

# **THE REPORT OF THE ARTS AND CULTURE STRATEGIC REVIEW**

31 Jan 2012

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## Our journey so far

1 Singapore has come a long way since our days as a fishing village and sleepy outpost. We are a thriving and dynamic metropolis, a business and lifestyle destination, and a comfortable and endearing home. Our people are hardworking and innovative, making their mark and their fortunes in Singapore and abroad. Our city is well-planned, clean and green, safe and secure.

2 Alongside economic and urban development, we have also made big strides in our cultural development and liveability. More than 20 years ago, a national committee led by former President and then-Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Ong Teng Cheong, mapped out a blueprint for Singapore's arts and culture landscape. The report of the Advisory Council on Culture and the Arts (ACCA) was widely considered a watershed, providing a much needed boost for a nascent cultural scene and emerging cultural identity<sup>1</sup>. Subsequently, the Renaissance City Plan (RCPs), in all their three phases, built on the recommendations of the ACCA, with a focus on enhancing vibrancy, building capabilities, and strengthening community outreach<sup>2</sup>.

3 20 years on, the impact of the ACCA and the RCPs continues to be felt. Since 1988, our cultural vibrancy has increased exponentially, with activities rising almost twenty-fold. Local audiences now have a year-round selection of festivals, fairs, events and activities to choose from<sup>3</sup>. Demand for arts and culture has kept pace with vibrancy, with ticketed attendances and museum visitorship rising three-fold and eight-fold respectively<sup>4</sup>.

4 Institutions such as the national libraries, the Esplanade: Theatres on the Bay and the national museums are now household names and cherished national icons,

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<sup>1</sup> The ACCA was set up in 1988 to examine the state of arts and culture development in Singapore and to realise the vision of a culturally vibrant society. It made a number of key recommendations – improvements to organisational structures, to the education system, to infrastructure and facilities, as well as greater promotional efforts for arts and culture. More importantly, it has helped us better appreciate the importance of arts and culture – to broaden our minds and deepen our sensitivities, to improve our overall quality of life, to contribute to a more culturally vibrant and gracious society, and to strengthen our social bonds.

<sup>2</sup> A series of three RCPs was launched from 2000. The RCPs emphasised the importance of arts and culture to Singapore's economy, competitiveness and liveability, and Singaporeans' innovation and creativity. This led to greater emphasis on the creation of original content, enhancement of industry development programmes, as well as greater focus on community outreach initiatives.

<sup>3</sup> From 1988 to 2010, the number of arts activities increased almost 20-fold from 1,700 to 33,884.

<sup>4</sup> From 1988 to 2010, ticketed attendances more than tripled from 0.41 million to 1.38 million. In the same period, visitorship to national museums increased over 8.5-fold from 0.32 million to 2.81 million.

a unique blend of traditional and contemporary, East and West that have become well-known beyond our shores. Private sector and community-led arts events and institutions thrive alongside national institutions and events. Coverage of Singapore's cultural scene in the media, both local and international, has never been more widespread. Singapore is frequently labelled a rising arts and culture hub in Asia.

5 We stand at the brink of another transformation in our cultural landscape, as we build on the foundations of the ACCA and RCPs. After decades of hard work to achieve our prosperity and security, we now have the cultural foundation and economic means to springboard to our artistic and cultural success. The time has come to focus on our identity, and strengthen the national unity that has brought us so far. Arts and culture will secure our identity amidst the multiplicity of global influences today, even as we remain open to the world.

6 It is against this context of forging change that the Arts and Culture Strategic Review (ACSR) was initiated in 2010. Following a review of existing arts and culture policies and programmes led by the private sector, the community and the arts and culture sector, a comprehensive series of public consultations was undertaken to seek views on the ACSR's preliminary recommendations, and suggestions on Singapore's future cultural development. This report is a culmination of this strategic review and thorough public consultation process, and an emblem of the partnership between the private sector, the community, the arts and culture sector and the Government that will be necessary to lift Singapore to the next peak of cultural development.

## Box 1. Leading arts and culture capitals in history

Throughout the history of the Western and Eastern world, several cities have stood out as the arts and culture capital of their time. Chang'an in Tang Dynasty China, Baghdad in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, Renaissance Florence, British colonial Mumbai, Paris in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and post-World War II New York have all reigned as the arts and culture capitals of their heyday.

Singapore has many of the traits behind the success of these cities as arts and culture capitals, which were tied to their status as business and trading hubs:

- **Centres of trade** – As imperial or economic capitals of their respective regions, these cities were centres of trade in goods and services in their regions. A few of them were also global centres of trade: Chang'an was the destination for the thousands of merchants plying the Silk Route; Baghdad was the centre of the Islamic world in its time; Florence was a trading centre with extensive trading relations from England to the Black Sea and the eastern Mediterranean; Mumbai was a major trading city in the British empire; and New York was the centre of trade in services and ideas after World War II. With trade came new knowledge and practices that sparked innovation and creativity. With trade also came an openness to other cultures and an ability to appreciate diverse aesthetic forms.
- **Confluences of talent and ideas** – With affluence and trade came economic opportunity, which in turn attracted masses of immigrants from all over the world. Chang'an was the largest and most culturally diverse city of its time, receiving immigrants from all over Central Asia, which included craftsmen, performers, artisans and poets. Mumbai attracted massive influxes of immigrants, especially across India. Paris, as the new bohemia at the time, drew artists from all over Europe to its cafes and bars. New York, during and after World War II, benefited from a huge inflow of immigrants from war-torn Europe, amongst which were artists and scientists fleeing the Nazis. A relatively liberal environment in these cities allowed for the free exchange of ideas, resulting in artistic movements like the flowering of poetry in Chang'an and Baghdad, Impressionism in Paris, and Pop Art in New York.
- **Concentration of wealth and patronage** – With strong economic growth came vast wealth, resulting in the development of an affluent merchant / middle class with surplus income to spend on leisure and

entertainment. Many bourgeois families became important patrons of arts and culture, such as the Medicis in Florence, and the Rothschilds in Paris and New York. In well-off Mumbai, a general appreciation for the arts permeated the population. The State was also often a strong champion of arts and culture: in Baghdad and Chang'an, imperial patronage was a significant driver of artistic excellence; in New York, public expenditure on beautifying the city supported many painters, sculptors and artisans; in Paris, art schools like the Ecole des Beaux-Arts were formed to spur artistic creation. All of these gave rise to strong demand for arts and culture, facilitating the development of a healthy arts and culture marketplace and ecosystem of patrons and consumers, artists and arts institutions, dealers and agents, theatres and museums that established these cities unequivocally as arts and culture centres of their time.

Singapore today strongly resembles these arts and culture capitals of yore. We have a strong historical legacy of trade and openness to new knowledge, practices and ideas. We are a city of immigrants, with a diverse and multi-cultural population. We have one of the largest and fastest-growing concentrations of wealth in the world. The pre-requisites are set for us to become a city of arts and culture patrons and consumers.

But these are necessary but insufficient conditions. To join the league of arts and culture capitals, we need to put in place the appropriate policies, incentives and educational opportunities that would facilitate a proliferation of artistic talent and free exchange of ideas, and catalyse a flowering of patrons and audiences that would sustain artistic and cultural creation. The ACSR seeks to recommend a comprehensive series of strategies to realise this vision.

## Re-affirming the value of arts and culture

"The animals other than man live by appearances and memories, and have but little of connected experience; but the human race lives also by art and reasonings."

Aristotle

### Arts and culture defined?

7 Arts and culture have a unique place in human society as they are one of the distinguishing features that differentiate us from animals, yet they have no universally accepted definition. In March 1978, the then-newly appointed Acting Minister for Culture, Mr Ong Teng Cheong, grappled with the question of what culture was. Mr Ong said, "The library gave me some 300 different interpretations as to what culture is [...] there is perhaps no other term with more interpretations than the word 'culture'."

8 Arts can be seen as a subset of culture, but in a world that has become much more complex than in 1978, culture has not become simpler to define. Perhaps arts and culture is like love – easy to recognise, but hard to circumscribe.

9 It may be more fruitful to describe what arts and culture *do*, than to define them definitively. Arts and culture enrich our souls and add meaning to our lives. They exercise our creativity, stretch our imagination, and strike a chord with our feelings. They connect us to the past, help us to dream our future, and define who we are. They develop us as a whole person – as full human beings.

10 In coming to terms with what arts and culture is, it may also be useful to consider the art forms that we would accept as arts and culture. Many art forms come readily to mind – plays, symphonies, ballets, paintings, sculptures, literature. The traditional art forms also come to fore – Chinese calligraphy, Teochew opera, *bangsawan*, Malay dance, Tamil literature, Indian dance. Yet there are many activities that do not conform to common perceptions of arts and culture, such as *getais*, community singing, drumming, hip-hop, film, photography, but do what these conventional art forms do – enrich our souls, exercise our creativity, develop our whole person. We should take an inclusive approach and embrace these activities, too, as arts and culture.

### Strategic importance of arts and culture

11 Over and above their value to our whole-person development, arts and culture have acquired strategic value for Singapore. As a small and open country, Singapore



has to continuously face strong winds and changing tides. Intensifying competition, rising aspirations and transforming demographics are just some of the forces that we have to contend with. How well Singapore can cope with the changing weather will depend on how united we are as a nation, and how deeply we understand what it means to be Singaporean. Arts and culture will help us weather these storms, through enriching Singaporeans' lives, strengthening our communities, and boosting Singapore's competitiveness.

### *Enriching Singaporeans' lives*

12 Singapore has risen from Third World to First, and we now have the resources and the latitude to pursue higher-order needs. With increased mobility and the ease of online access to information and knowledge, Singaporeans today have far greater exposure to and interest in different cultures, perspectives and opportunities for learning than before. As our people become more informed and inquisitive, they will need diverse and appropriate outlets for leisure, expression and self-improvement. Arts and culture can fulfil this need.

13 The National Arts Council's Population Survey on the Arts in 2009 showed that about half of all Singaporeans viewed arts and culture as having enriched their quality of life, broadened their mind and encouraged their creativity. Among those who are actively engaged in arts and culture, this figure grows to 9 in 10 Singaporeans. Most value arts and culture as a form of relaxation and a way to boost emotional and spiritual well-being<sup>5</sup>; as a medium for self-expression and for communicating with others, and as a means to facilitate socialising. The challenge ahead is to further enrich the experience of arts and culture and entrench it in the popular consciousness so that participating in arts and culture becomes an integral part of what it means to be Singaporean.

