for us was to do a written response to any art work in the NUS Museum's collection. I picked a sculpture by Ng Eng Teng. This became my maiden lesson in visual literacy, the first step in beginning to unlock the secrets of representation and symbolism. In this respect, museums that are clean white cubes with minimal texts and exhibition aids fail. Besides being the custodian of its collections, a museum plays a vital role in deciphering its treasures for its audiences, to educate them in developing visual literacy and to help them understand what they are seeing. And it can only do this through well-written but concise text panels and exhibition guides, the creation of which in itself is an exercise in creative writing.

I discovered the treasures of the Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM) later in life, as a young adult of 25. I covered one of its key exhibitions, *Beauty in Asia*, in the course of my work as a newspaper journalist and realised what an amazing collection of material objects Singapore had as a country. But more than that, the ACM's collection, drawing from various cultures and civilisations in Asia, sheds light on the ethnic roots of the diverse society that is Singapore. Through these artefacts, we not only tell the story and history of the region, we tell our story and the story of who we are in relation to the wider world.

My journey with museums took another turn with the reopening of the revamped National Museum in 2006. I had, by that point, fallen in love with visual culture and contemporary art, and was on the verge of pursuing further studies in the field. So far,

my path had not crossed with that of the *grande dame* of all our museums. But it was here, amidst the fanfare of the reopening of the oldest museum in the country, that I discovered the Singapore Stone. To say it captured my imagination is an understatement. The rock and its mysterious inscriptions are quite literally the bedrock of myths and legends surrounding pre-colonial Singapore, the earliest surviving physical and tangible connection we have to a time long past — one that we can hardly envisage now — in this modern land we call our home. At the end of the day, what museums do is to remind us, simply but powerfully, of who we are, in part because of where we came from. For me, museums have always been the realm where knowledge, aesthetics, and storytelling merge and meld into one. There are few places in the world where such magic takes place, and museums are among them.



INDIAN HERITAGE CENTRE OUR COMMUNITY TREASURE



Text by Reena Devi and Nalina Gopal

The museum scene in Singapore has flourished over the past few years and has reached a peak of over 50 museums this year, with a slew of diverse galleries and cultural institutions opening. As a physical space connecting the public with the arts, heritage, and culture, the museum remains a relevant and necessary institution in the cultural eco-system.

Launched on May 7 and located in the heart of Little India, the Indian Heritage Centre (IHC) showcases not only artefacts from the National Collection but also the community's collections. It also actively collaborates with the community for programming and outreach. Two hundred and three out of 443 artefacts on display at the museum are donated by or on loan from the community. These pieces in the permanent galleries offer a visual and chronological representation of the community's history, marking periods since the pre-modern era when South Asians established contact with Southeast Asians and East Asians.

The galleries focus on five major themes, starting from the early interactions between South and Southeast Asia, leading the visitor through the origins and migration of the South Asian community in Singapore, the pioneers and social and political awakening of the community in Singapore and Malaya and its pioneers, ending with contributions of Indians towards the making of Singapore as a nation.

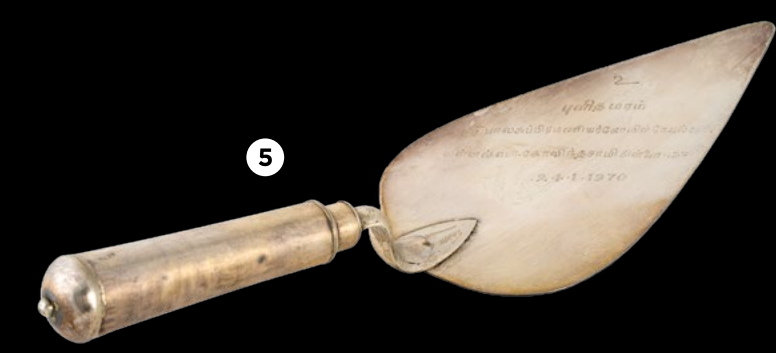
Façade of the Indian Heritage Centre at 5 Campbell Lane

The artefacts donated express this narrative in a variety of ways. One of the star artefacts highlighting the Indian migrants' rites of passage, attire, language, religious affiliations and festivals is the twentieth-century Gold Necklace (*Kasumalai*) which is a gift from the estate of Santhanam Victor Louis and the family of Gnanapragasam Pillai.

The traditional necklace, made of gold and adorned with precious stones, was donated for *alamkara*, or ornamentation of deities, to the Sri Thandayuthapani temple built by the Chettiar community in Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City. The Nattukottai Nagarattar Chettiars, who were among the early Indian migrants to the Southeast Asian region with business establishments in Vietnam, Myanmar, Malaysia and Singapore, commonly built temples in their places of settlement for the Hindu deity Murugan.

Another interesting artefact, on loan from P. G. P. Ramakrishnan, is the silver spade presented to P. Govindasamy Pillai by Holy Tree Balasubramaniam Temple, Naval Base, Sembawang on January 24, 1970. This artefact helps to present the visitors with further insight into the early Indians in Singapore and Malaya who lived during the pre-World War II era.

- 1 | *Bronze Medal awarded to K Jayamani at the 1977 SEA Games, 1977.* Bronze and Cloth. On loan from K. Jayamani.
- 2 | *Gold Necklace or Kasumalai, 20th century.* Gold. Gift from the estate of Santhanam Victor Louis and the family of Gnanapragasam Pillai.
- 3 | *Standing Shiva and Parvati, 12th to 13th century.* Bronze. Collection of Indian Heritage Centre.
- 4 | *Plaque presented by Singapore Council for Women to Shirin Fozdar, 1988.* Pewter. Gift of Jamshed K. Fozdar and Parvati Fozdar.
- 5 | *Silver Spade presented to P. Govindasamy Pillai by Holy Tree Bala Subramaniam Temple, January 24, 1970.* Silver. On loan from P. G. P. Ramakrishnan.
- 6 | *Headgear with Turban Ornament or Sarpech, 20th century.* Gold with precious stones. On loan from Saigon Chettiars' Temple Trust Pte Ltd.





One of these pioneers were P. Govindasamy Pillai, a native of Thanjavur District in Tamil Nadu. Popularly known as PGP, he left home in his teens and boarded a ship to Singapore. After landing at Tanjong Pagar in 1905, he worked at a store which he later bought over, allowing him to establish a string of PGP stores along Serangoon Road. An ace money manager, he gradually saved enough to expand into other businesses including textile shops and flour and spice mills. He was also a noted philanthropist, a prominent donor to the Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple, a founder-member of the Indian Chamber of Commerce that was set up in 1937, and a Justice of the Peace from 1939.

The impact of nationalist and sub-ethnic nationalist movements on the Indian community in the region is shown through reformist activities and the revitalisation of the Tamil Language and identity by community leaders such as Thamizhavel G. Sarangapany. This is showcased by the selection of archival photographs, documents, and personal artefacts from the collection of Sarangapany's immediate family, donated by his daughter, Rajam Sarangapany.

Sarangapany, who arrived in Singapore in 1924, was an active writer and publisher. He set up the Tamil magazine *Munnetram* in 1929 and the Tamil *Murasu* newspaper in 1935. Through his writings, he

promoted the principles of the Tamil reform movement. He encouraged Tamils to make Singapore their home, helped them gain citizenship, and championed for the Tamil language to be recognised as one of the national languages in Singapore.

Women also played a part as leading pioneers of the South Asian community in Singapore. This is characterised by a signature artefact gifted by Jamshed K. Fozdar and Parvati Fozdar: a commemorative plaque presented by the Singapore Council of Women (SCW) to Shirin Fozdar in 1988 in recognition of her contributions to Singapore as a staunch advocate of women's rights. Fozdar, who is of Indian origin, arrived in Singapore with her husband in 1950. By 1953, she had become instrumental in setting up Singapore's first girls' club at the Joo Chiat Welfare Centre to teach women English and arithmetic. She was elected honorary secretary of SCW in April 1952, and thereafter served a key role in the drafting and establishment of the Women's Charter in 1961. She also played an important part in the formation of the Muslim Syariah court in 1958. Her role in Singapore's women's movement represented a pioneering effort in establishing Southeast Asia's Baha'i community.

The diverse array of individuals, communities, religious and cultural organisations which comprised

the South Asian community are represented by the textured narrative of the permanent galleries showcasing a primarily community collection. The IHC is evidence that the role of a heritage institution has evolved into a relevant social space of connectivity, culture, and heritage, supported by the people *for* the people.

According to IHC Director, Dr Gauri Krishnan, "IHC has been very fortunate in its artefact collection drive and has managed to source a significant number of artefacts through the community as well as the national collection within a very short span of time. Its collections are representative, cover diverse periods in history and communities and range from classical to modern – appealing to a wide cross-section of visitors. Even the evocative displays and media devices have made the artefacts more accessible and appealing." IHC has harnessed media and technology to tell stories, making collections more accessible and providing the community's voice to the thematic curation. Other than three large interactives and over 20 touch screen interactives, IHC also offers visitors an immersive and novel experience with an Augmented Reality enabled audio guide. Commencing with an introductory film, which offers a curated perspective on the five themes in the permanent galleries, the interactive experience is geared towards engaging both group and individual visitors.

The Indian Heritage Centre is open from Tuesday to Thursday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Friday to Saturday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sundays and Public Holidays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. They are closed on all Mondays unless stated otherwise. Admission is free for all Singapore Citizens, Permanent Residents and visitors aged six and below. Admissions Fees for overseas visitors are \$4 for adults and \$2 for students and senior citizens.

To find out more information, check out their website at www.indianheritage.org.sg

Visitors exploring the *Roots and Routes: Origins and Migrations* gallery

PROFILE // MOK WEI WEI

FINDING THE BALANCE



Mok Wei Wei is an internationally acclaimed architect who designed the newly opened Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum.

What drew you to the field of architecture?

My father Mok Lee Kwang, who was the chief editor of *Lianhe Zaobao*, was a little unusual in his parenting style during the 1960s and 70s; he encouraged our exposure to music and art when we were growing up. As I grew older, I found that the creative aspect of being an artist, though intuitive and abstract, could be frustrating and this led me towards balance. One can be creative and intuitive while at the same time, deductive and pragmatic.

What is your design philosophy?

Growing up as a Chinese-educated boy in Singapore where we converse in English in our everyday lives, I was very conscious of the “East meets West” energy and its constant negotiation. That push and pull was exciting. It was an advantage to be able to move between two different cultures and I sought a resolution between the two. Today, it’s not so much “East meets West” anymore but more “local-global”. As architects, we always have to negotiate what we see around us and what we are exposed to in a global context. That negotiation is exciting. My response to opposing situations is to find a resolution. I like to embrace tension and occupy a position of equilibrium.

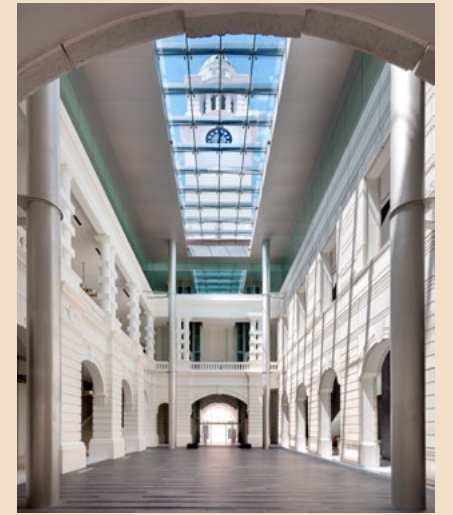
What can you share about the art of conserving old buildings in Singapore?

To me, I think you have to love the patina of old age — old wood, old metal — that aspect of materiality. The other aspect is to have respect and love for the expression of different eras. Each time period has its own unique expression. To see the value in the various expressions

will make you appreciate and want to conserve them. I think the design approach to this kind of work is moving away from wanting to clean up everything to keeping the patina. This is in line with the Urban Renewal Authority’s conservation principles of encouraging the three ‘R’s: maximum retention, sensitive restoration and careful repair. Further to this approach, instead of creating a stark contrast between the new and the old, we seem to be developing towards a more subtle juxtaposition of the two. For instance, take a look at the atrium at the Victoria Theatre and Victoria Concert Hall, which serves as a point of reconciliation for all elements. On one side is the historic façade of the Concert Hall, where plasterworks of mouldings, keystones and pilasters are thick and pronounced, typical of neo-classical architecture. On the opposite side, the lost theatre façade is now reinstated according to the archive drawings. Instead of an exact replica, the wall is clad in precast concrete panels where the motifs and decorations have been flattened and appear as incisions on the surface. Compared with the pronounced plasterworks on the historic façade, it has an unmistakably contemporary character, but with a link to the past. The subtle difference of the precast concrete and the historic masonry walls is an example of the juxtaposition of the new and the old.

What was the biggest challenge you faced when designing the new Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum? Can you tell us more about how its iconic rock form came about?

I’m proud of the fact that this so-called iconic building was never initially intended to be iconic, but rather, its form was conceived from careful analysis and understanding of the building’s needs. Of course, at the back of our minds there had been



Central Atrium linking Victoria Theatre and Victoria Concert Hall

Photo courtesy of W Architects

a desire for a distinctive character but really, the rock and vegetated façade came about through a deductive approach. First, we analysed the building’s functions. It would be an exhibition space with room for storage of the collection of more than half a million animal specimens. In both instances, natural light was undesirable hence the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum is virtually a windowless building. As the brief stated that there should be allowance for future expansion, we compacted the main museum and created an adjacent one-storey classroom block which can be added upon in the future. Now that the museum was a big solid mass, we decided to express it as a rock. As a counterpoint to the building’s function, which is essentially a tomb (storage) for the dead (specimens), a “living wall” of plants was introduced on the face of the rock. The scientists then decided that it would be fitting for local coastal plants to grow on this rock façade; such vegetation would normally grow on rocky sea cliffs. As you walk around, you will notice four themes in the landscaping: the cliff landscape, a mangrove pond, a phylogenetic landscape which shows



Façade and exterior of museum
Photo courtesy of Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum

how plants evolve and lastly, a coastal landscape. The selection of plants in these thematic areas is based strictly on the actual environment they originally inhabited, thus creating a landscape feature that is not only visually appealing, but is also content driven and serves as an educational tool. A lot of thought went into the location of the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum. It sits next to the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music and the University Cultural Centre. The three buildings share a central space called the Alice Lee Plaza which we improved by adding a canopy cover that provides shade to half of the space. The area is now a cultural hub where music, art and science come together. In this day and age, everybody wants an iconic building and there is so much emphasis on the flashy and the eye-catching, often with little reason behind the design. I feel this is the wrong approach. The content should always be strong; form follows function. There is a reason why the museum looks and feels the way it does — this has been the most satisfying thing.

Tell us about designing spaces for museums: what are some of the key considerations, challenges and motivations for such spaces?

Cultural institutions demand identity and cultural content. This is a demand not usually made in other projects. The kind of identity

they seek to express is a physical manifestation of societal values and cultural symbols. Therefore, they are more challenging. Invariably, aesthetics are involved. They are usually also public institutions; as public spaces, they are challenging and exciting to create.