### *Strengthening Singaporean ties*

14 As a young nation, Singapore has focused most of its efforts in the past on building up its fundamentals: strong economic growth, good governance, excellent infrastructure, world-class education. However, a nation cannot inspire and endear its people through infrastructural sophistication and material wealth alone. What binds a nation to its people are the softer things in life: family, friends, places, communities, memories. In the years ahead, social challenges such as keeping our aging population active and our mobile population rooted, as well as integrating new

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<sup>5</sup> In fact, a 2011 Norwegian study, "Patterns of receptive and creative cultural activities and their association with perceived health, anxiety, depression and satisfaction with life among adults" showed positive links between participation in arts and culture and improved happiness, lower anxiety and depression, as well as higher life satisfaction.

residents and citizens with diverse cultures and traditions, will increasingly take centre stage. Arts and culture can play a key role in the following areas:

a. Defining Singaporean-ness in a globalised world. A nation is not just a geographical entity; it is also a culture, a way of life, a feeling of belonging in one's heart and soul. We want "Singapore" to not just be a country, but an emotion, a sense of identity, a state of mind. We want to be a comfortable, comforting and distinctive place in the world that our people can always come home to, identify with and root for, notwithstanding our imperfections. Arts and culture is an important means of forging collective memories and shared experiences that binds families, friends, communities and peoples<sup>6</sup>. Arts and culture institutions, talents and precincts can be powerful symbols of home that Singaporeans can recall fondly when away from home.

b. Promoting social cohesion across population segments. Arts and culture is an inclusive and interactive means for reaching out to and bringing together different segments of the population:

i. **Seniors.** With one of the fastest aging populations in Asia, it is critical for Singapore to provide a wide range of opportunities to keep our seniors actively engaged. This is particularly the case, since the current generation of seniors – the "baby boomer" generation – is better educated and expected to live longer than earlier generations. Arts and culture is particularly suited for seniors given that it is less dependent on physical fitness, can cater to a wide range of interests, and can be enjoyed by individuals or in groups. Arts and culture can also be a medium for inter-generational interaction, allowing grandparents and their grandchildren to interact meaningfully through the sharing of stories and traditions from the past, adding to their sense of fulfilment, belonging and socio-emotional well-being.

ii. **New Singaporeans and Residents.** 36% of Singapore's population are foreigners<sup>7</sup>. With such a significant proportion of foreigners, there is a pressing need for Singapore to facilitate the integration of new citizens, permanent residents and foreign talent. Through arts and culture activities, we can facilitate cross-

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<sup>6</sup> From the National Heritage Board's 2008 Heritage Awareness Survey, 3 in 4 Singaporeans agree that participating in heritage activities and visiting museums will help them develop a greater sense of belonging to Singapore. Similarly, a 2008 Canadian Study "Social Effects of Culture" found that Canadians who visited a public art gallery or historical site, or attended a theatrical performance were more likely to have a stronger sense of belonging to Canada than those who did not.

<sup>7</sup> From the 2010 Census, of a total population of 5.08 million, 3.23 million were Singapore citizens.

cultural dialogue, and pique curiosity about the increasingly diverse cultures we live amongst, so as to develop the necessary mutual respect and understanding integral to a gracious society. Arts and culture also provides a platform to celebrate the “Singaporean-ness” that unifies our diversity and defines us as a people, strengthening social cohesion across communities, and nurturing culturally-sensitive and globally-attuned citizens<sup>8</sup>.

### *Boosting Singapore’s competitiveness*

15 Cities around the world have come to realise that talents, and with them ideas and investments, are drawn to places where they have the best opportunities to work, live and grow. In pace with Asia’s increasing affluence and global economic clout, many Asian cities have committed significant investment into arts and culture, making it an integral part of national development and positioning. High profile long-term cultural developments include Seoul’s “Vision 2015: Cultural City Seoul”, Hong Kong’s West Kowloon Cultural District, Abu Dhabi’s Saadiyat Island Cultural District, and the proliferation of world-class cultural institutions in top-tier Chinese cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, as well as emerging cities such as Guangzhou. In addition, cities are investing heavily in flagship cultural events that showcase their cities’ readiness to contribute to the world’s cultural development. The biennales in Gwangju, Sharjah and Sydney, and contemporary art fairs such as ArtDubai and SH Contemporary (the Shanghai Contemporary Art Fair) are the most prominent examples of these.

16 Against this backdrop, our traditional strengths, such as health, education, public safety and a clean, green environment, continue to be relevant in the global war for talent, investments and international attention. However, a differentiating factor for ensuring that talent, investment and attention stay for the long-haul is a distinctive and thriving arts and culture scene that will endear Singapore to citizens old and new. As a city in the Asian region, we must also capitalise on Asia’s growing presence in the global economy and consciousness, and on our own multicultural heritage and cosmopolitan outlook, to brand and position Singapore strategically. Singapore is not just the crossroads within Asia, but also the crossroads between Asia and the rest of the world.

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<sup>8</sup> A 2006 study by Arts Council England found that the arts can bring people together, create links between different communities and encourage people to feel a sense of pride and belonging in their local area. A 2009 survey by the Australia Council for the Arts also concluded that the arts can help to improve cross-cultural understanding and tolerance, and to define national identity.

## Overcoming the challenge of arts and culture for all

17 To cultivate a bustling cultural scene, **it is necessary to permeate arts and culture throughout all levels of Singapore society**. The key challenge facing all arts and culture professionals, advocates and policy-makers is this: how may all Singaporeans, regardless of origin, race, age and social standing, be encouraged to appreciate, participate and engage in arts and culture?

a. In the area of heritage, the 2008 Heritage Awareness Survey conducted by the National Heritage Board shows that although 3 in 4 Singaporeans agree that participating in heritage activities and visiting museums will help them develop a greater sense of belonging to Singapore, only 1 in 2 Singaporeans actually visited historic districts to appreciate our heritage, and only 1 in 4 Singaporeans actually visited museums and heritage galleries. Yet, from recent ardent discussions in the forum pages on historical sites such as the Keretapi Tanah Melayu (KTM) rail corridor and Bukit Brown cemetery, there is clearly strong interest in Singapore's history and heritage.

b. In the arts, while the percentage of Singaporeans attending an arts event has quadrupled since 1996 (to 40% in 2009), it is still less than half of our total population. Furthermore, interest in and likelihood to attend and participate in arts events and activities have plateaued since 2005, to 31% and 25% respectively. Yet, over 1 in 3 Singaporeans who are neutral to the arts have a high likelihood of becoming interested, according to surveys. Pilot projects by the National Arts Council have shown that these "neutrals" respond positively and enthusiastically when involved in and given more knowledge of arts activities.

18 To reach our goal of arts and culture for all, we will need to redefine how we regard, develop and promote arts and culture, and remove remaining barriers to entry, particularly the impression that arts and culture is elitist, boring, costly or impenetrable.

### **The Arts and Culture Strategic Review (ACSR)**

19 To this end, the Arts and Culture Strategic Review (ACSR) was launched in March 2010, to chart a course for Singapore's cultural development till 2025. Driven by an ACSR Steering Committee, chaired by Mr Lee Tzu Yang, Chairman, School of the Arts, Singapore (SOTA), the ACSR is supported by four Working Committees that examined the following areas:

- a. **Product:** Building capabilities for excellence in our cultural institutions and offerings.
- b. **People:** A broad base of appreciative participants and practising enthusiasts, supporting a high-quality creative workforce which includes our arts and culture professionals and star talent.
- c. **Participation and Partnership:** A gracious, cohesive and creative society that takes ownership of arts and culture.
- d. **Place:** Authentic, accessible and memorable destinations.

Details on the composition of the Steering Committee and four Working Committees can be found in ANNEX A. The Secretariats for the ACSR committees are at ANNEX B.

20 Unlike the ACCA and the RCPs, the ACSR was driven by the private sector, the community, and the arts and culture sector. With the maturing of Singaporean society, and a growing population of Singaporeans interested in Singapore's future development, the ACSR's intent was to provide the public with a greater stake in shaping our cultural development, engender a greater sense of public ownership of Singapore's arts and culture, and ensure its long-term sustainability.

21 The ACSR was grounded on a deep-seated belief that arts and culture have a place in everyone's lives. As such, extensive and comprehensive public consultations were undertaken to seek feedback on its preliminary recommendations. No effort was spared in soliciting views from a diverse range of stakeholders, including youths, working adults, and would-be retirees; arts and culture practitioners; arts administrators; arts students; arts educators; businesses; and community leaders.

22 The public consultation process included the following milestones:

- a. Focus group discussions and in-depth interviews held in May and June 2011 with a diverse mix of stakeholders, involving a total of more than 80 participants.
- b. A month-long online public consultation held in August and September 2011 on the ACSR homepage and portal – [www.acsr.sg](http://www.acsr.sg) – which received close to 3,000 visits and over 100 comments.

c. A quantitative survey conducted in September 2011, involving more than 500 respondents who were controlled to be representative of Singapore's socio-economic profile.

d. Five public forums held between September and November 2011, which attracted almost 180 participants. Two forums were conducted in English, with the other three conducted in Malay, Tamil and Mandarin, to ensure that the non-English speaking groups were not left out.

Details on each of the public consultation platforms can be found in ANNEX C.

23 The responses to the ACSR public consultation sessions have been extremely encouraging. Many comments and suggestions were raised, some passionately. These consultations demonstrated that the public, whether practitioners, students, educators, grassroots activists or the community in general, care deeply about arts and culture. Where there were differing views on the ACSR's preliminary recommendations, debate has helped the ACSR to sharpen its recommendations.

24 In the formulation of its vision, strategic directions and recommendations, the ACSR has incorporated as much of the feedback as it could. The ACSR would like to thank everyone who participated in the public consultations for their candid, constructive and invaluable contributions.

## Our vision for 2025

25 The ACCA and RCPs emphasised arts and culture's role in nation-building and economic growth respectively. These roles will continue to be important in the larger context of Singapore's viability and success as a nation-state, and as a marketplace for arts and culture. The ACSR shifts the focus for the next phase of our cultural development to **our people and society**. We must set the stage for a future in which arts and culture is a fundamental part of being Singaporean, in which our people can lay claim to Singapore's past in order to take a stake in Singapore's future, and where anyone who wishes may enjoy arts and culture – be it as audience, hobbyist, professional, educator or supporter.

26 In 2025, we aim to be:

**A nation of cultured and gracious people,  
at home with our heritage,  
proud of our Singaporean identity.**

We hope that by 2025, the percentage of Singaporeans who attend at least one arts and culture event each year will **double from a minority of 40% to a majority of 80%**, and the percentage of Singaporeans actively participating in arts and culture activities will **increase from the current 20% to 50%**.

27 Our vision for 2025 encompasses the following two facets:

**A) Arts and culture will be an integral part of our people's lives.**

- There will be **opportunities for Singaporeans from all walks and all seasons of life** to appreciate and participate in arts and culture. Going to a performance, an exhibition or a book reading will be readily embraced by our people as an everyday affair.
- Our people will have **easy access to a wide variety of arts and culture activities** that cater to their varying interests. From an early age, **arts and culture will add colour to our daily routines**, not only in our places of work, living, learning and leisure, but also as we transit between these spaces.

- We will be conscious of the **cultural diversity** around us, and the aspects of our culture that unify us all as Singaporean. We will also support the continued growth and development of our **traditional arts** as part of our **cultural heritage**. These shall add to a **sense of place, community, belonging and opportunity**.
- For the individual, there will be a **lifelong interest in arts and culture**, and a **deep appreciation** for our shared heritage, the collective memories of our community and nation, and the prevalence and pervasiveness of arts and culture in our lives.
- There will be a **groundswell of support** for our local arts and culture scene. This will include fans and audiences, volunteers, sponsors and philanthropists, and mentors who will support the development of thriving, self-sustaining creative communities.

#### **Voices from the ground**

“Arts and culture should be a language, something you live with, like sport or yoga or jogging. If you don’t do it, something is missing.”

- Middle-aged female therapist/researcher, commenting at one of the ACSR’s public forums

#### **B) Our cultural landscape will consist of excellent cultural institutions and offerings, supported by a broad and qualified base of talent.**

- Even as we strive towards broader support for and involvement in arts and culture, we also seek **to raise the quality of arts and culture offerings across all levels**.
- We will have world-renowned cultural institutions and offerings that can serve **as sources of national pride**, celebrated and embraced locally, regionally and internationally. These will be entrenched as “must-sees” in the minds and memories of locals and visitors, and will inspire others in the arts and culture scene to strive for greater excellence.



- To support these iconic cultural institutions and offerings, our professionals will enjoy **high standards of training, development and continual upgrading**. They will also have strong support from a **growing arts and entertainment industry and pool of private donors**, who will contribute to the production of unique, quality offerings that we are proud to call our own.
- Artistic and cultural excellence is not defined by any one genre or art form, nor whether it is traditional or contemporary. We shall thus embrace **inclusiveness and a diversity of cultures, genres, standards and practices**, capitalising on inherent tensions – such as that between the traditional and the contemporary, between “high art” and popular culture – for the creation of distinctive and innovative works.