Can you share with us a highlight or memorable moment from your career?

I take the larger perspective over a longer timespan so I don't really have moments; they're more like memorable periods! I would say that my career can be roughly described in three periods. The first decade or so was characterised by the exuberance of postmodern form. In the second phase, I sought to return to the basics and clarity of the modern language. Currently, I would say that I am straddling the two poles, and seeking a resolution of the opposites. It is an architectural journey that is guided by the general philosophy of the designer. In almost every decade, you have to have a complete change of mindset. Accordingly, the expression of the work changes. This is only natural. The world moves on. It is important to know your own place in today's connected world so that you don't just follow trends. You have to really examine for yourself what is relevant and worthy. Come to your own conclusion. Make it deep. Let the quality show.

What do you hope to see in the Singapore museum scene to come?

I'd like to see a design museum that documents the history of design in Singapore — product design, graphic design, environment design, landscaping, everything! There is so much that has not been documented. Currently, I feel that museums in Singapore are doing very well. One of my greatest joys is to visit shows at museums. I feel they have really enriched the cultural life of Singaporeans. We can build on what we currently have, become more professional at research and information dissemination. There is so much joy in learning! I hope that curators will continue to love their work and institutions will enable them to develop their research capabilities.

What words of wisdom would you pass on to our young architects?

First, I'd say "to have the wisdom to wait", by which I mean to wait in such a way that you don't short-change yourself. Give up little gratifications in order to reach a larger goal. See the bigger picture. Good work takes time. Secondly, "architecture is a field that requires many types of talents", not just design. Many different skills are needed in this field so don't despair and give up just because you think you cannot design well. Find out what you are really good at. You can still have a rewarding professional practice and make meaningful contributions.



OUR NATURAL HERITAGE

LEE KONG CHIAN
NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Text by Reena Devi

*Photos courtesy of
Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum*

Singapore's first stand-alone natural history museum finally opened its doors to the public on April 18 and members of the public warmly welcomed the latest member of our museum and heritage scene. Quintessentially a people's museum, it was supported by a grounds-up fundraising initiative that generated donations from foundations, corporations, and thousands of members of the public.

While the museum is new, the inspiration for its establishment can be traced all the way back to Sir Stamford Raffles himself. Over the years, many have pushed for the idea of a stand-alone natural history museum in Singapore; in 2005, Professor Tommy Koh, Singapore's Ambassador-at-Large and Honorary Chairman of National Heritage Board, formally proposed the idea. However, due to a lack of funding, the project never materialised. It was only in 2009, after a group of anonymous donors came forward with seed funding, that the idea took root.

Over a weekend in May hosting 2009's International Museum Day, the collection which was then housed in the Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research (RMBR) at the National University of Singapore, saw over 3,000 visitors – more than what RMBR would see in a year! This keen interest, along with awareness raised by articles in *The Straits Times* surrounding the idea of a museum, followed a string of donations from the public which amounted to almost \$1 million, \$25 million from the Lee Foundation, along with the original seed funding given by the group of anonymous donors, which allowed the project to progress. It was

because of the interest and generosity of the public that LKCNHM stands as it does today.

A secretary gave a month of her salary; a retired technician at the NUS Biological Sciences Department gave another \$20,000. The museum's centrepieces – Prince, Apollonia and Twinky, a trio of among the largest creatures to roam the earth about 150 million years ago – would not be around had Della Lee, wife of Lee Foundation chairman Lee Seng Gee, not generously donated \$25 million to the cause. Another signature piece, a 200-year-old narwhal tusk, was donated by the family of late businessman “Whampoa” Hoo Ak Kay, one of Singapore's pioneers of the 1800s. The tusk was given to Whampoa by the Russian government in the 1860s as a gift, as he represented them as consul in Singapore.

Both a museum and a research facility, LKCNHM strives to be a leader in Southeast Asian biodiversity – in research, education and outreach. The public gallery consists of over 2,000 specimens categorised across 15 different zones. These include the *Cabinets of Curiosity* zone, which showcases many iconic specimens from our native soil and *Singapore Today*, a showcase of our island's geology and important conservation work being done by national agencies. The impressive collection of natural specimens and artefacts tells the story of our island nation.

This precious gem of an institution stands as testament to the role we, as seemingly ordinary citizens, have in shaping and preserving Singapore's heritage story.

The star exhibits of diplodocid dinosaur fossils, Apollonia, Prince, and Twinky

The Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum is open from Tuesday to Sunday, and Public Holidays from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. It is closed on Mondays. For Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents, the admission fees are \$16 for adults and \$9 for children, students, NSF and persons with disabilities. Admission fees for overseas visitors is \$21 for adults and \$13 for children, students and senior citizens. It is free of charge for children under the age of three and NUS staff and students. To find out more information, check out their website at lcnhm.nus.edu.sg

INTO THE WEST

JURONG HERITAGE TRAIL



Text by Stefanie Tham

A friendly debate comparing the western side of Singapore with the east went viral among netizens early this year, after a local Tumblr page was set up to poke fun at the west, which includes Jurong, Boon Lay, Pioneer, and Tuas. Commonly posted woes lamented the long time it takes to travel to and from the west, its lack of attractive amenities, and the dismal number of good food places found there.

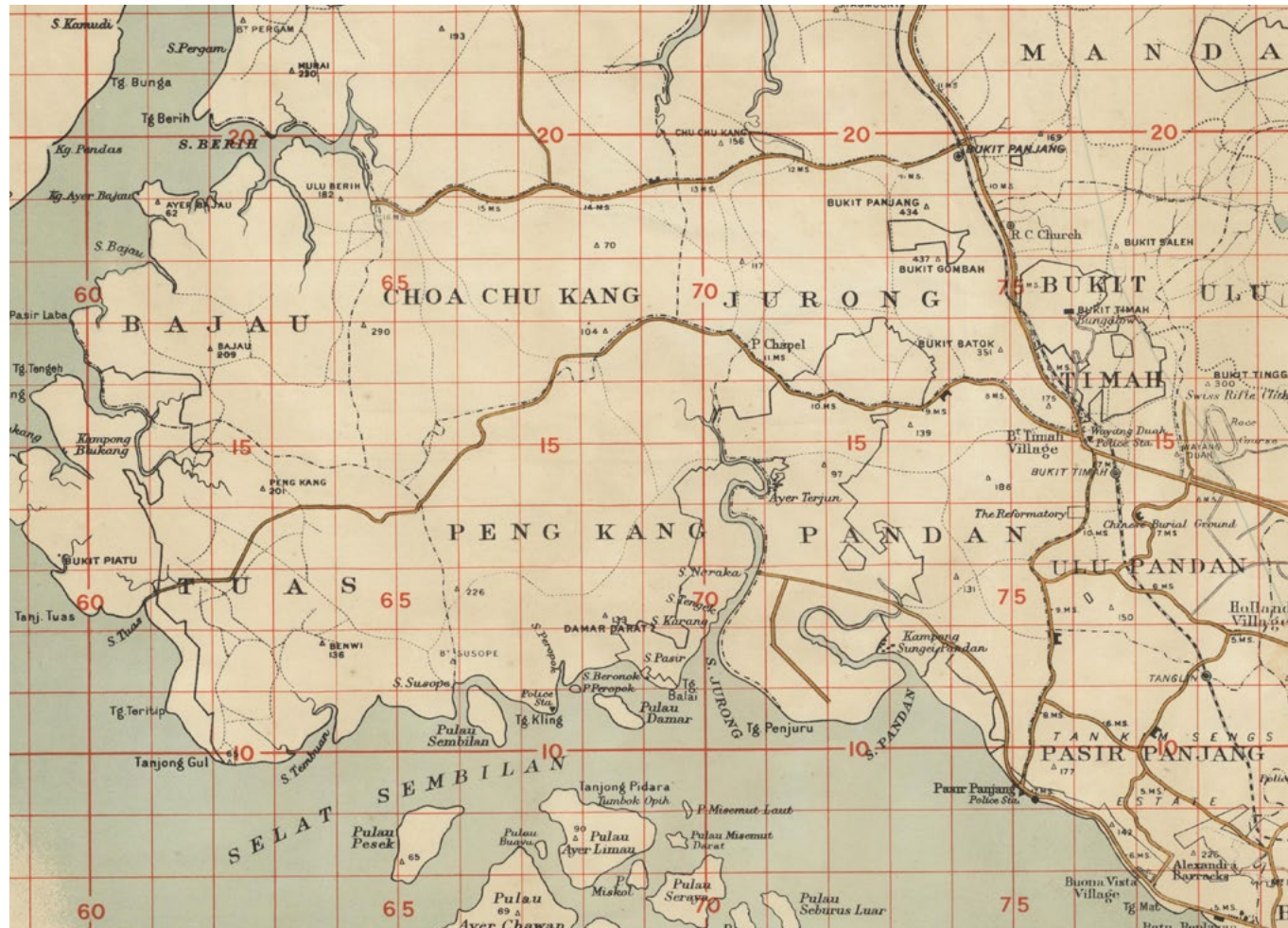
Indeed, mention Jurong to most Singaporeans and such stereotypical descriptions tend to emerge, perhaps unjustly so. The west is often characterised by its industrial landscape, and thought to be barren, boring, and even bizarre. After all, those who do not live in Boon Lay may not regard smelling burnt cocoa at the MRT station as an ordinary, everyday experience.

However, Jurong is not as desolate as most people believe it to be. Empty grass fields in Jurong East have now given way to new shopping malls and beautiful landscaping, injecting life into the formerly quiet town. More changes can be expected as plans to develop the Jurong Lake District will commence soon. Jurong is on the cusp of another stage in its transformation, perhaps one that will dispel old stereotypes.

A study of Jurong's past also reveals an intriguing and layered history, of a time when Jurong was home to a number of prawn ponds and well-known for its brickworks. Its successful transformation into a modern industrial estate also tells a tale of unwavering determination and foresight during the period when our nation was only just learning how to stand independently.

The Jurong Heritage Trail, which was launched in April this year by the National Heritage Board (NHB), highlights this rich heritage gathered through in-depth research and interviews with residents and workers who once called Jurong their home. The trail shares a colourful history that challenges the notion that the west is without character or heritage. Some sites of heritage still exist today and this article presents a number of locations featured in the trail that people can visit. No passport required.

The Chinese Garden at sunset



A 1911 map depicting the historical boundaries of Jurong
 Courtesy of Great Britain, War Office, National Library of Australia, G080401936

Imagined Borders and Early Trades

The historical boundary of Jurong as seen on official maps does not quite correspond with the memories of its long-time residents. According to a 1911 map, Jurong was a small parcel of land sandwiched between Choa Chu Kang and Bukit Timah, and was located where Bukit Batok is today. Today's Jurong East would have been a district called Pandan, whereas Boon Lay was formally called Peng Kang.

However, residents like Ng Lee Kar remembered a different Jurong, one whose boundary stretched from the 7½ Milestone at Bukit Timah Road to Tuas at the 18th Milestone. This

was a large area that spanned the entire length of Jurong Road, once the only road leading to the southwest of Singapore. As many *kampongs* were only accessible through it, villagers identified their location by the road's milestones, and hence associated Jurong with the road.

Then, Jurong Road was not like the arterial roads Singaporeans are familiar with today. Consisting of only two lanes, a major accident would have rendered the road completely inaccessible. Former resident Francis Mane summed up this scenario as being “really *jialat*” (Hokkien term that connotes a difficult situation). His words could

certainly be used to describe the day when Nanyang University opened in 1956 near the 14½ Milestone. Nanyang University, a national monument, is the first Chinese-language university in Southeast Asia and was formed with the help of donations from the local Chinese community. A major traffic jam occurred along Jurong Road on the day of its opening, rendering the motorway impassable, and took the record for the biggest traffic jam Singapore experienced then.

Like many other parts of Singapore, Jurong was covered with plantations, mainly gambier and rubber. But it was the prawn ponds that still evoke



Prawn farmers at work in Jurong, 1960
 Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

fond memories among residents, some whom used to make a living from it. Jurong contained nearly half of the 1,000 acres of prawn ponds in Singapore in 1955. The area where Pandan Reservoir is today used to be covered with mangroves and was a prawn pond reserve. Chua Kim Shua remembered selling these prawns for 40 to 50 cents per kilogram at the market. “I was able to earn about a few hundred dollars a month just selling prawns,” he recalled. “We scooped up the prawns using a pail, and there were many of them then.”

Another notable trade in Jurong was its brickworks industry, a prelude to Jurong's industrialisation. Jurong

was well-known for its brickworks since the 1920s, and once produced as many as three million bricks a month to meet demand in the construction sector in the 1970s. Also, the soil found in Jurong proved to be highly suitable for pottery making; Jurong had an abundance of the sticky mud known as *nian tu*, which was essential in pottery. This resulted in a burgeoning industry of brick and pottery making.

Today, people can still travel along a remaining stretch of the old Jurong Road entering from Bukit Batok Road or Jurong West Avenue 2. Although the Pandan Reservoir is no longer a prawn reserve, a slice of mangroves

at the mouth of Sungei Pandan can still be seen. The reservoir is now an arena for water sports. A legacy of Jurong's former brickworks industry remains in the form of the Thow Kwang Dragon Kiln and the Guan Huat Dragon Kiln (today's Jalan Bahar Clay Studio), both located at Lorong Tawas where visitors can also pick up some ornamental pottery.

The Industrial Story

Most Singaporeans would not find the story of Jurong Industrial Estate unfamiliar. Often weaved into the Singapore Story as an example of how the country adapted to remain economically resilient, Jurong's industrialisation shaped the lives of



The Jurong Town Hall today
Courtesy of JTC Corporation



Jurong Hill with its Lookout Tower

many individuals who found work in its factories and a new home to live in.

The vast amount of land and its deep coastal harbour made Jurong the ideal location to become Singapore's primary industrial centre. The first bulldozer entered Jurong in September 1961, and its landscape has been altered permanently since. In spite of the government's high expectations, only around 24 factories were set up by 1963 — Singapore was far from solving her problems of growing unemployment and declining entrepot trade. It was only through supplying tax incentives, establishing good labour relations, and creating a sense of security for investors did factories finally sprout. By 1970, Jurong boasted 264 factories with 32,000 workers.

Formerly under the purview of the Economic Development Board (EDB), the management of Jurong Industrial Estate was handed over to a new statutory board, Jurong Town Corporation (JTC), in 1968. A new headquarters was built for JTC: Jurong Town Hall. The five-storey building cuts an impressive presence, reflecting a Brutalist style of architecture that emphasises the imposing bulkiness of the concrete structure. The building's design was from a winning entry of an architectural design competition by a local firm, Architects Team 3, and it was most recently gazetted a national monument for its significance as a symbol of Singapore's economic progress.

The memories of those who worked in Jurong reveal the unique challenges of working in the estate in its early years. Distance was a big issue for those who did not live in Jurong, particularly because of limited public transport services in the area. Woo Lee Tuan remembered the difficulty of getting to work: "Back then, there [was] still no road leading to the estate, and we

had to go via Pasir Panjang Road or Jalan Jurong Kechil." This resulted in many workers sharing rides on pirate taxis, which Woo used to get to work. "The vehicles were actually meant for transporting vegetables and other produce. It was quite an uncomfortable ride."