28 As we work towards our vision for 2025, we will need to address the following fundamentals:

a. Changing perceptions. One of the prevailing perceptions among the general public is that arts and culture is expensive, inaccessible and/or restricted to “high art” and therefore not for them. In addition, while there are no lack of activities, awareness of these activities is often confined to those in artistic and cultural circles, such that potential audiences might not be aware of offerings that could be of interest to them. Furthermore, as an academic discipline, career option and leisure activity, arts and culture is sometimes given lower priority and support than other areas, such as science and technology, finance and sports. On the whole, **it is perceived as a good-to-have, rather than a must-have**. Yet the truth is, far from being elitist or inaccessible, arts and culture is in fact already everywhere: in the designs of our clothes and accessories, the graphics in magazines and billboards, the films in cinemas and on television, the music in bars and cafes. The challenge is getting the public to recognise these as arts and culture, deepen their interest in them, and extend their appreciation to other art forms.

### **Voices from the ground**

“Price is not as great as barrier as mindset. Students are willing to bug their parents to pay money to see Korean pop stars, but not the arts.”

- Chinese female student, commenting at one of the ACSR’s public forums

b. Overcoming “inertia”. Most people tend not to specially make visits to seek out new artistic and cultural experiences, and would only interact with arts and culture if it were brought to spaces where they would frequent anyway. This is particularly pertinent for young adults, who might have been active in arts and culture in school, but “dropped out” on entering the workforce due to shifting priorities, and lack of readily-available support structures – resources, networks, facilities and even goals – to sustain their pursuits.

c. Creating space. In the years ahead, our society will continue to mature and with it, our cultural landscape. Technology will also evolve, offering new channels for us to share information and creative output with a wider audience. In this context, there is scope to let the community take greater ownership of our arts and culture activities, facilities and development, in order to harness Singapore’s creative capacity. Unfortunately, much of our cultural development is currently perceived as being directed “top-down”. Our people need more space and support to initiate artistic and cultural activities from the ground-up, with the Government playing a more catalytic role in facilitating connections and allowing emergent subcultures and creative communities to thrive.

d. Developing people. Our current arts and culture education, training and development landscape can be reinforced by expanding the range of course offerings, providing more avenues for professional upgrading, and strengthening the quality of instruction and quality of student intake and output. To meet the demands of the cultural sector and bring our institutions and offerings to the next level, there is a need to raise the capacities and capabilities of our cultural and broader creative workforce, and maintain a steady stream of qualified professionals. Currently, our star talents often have to establish themselves overseas before they are recognised and supported in Singapore. Our challenge is to identify star talents early and provide the necessary support and pathways for them to realise their full potential, whether within or outside of Singapore.

e. Distinguishing Singapore. While other emerging global cities focus on laying a foundation for world-class cultural institutions, Singapore should strategise how best to build on its existing infrastructure to take its existing stable of talent, offerings and institutions to the next level. Originality, authenticity and uniqueness in content are key to distinguishing ourselves as a capital of culture at the heart of Asia. We should find innovative means of capitalising on our “crossroads” identity to produce and market made-in-Singapore offerings. These should authentically reflect who we are, and

emphasise to the world that Singapore is not simply a clone of other cities, but a unique Southeast Asian mosaic of dynamic cultures and ways of living that cannot be found anywhere else in the world.

29 To achieve the next phase of our cultural development, the ACSR recommends two strategic directions – **engagement** and **excellence** – that correspond to the two facets of our 2025 vision. Each of these directions is supported by three strategies:

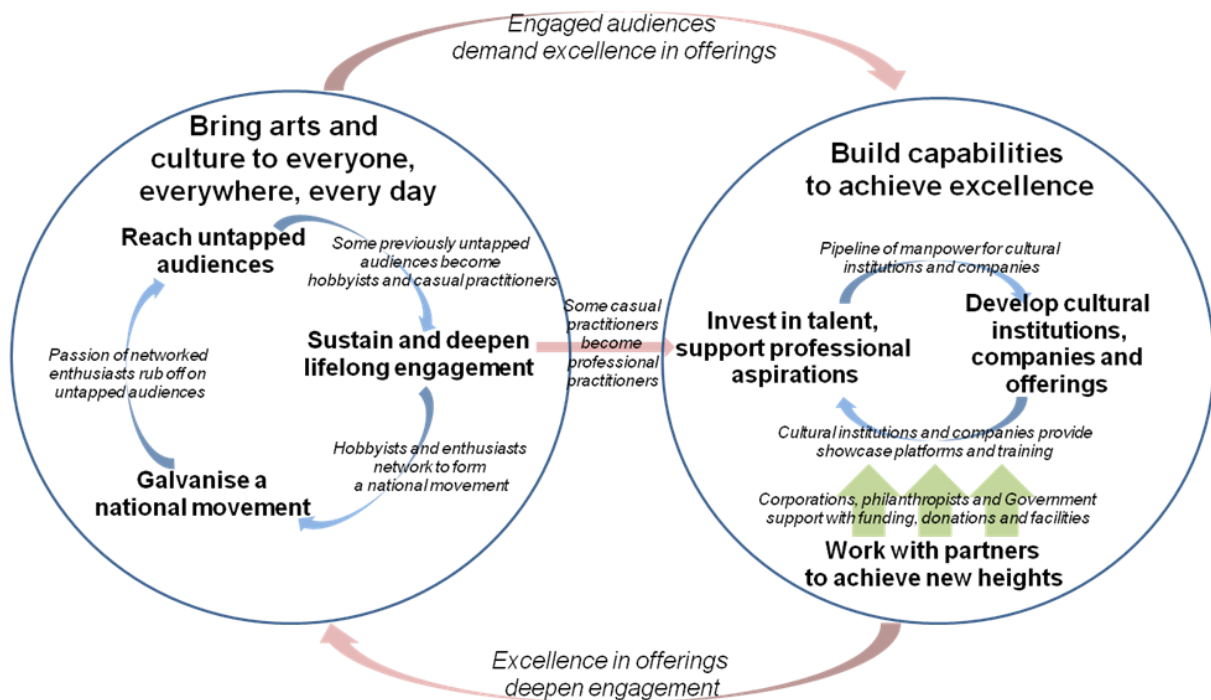
**A) Bring arts and culture to everyone, everywhere, every day**

- I Reach new audiences
- II Sustain and deepen lifelong engagement
- III Galvanise a national movement

**B) Build capabilities to achieve excellence**

- IV Develop cultural institutions, companies and offerings
- V Invest in talent, support professional aspirations
- VI Work with partners to achieve new heights

30 The two strategic directions and six strategies reinforce one another in a self-sustaining ecosystem, as summarised in the diagram below:



31 We are encouraged by the public’s affirmation of the ACSR’s strategic directions throughout the course of our public consultations. According to our quantitative survey, more than 80% of the respondents support making arts and culture more accessible, and strengthening capabilities to maximise Singaporeans’ creative potential, develop cultural icons, and grow promising groups and art forms.

32 The road to our 2025 vision will not be easy. Along the way, there will be many dilemmas to face, debate and resolve. In bringing arts and culture to everyone, everywhere, everyday, will we need to “dumb down” arts and culture products to make them more understandable to the man-in-the-street? In implementing new programmes to initiate change, will the effect be to stifle ground-up initiatives? The ACSR does not have all the answers, but we have started the conversation. The journey to 2025 would involve finding out the answers as a nation.

## ACSR's recommendations at a glance

Students and young practitioners

- Higher quality arts and culture programmes as part of co-curricular activities (CCAs) and the curriculum
- Better quality arts and culture facilities in schools
- Enhanced tertiary arts education
- Support for continued participation in arts and culture while transitioning to tertiary education or life after school
- More opportunities for further training and development, such as scholarships, mentorships and apprenticeships
- More opportunities to join local community arts and culture groups to continue pursuing their interests after graduation

Working professionals

- Opportunities to participate in arts and culture activities at the workplace
- More digital arts and culture platforms and information services on-the-go
- More opportunities to support arts and culture as a form of corporate social responsibility

Home-makers

- More arts and culture content in free-to-air television and radio
- Better access to classes, workshops and showcase opportunities for hobbies and crafts
- More opportunities to socialise and network through arts and culture events and activities

Senior citizens

- Arts and culture elements integrated into wellness and hobbyist programmes
- People's Association networks enlivened with more arts and culture activities

Community leaders and community groups

- More and better-equipped arts and culture facilities in community clubs
- Opportunities to share personal histories and memories with the next generation
- More opportunities to identify, develop, and showcase community talent
- Greater empowerment and support to initiate community arts and culture activities
- Greater support for showcasing unique place identities of neighbourhoods and ethnic cultures

Hobbyists and practising enthusiasts

- More opportunities to develop and showcase your craft, such as competitions, mentorships and craft fairs
- Suitably-equipped spaces at your doorstep to practice, perform and exhibit works
- Integrated networks of like-minded groups across the island

Audiences

- Easily accessible programmes to learn about arts and culture
- Convenient physical and online platforms to locate arts and culture content, activities and networks
- Cultural precincts with vibrant public spaces and strong place identities
- Higher quality arts and culture events, activities and offerings

Arts and culture practitioners and organisations

- Funding catered to the specific needs of individual professionals, organisations and art forms
- Streamlined grants and busking licence application processes and key performance indicators
- More and better opportunities to upgrade capabilities, such as Continuing Education and Training (CET), mentorships and apprenticeships

Educators and educational institutions

- A more supportive environment for freelancers and content creation
- More professional-quality and affordable performance and exhibition spaces across the island, including downtown
- More opportunities for exposure and capability upgrading for arts educators
- Greater resources for Institutes of Higher Learning for arts and culture hardware and software

Patrons, philanthropists and volunteers

- Expanded tax incentive and matching grant schemes to incentivise greater giving
- Greater recognition for arts and culture contributions

Businesses

- A dynamic marketplace for arts and culture
- Schemes to support the co-development of cultural businesses
- Schemes to encourage the use of commercial spaces as galleries

## **Box 2. Reinventing cultural capitals: The City of London Cultural Strategy 2010 - 2014**

While Singapore has been positioning itself as a Leading Global City and an Endearing Home<sup>9</sup>, other global cities have not been standing still. These include cities that have already been established as indisputable arts and culture capitals. In 2008, the City of London published a comprehensive new development plan, entitled *The City Together Strategy: The Heart of a World Class City 2008 – 2014*. The goal was to strengthen London's position as a world-class city through five focus areas – i) economic competitiveness, ii) community resilience, iii) environmental sustainability, iv) cultural vibrancy and v) security. There is no respite from the international competitive pressure.

In response to *The City Together Strategy*, a *City of London Cultural Strategy 2010 – 2014* was released as a follow-up action plan. The *City of London Cultural Strategy* is significant in that it does not merely address the pillar of cultural vibrancy, but sets out in detail how arts and culture can achieve all five of the *City Together* pillars. It is also the first time the City of London Corporation (the city government) has released a comprehensive plan for London's arts and culture development.

The plan sets out ten key recommendations, summarised as follows:

1. Market the City's arts and culture offerings, recognising diversity but creating a sense of overall cohesion.
2. Deliver educational, participation and creative opportunities to people of all ages and backgrounds, using a cross-cultural and educational sector approach.
3. Digitise the archives of the city, linking them up and making them publicly available.
4. Map cultural partnerships of publicly funded cultural institutions, work with fringe arts institutions, and create new partnerships to plug gaps.
5. Create a single web portal that promotes the City's cultural offer and links to the City's cultural sites.
6. Forge links between existing volunteering programmes to create a unified "volunteer" offer.
7. Increase the awareness of all public sector staff of the cultural

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<sup>9</sup> A strategic thrust of the recent Report of the Economic Strategies Committee, of which the Arts and Culture Strategic Review is a key recommendation.



opportunities available to them.

8. Work with the Planning and Transportation department to enliven public spaces with coherent programming of performances and street events.
9. Work with the tourism authorities to design and promote a programme of city arts and heritage walks.
10. Position London as a leader in sustainability in the arts and culture sector in the UK.

The focus of London's strategy is on marketing and promotion of arts and culture offerings, as well as on education and access to arts and culture. In that light, the challenges that London faces are not unlike Singapore's own challenge of bringing arts and culture to everyone, everywhere, every day. As a global city, it is not enough to have excellent and iconic cultural institutions and offerings. It is just as – if not more – important that residents of the city know and embrace these institutions and offerings as their own.

Another key theme in London's strategy is the importance of partnerships between the public sector, businesses, and non-government organisations in achieving outcomes. Maintaining world-class cultural institutions and offerings in a global city is not just the government's responsibility alone, but also that of the city's corporations, communities, patrons and the general public.

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# Strategic direction 1: Bring arts and culture to everyone, everywhere, every day

## I Reach new audiences

### Key stakeholders

- Audiences, consumers, supporters and potential “converts” to arts and culture
  - Students
  - Arts educators
  - The average citizen
  - The technologically-savvy
  - Visitors

### Summary of recommendations

- a. Nurture the next generation of arts and culture participants
  - i. Increase the breadth, depth and quality of arts and culture programmes in schools
  - ii. Build the capacity of arts and culture teachers
  - iii. Raise support for arts and culture co-curricular activities in schools
  - iv. Enhance the quality of external arts and culture instructors engaged by schools
  - v. Develop new pedagogical approaches for arts education
  - vi. Proliferate programmes to meet the interests of youths outside of schools
- b. Promote arts and culture for lifestyle, leisure and learning
  - i. Organise an annual “Arts and Culture Day” dedicated to promoting arts and culture
  - ii. Develop easily accessible “Arts Culture 101” programmes and information packages
- c. Tap into Singaporeans’ nostalgia for the past and their latent interest in heritage

- i. Facilitate community-led showcases of our heritage
  - ii. Facilitate sharing of personal stories
  - iii. Celebrate the unique place identities of heartland neighbourhoods
  - iv. Strengthen appreciation of ethnic cultures
  - v. Celebrate the cultures and stories of communities beyond the traditional Chinese-Malay-Indian-Others categorisations
- d. Increase exposure to arts and culture through mainstream and new media
- i. Enhance content in local free-to-air television and radio channels
  - ii. Develop more engaging online content
  - iii. Set up a one-stop portal, ArtsCultureSG, to consolidate information on arts and culture activities and content
  - iv. Design applications for smart phones and mobile devices to provide on-demand content on-the-go
  - v. Consolidate websites for fundraising and volunteerism into a single online platform
- e. Bring arts and culture to most-frequented public spaces island-wide
- i. Set up community galleries in neighbourhood civic and community facilities
  - ii. Carve out spaces for exhibitions and performances in public spaces with high human traffic
  - iii. Decentralise approval of busking licenses to the local community
  - iv. Create a signature arts, culture and lifestyle precinct

“To have great poets, there must be great audiences.”

Walt Whitman

33 People are the starting point of a city’s cultural development. Arts and culture capitals such as London, Paris and New York would not be what they are today without a critical mass of appreciative audiences, supporters and consumers – average citizens who consider going to the theatre or the museum, buying a painting

by a local artist or a new novel by an up-and-coming writer, or supporting the local band at a neighbourhood venue part of everyday life. Similarly, our arts and culture scene would not have achieved its current levels of vibrancy, without our Singaporean audiences, consumers and supporters.

34 While vibrancy has indeed increased exponentially over the past 20 years, we see signs of attendances plateauing after two decades of strong growth. It is also commonly perceived that arts and culture speaks to a small group of people who are already converts and aficionados, rather than to the masses. With 40% of Singaporeans having attended at least one arts and culture event in 2009, there is significant potential to widen our audience base and reach out to the remaining Singaporeans.

35 It is important to maintain the variety and quality of offerings that appeal to current audiences. However, we must dispel perceptions that arts and culture is limited only to offerings that are commonly regarded as “high arts and high culture” – classical music, opera, ballet – or traditional genres of visual arts, performing arts, literary arts and heritage. Hobbies and handicrafts are no less a part of our arts and culture, as are street cultures, popular entertainment, and community activities with cultural roots, such as *getai*.

36 We must **expand the range of available arts and culture offerings** to cater to the interests of audiences we have not yet reached. This will involve expanding and redefining “arts and culture” to include amateur, popular, street and hobbyist activities. The goal is to change prevailing perceptions of arts and culture as being “not for everyone”, or a “good-to-have” when we have time to spare. Rather, arts and culture should be an integral part of everyone’s lives, and impact our lifestyles, learning and leisure on a continuous basis.

37 We must also **raise awareness** of available offerings and **improve access** to them. Many Singaporeans are unaware of the full range of quality programmes available for their enjoyment and enrichment, given the limited publicity attached to them. They could also have difficulty searching for arts and culture activities suited to their tastes amidst an ever-expanding events calendar in Singapore. Furthermore, they might be less inclined to leave the comfort of their homes, workplaces or places of recreation in pursuit of arts and culture, and would therefore not be reached unless arts and culture was brought to them.

38 We must make more use of new media technologies to promote and raise awareness of events, activities and programmes. This would **connect the general public more effortlessly to timely, relevant information** that will enable them to further their interest and meet their developmental needs in arts and culture.

39 Finally, as members of the public have highlighted during the ACSR's public consultations, there is a need to make arts and culture **more understandable to the man-in-the-street**, while balancing mass appeal against quality and high standards. The development of new audiences and consumers would generate the demand to support arts and culture offerings, companies and professionals.

### **Voices from the Ground**

"We can have high ideals, but if it's too far out, I have a really tough time understanding. I applaud the actions, but I struggle to understand. You must make it relevant to the people on the ground."

- Young Chinese male product designer, commenting at one of the ACSR's public forums

40 The ACSR recommends the following:

a. Nurture the next generation of arts and culture participants. Children are our future cultural audiences, participants and consumers, and it is important to provide an environment in which their creativity, life-skills and sense of appreciation for diverse cultures can blossom from an early age. We should continue to encourage parents to enrol their children in arts and culture enrichment classes of all kinds, including classes on our ethnic cultures. We must also ensure that opportunities for such arts and culture enrichment classes are available to *all* children, regardless of social background. The importance of having good arts education from a young age is a recurring theme in the ACSR public consultations, which also underscored the need to focus on the process of learning and creation as an outcome in itself, and not just a means. We should work through our schools to maximise our outreach to children and youths.

i. **Increase breadth, depth and quality of arts and culture programmes in schools**. While continuing to strengthen the depth and quality of the current art and music curriculum, we can encourage schools to include activities and showcases of arts that are not currently available in schools, such as traditional arts and popular genres like hip-hop, show choirs, indie music, photography and film-

making. This would better cater to students' interests, and excite them on the large number of ways they could be involved in arts and culture.

ii. **Build the capacity of arts and culture teachers.** Teachers have a profound impact on children's interests in arts and culture. To shape the children's interest, teachers must be better-equipped with arts and culture capabilities. To raise teachers' proficiency, we can establish in-classroom partnerships with practitioners, as well as internship programmes with industry and public-sector cultural agencies. To broaden teachers' perspectives, we can enhance their exposure to a diverse range of arts and culture activities, through seminars, master-classes and learning journeys. These programmes would seek to inform and excite teachers about the possibilities of continued engagement in arts and culture, which we hope will in turn inspire their students.

iii. **Raise support for arts and culture co-curricular activities (CCAs) in schools.** We can establish a presentation grant to support the creation, production and display of quality performances, exhibitions or products by CCA groups. This will empower students to be producers and promoters of arts and culture. Support provided could subsidise the cost of materials, facility and equipment rentals, and skills upgrading, thereby yielding longer-term returns in raising the artistic and professional standards of arts and culture CCAs.

iv. **Enhance the quality of external instructors engaged by schools** for National Arts Council's Arts Education Programme (AEP) and arts and culture CCAs. This will ensure that students benefit from high standards of instruction that could in turn encourage them to explore various art forms in greater depth. To this end, we can chart an instructor development framework that will equip instructors with the necessary pedagogical skills to effectively and inspiringly impart knowledge of and passion for their art forms to students.

v. **Develop new pedagogical approaches** for "Art in Education" and "Education in Art", in order to effectively meet students' learning needs in and through arts and culture. For "Education in Art", we can provide seed grants to develop resources and methodologies for teaching art, music, humanities and national education subjects, which can be shared across schools. This can be complemented by greater access to resources, such as instruments and archival materials. For "Art in Education", we can pilot programmes that creatively infuse arts

and culture into the teaching of other subjects, so as to enhance learning and increase student engagement.

vi. Outside of schools, we could support and facilitate a **proliferation of programmes tailored to meet the interests of youths**. These could include mass-participation platforms such as festivals and competitions that can have a “viral” impact among youths, as well as social work and volunteerism programmes that use arts and culture as a medium for social outreach.

b. Promote arts and culture for lifestyle, leisure and learning. We can capitalise on Singaporeans’ appetites for new experiences and self-improvement to encourage the exploration of arts and culture among those we have not reached out to.

i. **Organise a dedicated “Arts and Culture Day”**. While every day should be an “arts and culture day”, arts and culture can receive special focus during a designated day (or period) each year to promote creative expression and encourage participation and engagement of all Singaporeans in the artistic and cultural life of their communities. On this day, cultural institutions can be given support to offer free, hands-on activities for Singaporeans to immerse themselves in arts and culture. For example, Singaporeans could go “behind the scenes” at blockbuster productions and museum exhibitions, participate in workshops run by smaller production companies and artist studios, and create works of their own. Suggestions from the public also included organising “World Guinness Book of Records” arts and culture “competitions” as a novel way of engaging Singaporeans; and encouraging locals to don their ethnic costumes to raise awareness of our ethnic heritage. This could culminate in a large-scale celebratory event that brings together various arts and culture communities, professional networks and hobby groups. The ACSR’s public consultations showed that an Arts and Culture Day is likely to have a strong impact on widening our audiences.

ii. **Develop “Arts Culture 101” programmes and information packages**, targeted at specific segments of the population. The “Arts Culture 101” series would seek to introduce participants to different aspects of our arts and culture in an easily accessible way, from museums to manga, Peranakan food to poetry, line dancing to lithography. For those who would like to dive deeper in, there would also be programmes which would incorporate opportunities for hands-

on activity and the creation of artistic works with the guidance of practitioners in the field. Information packages could come in printed and digital formats that would be made available online where possible. If this series is well received, it could also be expanded and produced as television programmes subsequently.

c. Tap into Singaporeans' nostalgia for the past and their latent interest in heritage. Recent public response to the closure of the Keretapi Tanah Melayu (KTM) railway and the exhumation of the Bukit Brown cemetery has demonstrated Singaporeans' interest in preserving our heritage. The ACSR also received strong feedback at our public consultations on the importance of reinforcing our heritage to strengthen our identity. Arts and culture offerings should therefore identify and capitalise on aspects of heritage or history that are close to Singaporeans' hearts. To that end, we can:

i. **Facilitate community-led showcases of our heritage.** We can provide resources to encourage grounds-up arts and culture projects involving aspects of our heritage (such as Singaporean food culture, place histories of HDB housing estates, or the histories of Chinese dialect groups). This could be in terms of professional support in helping the community identify important landmarks, personalities and events related to their projects, marketing and promotions, or provision of showcase platforms. Not only would this raise awareness of Singapore's history and culture, particularly the history and culture of local neighbourhoods, it would also encourage greater public involvement and ownership.

ii. **Facilitate sharing of personal stories.** Stories are a vital expression of human imagination, and the foundation of a community's cultural heritage. They are an important medium, used by all Singaporeans, to recount and to share their experiences of the past. They help us remember that history is ultimately a collection of human stories. We must facilitate the sharing of these stories and the creation of personal and family memoirs through Government-driven efforts, such as the Singapore Memory Project<sup>10</sup>, as well as digital platforms for collaboration and communication initiated by members of the public. This will provide additional avenues for the average citizen to participate in content creation and the curation of such content.