Others whose companies provided free transport regarded themselves lucky. As Haji Saleh bin Abdul Wahab recalled, "The company provided private buses from the 7th Milestone. [They] provided transport for you even if you lived very far away like in Geylang." Food centres were also scarce. Lim Sak Lan, who worked in JTC in the late 1960s shared: "When we were at worksites, we made do with site canteens. There were places away from the sites, but they were shabby little coffee shops and restaurants."

Despite such discomforts, many of them nevertheless took pride in their work and over time, formed close friendships with their colleagues. Karen Lee, who worked in a spinning mill, reminisced fondly: "When we worked the night shift we would go to the hawker centre to buy food we liked and bring it [back] to the factories for our working colleagues. When we stayed in the company hostel, we were very close... I can [still] remember these people now, even those who came from Malaysia."

In the present day, Jurong Town Hall still stands along Jurong Town Hall Road. In 2000, JTC moved across the road into a larger building, and the Town Hall is now a space for start-up companies. You can also take a stroll in the Garden of Fame next to the building, which commemorates the visits of many dignitaries to Jurong's Industrial Estate over the years.

Green Lungs

In the process of conceiving the industrial estate, urban planners

wanted to ensure that green spaces were integrated to preserve the beauty of Jurong's natural landscape. Jurong was meant to be a self-contained garden industrial estate, and thus 12 percent of the land was set aside for public parks, gardens, and open spaces.

The Jurong Lake area is one such green lung planned to separate the industrial from the residential. The lake was formed after the Jurong River was dammed in 1971, creating the 81-hectare freshwater reservoir. Three islands were shaped, housing the Chinese Garden, Japanese Garden, and the golf course of the Jurong Country Club. When it first opened, the Chinese Garden and Japanese Garden attracted immense attention, the former receiving half a million visitors within eight months of its opening in April 1975.

Jurong Hill is another point of attraction. Formerly called Bukit Peropok, the hill is the tallest peak in Jurong today. It was converted into a park in 1968, and a Lookout Tower was constructed at the top of the hill. Residents might remember dining at the Japanese teppanyaki restaurant when it opened in 1970, or spending a leisurely day with the family exploring the hill's Garden of Fame. The tower offers visitors a sweeping view of the industrial estate, and was a stop point for many visiting heads of states.

Today, the Chinese Garden and Japanese Garden are open for public visits. Jurong Hill is also accessible, although the restaurant has since closed.

To find out more about Jurong's history, visit www.nhb.gov.sg/NHBPortal/Places/Trails/Jurong or pick up the Jurong Heritage Trail booklet at NHB's museums.

THE DRAGON KILN BREATHES THOW KWANG DRAGON KILN

Text and photos by Carolyn Lim

Anyone who tires of the towering glass-steel offices at Raffles City, or the shop-till-you-drop malls along tree-lined Orchard Road, can head to the west of Singapore and explore a hidden cultural treasure: a dragon kiln. Tucked away at the western end of the island, next to the Nanyang Technological University, there are not one but two septuagenarian dragon kilns that transport visitors back in time to a once-thriving pottery industry in Singapore. In the early 1960s, there were about 10 kilns in Jurong producing functional wares, such as earthenware jars and latex cups. The kilns were located in Jurong because of the area's white sedimentary clay, which is well-suited for the production of these wares.

The Early Pottery Industry

From the 1950s to the early 1990s, dragon kilns were central to the pottery industry when earthenware pots were produced using methods such as coiling, throwing and plaster moulding. Other utilitarian wares, such as latex cups for the rubber plantations, and ceramic souvenirs were also fired in these

kilns. However, the pottery industry declined, and by the mid-1990s, with the demolition of the Sam Mui Kuang dragon kiln at the Jalan Hwi Yoh, the two other kilns in Jurong — the Thow Kwang and Guan Huat dragon kilns — ceased commercial production. Thow Kwang changed its business model to the import and export of ceramics. The “dragons” went into a slumber.

Thow Kwang Dragon Kiln

Built in the 1940s, Thow Kwang Dragon Kiln is one of only two surviving kilns in Singapore. The other kiln, Guan Huat Dragon Kiln, is located a stone's throw away. The dragon kiln (*long yao* in Mandarin), is a long hollow semi-circular tunnel made of bricks, and resembles the body of the mythical beast. The kiln was built on a sloping terrain to take advantage of the updraft during the firing process.

The Thow Kwang Dragon Kiln is less than a metre wide in the front chambers, and widens to about two metres at the back. At the back of the kiln is a nine-hole brick damper wall, where the smoke and heat escape via a chimney. At the sides, circular

humps of bricks spaced at intervals along the kiln's length support the kiln structure. Visitors enter the 27-metre long kiln through one of the two arched doorways. The doorways are lined with bricks with names like Nanyang, Bee Kiow and Jurong — reminders of Singapore's past when factories produced bricks for local use. Alongside the kiln are 17 pairs of stoke holes, where wood is added and the firers monitor the temperature inside during the firing process.

Firing the Dragon

A wood firing can take from 25 to 36 hours or more to complete, and this does not include the time needed to pack and load the pieces in the kiln. Why then would anyone want to use this traditional method to fire clay pieces, when today's commercial electric and gas kilns require much less time and effort?

Many potters yearn for the unique combination of wood ash and salt on their pieces, which gives them a one-of-a-kind result. When using a wood kiln, potters rarely get pieces that are the same. The unpredictability and uncertainty of not knowing how the

Back:
Height: 1.97 metres | Width: 2 metres

Middle:
Height: 1.95 metres | Width: 2.05 metres

Overall dimensions:
Length of kiln: 27 metres

Front:
Height: 0.80 metres | Width: 0.77 metres



pieces will turn out gives potters an artistic edge. It is also an experiential process — perhaps potters experience a feeling of being transported to the past when they see the burning wood and the glowing flames licking the clay pieces.

Indeed, this unique wood firing experience is achieved only through great effort. Work begins long before the firing. Hours of preparation are needed to set up the kiln shelves and load the pieces into the kiln. Each piece is carried into the kiln and carefully placed on the kiln shelves. The pieces are strategically arranged to ensure a smooth flow of heat and fire through the kiln. Once all the pieces are packed, the stoke holes and doorways are sealed, and the kiln is ready for firing.

A wood firing usually begins in the morning with offerings and prayers at the fire box. Sticks of wood are thrown into the fire box to feed the “dragon”, and the temperature is slowly raised. As day turns to night, the temperature rises and the heat gets more intense.

Standing in front of the kiln, a person may be overwhelmed by the heat, the glowing flames and the crackling of burning wood in the kiln. The firers, working in shifts, are all flushed and sweaty — but the work only gets tougher from here. When the temperature in the kiln finally reaches 800 to 1,000 degrees Celsius, lots more effort and wood are needed to feed the kiln. There are anxious moments when the temperature drops instead of going up, and the firers have to feed more wood into the fire box. Everyone watches the thermocouple readings eagerly to see if the temperature will rise again.

After 12 hours or more, and when the temperature at the fire box reaches

1,250 degrees Celsius, the front pit is sealed — amid shouts of relief and joy — and the firers move to the stoke holes on both sides of the kiln. The process of feeding the kiln continues. Through the stoke holes, the firers look for the pyrometric cones which bend at a particular temperature, signalling to the firers to move to the next pair of stoke holes. Almost always, salt is thrown into the kiln at this stage. Salt reacts with the silica in the clay body, and this chemical reaction forms an attractive glaze. This continues until each chamber in the kiln is fed. When the last stoke holes are sealed, the remaining glowing embers are left to extinguish as the dragon draws its final breath and is left to cool. The Thow Kwang Dragon Kiln is fired about two to three times a year. To witness or participate in a wood firing process is truly an unforgettable experience.

One-of-a-kind Wood-fired Pieces

The kiln is left to cool, and days later the unpacking begins. This is often a moment of apprehension and curiosity as the potters can finally see the pieces. Each piece is knocked loose from the kiln shelves and carried out to be examined. The uniqueness of a wood-fired piece results from the combination of wood ash and salt that coat the pieces. It is unpredictable, erratic and what gives a wood-fired pot its uniqueness and beauty.

Weekend Clay Experience

On weekends, Thow Kwang Dragon Kiln is a bustle of activity. In one area, a group of potters are throwing or glazing their work; in another, children and adults are trying their hands at being potters. For a small fee, anyone can have a hands-on experience working with clay, making and firing a small piece to bring home. Sometimes, a throwing demonstration on the kicking wheel by one of the potters can be seen.

Firers ensure that the temperature of 1,250 degrees Celsius is reached at each pair of stoke holes before moving to the next chamber

Interested to know more about wood-firing? Now there's a free interactive app, *DragonFire Singapore*, supported by the NHB Grant Scheme. It gives a close-up look at wood-firing in action, available for iPad on iTunes: <http://goo.gl/dAeXVI>

Check out Thow Kwang's facebook page www.facebook.com/tkpotteryjungle for a schedule of its weekend workshops.

Thow Kwang Dragon Kiln, 85 Lorong Tawas, S639823

Guan Huat Dragon Kiln, 97 Lorong Tawas, S639824

If you would like to learn more about the NHB Grant Scheme, please visit www.nhb.gov.sg/NHBPortal/AboutUs/Grants/Overview or email NHB_heritagegrants@nhb.gov.sg

PROFILE // RAJA MOHAMAD

HERITAGE ON FILM

SPEAKING FROM THE HEART OF THE INDIAN MUSLIM COMMUNITY, RAJA MOHAMAD IS A NHB GRANT RECIPIENT WHO SET OUT TO FILM *BARAKATH: OUR PIONEERING SPIRIT* TO DOCUMENT THEIR COMPELLING HERITAGE.



How did you come to be interested in the heritage of your community?

My interest in the Indian Muslim community was piqued through two incidents. The first incident was when I was asked to be involved in the development of Nagore Dargah Indian Muslim Heritage Centre wherein I realised the Indian Muslim community has some very profound and rich heritage that I felt was worth sharing with rest of Singapore. The second incident was when another production company was researching Indian Muslims and lamented the lack of materials in print, media or any form in Singapore.

Why was documentary the form chosen to promote this heritage?

As the old adage says, “a picture is worth a thousand words”. We wanted to document a colourful tapestry of the Indian Muslim community and for the individuals presented in the documentary to speak from their hearts and in a language they felt comfortable in. We were very fortunate to have Former President S. R. Nathan and Minister Yaacob Ibrahim take part. Soon, we will be starting work on a coffee table book.

What was the most memorable part of making this documentary?

Several! For example, that non-Tamil speaking Indian Muslims such as Haji Allauddin of Masjid Khalid and Samad Allapitchay (who was National Soccer Team’s captain) still related back to their Indian Muslim heritage with fondness and affirmed their Indian Muslim roots. Having heavyweights such as Former President S. R. Nathan, Minister Yaacob Ibrahim and Former Senior Minister of State Haji Zainul Abidin Rasheed featured in this documentary was encouraging since this is a private project and not something done for national TV and yet had support from such luminaries.

What would you tell other heritage enthusiasts about documenting and preserving history?

Having one’s heritage recorded in some form is very critical to one’s identity and knowing oneself. As an individual who is not into film-making or research, I treated this project as my duty to tell Singapore and the world at large the story of my forefathers and the Indian Muslim community. I hope this project will be a catalyst for others to come on board and embark on a larger and better documentary in the future. I wanted to showcase the illustrious individuals we have had amongst us both in the past and recent times. The heritage centre, the documentary and hopefully the coffee table book will help us to do just that.

The *Barakath: Our Pioneering Spirit* documentary, supported by the NHB Grant Scheme, can be viewed at the Nagore Dargah Indian Muslim Heritage Centre, 140 Telok Ayer Street. If you would like to learn more about the NHB Grant Scheme, please visit www.nhb.gov.sg/NHBPortal/AboutUs/Grants/Overview or email NHB_heritagegrants@nhb.gov.sg

PROFILE // LIM CHEN SIAN

DIGGING FOR ANSWERS

LIM CHEN SIAN IS A FAMILIAR FACE IN THE LOCAL HERITAGE SCENE WHO CONTINUES TO BOLDLY DIG FOR ANSWERS TO UNCOVER SINGAPORE’S PAST.



How and when did you begin as an archaeologist?

I started out liking history as a child and wanted to be a military historian. But at some point, I wondered what led to World War II? The more questions I asked, the further back in time I went and at some point, you run out of documentation. I became a little dissatisfied with the discipline of history and moved into archaeology, a discipline that tells us about the past not only through documents but material culture (i.e. artefacts).

What skills does an archaeologist need to have?

Archaeology is multidisciplinary. You need to know a bit about everything because you deal with objects and their context; there’s history, art history, chemistry, biology, geology, anthropology, ethnology, all thrown in. It’s a study about context.

Can you tell us a little about your work?

I originally trained as a Mayanist and as an Egyptologist. Today, I’m a historical archaeologist. I’m interested in post-European contact in colonial Southeast Asia and study how colonialists interacted with the indigenous population. We also do a lot of work on Ancient Temasek. What I’m interested in is the connection; although we may not be linked directly by blood to our distant predecessors, we are linked by space. We all share the same space as the people 200 years, or 700 years ago did. It gives you an understanding of your own identity and it’s right beneath your feet. I think it adds soul to Singapore.

What happens when you discover artefacts? Who owns them and what is usually done with the finds?

The objects belong to the state. Archaeological ethics dictate that I’m obliged to not keep any of these items and we don’t appraise the value. It’s the information we want; historical data from the artefacts is invaluable. Archaeologists are custodians of the artefacts but the objects belong to the country and the people.

Can you share with us an exciting discovery?

In 2002, I came back for summer vacation and volunteered at the Old Parliament House dig for a day. Right under the elephant statue, I discovered that the entire site was full of artefacts. And I wondered to myself, why am I digging up America’s backyard? Why am I not digging up Singapore? To find out that half a metre below my feet, there was treasure everywhere, all this forgotten material in my own country, was incredible. It made me decide to stay.

What advice do you have for budding archaeologists?

First, you’ll need to be interested in the past. Be inquisitive and have a sense of curiosity. Keep asking questions and have a great sense of humour! Archaeology is in its infancy in Singapore, so it’s tough but it is very rewarding work.

Learn about the Archaeology Unit of the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies where Lim is a visiting fellow at nsc.iseas.edu.sg

THE DARK AGE OF TEMASEK

REDISCOVERING OUR ORIGINS



1 | Gold coin – Kupang – 15th century
 2 | Fragment of stoneware storage jar with Lim inscription – 14th century
 3 | Celadon (greenware) censer (incense burner) from Long Quang imperial kiln
 4 | Erotic porcelain – 14th century

*Items are not presented to scale

Text by Dr John Kwok

The “Dark Ages” was once used to describe Europe in the sixth to eleventh centuries when it was believed that civilised life had disappeared following the end of Rome. Archaeological excavations across Europe have uncovered the remains of towns, ports, temples and markets – evidence that Europe after Rome was anything but “dark”. Historians and archaeologists now no longer use the term “Dark Ages” to describe Europe after Rome. There is a time period in Singapore’s past that resembles Europe’s “Dark Ages”. This time period is called the

“Temasek Age”; Singapore was known as Temasek until the arrival of the British in the nineteenth century.