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<sup>10</sup> The Singapore Memory Project (SMP) is a national initiative to collect, preserve and provide access to the memories of our nation – these include personal, familial, community and organisational stories and histories. Through the collection and documentation of Singapore memories, the SMP aims to build a national collection of content in diverse formats that will be preserved and made available for discovery and research.



Contributing to our shared cultural heritage can be easy, enjoyable and meaningful.

iii. **Celebrate the unique place identities of heartland neighbourhoods.** HDB estates have become an integral part of Singapore's identity. In many HDB estates, strong community identities have taken shape with distinctive stories, characters and colours. We should sharpen these unique identities by identifying their distinctive elements and enhancing them. This should include retaining their built heritage and activating the existing infrastructure with programmes that bring to life the stories and distinctive characters of the neighbourhood.

iv. **Strengthen appreciation of ethnic cultures.** During our public consultations, the public has repeatedly highlighted the need to strengthen the traditional arts, by raising standards and attracting more people to become practitioners and audiences. Indeed, Singapore has inherited a treasure of multi-cultural heritage, brought over by our immigrant ancestors. Few civilisations can boast the richness and history of the traditional Chinese, Malay and Indian cultures. It is our duty to preserve and build up this treasure trove. The public has suggested strengthening the general awareness and understanding of ethnic cultures and traditional arts such as Teochew opera, *bangsawan*, and Indian dance. This could be done through supporting ethnic community groups and traditional arts groups, and injecting content into the school curriculum and CCAs to impart an appreciation of ethnic cultures and heritage.

v. **Celebrate the cultures and stories of communities beyond the traditional Chinese-Malay-Indian-Others categorisations.** We should also recognise and promote the contributions of other ethnic groups to our multicultural heritage and identity. We can facilitate platforms that encourage Singaporeans to learn more about these communities, and preserve natural enclaves where these communities thrive (such as the Thai community at Golden Mile Complex).

d. Increase exposure to arts and culture through mainstream and new media. While television and radio remain popular among the general public, they carry limited arts and culture content at present. On the other hand, arts and culture content has a growing presence in the world of social media – cases in point being the National Heritage Board's Yesterday.sg, and the use of Facebook as a marketing platform for events. The mainstream media can

be augmented with more arts and culture programmes, while online arts and culture content could be better supported and publicised to reach out to segments of the Singapore population that are younger and more savvy with new technologies.

We can also set up digital channels for networking and information dissemination, taking advantage of the growing applications sector, as well as the speed and coverage offered by Singapore's Next Generation National Broadband Network. Through the digital medium, we can take advantage of the reach and speed of the Internet to synchronise, consolidate and connect people to real-time arts and culture information from a variety of sources. Digital platforms also offer greater opportunities to customise information to meet consumers' demands.

We can:

- i. **Enhance content in local free-to-air television and radio channels.** We can infuse more arts and culture, particularly traditional arts and aspects of our heritage, into mainstream channels. We can also broadcast audience-friendly elements from major arts and culture events (such as the Singapore Youth Festival and the Singapore Arts Festival), to reach out to the peers, friends and families of the participants, and audiences who would otherwise not attend such events. Members of the public have also suggested showcasing more arts and culture documentaries, news features and interviews with local artists on regular TV and radio timeslots. This could be in the form of shorter, more accessible packets of content that can be broadcast during prime time or rush hour. These clips would provide a quick glimpse or guide to our arts and culture scene, and can be scripted to cater to those who are less familiar with arts and culture.
- ii. **Develop more engaging online content,** in order to maximise the use of social media (such as YouTube and Facebook) as a tool for reaching out to younger and more tech-savvy Singaporeans. Existing content can be regularly refreshed to sustain interest, while exclusive, interesting or humorous content that provides a more in-depth look into the arts and culture scene (such as upcoming events and exhibitions) can be produced. These are likely to be shared virally via social media channels and could therefore reach a wider circle of unreached audiences. Social media such as YouTube would also provide artists with an online platform to showcase their work, reducing the need for

physical venues, which would often have cost, size and availability constraints.

iii. **Set up a one-stop portal, ArtsCultureSG**, for content development, conversation, collaboration and community. A wide array of information can be made available on this portal, including an up-to-date database of programmes and activities, as well as facts, figures, write-ups and profiles on our cultural scene, cultural heritage and cultural professionals. The portal will provide audiences and participants with comprehensive, consolidated information about arts and culture events at their fingertips. The portal can also connect practitioners with similar interests across geographical boundaries, facilitating the organisation of activities, exchange of ideas, sharing of creative works and collaborations on original stories and artworks. In addition, users can personalise their profiles, allowing the portal to connect them to content of interest to them, or to like-minded practitioners. The ArtsCultureSG portal would complement the “Arts Culture 101” programmes, by providing participants who become interested in arts and culture with a means to find out more for themselves.

iv. **Design applications for smart phones and mobile devices** that will bring arts and culture content to Singaporeans on-demand, on-the-go. These applications can be information apps (for example, apps on event listings), trailers apps for upcoming arts and culture events, as well as gaming apps to pique the interest of younger potential audiences. They can have interest-matching capabilities so that the information and suggestions offered will be relevant to the user.

v. **Consolidate websites for fundraising and volunteerism<sup>11</sup>** onto a single online platform, to provide a seamless and integrated experience for anyone interested in finding out about online donation and volunteer opportunities in arts and culture. The platform can have search capabilities to match-make interests of prospective donors to relevant arts and culture causes and organisations, and will also provide information about these causes and organisations so that donors will be more informed in their giving. In addition, it can allow volunteers to find and sign up for projects that best suit their time, interest, skill and location.

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<sup>11</sup> These include Give2Arts.sg, SG Gives, SG Cares, e-match and PA’s “Be a Volunteer” webpage.

e. Bring arts and culture to most-frequented public spaces island-wide. Arts and culture cannot be confined to specific cultural spaces like theatres, museums and exhibition spaces (although these are important as focal points) – they must permeate the spaces we inhabit and pass through in our everyday lives, to make it easy to reach people in their existing routines.

i. **Set up community galleries in neighbourhood civic and community facilities.** The libraries, community clubs and sports facilities are natural centres of activity for Singaporeans from all walks of life. Many people enjoy these facilities every weekend and are audiences waiting to be tapped. In these facilities, interactive galleries can be set up to tell stories about the history, life and culture of the immediate neighbourhood. This could include multimedia shows with archival footage and artefact displays from the National Collection, complemented by story booths with facilities for the playback of oral history recordings and for the public to record their own memories and stories. These galleries should be sited at common areas within these civic facilities such as waiting areas, entrances and public walkways, to tap captive audiences such as passers-by and waiting members of the public. Significantly, setting up community galleries in neighbourhood civic and community facilities received strong support during the ACSR's public consultations, including more than 70% support levels in our quantitative survey.

ii. **Carve out spaces for exhibition and performance in public spaces with high human traffic,** including major activity corridors such as Orchard Road and the Singapore River, and upcoming spaces such as the old KTM railway corridor. Other spaces with potential to capture the interest of passing human traffic include transport hubs (such as MRT stations and bus interchanges), shopping malls and food centres. For example, we can designate performance corners or spaces for rotating displays of public art in more public areas (particularly MRT stations or covered atriums and open spaces in Government or commercial buildings). We can also present the story of Singapore – our history, struggles and triumphs – through art installations in areas of high human traffic (sidewalks along Orchard Road, for example) that could serve as both tourist attractions, as well as visible daily reminders of our history.

“Recently, I went for a short break in Philadelphia and I found its concept of ‘museum without walls’ most interesting. Basically, along the streets of Philly were sculptures and works of art portraying the history, struggles and triumphs of the US. It would be wonderful if Singapore could do something similar.”

- Comment from “Ken Quek”, posted on ACSR’s online consultation portal

iii. **Decentralize approval of busking licences.** High quality busking adds vibrancy to everyday spaces, reminding us of the nourishing role of arts and culture amidst the routine. Some members of the public have suggested streamlining and decentralising the application process for busking licences to the local community. This would make it easier for talented hobbyists and professional performers to share their talent with the community, generate vibrancy across the island, and bring arts and culture to people’s doorsteps. This would also give the local community control over the quality of the buskers, allowing standards to be diversified in accordance with different precincts’ characters, instead of being standardised by a central agency.

iv. **Create a signature arts, culture and lifestyle precinct with seamless connectivity** in the downtown area, such as the Bras Basah and Padang area. This would imprint in people’s consciousness an iconic, high-profile precinct integrating arts and culture with leisure and lifestyle, demonstrating that there need not be a dichotomy between the two. Within this signature precinct, arts and culture offerings should blend seamlessly into retail, entertainment and lifestyle spaces, so that the average visitor can encounter arts and culture even as he or she shops, dines or simply hangs out. We can synergise programming and marketing across key cultural institutions and commercial developments, activating open spaces between them with high-quality programmes that would draw the attention of passers-by and encourage them to linger. In addition, we can strengthen connectivity by pedestrianising key roads, providing weather-proof underground linkages, carrying out environmental improvement works (such as widening side-tables and improving lighting), and maximising the use of ground-level spaces in public buildings. This would improve pedestrian access to these precincts, allow artisan and street markets to be set up, and cater to programmes and exhibitions. More street-level activity would draw a greater concentration of Singaporeans into this signature precinct, where they can enjoy the experience of being immersed in

arts and culture offerings in and around cultural institutions, historical buildings and commercial establishments.

### **Box 3. Arts, culture and lifestyle precincts – Millennium Park, Chicago, and downtown Los Angeles**

#### Millennium Park, Chicago

Millennium Park was once an industrial wasteland in the centre of Chicago. Today, it is a 100,000 square metre expanse of vibrant cultural space. Encompassing a string of iconic cultural institutions and sites nestled within a vast green space, Millennium Park has been featured prominently in international journals. Distinctive Millennium Park developments include: the Frank Gehry-designed Jay Pritzker pavilion (a sculptural outdoor performance arts venue), Anish Kapoor's "Cloud Gate" sculpture (a giant "bean-like" stainless steel sculpture), and Catalanian artist Jaume Plensa's Crown Fountain (50 foot glass block towers of flowing water that project video images of 1,000 Chicagoans).

Framing the park are other major cultural institutions such as the Harris Theater (the city's main venue for music and dance performances), and the Art Institute of Chicago (the city's main art museum). Today, the Park is an arts, culture and lifestyle precinct hosting more than 525 free events each year. With millions of visitors, it is one of the most popular American and international destinations in the world.

The development of Millennium Park was a partnership between the public and the private sectors, with a large proportion of the cost underwritten by donors, including corporations and some of the wealthiest families and individuals in the city. A collection of renowned artists, planners, landscape architects and designers, most notably Frank Gehry, were involved in the Park's design.

The Park transformed Chicago's branding and image in a single stroke. From a gritty, windy mid-western city playing second fiddle to New York and Los Angeles, it became the "wonder city" – the city that could. More importantly, the Park has become a rallying point for Chicagoans – the centre of the city's cultural and civic life, which is also the pride and joy of the average citizen.

#### Downtown Los Angeles

The common mental image of Los Angeles is a city of low-rise urban sprawl.

From the 1960s to mid-1990s, the centre of Los Angeles was a sea of roads and carparks, with a sprinkling of skyscrapers. The city had decentralised with the popularisation of driving.