There are no written records of Temasek and the people of Temasek left no records for us. The histories of empires in the region hint at the existence of Temasek. For example, the *Sejarah Melayu (Malaya Annals)* mentions Temasek during an invasion of China led by Raja Suran, a powerful ruler in India. His army rampaged across what are now Myanmar, Thailand, and Malaysia before arriving at Temasek, where it

was stopped by the sea. Raja Suran ordered hundreds of boats to be constructed at Temasek to ferry his army to China. But the Chief Minister to the Chinese Emperor sent an old ship to Temasek with a crew of toothless old men who could barely walk, and filled the cargo hold with potted trees and rusted needles. After arriving at Temasek, the crew told Raja Suran that their ship carried a cargo of iron bars but the long voyage had reduced them to the size of rusted needles and the trees on the ship had grown from seeds that were planted when they left China.

They also said that they had been young boys when they left China. Alarmed that the voyage to China would take so long that he and his army would not survive it, Raja Suran turned his army around. Centuries later, a descendant of Raja Suran later became king of Palembang and the father of Sang Nila Utama, who would visit Temasek and form the settlement Singapura on the island.

The British arrived at Singapura in 1819 and founded the port city of Singapore. 1819 is traditionally marked as the year when the history

of Singapore begins. Temasek, if it is mentioned at all, is presented as a myth or in a footnote.

Archaeological research in Singapore over the last 31 years has contributed immensely to research on Temasek and the “Temasek Age”. The most recent archaeological excavation at Empress Place, also Singapore’s largest archaeological excavation to date, unearthed an estimated three tonnes of artefacts. It was the biggest-ever haul in Singapore from a single excavation project, which the National Heritage Board

described as an “excavation jackpot”. The archaeology team, led by archaeologist Lim Chen Sian from the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies Archaeological Unit, recovered a number of notable artefacts which shed more light on the “Temasek Age”.

Among them were 16 figurines shaped like Buddhist devotees, suggesting that either Buddhism was widespread in Temasek or Temasek was frequently visited by traders or pilgrims from Buddhist kingdoms. There was also a large shard from



a Chinese imperial-grade Celadon incense burner, which suggests that an organised society existed in Temasek – Chinese emperors would bestow imperial-grade pottery to the heads of states of kingdoms as an acknowledgement of their subservience to China, and as a sign that trading privileges with China had been granted.

Also uncovered at Empress Place was a pottery cup produced at the Jingdezhen kiln complex in Jiangxi province, implying that trade between Temasek and China

extended beyond the traditional trade hubs around China's southern coastal provinces of Guangdong and Fujian. There was also the surprising discovery of a pottery lid featuring an intricate miniature sculpture of an embracing couple on its underside, suggesting that Temasek society may have had a more playful and liberal side.

Every recovered artefact must be carefully cleaned, sorted, tagged, and catalogued. This post-excavation work, which takes about 23 days for every one day of excavation, is

painstakingly slow but important and necessary. The processed artefacts will be studied by archaeologists and historians in an effort to answer questions on the “Dark Age” of Temasek: How was Temasek society organised and ruled? What kind of lives did Temasek people live? What happened to Temasek? Close collaboration between historians and archaeologists researching these recovered artefacts, together with archaeological data compiled from excavations and archaeological artefacts, will one day help us answer these questions and many more.

- 5| Glazed stoneware jarlet – 14th century
- 6| Qing Bai tea or wine cup – 13th to 14th century
- 7| Qing Bai baby figurine – 13th to 14th century
- 8| Porcelain Buddhist devotee figurines – 13th to 14th century

*Items are not presented to scale

ONE CITY, TWO PHOTOGRAPHERS

A BOOK REVIEW

Text by Ian Tan

Two substantial volumes of architectural photography, documenting changes in Singapore's urban landscape, were published recently. The rich historical content, coupled with detailed and meticulous research and photography processes, make these two books a befitting visual tribute to the country's progress. They showcase Singapore's physical development from a colony to a nation within half a century. Although the premises of the two books differ significantly, their narratives are complementary, and can even be read sequentially as some buildings are featured in both books but during different eras.

Through the Lens of Lee Kip Lin, written by architectural historian Dr Lai Chee Kien, offers a rare glimpse into the late Lee Kip Lin's lifelong passion of recording the changing urban landscape of Singapore during a period of rapid economic development and building renewal. Readers may feel a tinge of regret leafing through the photographic records of many demolished buildings and erased streets. The second book, *Our Modern Past*, represents an effort to survey the diverse forms of local modern architectural works and to highlight the pertinent need to recognise the role these buildings played in nation-building. It leaves readers with a sense of optimism as many of the buildings it features have since been given new leases of life after restoration.

Through the Lens of Lee Kip Lin presents the results of Dr Lai's extensive research into more than 14,500 slides and negatives from the photography portfolio of the late Lee Kip Lin. The images, taken between 1965 and 1995, represent part of the Lee Kip Lin collection donated by Lee's family to the National Library Board in 2009. They include images of landscapes, streets and buildings taken all over Singapore.

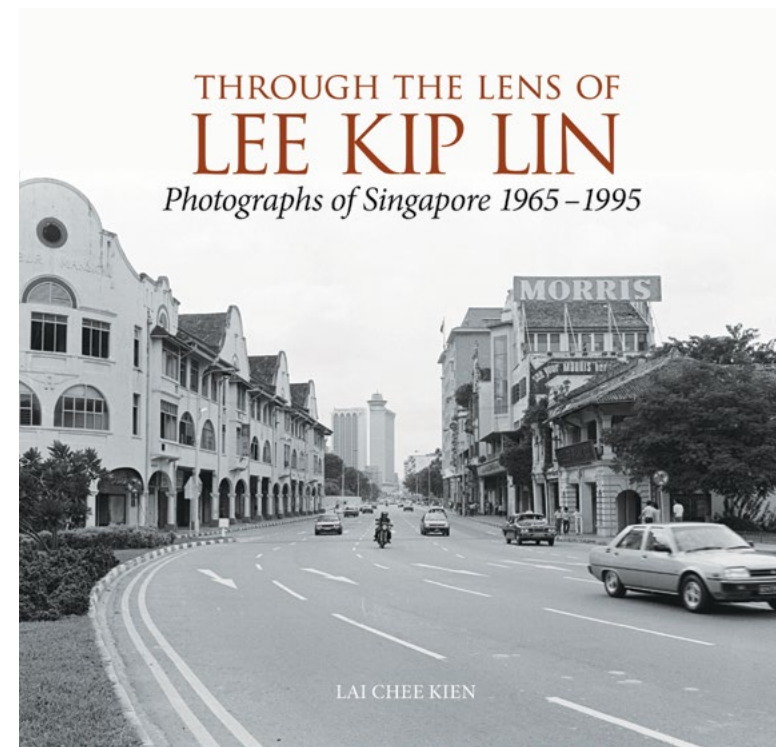
What sets this collection apart from a run-of-the-mill coffee table book is the systematic approach Lee took in documenting his subjects, as well as his meticulous record-keeping. Lee would take multiple images of each building or street, starting from larger contexts before moving into details — such as from streets to buildings, and, where possible, from exterior to interior views. Notebooks in the Lee Kip Lin Collection contain hand-written information about the locations and dates of the photographs taken, as well as notes tracing the history of places, which were copied from notices, letters, and reports from archives around the world. This rare compendium of streetscape and architectural photography allows future researchers to gain first-hand insights into a crucial period of development in Singapore's early independence years. Most of the featured photographs were shot on black and white film; Dr Lai postulates that not only were monochrome films probably more affordable for Lee's extensive documentation style, but

they also had the advantage over colour film of offering a stronger contrast and clearer rendition.

Our Modern Past offers a rich visual exposition on distinctive modern buildings constructed during the 1920s to 1970s. It spans three distinct time periods: the inter-war period, the post-war years, and the post-independence phase. The photographs, many occupying full-page spreads, render the architectural details of building exteriors and interiors in vivid hues and tones. They are the work of the renowned late photographer Jeremy San, whose keen eye for capturing lighting changes and deep sense of appreciation for unique designs enable his photographs to breathe life into the modern buildings we pass by without a second glance. We often take for granted the familiar spaces in which we live, work, and play. Yet when they disappear or are replaced, the feeling of loss and yearning lingers for a long time.

Through the Lens of Lee Kip Lin and *Our Modern Past* join other seminal architectural tomes in generating awareness for overlooked buildings around us. Many are still standing today, some with extensive modifications and others with completely new functions; however their heritage and legacies remain and are waiting for us to uncover and appreciate.

Both books are available at all major bookstores.



Dr Lai Chee Kien. *Through the Lens of Lee Kip Lin: Photographs of Singapore 1965 - 1995*. Singapore: National Library Board, 2015.



Ho Weng Hin, Dinesh Naidu, Tan Kar Lin and Jeremy San. *Our Modern Past: A Visual Survey of Singapore Architecture 1920s - 1970s*. Singapore: Singapore Heritage Society and SIA Press Pte Ltd, 2015.



ISLAMIC ARTS MUSEUM MALAYSIA

AN OASIS OF ISLAMIC ARTS



Text by Maggie Tan

Photos courtesy of the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia

Located amidst lush greenery, the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia (IAMM) is off the beaten path for most tour groups but nevertheless a must-visit destination on any trip to Kuala Lumpur. Opened in 1998, it is Southeast Asia's largest museum of Islamic arts and is committed to creating a collection that represents the global Islamic world. The building houses more than 7,000 artefacts from all over the Middle East, China, India, and Southeast Asia.

The museum is notable not only for the collection it contains but also

for the physical building it is housed in: a structure that has features inspired by Iranian and Central Asian architecture yet remains modern, airy, and light, giving the impression of tremendous space. The artefacts are exhibited in galleries according to their geographical origin and along the following themes: Architecture, Quran and Manuscripts, Jewellery, Arms and Armour, Textiles, Living with Wood, Coins and Seals, Metalwork, and Ceramics. One section that was particularly impressive was the display of beautiful miniature Qurans. The

glorification of the written word and high level of artistry is bedazzling; you can spend hours just poring over the high degree of ornamentation and ponder the time and skill devoted to each page.

IAMM aims to provide lifelong learning for children, students, and adults, as do most leading museums in the world today. It offers a range of educational programmes that allow participants to discover their artistic abilities, thereby learning while having fun. The Children's Library in the museum holds both fiction

and non-fiction books and children can register to become a member by obtaining a Children's Library Passport. The Scholar's Library was established as an education centre for scholars and researchers; it houses more than 16,000 titles including nineteenth and early twentieth century publications such as *Plans, Elevations, Sections and Details of the Alhambra* by Pascual de Gayangos (1842) and the *Malay Sketches* by Sir Frank Althelstane Swettenham (1913).

Currently, you can catch the *Holy Month of Ramadan: A Visual Celebration* exhibition at IAMM, which runs until August 31. The exhibition's message is a cross-cultural and inter-faith portrayal of the essence of the spiritual Ramadan month; 66 photographs from aspiring amateurs to professional photographers from over 60 countries are on display.

- 1 | Inverted Dome Pavilion
- 2 | Ceramic Gallery
- 3 | Children's Library
- 4 | Architecture Gallery

The Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily, including public holidays. Admission fees are RM14 for adults and RM7 for students. The museum also offers a virtual tour on its website at www.iamm.org.my/ Hungry visitors can check out the Museum Restaurant (+603 2270 5152), which offers the rich flavours of Middle Eastern cuisine in an elegant space overlooking the fountain. Remember to save some space for the homemade *bakhlava*!

FUN WITH HERITAGE

ENJOYING MUSEUMS AND HERITAGE TRAILS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Text by Nurliyana Halid

Thinking of interesting places to visit during the weekends or holidays? Look no further: drop by one of Singapore’s museums or go on a heritage trail and discover more about our culture and heritage. Spend some quality time with your family through these interactive activities that can be enjoyed by all.

What is Family Time?

Family Time, a new feature introduced by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in its Character and Citizenship Education (CCE) lessons for primary schools, offers families opportunities to bond. In support of CCE, the National Heritage Board has compiled a series of activities that families can consider when planning their outings at www.nhb.gov.sg/NHBPortal/Education/ResourcesforFamilies

Before Your Visit

Build up excitement by digging out some old photographs, personal belongings with sentimental value or family heirlooms at home. Interest your children or wards in the outing by discussing with them what they can expect to see and experience at a museum or on a heritage trail. You can download and print Family Time Activity Sheets from the aforementioned website and consider packing some light snacks and drinks for your family excursion.

During the Outing

Engage in an active dialogue with your children or wards during the outing. Allow them to discover their interests while asking questions to stir their imagination. Apart from asking questions, each family member can identify one favourite object from the museum collections or one favourite site on the heritage trail and tell the rest of the family why he or she likes it. If your children or wards love to draw, you can bring blank papers and pencils and do simple sketches of your favourite artefacts or sites together. You can also take “we-fies” with your loved ones and upload them on Facebook and Instagram – with the tag *#funwithheritage* – to capture memorable moments.

After the Visit

Keep the conversation going and ask your children or wards about their museum or trail experience, their favourite artefacts, interesting facts they have learnt, and other things they would like to learn about. You can also ask your children or wards to draw the most memorable moment of their visit.

For more information on Family Time, please visit www.nhb.gov.sg/NHBPortal/Education/ResourcesforFamilies

For more information on heritage trails, please visit www.nhb.gov.sg/NHBPortal/Places/Trails

YISHUN SEMBAWANG HERITAGE TRAIL: A TRAIL ABOUT PIONEERS

Yishun

Did you know that Yishun is named after Lim Nee Soon, who was known as the “rubber and pineapple king” for making his fortune from these crops? Many of his plantations were located where Yishun and Sembawang are today. Born in Singapore, Lim Nee Soon was also a community leader and philanthropist.

Khoo Teck Puat

Did you know Khoo Teck Puat Hospital is named after billionaire Khoo Teck Puat, whose foundation donated \$125 million for this cause? In 1981, Khoo Teck Puat set up the Khoo Foundation, a legacy which continues to benefit numerous social welfare and educational causes in Singapore.

Guiding questions to ask your child or ward:

- Q1.** What are some of the values portrayed by the pioneers?
- Q2.** Are you inspired by their stories? Why?
- Q3.** How would you demonstrate the values of resilience, generosity, and care to those around you?

MUSEUM VISITS



Singapore Stone

This piece of coarse sandstone slab is a fragment of the *Singapore Stone*. The original stone was about three metres high by three metres wide, and stood at the mouth of the Singapore River at what is known as Rocky Point. The engravings on the fragment are the earliest inscriptions found on the island, and are evidence of human inhabitation in ancient Singapore.

Guiding questions to ask your child or ward:

- Q1.** Where do you think it was found?
- Q2.** What do you see on it?
- Q3.** What is the language of the writing?
- Q4.** Who do you think inscribed it?

When the stone was first discovered in 1819, no one could decipher the 50 or more lines of inscription found on it. Scholars have different views on the date the stone was carved, ranging from the tenth to thirteenth century; the language of the script – possibly Sumatran or old Javanese. The stone was blown up in 1843 to build Fort Fullerton.

MUSEUM VISITS



Dynamic Dragon

The exterior design of this blue and white stem cup features a dragon with two horns and three claws chasing a flaming pearl. Around the rim of the cup runs a classic scroll, while another flaming pearl – a characteristic Yuan dynasty motif – appears in the

Guiding questions to ask your child or ward:

- Q1.** What do you think the object is?
- Q2.** What do you think it was used for?
- Q3.** What designs can you see on it?
- Q4.** Why do you think dragons are important symbols to the Chinese?

cup’s interior. This stem cup would not have qualified as imperial ware as only dragons with two horns and five claws were used in court designs. Hence, this stem cup was most likely used as a drinking vessel for daily domestic use.

WHAT'S ON

JULY – SEPTEMBER 2015

DAILY

ANCIENT RELIGIONS

Asian Civilisation Museum
All day free admission

The Asian Civilisations Museum has launched a new permanent gallery. The Ancient Religions Gallery traces the spread of religions out of India into China, Sri Lanka, and Southeast Asia. A thousand years of sculpture shows the change in art from early cults to international forms of Hinduism and Buddhism. The displays demonstrate how the cultures of Gandhara, Kushan, Tang China, and Sriwijaya gave new expression to these systems of belief.

PLAY @ NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SINGAPORE

National Museum of Singapore
Level 3, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
All day free admission

PLAY @ National Museum of Singapore (NMS) is the first dedicated area for young children to take their first steps towards enjoying museums, featuring interactive exhibits and special activities that encourage learning through play. Come join us at the three spaces of PLAY@NMS – EXPLORE, CREATE and PERFORM!

For more information, please go to www.nationalmuseum.sg

NEW OMNI

Omni-Theatre
IMAX Movie - \$12
Digital Movie or Live Show - \$14
From May 30

The Omni-Theatre, Asia's largest seamless dome screen, is now fitted with digital planetarium technology to transport audiences from the

comfort of their seats to any destination. Visit other parts of the Earth or even go into space for an out-of-this-world visual experience. The powerful visualisation software, which allows particle systems to be rendered in stunning detail, also enables science educators to conduct live lectures on space science, astronomy, and other topics.

For showtimes, please go to www.omnitheatre.com.sg

GUIDED TOUR OF MALAY HERITAGE CENTRE

Malay Heritage Centre
Tuesday to Friday | 11 a.m.
Saturday to Sunday | 2 p.m.
Tour duration: 1 hour 15 minutes.
Registration and starting point for free guided tours are at the Visitor Services Counter. Tours are conducted in English. Limited to 20 people per tour.

Join our free guided tours of MHC's permanent galleries and learn more about Kampong Glam as well as its significance to the Malay community from our museum docents.

For groups of more than 20 people, it is advisable to book your tours two weeks in advance. For corporate or special needs tours, please email your request to NHB_MHC@nhb.gov.sg

* The availability of the guided tours is subject to the availability of our volunteer docents.

WEEKLY

UPCYCLE ART WORKSHOP

ArtScience Museum
Monday | August 10, 4:30 p.m.
Friday | July 10 and 24, August 7 and 21, September 4 and 18, 4:30 p.m.



LET'S PLAY! TRADITIONAL MALAY GAMES

Saturday | August 22, September 5 and 19, 4:30 p.m.
Sunday | July 26, August 23, and September 20, 4:30 p.m.
September school holidays | September 7 and public holiday | September 24, 4:30 p.m.
\$5 for each person. Purchase tickets on the day from the museum retail store, B2.

Plastic is one of the biggest man-made killers of maritime life. Learn about the different types of plastic and their impact on our oceans, and then upcycle a plastic object to create deep-sea creatures. Suitable for all ages.

Up to 20 visitors on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more information, please go to www.marinabaysands.com/museum/exhibitions-and-events/the-deep.html

MARANTAU: DIMA BUMI DIPIJAK DI SINAN LANGIK DIJUNJANG MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION OF THE MINANGKABAU COMMUNITY IN SINGAPORE

Malay Heritage Centre
Ongoing to April 3, 2016
Every Tuesday | 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

As part of the Se-Nusantara (Of the Same Archipelago) series, MHC presents MARANTAU, a community co-curated exhibition organised in partnership with the Singapore Minangkabau Association, featuring the heritage and history of the local Minangkabau community whose ancestral home lies among highlands in Padang, West Sumatra. Accompanying the exhibition will be a host of exciting cultural programmes from music, dance, textile-weaving demonstrations and public lectures.

LET'S PLAY! TRADITIONAL MALAY GAMES

Malay Heritage Centre
Every Tuesday |
10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Come and learn more about traditional Malay games at the Malay Heritage Centre. Learn skills you will need to play *capteh*, *main lereng* (wheel spinning), *congkak* (traditional Malay board game), *batu seremban* (five

stones), and many more. This 45-minute session will also invite participants to use their creativity as they invent new and fun games with new-found items.

THE DEEP GUIDED TOURS

ArtScience Museum
ArtScience Museum, B2
Complimentary to exhibition ticket-holders
Family Friday Guided Tours |
Every Friday | 3:30 p.m.

WE: DEFINING STORIES

Travelling Exhibition
Library opening hours. Free admission.

Central Public Library (Jul)
Toa Payoh Public Library (Aug)
Bishan Public Library (Sep)
Tampines Regional Library (Oct)
Jurong West Public Library (Nov)
Bedok Public Library (Dec)



Revisit Singapore's turbulent march towards independence and appreciate the quirks that define us as Singaporean today in this exhibition featuring photographs from the archives of *The Straits Times* and the National Museum of Singapore Collection. This travelling visual exhibition of headline photographs documents significant moments of Singapore's history, and forms a pictorial story of home and identity 50 years since independence. For more information, please go to <http://bit.ly/wedefining>

English Guided Tours |
Every Saturday | 11:30 a.m. and
Every Sunday | 5 p.m.
Public holiday tours on July 17,
August 7 and 10, September 24,
2:30 p.m.
September school holidays |
September 11, 2:30 p.m.
Chinese Guided Tours |
September 7 and 11
Every Saturday and Sunday |
4 p.m. Public holiday tours
on July 17, August 7 and 10,
September 24, 4 p.m.

Why are some sea creatures transparent, and why are others bioluminescent? How do animals survive at extreme depths? Learn about the extraordinary creatures of the abyss in this fact-filled tour.

For more information, please visit www.marinabaysands.com/museum/exhibitions-and-events/the-deep.html

MAKE YOUR OWN GLOWING ANGLER FISH WORKSHOP

ArtScience Museum
Workshop space, B2
Friday | July 17 and 31, August 14 and 28, September 25, 4:30 p.m.
Saturday | August 8, 15 and 29, September 12, 4:30 p.m.
Sunday | July 19, August 9, 16 and 30, September 13 and 27, 4:30 p.m.
September school holidays |
September 11, 4:30 p.m.
\$5 for each person. Purchase tickets on the day from the museum retail store, B2.

Use a UV LED light and a battery to decorate an Angler fish template and create a simple circuit to make it light up. Learn all about this fascinating creature and other bioluminescent life forms in the ocean depths. Suitable for children aged four and up. Up to 20 visitors on a first-come-first-served basis. Registration begins 15 minutes before workshop begins.

CLAYMATION WORKSHOP

ArtScience Museum
Workshop space, B2
Saturday | July 18 and 25, August 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29, September 5, 12 and 19, 2:30 p.m.
September school holidays |
September 8, 4:30 p.m.
\$5 for each person. Purchase tickets on the day from the museum retail store, B2.

Understand first-hand this intriguing form of animation and create a short film by moulding a clay character. Suitable for all ages.

Up to 20 visitors on a first-come-first-served basis. Registration begins fifteen minutes before workshop begins.

DREAMWORKS GUIDED TOUR

ArtScience Museum
ArtScience Museum, B2
Saturday | from June 13 to Jul 19, 5 p.m.
Sunday | from June 14 to July 19, 11:30 a.m.
Complimentary to ticket holders

Enjoy insights into the creation of Dreamworks's star characters in this entertaining and informative tour. (English language only)

PRINTING FROM THE PAST: LETTERPRESS AND TYPESETTING WORKSHOP

ArtScience Museum
ArtScience Museum, Level 3
Saturday | July 18, August 15, September 9, 2 p.m., 3:30 p.m. and 5 p.m.
\$15 for each person. Purchase tickets in advance online or from the Marina Bay Sands Box Office outlets

This hands-on workshop provides an introduction to letterpress printing and basic typesetting, introducing tools of the trade and the basics of

typography. Participants will learn the stages of typesetting, including layout, lockup, make-ready, ink and colour and packing, and will also get the chance to operate the press, and print their own card in letterpress metal types. Suitable for adults and children aged eight and up. Classes of 12, with tickets purchased in advance.

For more information, please visit www.marinabaysands.com/museum/singapore-stories.html

THE MAGIC OF ANIMATION WORKSHOP

ArtScience Museum Workshop space, B2 Sunday | August 9 and 23, September 13, 20 and 27, 2:30 p.m. September school holidays | September 10, 4:30 p.m. \$5 for each person. Purchase tickets on the day from the museum retail store, B2.

Learn about the beginnings of animation through zoetrope demonstrations, and the opportunity to create thaumathropes or flip-books to take home. Suitable for all ages.

Up to 20 visitors on a first-come-first-served basis. Registration begins 15 minutes before workshop begins.

SINGAPORE STORIES: THEN, NOW, TOMORROW

ArtScience Museum ArtScience Museum, Level 3 Curator Guided Tours | Friday July 17, Saturday July 18, and Sunday, July 19, 11:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. English Guided Tour | Every Sunday | 11:30 a.m. from July 26 Chinese Guided Tours | Every Saturday and Sunday, 2 p.m. from July 25

Public holiday tours on August 7 and 10, and September 24, 2 p.m. Free admission

Journey through 170 years of Singapore's history through the pages of *The Straits Times* to consider where we have been, how we got here, and where we might be heading.

For more information, please visit www.marinabaysands.com/museum/singapore-stories.html

WEEKEND GUIDED TOUR (LAND OF GOLD AND SPICES)

National Library, Singapore Outside the Gallery, Level 10 Weekends | July 4, 5, 11, 12, 18 and 19 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. [Conducted in English], 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. [Conducted in Mandarin]

Join our guided tours, led by librarians and volunteers, and explore the early maps of Singapore and Southeast Asia. Tours are limited to 20 participants for each session, on a first-come-first-served basis. The first 10 participants of each session will receive a complimentary copy of the exclusive publication, *Visualising Space: Maps of Singapore and the Region*.

For more information, please visit www.nlb.gov.sg/exhibitions/

MONTHLY

NIGHT UNDER THE STARS

Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall Zhongshan Park [16 Ah Hood Road, Singapore 329982] July 4 and August 8 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Free admission

Thinking of what to do and where to go on a Saturday

evening? Why not make a trip to the Zhongshan Park with your family and friends for some entertainment under the stars? Bring along your picnic mat and join us as we bring to you different themed performances each month.

For more information, please visit www.wanqingyuan.org.sg

GALLERIES ALIVE! TRADITIONAL MALAY MUSIC/WAYANG KULIT

Malay Heritage Centre Traditional Malay Music | Every third Wednesday of the month *Wayang Kulit* | Every third Thursday of the month

Watch the Malay Heritage Centre's permanent galleries come alive with live performances of traditional Malay music or enjoy a *wayang kulit* performance as our *dalang* tells the stories of Sang Kancil and his adventures.

All programmes are free but admission charges to the permanent galleries may apply to international visitors. Citizens and Permanent Residents enjoy free admission to the Malay Heritage Centre.

GALLERIES ALIVE! TRADITIONAL MALAY MUSIC/WAYANG KULIT



For more information about the sessions or registration, please call 6391 0450 [Tuesday to Sunday | 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.] or email your contact details to NHB_MHC_Programmes@nhb.gov.sg.

SINGAPORE MARITIME TRAIL 2

Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore Every 2nd Saturday of the month 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Free admission

The Singapore Maritime Trail 2 takes visitors on a journey that maps out the progress and advancement of our port, focusing on its history and the stories of the people in the maritime sector who have contributed to the nation's maritime success. Launched in May 2015, this second trail is an extension of the 2014 Singapore Maritime Trail 1, which included a tour of local maritime heritage sites.

The guided tours are open to the public and spaces are limited. For registration or enquiries, please email fang_jiayun@mpa.gov.sg or call +65 6836 6466 [Monday to Friday | 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.].



CHILDREN'S SEASON: MASAK MASAK 2015

NOW ON

STORIES FROM THE SEA

ArtScience Museum Workshop space, B2 Sunday | July 12, August 2, and September 6, 2:30 p.m., 3:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Complimentary to exhibition ticket-holders

Be enchanted by master storyteller Kamini Ramachandran as she takes visitors to kingdoms below the seas. Listen to stories about creatures, both real and mythical, who live in the deep. A special storytelling session in conjunction with *The Deep* exhibition. Attendance is on a first-come, first-served basis. Recommended for family audiences with children four to eight years old.

For more information, please visit www.marinabaysands.com/museum/exhibitions-and-events/the-deep.html

CHILDREN'S SEASON: MASAK MASAK 2015

National Heritage Board and Museum Roundtable National Museum of Singapore Ongoing to August 10 | Daily, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Free admission

Children's Season at the National Museum of Singapore returns with another fun-filled festival to celebrate the June school holidays. Join us at *Masak Masak 2015* which features familiar playgrounds and interactive installations by Singaporean and international artists, including Jeremy Hiah, Mademoiselle Maurice, and Crystal Wagner. Don't miss the engaging performances and family-oriented activities as well. Let your young ones play at the museum and have fun! Suitable for children aged three to seven.

For more information, please visit www.nationalmuseum.sg

SINGAPURA: 700 YEARS

National Museum of Singapore Exhibition Galleries 1 and 2, Basement Ongoing to August 10 Daily | 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Free admission for Singapore Citizens, Permanent Residents, and visitors aged six years and below

Experience Singapore's transformation through the ages from a humble fishing village to the pride of an empire, before finally becoming the modern, independent city-state it is today. This immersive exhibition takes visitors on an exploration of Singapore's rich history and its key defining moments.

Free guided tours on the exhibition are provided in English, Mandarin, Japanese, and French. Visit www.nationalmuseum.sg for a series of *SINGAPURA: 700 Years* programmes and resources.

COUNTING SHEEP, DREAMING GOATS

Singapore Philatelic Museum Ongoing to September 27, Monday | 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday to Sunday | 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. \$6 for adults and \$4 for children [3 to 12 years old]. Free admission for Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents

Celebrate the Year of the Goat/Sheep at Singapore Philatelic Museum with this fun and interactive exhibition for children. Learn about interesting facts and discover the importance of sheep and goats in our everyday life and culture such as in food, clothes, and musical instruments. Enjoy hands-on and multisensory exhibits, and admire more than 300 beautiful goat and sheep-themed stamps from around the world.