Since the mid-1990s, however, Los Angeles has been reversing its downtown evacuation. Today, the rejuvenated downtown Los Angeles is an arts and culture precinct of cultural institutions interconnected by landscapes.

The rejuvenation of downtown Los Angeles began with the conversion of an old warehouse into a contemporary art museum, the Geffen Contemporary. Commissioned in 1983, the then-emerging local architect Frank Gehry was appointed to design the project. This was followed by the commissioning of the Permanent Contemporary in 1986. The two art museums added to three nearby cultural institutions built in the 1960s: the Dorothy Chandler Music Center, the Mark Taper Forum (a “thrust stage” theatre), and the Ahmansen Theatre.

The Walt Disney Concert Hall, also designed by Frank Gehry, was added to the cluster when it was launched in 1992 and completed in 2007. With the opening of the Ramon C. Cortines School Of Visual And Performing Arts in 2009, the area was consolidated as Los Angeles’ visual and performing arts district.

One turning point in the regeneration of Los Angeles’ downtown was the fight to save the neo-Egyptian Art Deco Richard Biordan Central Library. Scheduled for demolition after a fire in 1986, the threat to the library galvanised an army of supporters, leading to its restoration in 1988 – 93. This played a part in alerting building owners to the potentials of this district. A nearby office building, the former Superior Oil Company HQ, was converted into a hotel with a rooftop and lounge in 2000, and has become a magnet for the young and hip.

Today, downtown Los Angeles is joined up with garden landscapes, reflecting ponds interspersed with fountains, and outdoor escalators. An on-going landscaping project – the Grand Avenue Project – will create a 65,000 square metre park and a Gehry-designed development, guided by a committee of prominent citizens.

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## II Sustain and deepen lifelong engagement

### Key stakeholders

- Hobbyists and practising enthusiasts
  - Youths
  - Working adults
  - Homemakers
  - Senior citizens
  - Community groups

### Summary of recommendations

- a. Lower barriers to participation for students as they transit to tertiary education and life after school
  - i. Provide more resources to Institutes of Higher Learning
  - ii. House community-based arts and culture groups in schools
  - iii. Implement a “Creative Lifestyle @ Work” programme to encourage companies to organise arts and culture activities at the workplace
- b. Lower barriers to participation for future retirees as they transit to their golden years
  - i. Leverage on People’s Association’s networks to engage future retirees in arts and culture
  - ii. Expand the range of arts and culture activities available to seniors
  - iii. Infuse wellness and hobby programmes with arts and culture elements
- c. Provide more opportunities for hobbyists to develop and showcase their craft
  - i. Increase support for community arts and culture interest groups at the grassroots level
  - ii. Support a proliferation of showcase and competition platforms at all levels of community
  - iii. Facilitate mentorships for hobbyists
- d. Improve access to suitably-equipped spaces where hobbyists can practice, perform and exhibit their works

- i. Integrate regional cultural centres into upcoming town hubs
- ii. Establish regional cultural centres in schools
- iii. Enhance exhibition and other programmable spaces in libraries
- iv. Support fringe arts and culture activities in public spaces
- v. Match arts and culture groups to appropriate spaces in State and commercial developments

“Art is not the possession of the few who are recognized writers, painters, musicians; it is the authentic expression of any and all individuality.”

John Dewey

41 Arts and culture are a universal means of self-expression. The creation of artworks and the expression of creative energies is a deeply fulfilling experience. The fulfilment of this deeper need, which makes the person whole, should not be restricted to artists and arts professionals, but open to every student, working adult, home-maker and retiree. For those who wish to do so, **all Singaporeans should be given the avenues and space to fulfil their aspirations as arts and culture practitioners.**

42 Currently, only 20% of Singaporeans participate actively in arts and culture. As such, there is significant potential to increase participation by growing the pool of amateurs, hobbyists and practising enthusiasts. This, in turn, will engender greater community involvement in and ownership of arts and culture activities. It will promote arts and culture activities as common leisure options that can enhance one’s quality of life.

43 Studies have also shown that youths who participate in arts and culture activities in school generally stop participating upon entering the workforce<sup>12</sup>. This is largely due to new work and social commitments, difficulties in sustaining communities of interest beyond the school environment, and a perceived dearth of

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<sup>12</sup> The 2009 NAC Population Survey of the Arts found that only 22% of Singaporeans between ages 20-29 participated in the arts, almost half of the 42% participation rate for Singaporeans in the school-going age range of 15-19 years.

avenues for participation. There is a need to reduce such attrition in the transition between schools and the workforce.

44 Finally, by 2030, one in five Singaporeans will be 65 years old and older, requiring activities that are tailor-made to their interests and appropriate to their level of physical fitness. Arts and culture offers an inclusive, engaging and non-strenuous avenue for our seniors – who will be better educated and will live longer than past generations – to remain actively engaged in society.

45 Given this, we must provide opportunities for **sustaining engagement with arts and culture throughout a Singaporean’s lifetime**, by putting in place facilities, resources, practitioner networks and programmes to minimise attrition between school and the workforce, cater to working adults and homemakers who wish to practice their craft, and address the needs and interests of the elderly.

#### **Voices from the ground**

“I perform on weekends so that people can enjoy it. It’s about ownership: this art is mine, it’s my pride to give it to people to enjoy.”

- Young Chinese male music teacher, commenting at one of the ACSR public forums

46 The ACSR recommends the following:

- a. Lower barriers to participation for students as they transit to tertiary education and life after school. Upon leaving the Ministry of Education school system to enter tertiary educational institutions, students experience a sharp drop in funding and infrastructure support for arts and culture activities, as tertiary institutions are not eligible for the Tote Board Arts Grant<sup>13</sup>. Arts and culture interest groups in tertiary institutions are also largely self-funded and have limited resources for outreach. Furthermore, tertiary educational institutions, particularly the polytechnics, lack sufficient cultural facilities such as performance or exhibition spaces, and tend to offer fewer opportunities for students to engage in art and culture activities.

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<sup>13</sup> Tote Board offers annual grants to primary and secondary schools, junior colleges and centralised institutes for programmes under the NAC-Arts Education Programme.

Students experience a second sharp drop in support upon graduation, as they lose access to school-based communities of interest. Support for alumni groups is weak, and without personal or professional connections, students face difficulties transitioning to community-based interest groups.

To sustain participation levels, we must smooth over both transitions by providing the necessary funding, infrastructure and community support. This will facilitate students' continued engagement, even as they adjust to new responsibilities and demands post-school, and sustain the impact of the arts and culture initiatives at the pre-tertiary level. During the ACSR's public consultations, the public reaffirmed difficulties in sustaining students' engagement in arts and culture upon graduation.

i. **Provide more resources to Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs).** These resources could be used to upgrade cultural facilities, purchase equipment, and engage instructors for courses and workshops. A vibrant arts and culture calendar could also be programmed, coordinated across the IHLs, that showcases both professional and student talent. A fund could be set up for seeding and sustaining student-initiated interest groups, and equipping these groups with professional competencies for long-term sustainability, such as recruitment management, marketing and publicity, and revenue and cash-flow management.

ii. **House community-based professional arts and culture groups in schools.** A partnership programme could be developed to house community-based groups in arts spaces managed by schools, and support student-professional collaborative learning and performances / exhibitions in schools. The programme can aid in building strong professional and personal relationships between practitioners and students that can carry over to life after graduation. Participating schools could also benefit from the arts and culture groups' professional expertise to complement formal instruction, and from higher quality programming that can better attract new audiences within the school and the immediate community. Community arts groups could benefit from affordable arts housing and rehearsal venues within the school compound, and also from a more assured stream of new blood.

iii. **Implement a "Creative Lifestyle @ Work" programme** to facilitate integration of arts and culture programmes in the workplace. This will provide busy young adults with opportunities to re-ignite and

sustain their interest in arts and culture, reach out to new audiences and participants, and demonstrate the impact of arts and culture on physical health, mental well-being, confidence and creativity. We can provide companies with co-funding grants to help start and sustain Creative Lifestyle @ Work initiatives such as short courses and workshops, lunchtime performances, events and interest groups at the workplace. We can also support companies' efforts by providing information on activities and facilitating partnerships with professional groups in the running of programmes. In addition, we can introduce an award to recognise companies that put in strong efforts to integrate arts and culture into working life.

b. Lower barriers to participation for future retirees as they transit to their golden years. Our seniors should have an expanded range of cultural and lifestyle offerings to look forward to, that caters to their interests and abilities and taps on their memories and experiences. Studies have shown that our future retirees wish to maximise their time and be more independent after retirement<sup>14</sup>. We can offer interested seniors post-retirement employment or volunteering opportunities in fields related to the preservation and promotion of heritage, other traditional arts and culture practices (such as ethnic cuisine and handicrafts), or arts and culture in general.

i. **Leverage on the People's Association's (PA's) networks to engage future retirees in arts and culture.** Given that over 50% of seniors are interested in learning, and most prefer to learn in groups<sup>15</sup>, we can facilitate a groundswell of "Silver Arts and Culture Interest Groups" through PA's networks. These interest groups will be important channels for active agers to develop latent arts talents and learn new skills, thereby encouraging them to stay mentally, physically and socially active. Passionate senior citizen volunteers can be identified and groomed as peer leaders to drive these groups, initiate ground-up activities, and even mentor other community interest groups.

ii. **Expand the range of arts and culture activities available to seniors.** This would address future retirees' feedback at the public consultations that there is currently a lack of variety. We should build on current efforts undertaken by People's Association and National Arts Council to develop a comprehensive range of activities for seniors in

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<sup>14</sup> From a 2009 survey commissioned by Council for Third Age (C3A) – "Understanding Singapore's Baby Boomers" (age 45-60).

<sup>15</sup> From a 2008 MCYS survey – "Learning Needs of Seniors in Singapore".

genres that they are keen on pursuing, such as community singing, line dancing and handicrafts. These activities can include workshops, excursions to cultural venues, performances and exhibitions, volunteering opportunities, and even talent showcases, such as a Senior Citizens Arts Festival.

iii. **Infuse wellness and hobby programmes with arts and culture elements.** Studies have shown that future retirees are most interested in learning about personal health and hobbies, and less interested in learning about arts and culture<sup>16</sup>. To encourage greater interest in arts and culture, we can work with social sector agencies to develop arts-in-health programmes that use arts and culture as a tool for rehabilitative therapy, wellness and active aging. We can also introduce cultural and creative elements into hobbies that seniors enjoy, such as introducing Malay or Peranakan dessert/pastry-making, in place of simple baking classes, or infusing modules on design and patterns in knitting classes. This will help to shape perceptions of arts and culture as an enriching and worthwhile hobby for seniors.

c. Provide more opportunities for hobbyists to develop and showcase their craft. Given that hobbyists might be at different stages of development in their craft, and thus have varying needs and aspirations, there cannot be a one-size-fits-all solution. We should facilitate better general access to resources, expand the range of options for further training, and provide avenues for hobbyists to showcase their works. This would sustain a vibrant arts and culture scene at the community level, and provide a ladder for the man-in-the-street who has been “converted” to arts and culture, to progress from passive appreciation to more active participation.

i. **Increase support for community arts and culture interest groups at the grassroots level,** to help fledgling interest groups take off and established interest groups to flourish. This can be achieved by providing start-up grants and starter toolkits to new groups, organising workshops for them to learn best practices, subsidising the purchase of resources (such as musical instruments), and facilitating partnerships with relevant instructors. We can also identify emergent areas of interest in various communities, and seed new interest groups by raising awareness among hobbyists who share these common interests (a case in point being National Arts Council and People

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<sup>16</sup> According to the 2009 C3A survey, seniors were most interested in learning about personal health (ranked first) and hobbies (ranked second), with arts and culture ranking ninth overall.