For more information, please visit www.spm.org.sg

SINGAPURA: 700 YEARS





GREAT PERANAKANS: FIFTY REMARKABLE LIVES

RETURN TO SENDER – AN EXHIBITION

Singapore Philatelic Museum
Ongoing to November 15
Monday | 1 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Tuesday to Sunday | 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.
\$6 for adults and \$4 for children (3 to 12 years old). Free admission for Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents

Come learn about the life of a man who defined a new music genre through his passion for singing. *RETURN TO SENDER – An Exhibition* celebrates Elvis Presley, the King of Rock 'n' Roll, who captured the hearts of millions around the world with his unique musical style. On display are items from a private collector who started the collection around the same time as Elvis's discovery till today. They include vinyl records, song sheets, movie posters, fan magazines, commemorative books, philatelic materials, and memorabilia.

GREAT PERANAKANS: FIFTY REMARKABLE LIVES

Peranakan Museum
Ongoing to April 3, 2016
Free admission for Singaporeans and Permanent Residents

Great Peranakans celebrates the achievements of 50 men and women who have shaped Singaporean life and culture over the past two centuries. These pioneers made important contributions in art, culture, education, business, governance, and public service. Collectively, their stories and the more than 100 objects from their lives invite greater contemplation of evolving Peranakan and Singaporean identities.

ONCE UPON A TIME IN ASIA: THE ANIMAL RACE AN INTERACTIVE EXHIBITION FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

Asian Civilisations Museum
Ongoing to August 16

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Free admission
Recommended for 5 to 12 years old

Come play with us and explore with all five senses. Have fun and make some art of your own to take home. Discover interesting animal facts using the five senses – from learning about animal poop to exploring the symbolism of animals in other Asian traditions through stories.

This specially-curated exhibition for children and the young at heart features interactive ensembles inspired by objects in the collection of the Asian Civilisations Museum that draw on artists' visions of animals in art across many cultures. This exhibition is supported by Science Centre Singapore.

DR SUN YAT SEN AND HIS FAMILY

Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall
Ongoing to October 18
Tuesday to Sunday | from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Closed on Mondays)
Free admission
(For Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents)

The exhibition will provide insights into Dr Sun Yat Sen's family with a special focus on his parents, siblings, wives and children, and their unstinting support which was crucial to both his personal achievements as well as the success of the revolution. More than 170 artefacts ranging from photographs and documents to personal belongings of Dr Sun and his family will be showcased.

For more information, please visit www.wanqingyuan.org.sg

#MY SINGAPORE – OURS TO CREATE EXHIBITION

S'pore Discovery Centre
Ongoing to January 3, 2016,
Tuesday to Sunday |
9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Free admission

The S'pore Discovery Centre *SG50 Exhibition* features Singapore as a nation and her transformation from a third-world country to a global city. It also highlights Singaporeans coming together to celebrate 50 years of nationhood and their collective wishes for Singapore's future.

For more information, please visit www.sdc.com.sg

JULY

TAPESTRY OF LIVES EXHIBITION, TOUR, AND ARTIST TALKS

Singapore Memory Project
Level 1, The Plaza, National Library Building
July 3 to 28, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. (Exhibition)
Level 5, Possibility Room, National Library Building
July 18, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. (Exhibition, Tour, and Artist)
Free admission

Enter a woven quilt of homespun tales that define Singapore, where threads of lives are spun together through our mutual communal ties.

Tapestry of Lives comprise the following exhibitions: *On The Road, Our Story That Binds, Public Conversations, Trades by Postal Code, and Singapore Farmers.*

For more information, please visit nlb.gov.sg/golibrary/programme/Singapore.aspx

COOLIE CURRENCY EXHIBITION AND TALK*

Loh Ah Keong and Patsy Lee
Level 10, Promenade, National Library Building
July 6 to 28, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. (Exhibition),
Level 1, Visitors' Briefing Room, National Library Building
July 26, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. (Talk)
Free admission

A long time ago, clan houses and triads in Singapore and other parts of Southeast Asia paid coolies in a special currency made of Chinese porcelain. Retrace the history of Singapore's coolie migrants and their social culture through the use of this unique currency in the book *Coolie Currency*, which features the most complete collection of coolie currency for the first time.
*Talk is conducted in Mandarin.

Visit iremember.sg to register.

CURATOR'S TOUR PART 1 (LAND OF GOLD AND SPICES) CURATOR'S TOUR PART 2 (ISLAND OF STORIES)

National Library, Singapore Gallery, Level 10 & Lee Kong Chian Reference Library, Level 11
Friday | July 10
7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (*Land of Gold and Spices*),
9 p.m. to 10 p.m. (*Island of Stories*)
Free admission

Participate in these tours led by our curators and be intrigued by the concept of maps and mapping. Meeting point for *Land of Gold and Spices* | Outside the Gallery, Level 10
Meeting point for *Island of Stories* | Outside the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library, Level 11
Tours are limited to 20 participants for each session, on a first-come-first-served



CURATOR'S TOUR PART 1 (LAND OF GOLD AND SPICES) CURATOR'S TOUR PART 2 (ISLAND OF STORIES)

registration basis. Register at nlb.gov.sg/golibrary/programme/Tours.aspx In conjunction with the Geo|Graphic Festival.

For more information, please visit nlb.gov.sg/golibrary/programme/Tours.aspx

SINGAPORE SCIENCE FESTIVAL

A*Star & Science Centre Singapore
Various locations around Singapore
July 10 to August 2

The Singapore Science Festival [SSF] is an annual celebration of everything Science, Engineering, Technology, and Mathematics [STEM]. Jointly organised by the Agency for Science, Technology & Research [A*STAR] and the Science Centre Singapore, SSF aims to cultivate the public's interest in STEM from an early age, to build the foundation for Singapore to grow as a hub for

STEM. Be prepared for a range of exciting hands-on activities, events, workshops, and unique guest performances.

For more information, please visit www.sciencefest.sg

IN-GALLERY STORYTELLING SESSIONS

National Museum of Singapore
SINGAPURA: 700 Years
Exhibition, Basement
Saturday | July 11 and 25;
August 7, 8 and 9, 12 noon and 12:30 p.m. (Each session lasts 30 minutes)
Free admission. Each session is limited to 20 children from ages four to eight, on a first-come, first-served basis. Please register on-site in advance.

Let our storytellers inspire your young ones with intriguing and colourful tales from the past. Featuring engaging dramatisation and interaction, these sessions are a wonderful introduction to Singapore's rich history.

Treasures from Asia's Oldest Museum: Buddhist Art from the Indian Museum, Kolkata

Asian Civilisations Museum
Ongoing to August 16
Free admission

The exhibition presents the evolution of Buddhism through the art of India. Important sculptures and paintings from the Indian Museum in Kolkata will trace the Jataka stories (past life stories of the Buddha), scenes from the life of the Buddha, and symbols used to represent Buddhist concepts. Representations of bodhisattvas and the Buddha will be on display. The exhibition features striking sculptures from the Pala and Gandhara cultures.

The Indian Museum, Kolkata, is the oldest museum in Asia, and greatly influenced the founding of other institutions in the region. Singapore's strong historic ties to Kolkata give this exhibition a special resonance, especially during 2015, which signifies both Singapore's 50th anniversary as well as the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between India and Singapore. Seen outside the ACM is the obelisk commemorating Indian viceroy Lord Dalhousie's visit from Kolkata in 1850.



Buddha preaching India, Gandhara, ca 2nd century Schist, height 79 cm
Photo courtesy of the Indian Museum, Kolkata

THE POLITICS OF DEFEAT TALK

Margaret Thomas
Level 5, Possibility Room,
National Library Building
Saturday | July 11
10 a.m. to 12 noon
Free admission

As a founding member of the Labour Party of Singapore in 1948, the late Francis Thomas played a critical role in shaping the destiny of our nation. Catch a glimpse of Singapore's history and its struggle for independence through Thomas' papers and secret diaries as compiled by his daughter, Margaret.

LIFE BEYOND THE BIG TOP BOOK LAUNCH

BOOK LAUNCH & TALK
Level 5, Possibility Room,
National Library Building
Saturday | July 11
2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Free admission

From the 1950s to the 1970s, the Tai Thean Kew Circus toured Malaya and Singapore, entertaining people of all creeds and races. In this coffee-table book, the author recounts the storied journey of these Chinese circus performers using memories from her family and fans of the circus.

BIBLIOTOPIA TALK BY MICHAEL LEE

National Library, Singapore
Possibility Room, Level 5,
National Library Building
Saturday | July 11
3 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Free admission

In this talk-and-tour event, artist Michael Lee revisits his research and creative processes for *Bibliotopia*, a new series of three LED-lit mind maps inspired by

Singapore fiction. Lee, who often transforms his sustained interests in urban memory and fiction into architectural models and drawings, has decided to respond to the commission by striving to mine the "Singaporean psyche" through reviewing a selection of fictional works by three local authors: Catherine Lim, and Adrian Tan. In conjunction with the GeolGraphic Festival.

Register at nlb.gov.sg/golibrary/programme/Arts.aspx

PICTURING CHINATOWN WORKSHOP

Singapore Heritage Society
library@chinatown
Sunday | July 12
2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Free admission

The evolution of a landmark is often best captured through

a camera lens. *Picturing Chinatown* by the Singapore Heritage Society exhibits the intimate photo essays of Chinatown, as created by participants in a series of community workshops. The different stories told through these photographs invite the public to take part in the conversation about our discrepant national memories, divergent social experiences, and a sense of dislocation.

AH CAI LA KOPI

Edmund Chen
Level 1, Visitors' Briefing Room,
National Library Building
Sunday | July 12
1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Free admission

There is nothing quite like catching up with friends, old and new, over a piping hot cup of coffee. Anchored

by actor Edmund Chen, *Ah Cai La Kopi* is a 20-episode multilingual talk show that features the personal journeys and experiences of Singapore's top local celebrities, personalities, businessmen, and professionals.

STRAITS FAMILY SUNDAY: BEAD BY BEAD

Peranakan Museum
July 12, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Free admission

Did you know that the largest beadwork object in the museum was made with about 1 million beads? Come and find out more about these beaded artworks, bead by bead, when you visit this Sunday. Then create a unique craft inspired by this colourful collection.

PLANT POWER!

National Museum of Singapore
CREATE Space at PLAY@NMS
Friday | July 17
Saturday | August 1
1:30 p.m. (Each session lasts two hours)
Free admission

The interactive learning session is facilitated by HandsOnLearning and is recommended for children aged 4 to 12. Craft activity is limited to 80 families on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration required. Please register on-site in advance.

For more information, please visit www.nationalmuseum.sg

CYANOTYPE CREATURES

ArtScience Museum
Workshop space, B2
Saturday | July 18 and 25,
4:30 p.m.
\$5 for each person. Purchase tickets on the day from the museum retail store, B2.

Create magical underwater artwork through the early photographic process cyanotype, featuring extraordinary creatures from *The Deep*. Up to 20 participants on a first-come, first-served basis. Recommended for visitors aged five and above.

For more information, please visit www.marinabaysands.com/museum/exhibitions-and-events/the-deep.html

PROJECT SINGAPORE BOOK LAUNCH

Tai Sun
Level 5, Imagination Room,
National Library Building
Saturday | July 18, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
Free admission

Often associated with Singapore's food and beverage

industry, the Hainanese have found regional fame through one of our national past times. Gain a fresh perspective on our nation's history through the eyes of Tai Sun and nine other successful Hainanese businesses, from their early days to Singapore's struggle for independence.

For more information, please visit nlb.gov.sg/golibrary/programme/Singapore.aspx

GEMA DIKIR BARAT DI SINGAPURA

Izuan Bin Mohamed Rais
library@esplanade
Saturday | July 18
2 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Free admission

From the distinctive rhythms to their heavy drumbeats, learn more about *dikir barat*, a Malay performance art form native to the Malay Peninsula. *Gema Dikir Barat Di Singapura* is a coffee-table book accompanied by a 20-minute film that reveals the fascinating history of this traditional musical form.

KALA MANJARI: 50 YEARS OF INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC & DANCE IN SINGAPORE

Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society
library@esplanade
Saturday | July 18
2 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Free admission

Raga and Rasa – melodies and emotions expressed in the lively art forms of Indian classical music and dance – have been the bedrock of Indian identity across the centuries and around the world. These art forms have thrived and intertwined with other Asian cultures, helping Indians maintain a distinctive cultural identity in multicultural Singapore.

In the book *Kala Manjari*, the Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society commemorates the history of Indian performing arts over the last fifty years in Singapore, revisiting the memories of artistic pioneers and collaborators woven into a compelling story.

MALAYALEES AS THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF SINGAPORE SCREENING

Singapore Malayalee Hindu Samajam
Level 5, Imagination Room,
National Library Building
Saturday | July 18
4 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Free admission

Hailing from the Indian state of Kerala and the Union Territory of Lakshadweep, Malayalee settlers now form the second largest ethnic group within the Indian community here.

Discover how the pioneer generation of Malayalees in Singapore was involved in the struggle of building our nation in *Malayalees as the Building Blocks of Singapore*, a documentary featuring interviews with members of the community.

FUN WITH PHOTOGRAMS

ArtScience Museum
B1 Education Space
Sunday | July 19 and 26
2:30 p.m.
\$5 for each person. Purchase tickets on the day from the museum retail store, B2.

Use silhouettes of the amazing ocean creatures from *The Deep* placed on photographic paper in a darkroom environment to create artwork to take home. Up to 20 participants on a first-come, first-served basis. Recommended for visitors aged five and above.

The Singapore Journey: 50 Years Through Stamps

Singapore Philatelic Museum
21 July 2015 to April 2016
Monday | 1 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Tuesday to Sunday |
9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.
\$6 for adults and \$4 for children (3 to 12 years old).
Free admission for Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents

Singapore stamps document the growth of the nation, archiving trials, tribulations, achievements, and aspirations. Journey through 50 years of our nation's progress with specially selected stamps, philatelic materials, and rarely seen original stamp artworks.

For more information, please go to www.spm.org.sg

MINANG SONGS & DANCE II BY SUMBAR TALENTA

Malay Heritage Centre
Friday | July 24, 8:30 p.m.

Don't miss out on a musical evening with Sumbar Talenta as they bring to you various traditional Minangkabau songs and dances like the *tari pasambahan* and *tari piring*.

CONVERSATIONS CREATING NEW REALITIES: ANIMATION NOW AND NEXT

ArtScience Museum
Expression Gallery, Level 4
Saturday | July 25
10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Free admission

A day of engaging presentations given by animators and animation thought leaders that explore animation today and in the future.





GEYLANG SERAI FOOT AND FOOD HERITAGE TRAILS

GEYLANG SERAI FOOT AND FOOD HERITAGE TRAILS

Geylang Serai Integration & Nationalisation Champions Committee
 July 25, August 29, and September 26
 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
 August 9, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 Free admission

The trails highlight various places of worship and favourite food haunts of locals; when combined with stories of residents, these trails showcase the harmonious, multi-religious and multi-cultural nature of the neighbourhood.