Association's seeding of the Community Drumming Network<sup>17</sup>). Groups that have achieved certain standing in their communities can be given opportunities and funding support to perform in community- and national-level showcases, at prestigious venues such as the Esplanade, or even at overseas showcase platforms. They can even be partnered with professional groups to jointly develop artworks or performances, or the commercial sector to develop commercial arts projects such as media content.

ii. **Support a proliferation of showcase and competition platforms at all levels of community.** At the constituency level, we can replicate the success of current community programmes such as PA's "Community Life Arts Programme" (CLAP!)<sup>18</sup> and The Necessary Stage's "Theatre for Seniors"<sup>19</sup> across all constituencies. We can also expand the scale of existing platforms such as the District Arts Festivals<sup>20</sup> and PA's Got Talent<sup>21</sup> at the GRC-, district- and national-levels. New platforms such as an annual Community Arts and Culture Month can be created to allow community arts and culture groups to showcase their talents and actively engage residents in arts and culture. These presentation and competition platforms will not only raise the vibrancy of the community arts and culture scene and support the efforts of more community groups to showcase their talent; they are also developmental milestones towards which community groups can aspire and work. They can provide showcase opportunities for both casual and professional practitioners, or collaborations between the two.

iii. **Facilitate mentorships for hobbyists**, so that they can learn from more experienced practitioners. We can match young talents or emerging groups (including arts students and dedicated hobbyists) with established talents on collaborative projects. Through these

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<sup>17</sup> Drumming enthusiasts from various community centres around the island were brought together by the National Arts Council's to form a Community Drumming Network in 2010.

<sup>18</sup> The People's Association's Community Life Arts Programme is a regular community arts event that features arts talents in the community. It has a strong social and community bonding element and as such often showcases popular and traditional art forms from hip hop to Chinese Orchestra.

<sup>19</sup> Theatre for Seniors is a 3-year run by the Necessary Stage for participants aged 50 and above. It equips participants with essential skills and knowledge in drama, including acting, playwriting and directing, as well as administration and technical theatre. The programme provides seniors an opportunity to impart their personal stories and to develop personally.

<sup>20</sup> PA's District Arts Festivals, organised in partnership with NAC, are annual arts festivals held at the district level to celebrate community identity, showcase community talent, and build community arts and culture capabilities.

<sup>21</sup> PA's Got Talent is a programme that identifies and provides development and showcase opportunities for talents at the community-level.

partnerships, mentees can acquire knowledge and best practices that will enable them to raise the level of their craft, while mentors can secure additional funding pathways as well as greater experience in mentoring and/or community engagement.

d. Improve access to suitably-equipped spaces where hobbyists can practice, perform and exhibit their works. The need for more and suitably-equipped facilities for community arts and culture participation was a point raised repeatedly by the public. There is currently a lack of affordable and suitably-equipped spaces such as sound-proofed music studios and dance studios with sprung floors for hobbyists and community groups to practice and showcase their craft. Upmarket venues such as the Esplanade are beyond their budget, school facilities are generally closed to the wider community, while most Community Club theatrettes and exhibition spaces do not meet minimum size or quality requirements for presentation. We must upgrade the quality of existing community facilities, open up existing civic and private spaces for public arts and culture use, and develop new spaces to meet the growing demand from arts and culture groups – both for hobbyists and professionals – across the island. As the public noted during the ACSR’s public consultation, making available suitably-equipped yet affordable performance spaces would also help to lower venue costs and ticket prices, making arts and culture more accessible to the public.

i. **Integrate regional cultural centres into upcoming town hubs.** These regional cultural centres will offer affordable semi-professional practice and presentation spaces such as auditoriums, galleries, music and dance studios for hobbyists and community groups. They can serve as multi-disciplinary arts and culture centres galvanising community talents at the district level, as well as resource centres supporting the arts and culture needs of neighbouring towns. They can also house professional artists and arts groups who can engage with the immediate community, and work with them to programme a year-long calendar of festivals and events at these centres. We can house these centres alongside libraries and sports facilities in upcoming town hub developments (such as those in Tampines and Jurong) for greater reach and accessibility.

ii. **Establish regional cultural centres in schools.** Besides town centres, schools are also natural rallying points for the surrounding heartland communities. We can upgrade the facilities of selected schools and open them up to the public, providing suitably-equipped facilities (such as black boxes, dance studios, rehearsal studios and



heritage display areas) at affordable costs for students, hobbyists and semi-professional community arts groups. This would enrich students' experience of arts and culture in school, which at the same time would enhance the quality and effectiveness of community outreach by young student enthusiasts. As with regional cultural centres in town hubs, we can house amateur and semi-professional arts groups in these school-based centres, to maximise the use of space, improve programming, and provide easier student access to artistic and technical advice. The proposed upgrading and opening of school arts facilities to the general public was supported by almost 80% of the respondents in the ACSR's quantitative survey.

iii. **Enhance exhibition and other programmable spaces in libraries.** Libraries can be fitted with semi-professional facilities and equipment (such as display cases, media walls, basic sound systems, and lighting) to encourage arts and culture enthusiasts to stage their own programmes and exhibitions at affordable cost. In line with the libraries' positioning as places for collaborative learning, these spaces can also be used by arts and culture communities to develop joint projects and exhibitions, where the public can learn about arts and culture. In this way, libraries can play an additional role as vibrant community arts and culture centres catering to community-initiated exhibitions and showcases, and community-based arts and culture learning.

iv. **Support fringe arts and culture activities in public spaces** which are easily accessible, such as vacant plots of land, parks, void decks and amphitheatres. These public spaces can have basic multi-purpose performance and exhibition facilities, which would suffice for community interest groups that do not have overly complex technical requirements. These facilities can also be further upgraded (for example, through soundproofing or improvements to existing sound and lighting equipment) to allow better quality productions and exhibitions to be staged. In addition to providing additional platforms for hobbyists to showcase their works, these public spaces will bring new life to familiar everyday spaces that we do not generally associate with arts and culture, making it convenient for families and friends to support hobbyists and groups. During the ACSR's public consultations, suggestions were made to nestle arts and culture activities within the lush and pleasant setting of parks. Examples of park facilities being well-used include the public stages at the Botanic Gardens and West Coast Park.

v. **Match arts and culture groups to appropriate spaces in State and commercial developments** for programmes and exhibitions. As suggested by the public, there is scope to activate more spaces at vacant State properties and commercial buildings for cultural purposes. A central resource database of spaces available for short-term or project use can be developed to help interested arts and culture groups find suitable practice, performance and exhibition spaces. In addition, tax incentives can also be provided for businesses to open up existing facilities and display spaces (such as auditoriums and atriums) for arts and culture use.

#### **Box 4. Supporting lifelong engagement for Seoul citizens**

The Seoul Foundation for Arts and Culture (SFAC) conducts a range of programmes to support lifelong engagement for amateurs, hobbyists, practising enthusiasts and community arts professionals. Established by the Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and the City of Seoul in 2009, the SFAC aims to make Seoul “the creative cultural city in the world”, through leading “all Seoul citizens to participate in Arts.”

A significant proportion of the SFAC’s initiatives are targeted at citizen arts and culture engagement and education, including the following:

- *Arts by citizens*, which provides support for amateur cultural arts club activities that encourage voluntary participation in arts and culture.
- *Community festivals*, which identify and provide support for community talent, while bringing arts and culture into the heart of the community.
- *Activating regional culture spaces* to provide support for citizen-initiated cultural activities while building regional identity.

SFAC also operates a comprehensive arts and culture education programme called the **Arts-Echo Project**, which serves to provide avenues for Seoul citizens of all ages to develop an artistic and cultural sensitivity and to express their creativity. Some of the initiatives included under the Arts-Echo umbrella are:

- *Creative Arts-TREE for Children*, which provides children of low-income homes with after-school caretaking programmes and arts and culture education programmes.

- *Vision Arts-TREE for Youth*, focusing on performing arts. The programme supports mentorships and collaborations between youth practitioners and prominent artists and arts groups.
- *Art School for Seniors who are Youths at Heart*, which customises arts and culture programmes for seniors, was initiated in response to increasing demand for arts and culture activities by seniors.
- *Teaching Artist Arts-TREE*, a training program for artists who are already experts in their own art genre, and who wish to become arts and culture educators.
- *Mediator Arts-TREE*, targeted at professionals in education, public administration and social work, who can play a champion role in incorporating and applying culture and artistic elements in their fields.

Finally, SFAC operates a network of regional cultural centres under the **Seoul Art Space** programme. An innovative urban renewal and community rejuvenation project, Seoul Art Space converts disused state and commercial properties into performance and exhibition spaces, as well as studio and rehearsal spaces for professional, amateur and community arts and culture practitioners. The spaces in turn become a rallying point and source of pride for members of the community. Eight Art Spaces have been developed so far across the Seoul Metropolitan Area, in such diverse spaces as an old office building, a printing factory, a health centre and an underground shopping centre.

Source:

Seoul Foundation for Arts and Culture website, at: <http://english.sfac.or.kr/>

### III Galvanise a national movement

#### Key stakeholders

- Arts and culture enthusiasts
- Youth leaders and community leaders

#### Summary of recommendations

- a. Seed, grow and deploy networks of enthusiasts across Singapore
  - i. Establish a Community Arts and Culture Club in each constituency to connect grassroots-level interest groups
  - ii. Deploy community engagement field officers in community clubs and constituencies
  - iii. Build on reading clubs to set up communities for reading, writing and storytelling
  - iv. Set up cultural concierges in libraries to facilitate link-ups with interest groups and provide information face-to-face
- b. Facilitate a groundswell of community-initiated programmes and community advocates
  - i. Strengthen support for independently-initiated projects and programmes
  - ii. Empower “fire-starters” to catalyse organisation of community arts and culture activities
  - iii. Nurture champions of arts and culture to advocate greater support through their networks

“A nation's culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people.”

Gandhi

47 Individuals who are passionate have an impact on those around them. Their passion sparks curiosity and interest in their friends, families and neighbours. Imagine the impact of a *community* of passionate individuals. The effect would be multifold. Imagine further the impact of a *nation of networked communities*. The outcome could be *exponential*. **By connecting arts and culture enthusiasts into**

**networks of advocates and activists, we can multiply their passion, knowledge and energy to achieve exponential outcomes.**

48 Several national movements have been effective in seeding self-sustaining networks. These include the Singapore Sports Council's "Sports for All" programme, the National Parks Board's "Community in Bloom" national gardening movement, and the National Library Board's "National Reading Movement". The success factors behind these movements include:

- a. Identifying a "rallying point" with low barriers to entry and opportunities for participation that are close to home, for people from all walks of life to come together and enjoy an activity.
- b. Linking up communities with similar interests across the island to share ideas and best practices.
- c. Leveraging on strong existing bonds in natural groupings (such as taxi drivers and hairdressers) so that these communities-of-interest become social networks that extend beyond the activity-of-interest itself.
- d. Partnering a wide network of Government agencies, NGOs, grassroots organisations and the private sector to garner widespread support and expand the scope of outreach efforts.

49 To galvanise a national movement for arts and culture, we must **provide channels for communities of interest to connect with one another**, foster information exchange, and facilitate the growth and spread of these interests. These channels will help to build bridges between the communities-of-interest, potential supporters and the general public, so as to harness the ideas, energy and passion of enthusiasts in community outreach. Importantly, these channels must be widely known by the general public in order to have an impact.

50 The ACSR recommends the following:

- a. Seed, grow and deploy networks of enthusiasts across Singapore, leveraging on our community facilities and structures. By linking up practising enthusiasts and hobby groups with similar interests into semi-formal networks, like-minded enthusiasts can come together in convenient and accessible spaces for learning and discovery, sharing of experiences, resources and best practice, and collaborative projects such as a joint performance or competition between music and dance groups. In so doing, they can mutually inspire one another towards new heights of innovation and achievement.