To register, go to www.one.pa.gov.sg, or visit www.facebook.com/gsheritagetrail

MALAY PIONEERS OF EARLY SINGAPORE

Siti Nafisah
 Level 5, Imagination Room,
 National Library Building

Saturday | July 25
 11 a.m. to 12 noon
 Free admission

Bold, adventurous, and courageous. These are but some of the words to describe these 10 Malay pioneers and personalities who have contributed to the progress of Singapore since its humble fishing village days. *Malay Pioneers of Early Singapore* is a series of articles and webisodes celebrating and commemorating the contributions of these daring role models.

LINGO LINGO WHERE YOU GO SCREENING AND TALK

J Team Productions
 Level 5, Imagination Room,
 National Library Building
 Saturday | July 25, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
 Free admission

Explore the origins of Singlish with Shawn Tan, as well as words used in the past with J Team Productions' charmingly

humorous jaunt down memory lane.

SREE NARAYANA MISSION

Sree Narayana Mission
 Level 5, Possibility Room,
 National Library Building
 Saturday | July 25
 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
 Free admission

From a diverse group with varying backgrounds to a respectable charitable organisation, trace the development of Sree Narayana Mission from its humble beginnings to the success it is today. Through this documentary, the charity shares the advances it has made in meeting the needs of the Sembawang community and Singapore.

SEMINAR BY DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER, TAN SRI DR RAIS YATIM

Malay Heritage Centre
 MHC Auditorium
 Saturday | July 25
 2:30 p.m.

For this Distinguished Speaker Seminar, we will be inviting Tan Sri Dr Rais Yatim, a prominent political Minangkabau figure in Malaysia, who is currently the President of International Islamic University of Malaysia.

Registration is required.

MINANG FASHION SHOW BY SUMBAR TALENTA

Malay Heritage Centre
 Bussorah Mall
 Saturday | July 25
 7:30 p.m.

As part of Aliwal Night Crawl, Malay Heritage Centre presents a *Minang Fashion Show* which will showcase the rich Minangkabau textile tradition like the *songket*. Textile and

fashion lovers out there should not miss out on this parade of colourful traditional costumes from the various regions of West Sumatra.

BUAL SCREENING

Tweeq
 Level 5, Possibility Room,
 National Library Building
 Friday | July 31
 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.
 Free admission

Comprising around 13 percent of our nation's population as the country's second largest ethnic group, the Malays are the original settlers of Singapore.

BUAL (meaning "speak" in Malay) is an inspiring documentary series that captures the stories and contributions of trailblazers in the local Malay Muslim community, and encourages youths to contribute to the larger community, fostering a strong sense of belonging to our nation.

AUGUST

HEARTS & CRAFT EXHIBITION, TOUR, AND ARTIST TALKS

Hansen Khoo, TINKR, and Dan Wong
 Level 1, The Plaza (Exhibition and Tour), Level 5, Possibility Room
 August 1 to 28, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. (Exhibition)
 August 8, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. (Tour and Artist Talks)
 Free admission

Led by the desire to give shape to our greatest past times, these forward-thinking minds spared no effort turning yesteryear's inspirations into today's creations. Hearts & Crafts comprise the following exhibitions: *The Little Red Brick*, *3D Printing Singapura Stories*, and *The Singapore March*.

THE WAY WE WERE EXHIBITION

Tan Zixi (MessyMsxi) and Lua Aiwei
 Level 1, Lobby, National Library Building
 August 1 to 28, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
 Free admission

Gain a rare and precious glimpse into the memories of Singapore and its forgotten practices, including *kampong* scenes, childhood games, mama shops, multicultural festivals, and practices. *The Way We Were* by Tan Zixi (MessyMsxi) and Lua Aiwei presents a visually impactful project creating merchandise adorned with *Toile de Jouy* illustrations.

TRACINGSG EXHIBITION

ONO Creates
 Level 1, Lobby, National Library Building
 August 1 to 28
 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
 Free admission

TracingSG draws its patterns from the visually rich range of icons seen in Singapore over the past 50 years. Showcasing five local places of gathering – the Void Deck, Coffeeshop, Provision Shop, Public Transport Space, and Play Area – each set of collective icons evokes vivid memories of nostalgia and community traced into timeless line art by ONO Creates.

TO SERVE WITH HONOUR AND PRIDE: 200 YEARS OF SINGAPORE MEDALS AND MEDALLIONS

57 Eng Leong Medallies Industries
 Yishun Industrial Park A,
 Singapore 768730
 From August 1 to December 31
 Monday to Friday | 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 Free Admission

This exhibition tells the story of modern Singapore from its founding in 1819 to present day through a collection of authentic historical medals. A journey through four distinct periods, it showcases critical events and heroic individuals who have been a part of this legendary history.

For more information, please visit www.elm.com.sg

SEMINAR: RIVERS & FOOTPATHS AS A MOTIVATING FACTOR OF MINANGKABAU MIGRATION TO MALAY PENINSULA UNTIL THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

Malay Heritage Centre
 MHC Auditorium
 Sunday | August 2, 11 a.m.

Speaker: Prof Dr Gusti Asnan

This seminar by Prof Dr Gusti Asnan will look into the factors that motivated the migration of the Minangkabau people to the Malay Peninsula from the social, political, and economic aspects.

Registration is required.

SEMINAR: TADARUS CINTA BUYA PUJANGGA

Malay Heritage Centre
 MHC Auditorium
 Sunday | August 2, 2:30 p.m.

Speaker: Akmal Nasery Basral
 In Bahasa Indonesia

For this seminar, writer and literary figure Akmal Nasery Basral will discuss his novel, *Tadarus Cinta Buya Pujangga*, which is a fictional book that traces the life of well-known Indonesian literary figure of Minangkabau descent, Hamka, or also known as Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah.

Registration is required.

FESTIVITIES: BARAYO DI RUMAH GADANG (HARI RAYA CELEBRATIONS AT THE RUMAH GADANG)

Malay Heritage Centre
 MHC Auditorium
 Sunday | August 2, 5 p.m.

Celebrate this festive Hari Raya season Minangkabau-style with songs and dances that are sure to uplift your mood.

PHILATELIC GEMS: SINGAPORE STAMP CLUB 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Singapore Philatelic Museum
 August 4 to November 14
 Monday | 1 p.m. to 7 p.m.
 Tuesday to Sunday | 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.

\$6 for adults and \$4 for children (3 to 12 years). Free admission for Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents

The first stamp club in Singapore, Singapore Stamp Club, celebrates its 75th anniversary this year with an exhibition of personal collections from its members. Take a peek into materials dating from the Straits Settlements era to today. Topics include postcards, airmails, crash mails, stamp essays, proofs, errors, artworks, sub post offices, island post offices of Syonan and more!

For more information, please visit www.spm.org.sg



PLAY AT TJ – OUR MEMORIES OF RECREATIONAL SITES IN TAMAN JURONG EXHIBITION OPEN HOUSE

National Heritage Board
 Our Museum @ Taman Jurong and Taman Jurong Community Club
 August 7, 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. (Tour and Artist Talks)
 Free admission

Play at TJ – Our Memories of Recreational Sites in Taman Jurong is a selected showcase of popular recreational sites belonging to Taman Jurong's heritage, and how they reflect the SG50 spirit of community and family bonding through the memories of its residents. In conjunction with this exciting launch, join us for an Open House and Jubilee celebration as we usher in our nation's 50th birthday with a host of fun performances and an exciting street party organised by Taman Jurong Grassroots Organisations.

Heritage Grant Schemes

Singapore's thriving heritage scene continues to grow with a variety of publications, events and exhibitions that help to cultivate an appreciation of our heritage.

The Heritage Participation Grant aims to support and enable a wide range of participants to step forth and take the initiative to promote and foster a deeper sense of appreciation of our shared heritage.

Concurrently, the Heritage Project Grant aims to provide a higher level of support for projects with the potential to make a significant and lasting contribution to Singapore's heritage scene.

If you are interested in learning more about the Heritage Grant scheme, please visit www.nhb.gov.sg/NHBPortal/AboutUs/Grants/Overview or email NHB_heritagegrants@nhb.gov.sg for more information.

The Maritime Heritage Fund, jointly administered by the Maritime Port of Authority and National Heritage Board, aims to foster a deeper appreciation of Singapore's rich maritime heritage and encourage community-led maritime themed projects including exhibitions, programmes, events or others that are engaging, original and innovative.

For those who are interested in learning more about MHF and how you can play a part in preserving our maritime heritage, please visit www.mpa.gov/sites/maritime_singapore/mhf/maritime-heritage-fund.page or contact Adeline_Niah@mpa.gov.sg for more information.

HARI RAYA OPEN HOUSE AND RACIAL HARMONY DAY
Malay Heritage Centre
August 7, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Free admission

This August, the Malay Heritage Centre together with Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall and the Indian Heritage Centre will be celebrating Hari Raya Aidilfitri and Racial Harmony Day in a one-day event. There will be cultural showcases, craft activities, food stations and games that are commonly shared among all the races in Singapore.

For enquiries and further details, call 6391 0450 (Tuesday to Sunday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.) or email NHB_MHC_Programmes@nhb.gov.sg

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION HERITAGE CENTRE – OPEN HOUSE
Ministry of Education Heritage Centre
402 Commonwealth Drive, Singapore 149599
August 7 and 8, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Free admission

Learn about the Singapore Education story in this heritage

centre that encourages visitors to reminisce about their school days as they tour the galleries, enjoy traditional games and snacks, play spin-the-wheel, and take home special souvenirs. Guided tours are available for groups with nine to fifteen people. Please email MOE_Heritage_Centre@moe.gov.sg by July 24, to arrange for group visits.

For more information, please visit www.moeheritagecentre.sg

MEMORIES AT OLD FORD FACTORY OPEN HOUSE

National Archives of Singapore
Memories at Old Ford Factory, 351 Upper Bukit Timah Road, Singapore 588192
August 7 to 9
Friday and Saturday | 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Sunday | 12 noon to 5:30 p.m.
Free admission

Old Ford Factory was the site where the British surrendered to the Japanese on February 15, 1942. Come and visit its permanent exhibition, where you will learn about the lives of those who lived through the

darkest years of the Japanese Occupation from 1942 to 1945.

For more information, please visit www.nas.gov.sg/moff

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SINGAPORE JUBILEE WEEKEND CELEBRATIONS

National Museum of Singapore
Friday to Monday | August 7 to 10, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (opening hours extended until 10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday)

Commemorate our 50th National Day at the National Museum with free entry to all our galleries this Golden Jubilee Weekend. Celebrate how far the nation has come at the *SINGAPURA: 700 Years* exhibition, and enjoy late-night admission with free outdoor film screenings on Friday and Saturday. Plus, join us at our Children's Season exhibition, *Masak Masak 2015*, and take part in a series of fun, hands-on family activities on August 8 and 9.

For more information, please visit www.nationalmuseum.sg

MEMORIES AT OLD FORD FACTORY OPEN HOUSE



MY FAVOURITE 70'S SHOW

National Museum of Singapore
CREATE Space at PLAY@NMS
Saturday | August 8, 2 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. (Each session lasts one hour)
Free admission

The workshop is conducted by The Amazing Art Shuttle and is limited to 30 pairs of parent and child (aged 4 to 12). Registration required. Please register on-site in advance.

For more information, please visit www.nationalmuseum.sg

HAND DRAWN NATION DOCUMENTARY

Lydia Shah
Level 5, Possibility Room, National Library Building
Saturday | August 8
4 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Free admission

Trace the background of pioneering illustrators who penned the drawings behind memorable publications and campaigns from the 80s and 90s. *Hand Drawn Nation* documents the indelible mark these illustrators' breakout publications (Vinny the Vampire, PETS coursebooks, and Young Generation magazines) left on Singapore then and today, marking the progress of our nation's illustration scene.

LET'S CELEBRATE SG50!

Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall
August 8 and 9, TBC
Free admission

Come join us at the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall to celebrate Singapore's 50th birthday. Let your creative juices flow as you create your own unique decorations on the craft works and express your love for our nation. Parents

are welcome to sign up for these fun and interactive craft workshops with their little ones. Each session is limited to a maximum of 30 participants.

For more information, please visit www.wanqingyuan.org.sg

STRAITS FAMILY SUNDAY-SUPERSIZED: MAJULAH SINGAPURA

Peranakan Museum
August 9, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Free admission

Get to know your Peranakan pioneers this National Day! Join a guided tour in the galleries exploring life stories, or make art inspired by the collection. Dress up in a *batik shirt* or *sarong kebaya* and take a commemorative photo with the whole family.

THE LITTLE RED BRICK LEGO BUILDING WORKSHOP

Hansen Khoo
Level 1, Visitors' Briefing Room, National Library Building
Monday | August 10
2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Free admission

The humble LEGO brick is a simple yet infinitely versatile art medium that can be used to build intricate structures, tell colourful stories, and connect communities. Watch top builders from the local Adult Fans of LEGO commemorate fifty uniquely Singapore memories through their creations at the SG50 edition of The Little Red Brick Show. Be inspired to build a story of your own too at one of their workshops.

WALK WITH US: BALESTIER HERITAGE AND FOOD TRAIL

Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall in collaboration with National Library Board

Toa Payoh Public Library, Programme Zone (Meeting point)
Saturday | August 15
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Free admission (Please register at library eKiosks or at www.nlb.gov.sg/golibrary/programme/Arts.aspx)

Join our volunteers as they explore different heritage sites, learn the stories behind historical buildings, and hunt for famous eating spots in Balestier where the Memorial Hall is located. Transportation will be provided to and from the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall and the library. This trail is suitable for parents with children eight years old and above.

Registration is required and each trail is limited to a maximum of 30 participants (split into two groups of 15 participants, one group for each language).

DANCE-THEATRE: SAUIK RANDAI MANJALANG RANG RANTAU MANDAHEKAN HATI BY INDOJATI

Malay Heritage Centre
MHC Auditorium
Saturday | August 15, 5 p.m.

Enjoy this unique *randai* performance by the IndoJati group from West Sumatra, which combines songs, dance, drama and *silat* (traditional Malay martial arts).

Registration is required.

SEMINAR: PROMINENT MINANGKABAUS IN SINGAPORE: ZUBIR SAID, YUSOF AND RAHIM ISHAK

Malay Heritage Centre
MHC Auditorium
Saturday | August 15, 2:30 p.m.

Speakers: Associate Prof Lily Zubaidah Rahim and Puan Sri Datin Dr Rohana Zubir

This seminar will give audiences a rare glimpse into the lives of two very prominent local Minangkabau figures: Yusof Ishak (first President of Singapore) and Zubir Said (the lauded composer who wrote Singapore's national anthem). Associate Prof Lily Zubaidah and Dr Rohana will be talking about their families, their lineage and legacy, as well as bringing us through some episodes of both men's lives

Registration is required.

SINGAPORE 2015 World Stamp Exhibition

Hosted by Association of Singapore Philatelists with full support from Singapore Post and Singapore Philatelic Museum
Sands Expo® and Convention Centre
14, 17, 18 August, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
15 August, 12 noon to 8 p.m.
16 August, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
19 August, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Free admission

SINGAPORE 2015 World Stamp Exhibition offers a rare opportunity for people of all ages to immerse themselves in the fascinating world of philately. Highlights include over 2,000 stamp exhibits, more than 110 trade booths, and the Special Attractions gallery. The President of the Republic of Singapore, Dr Tony Tan, is the Patron of the exhibition.

For more information, please visit www.singapore2015.com

KOPI CULTURE EXHIBITION, POP-UP STALL, AND BOOK LAUNCH

Invasion Studios
Level 1, Lobby [Exhibition and Pop-Up Stall], Level 1, Visitors' Briefing Room [Book Launch], National Library Building
July 18 to 28, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. [Exhibition],
July 26, 10 a.m. to 12 noon [Pop-Up Stall and Book Launch]

Before coffee mega-chains landed on our shores, Singaporeans were already discerning coffee connoisseurs. In the book *Singapore Kopi Culture*, Jahan Loh recounts how early migrants turned the colonial habit of afternoon tea into our own coffee-drinking culture, complete with unique coffee roasting and brewing techniques. This fascinating account of local coffee comes complete with its own pop-up coffee stall where visitors can view old coffee paraphernalia.

Venue: Level 1, Lobby [Exhibition and Pop-Up Stall], Level 1, Visitors' Briefing Room [Book Launch], National Library Building

For more information, please visit nlb.gov.sg/golibrary/programme/Singapore.aspx

RAMBUN PAMENAN BY TUAH SERANTAU

Malay Heritage Centre
MHC Auditorium
Saturday | August 22, 5 p.m.

This *randai* performance tells the story of Rambun Pamenan, a chivalrous young man who faced many challenges in his effort to save his widowed mother, the beautiful Linduang Bulan, from the clutches of the evil king, Raja Angek Garang.

Registration is required.

TALK/DEMO: KOTO GADANG: SULAM, TENUN, RENDA DAN KEUNIKANNYA (KOTO GADANG: EMBROIDERY, WEAVING, LACE & THEIR UNIQUENESS)

Malay Heritage Centre
MHC Auditorium
Saturday | August 22, 2:30 p.m.

Speaker: Sita Dewi Razai

Rich and luxurious textiles are often associated with



NEIGHBOURHOOD SKETCHES

Minangkabau culture. This lecture will highlight the different techniques of embroidery, weaving, and lace-making (or edge-making), which are characteristic of the Koto Gadang region. There will also be a demonstration of these techniques at the end of the seminar.

PUBLIC LECTURE ON "ANGKOR, DIVERSITY, AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPLORATIONS AT PHNOM KULEN, CAMBODIA: UNDERSTANDING THE SEMA SITE ENIGMA" BY DR KYLE LATINIS (NSC, ISEAS) AND DR STEPHEN MURPHY (ACM)

Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (NSC, ISEAS) and Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM)
Malay Heritage Centre, 85 Sultan Gate, Singapore 198501
Tuesday, August 25, 7 p.m.
Free admission

Phnom Kulen, Cambodia, relates to the origin of Angkorian civilisation (9th to 15th centuries CE). Existing data indicates a dominance of Hindu influence. Enigmatic

Sema Stone sites which demarcate sacred Buddhist spaces, however, are also located at Kulen – some possibly related to Dvaravati influence. Fieldwork in 2015 investigates Sema sites to further understand cultural diversity.

For more information, please visit <http://nsc.iseas.edu.sg>

THE DIALECTIC VERNACULAR EXHIBITION

Ang Song Nian
Level 1, Visitors' Briefing Room, National Library Building
July 25 to August 15, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. [Exhibition],
Level 5, Imagination Room, National Library Building
July 25, 10 a.m. to 12 noon [Talk]

Every time we speak in our dialects, we express a part of our cultural history. With the use of dialects slowly declining among the younger generation, the exhibition *The Dialectic Vernacular* brings our attention to the accompanying disappearance of our heritage and encourages the revitalization of dialect use.

NADI SINGAPURA – YOK SEMBANG GENDANG!

Malay Heritage Centre
MHC Compound
August 25 and September 26
5 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Yok Sembang Gendang! is a monthly community engagement avenue dedicated to sharing rhythms, grooves, and drums of the Malayan Archipelago. NADI Singapura welcomes enthusiasts of all ages and anyone who wishes to participate and experience the unique, vibrant drumming style originating from this region.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SKETCHES

Malay Heritage Centre
Bussorah Mall
August 28 and 29, September 25 and 26
From 8:30 p.m. (after Isya' prayers)

Set along the vibrant esplanade of Bussorah Street, visitors will

get a chance to sample the rich Malay culture presented in the style of street performances. From martial arts to songs of worship, *Neighbourhood Sketches* will have something for every type of culture vulture.

SEPTEMBER

TARI SUMARAK RUMAH GADANG BY GIRING-GIRING BAMBU

Malay Heritage Centre
MHC Auditorium
Saturday | September 5
2:30 p.m.

In this dance, the important role of *Bundo Kanduang* (or Mother) in the Minangkabau society is highlighted in that all activities under the roof are managed by her. This section will also feature other dance and musical performances uniquely from the West Sumatra region.

Registration is required.

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SINGAPORE



Mid-Autumn Festival 2015

Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall
Tuesday to Sunday | September 19 to 27,
from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
[Closed on Mondays]
Free admission

Celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival at Wan Qing Yuan with your family and friends this September. Catch the display of light sculptures at the Zhongshan Park and have fun taking part in activities such as lantern riddles, Chinese arts and crafts demonstrations, workshops, and many other activities.

RE-OPENING OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SINGAPORE PERMANENT GALLERIES

National Museum of Singapore
Saturday and Sunday |
September 12 and 13
10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Free admission

Come visit the new permanent galleries at the National Museum. Refreshed with updated stories and content on Singapore's post-independence history, the new galleries recapture the nation's defining moments, challenges, and achievements from its earliest beginnings 700 years ago to the independent, modern city-state it is today.

For more information, please visit www.nationalmuseum.sg

WOMEN'S ACTION

Association of Women for Action & Research (AWARE)
Level 5, Imagination Room, National Library Building
September | visit iremember.sg for the updated schedule
Free admission

The modern Singaporean woman's lifestyle – educated, healthy, and having equal access to job opportunities – owes much to the women's movement. AWARE pays tribute to the historic struggles and triumphs in the fight for women's rights, and commemorates its own pioneering role in the online interactive exhibition, *Women's Action*.

If you wish to feature your events, please email us at muse@nhb.gov.sg

All details and information were correct at time of publishing but could be subject to change. You may wish to check with event organisers before setting off. NHB cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions.



The Museum Roundtable (MR) is an initiative led by National Heritage Board since 1996. It represents and comprises a collective of public and private museums, heritage galleries, and unique attractions of science and discovery in Singapore. With more than fifty members currently, the MR strives to develop a stronger museum-going culture in Singapore while positioning museums as unique and fascinating destinations. Please visit www.museums.com.sg for more information.

A

The Army Museum of Singapore²
520 Upper Jurong Road
Singapore 638367
+65 6861 3651

Art Retreat Museum^{*1}
10 Ubi Crescent
Lobby C
#01-45/47
Ubi Techpark
Singapore 498564
+65 6749 0880
artretreatmuseum.com

ArtScience Museum
10 Bayfront Avenue
Singapore 018956
+65 6688 8826
marinabaysands.com/museum.html

Asian Civilisations Museum²
1 Empress Place
Singapore 179555
+65 6332 7798
acm.org.sg

B

Baba House^{*1}
157 Neil Road
Singapore 088883
+65 6227 5731
nus.edu.sg/museum/baba

The Battle Box³
2 Cox Terrace
Singapore 179622
+65 6338 6144

The Building & Construction Authority Gallery^{*3}
200 Braddell Road
Singapore 579700
+65 6248 9930
bcaa.edu.sg/learning-journey-sites/bca-gallery

C

Chinatown Heritage Centre³
48 Pagoda Street
Singapore 059207
+65 6534 8942
chinatownheritagecentre.sg

Chinese Heritage Centre²
Nanyang Technological University
12 Nanyang Drive
Singapore 637721
+65 6513 8157
chc.ntu.edu.sg

Civil Defence Heritage Gallery¹
62 Hill Street
Singapore 179367
+65 6332 2996
www.scdf.gov.sg/community-volunteers/visit-scdf-establishments/cd-heritage-gallery

The Changi Museum¹
1000 Upper Changi Road North
Singapore 507707
+65 6214 2451
changimuseum.com.sg

E

Eurasian Heritage Centre
139 Ceylon Road
Singapore 429744
+65 6447 1578
eurasians.org.sg/eurasians-in-singapore/eurasian-heritage-centre/

F

Fort Siloso
Sentosa Island
Siloso Point
Singapore 099981
1800 736 8672
sentosa.com.sg

Fu Tak Chi Museum^{2,3}
76 Telok Ayer Street
Singapore 048464
+65 6580 2888
fareastsquare.com.sg

G

Gan Heritage Centre^{*1}
18 Bukit Pasoh Road
Singapore 089832
+65 6223 0739
ganclan.sg

Grassroots Heritage Centre¹
National Community Leaders Institute
70 South Buona Vista Road
Singapore 118176
+65 6672 5200
nacli.pa.gov.sg/grassroots-heritage-centre.html

H

HDB Gallery¹
HDB Hub
Basement 1
480 Toa Payoh Lorong 6
Singapore 310480
hdb.gov.sg/hdbgallery

HealthZone
Level 2
Health Promotion Board
3 Second Hospital Avenue
Singapore 168937
1800 435 3616
hpb.gov.sg/healthzone/

Home Team Gallery^{*1}
501 Old Choa Chu Kang Road
Singapore 698928
+65 6465 3726

I

iExperience Centre
B1-10/19 Esplanade Xchange
90 Bras Basah Road
Singapore 189562
+65 6820 6880
iexperience.sg

The Intan^{*1}
69 Joo Chiat Terrace
Singapore 427231
+65 6440 1148
the-intan.com

IRAS Gallery¹
Revenue House Level 1
55 Newton Road
Singapore 307987
+65 6351 2076
iras.gov.sg/irashome/irasgallery.aspx

L

Land Transport Gallery¹
1 Hampshire Road
Block 1 Level 1
Singapore 219428
+65 6396 2550
lta.gov.sg/ltgallery/index.html

Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum
2 Conservatory Drive
Singapore 117377
+65 6516 5082
lkcnhm.nus.edu.sg

M

Malay Heritage Centre²
85 Sultan Gate
Singapore 198501
+65 6391 0450
malayheritage.org.sg

Marina Barrage¹
8 Marina Gardens Drive
Singapore 018951
+65 6514 5959
pub.gov.sg/Marina/Pages/Sustainable-Singapore-Gallery.aspx

Memories at Old Ford Factory²
351 Upper Bukit Timah Road
Singapore 588192
+65 6462 6724
nas.gov.sg/moff

Ministry of Education Heritage Centre
402 Commonwealth Drive
Singapore 149599
+65 6838 1614
moheritagecentre.sg/

MINT Museum of Toys
26 Seah Street
Singapore 188382
+65 6339 0660
emint.com

N

National Healthcare Group Polyclinics' Gallery of Memories¹
Level 3 of Bukit Batok Polyclinic
50 Bukit Batok West Avenue 3
Singapore 659164
+65 6355 3000
nhgp.com.sg

National Library Gallery¹
100 Victoria Street
Singapore 188064
+65 6332 3255
nlb.gov.sg/golibrary/exhibitions.aspx

National Museum of Singapore²
93 Stamford Road
Singapore 178897
+65 6332 3659
nationalmuseum.sg

NEWater Visitor Centre¹
20 Koh Sek Lim Road
Singapore 486593
+65 6546 7874
www.pub.gov.sg/water/newater/visitors/Pages/default.aspx

Ngee Ann Cultural Centre¹
97 Tank Road
Teochew Building
Singapore 238066
+65 6737 9555
ngeeann.com.sg/en/ngee-ann-cultural-centre

NUS Museum¹
University Cultural Centre
50 Kent Ridge Crescent
Singapore 119279
+65 6516 8817
nus.edu.sg/museum

P

Peranakan Museum²
39 Armenian Street
Singapore 179941
+65 6332 7591
peranakanmuseum.org.sg

Police Heritage Centre^{*1}
Police Headquarters
New Phoenix Park
28 Irrawaddy Road
Singapore 329560
+65 6478 2123
police.gov.sg/spfheritage

R

Red Dot Design Museum¹
Ground Floor
Red Dot Traffic Building
28 Maxwell Road
Singapore 069120
+65 6327 8027
museum.red-dot.sg

Reflections at Bukit Chandu²
31-K Pepys Road
Singapore 118458
+65 6375 2510
www.nhb.gov.sg/NHBPortal/Museums/ReflectionsatBukitChandu

Republic of Singapore Navy Museum¹
112 Tanah Merah Coast Road
Singapore 498794
+65 6544 5147
mindef.gov.sg/content/imindef/mindef_websites/atozlistings/navymuseum/home.html

Republic of Singapore Air Force Museum¹
400 Airport Road
Paya Lebar Airbase
Singapore 534234
+65 6461 8507
mindef.gov.sg/imindef/mindef_websites/atozlistings/air_force/about/museum.html

S

Science Centre Singapore²
15 Science Centre Road
Singapore 609081
+65 6425 2500
science.edu.sg

The SGH Museum¹
Bowyer Block
11 Third Hospital Avenue
Singapore 168751
+65 6326 5294
sgh.com.sg/about-us/sgh-museum/Pages/SGH-Museum.aspx

Singapore Art Museum²
71 Bras Basah Road
Singapore 189555
+65 6589 9580
singaporeartmuseum.sg

Singapore City Gallery¹
45 Maxwell Road
The URA Centre
Singapore 069118
+65 6321 8321
ura.gov.sg/uol/citygallery

Singapore Coins and Notes Museum
20 Teban Gardens Crescent
Singapore 608928
+65 6895 0288
scnm.com.sg

Singapore Discovery Centre
510 Upper Jurong Road
Singapore 638365
+65 6792 6188
sdc.com.sg

Singapore Maritime Gallery¹
Marina South Pier
Level 2
31 Marina Coastal Drive
Singapore 018988
+65 6325 5707
maritimegallery.sg

Singapore Philatelic Museum²
23-B Coleman Street
Singapore 179807
+65 6337 3888
spm.org.sg

Singapore Sports Museum²
6 Stadium Walk
Singapore 397698
+65 6653 9710
sportshub.com.sg/venues/Pages/singapore-sports-museum.aspx

Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall²
12 Tai Gin Road
Singapore 327874
+65 6256 7377
wanqingyuan.org.sg

T

Tan Tock Seng Hospital Heritage Museum¹
11 Jalan Tan Tock Seng
Level 1
Singapore 308433
+65 6357 8266
tts.com.sg/TTSH-Heritage-Museum

W

Woodbridge Museum¹
10 Buangkok Green
Buangkok Green Medical Park
Singapore 539747
+65 6389 2000

*By Appointment Only

¹ Free

² Free for Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents

³ Opening soon

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