With proper training, these enthusiasts can be deployed within the community as ambassadors for arts and culture, able to provide audiences and other hobbyists with convenient and ready access to information, resources and networks. This would in turn make arts and culture seem more personable and accessible to our stakeholders.

At the constituency level, we can:

i. **Establish a Community Arts and Culture Club (CACC) in each constituency.** The purpose of the CACCs is to link up the various arts and culture interest groups across different grassroots organisations, akin to the Singapore Sports Council supporting Community Sports Clubs. The CACCs can help to connect members of the public to arts and culture activities, resources, facilities and interest groups that suit their interests, within grassroots organisations and Community Clubs across Singapore, without duplicating these organisations' functions. We can work through the CACCs to connect these interest groups into national arts and culture-related networks and event calendars. The CACCs can also organise constituency-level programmes (such as concerts, festivals, networking sessions and workshops) that bring interest groups together to showcase their works, compete and learn from other another.

ii. **Deploy community engagement field officers in Community Clubs (CCs) and at constituencies.** To strengthen our ability to reach out to interest groups, an additional group of community engagement field officers can be based at the CCs and constituencies. They can work closely with the CACCs to develop and implement programmes for PA's grassroots networks and other community groups. In addition, they can facilitate greater synergy and collaboration amongst arts practitioners, community groups, Government and grassroots agencies and social sector organisations through cross-agency initiatives, precinct-wide festivals, and platforms for training and sharing of community engagement best practice. These community engagement field officer positions would provide opportunities for more passionate and committed enthusiasts to be employed in their field of interest.

Given their accessibility in heartland neighbourhoods, their standing as familiar and comfortable social spaces, as well as their rich depth of resources for knowledge and learning, libraries are natural nerve centres for community engagement with arts and culture. In the libraries, we can:

iii. **Build on reading clubs to set up communities for reading, writing and storytelling** all over Singapore. These communities will encourage Singaporeans to not only enjoy books together, but to also come forward and contribute their personal stories. We can encourage participants to share their stories, experiences and interests in writing and other physical or digital forms of creative media (such as blogs, video clips and audio recordings). The growth of these communities can be catalysed through online means, allowing participants to comment on or respond to content submitted by others.

iv. **Set up cultural concierges in libraries**<sup>22</sup>. Cultural concierges at the libraries will be friendly faces that can facilitate link-ups with interest groups, instructors for training and development, supporting resources (such as grants, equipment and know-how), as well as content that users require (including books and multimedia). They can also market and provide information on arts and culture events and activities, in the immediate neighbourhood or elsewhere in Singapore. They would complement the ArtsCultureSG portal, by providing similar services face-to-face rather than in virtual form, especially for those less adept with Internet technologies. Cultural concierges can further reach out proactively to the immediate community to (co-)organise community programmes, as well as to seek out collaborative opportunities (such as with town councils and clan associations) to widen the appeal and reach of library-based arts and culture activities. In the ACSR's quantitative survey, more than 70% of the respondents supported having cultural concierges in libraries.

### **Voices from the ground**

“Having a go-to point where one could find more information and related resources about it would be useful in making arts and culture more accessible as a whole.”

- Comment from “Edlyn”, posted on the ACSR's online consultation portal

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<sup>22</sup> The cultural concierges will be similar to Singapore Tourism Board's Arts and Entertainment Events Concierges located at the TicketCube booth in Orchard Road.

b. Facilitate a groundswell of community-initiated programmes and community advocates. As surfaced during the ACSR's public consultations, many arts and culture programmes are initiated from the grounds-up. For example, one participant set up a community orchestra to allow students to pursue their interest after they graduate, while another brought ballroom dancing lessons out of the ballroom into HDB amphitheatres, breaking the mindset that ballroom dancing is exclusive and elitist. We need to encourage more of such efforts.

We should support and allow more space for emerging subcultures, activities on the periphery and content creation by the community, so that our cultural identity can emerge organically and authentically from the ground. We should also harness the growing interest among Singaporeans for our heritage, particularly as Singapore approaches our 50th year of independence. To this end, Government should play a more facilitative role, encouraging the public to initiate and sustain activities that they are interested in and passionate about. Such grounds-up, organic growth in turn can engage a greater number of Singaporeans.

i. **Strengthen support for independently-initiated projects and programmes**, from providing starter-kits and conducting introductory workshops, to supporting individuals or hobbyist groups organising events and activities to showcase their works. Individuals and community groups can be given funding and resources to pilot new and innovative initiatives for the community, with the community. These programmes should eventually garner sufficient interest and support to be sustained financially by the community.

ii. **Empower “fire-starters” to catalyse the organisation of community arts and culture activities.** These “fire-starters” can rally interested participants, groom potential leaders in each community, impart relevant skills, and seed events and activities for community participation. In this way, the community can organically generate and champion ideas and initiatives in areas where there is greatest potential. To tap onto public interest in heritage, we can identify heritage enthusiasts in schools and the community and train them to develop and guide heritage trails, exhibitions and activities. These heritage “firestarters” can train others in turn and propagate the movement. They will receive funding support to pilot community-led heritage projects, such as heritage corners at void decks and heritage walks curated by members of the community. The National Heritage Board can then showcase these achievements and projects at national



events such as the Singapore Heritage Festival<sup>23</sup> and Explore! Singapore<sup>24</sup>.

iii. **Nurture champions of arts and culture, who can advocate for greater financial and partnership support** through their personal and professional networks. We can use social media networks as channels for arts and culture champions to share their experiences and seed advocacy-related content. We can also identify and profile these champions in both traditional and social media, recognising their contributions to Singapore's cultural landscape and their own immediate communities. In telling their stories and showcasing their works, these champions can hopefully inspire others to get involved in arts and culture.

### **Box 5. Sydney 2030 – Leveraging on existing strengths**

The initiatives to galvanise a national movement for arts and culture leverage on Singapore's existing strengths, such as existing enthusiasts and networks. Sydney, too, is embarking on an arts and culture masterplan that leverages on its current assets.

In 2010, The City of Sydney released a new long-term masterplan entitled *Sustainable Sydney 2030 – Green, Global, Connected*, after an extensive series of consultations with the public, businesses and the community. The plan outlined a new vision and a detailed roadmap, delivered in partnership with the community which would transform Sydney into a “great city with a heart.” As its core were strategic directions addressing competitiveness, sustainability, community revitalisation, and liveability.

In the plan, culture and creative industries are identified as a key strategic thrust because of the belief that they are “fundamental to liveability, tolerance and quality of life and increasingly to economic development”. The four key priorities for arts and culture, with a sampling of the recommendations, are below:

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<sup>23</sup> The Singapore HeritageFest (SHF) is an annual event organised by the National Heritage Board and held over 2 weeks in July. It brings visitors on an interactive journey through Singapore's rich heritage and diversity of cultures. The festival's many events and activities are held in public venues in the heartlands as well as in the city, comprising of exhibitions, heritage tours, workshops and concerts, among others.

<sup>24</sup> Explore Singapore!, also championed by the National Heritage Board, aims at making heritage sites and museums accessible and enjoyable, and features activities located at Singapore's museums and heritage attractions.

1. *To encourage the appreciation and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage and its contemporary expression through:*
  - a. Developing an Indigenous Cultural Plan.
  - b. Establishing of an Australian Indigenous cultural centre.
  
2. *To support cultural activity, participation and interaction through:*
  - a. Promoting the use of temporarily unused city buildings as affordable spaces for artists, arts and cultural studios.
  - b. Preparing an integrated Cultural Events Strategy to identify opportunities for community-based events.
  - c. Using streets, laneways and public spaces for arts and culture events.
  - d. Preparing a Cultural Infrastructure Plan that assesses future needs.
  - e. Making spaces for busking and performances accessible and affordable.
  
3. *To support the development of creative industries through:*
  - a. Developing creative industry and cultural precinct strategies.
  - b. Providing a Creative Spaces Register to provide access to studio spaces in the city.
  - c. Developing a pilot program that encourages start-up cultural and creative enterprises.
  
4. *To provide cultural leadership and strengthen cultural partnerships through:*
  - a. Developing a creative framework for Public Art in the City.
  - b. Developing partnerships with universities to involve them in community cultural development.

The plan also outlines two major urban walking trails: (i) the **Eora Journey** – a heritage trail that takes visitors to significant indigenous heritage sites in the city, strengthening the cultural identity of local communities, and contributing actively to national reconciliation; and (ii) the **Cultural Ribbon**, in which all of Sydney's major harbourside cultural sites – including the Sydney Opera House – will be strung together into a signature arts, culture and lifestyle precinct.

A key focus for the strategy is to strengthen and promote what the City already has – to re-look its heritage and cultural assets and maximise their impact on quality of life and community bonding. Therefore, a significant number of action items are dedicated to stock-taking and assessments – of cultural events, cultural

sites, cultural infrastructure, public art, creative spaces – and examining ways to enhance these in order to encourage greater artistic excellence, and facilitate community involvement and ownership. This is not unlike Singapore’s own challenge of realistically assessing our existing enthusiasts, networks, cultural offerings, institutions and talent, and investing in appropriate capabilities to achieve excellence.

Sources:

Sydney 2030 Homepage: [www.sydney2030.au](http://www.sydney2030.au). Particularly section on Arts and Culture.

City of Sydney, 2010. *Sustainable Sydney 2030 – The Vision*. Available at: <http://www.sydney2030.com.au/vision-in-2030/resources>

## Strategic direction 2: Build capabilities to achieve excellence

### IV Develop cultural institutions, companies and offerings

#### Key stakeholders

- Arts and culture organisations and professionals
- National cultural institutions

#### Summary of recommendations

- a. Spur the growth of both emerging and established art forms (including traditional arts)
  - i. Theatre: Boost funding to raise standards of content, practice and professionalism
    - Invest in the development of more talented playwrights and better scripts
    - Strengthen support for incubation and gestation of works from script to stage
    - Enhance infrastructural support through new or upgraded theatres
  - ii. Music: Develop home-grown talent and companies in the music sector
    - Groom and recognise new talent
    - Support local music compositions
    - Foster collaborations to produce, aggregate and distribute music-related content
    - Develop a vibrant Singapore-based business ecosystem to attract international music companies
    - Inject greater investment into home-grown music festivals and concert organisers
  - iii. Dance: Support the development of dance excellence, choreography, education and professionalism
    - Review Government assistance to dance companies

- Build a dance centre as a focal point for experimentation and innovation

iv. Visual Arts: Position Singapore as a major hub for contemporary visual arts

- Encourage research and critical discourse on contemporary Asian art through a Centre for Contemporary Art
- Reinvent the Singapore Art Museum as a Museum of Contemporary Art
- Support public exhibitions of private collections
- Support the development of private museums to exhibit private art collections
- Develop a signature Visual Arts Prize

v. Literary Arts: Increase exposure for local literary content

- Incorporate more local literary works into the English and mother tongue curricula in schools
- Create avenues for potential writers to exchange ideas and develop critical thinking skills
- Enhance existing literary arts mentorship programmes
- Strengthen support for intermediaries to adapt literary works for other creative media

vi. Film: Enhance support for non-commercial films with artistic, heritage or cultural significance

- Provide seed funding for smaller budget films with artistic, heritage and cultural significance
- Promote local films with world-wide art-house or festival distribution potential to attract private investment
- Seed a community-led Singapore film foundation
- Set up a Singapore film archive with open access to the public
- Shape the Singapore International Film Festival to feature more local talent and films

b. Boost funding and infrastructural support for major national cultural

institutions

- i. Develop mid-sized performance spaces at the Esplanade, to complement its large and small spaces
  - ii. Revamp and expand the galleries at the Asian Civilisations Museum
  - iii. Enhance Singapore's national collections of artefacts and artworks through a National Collection Framework
  - iv. Scale up funding to the Singapore Symphony Orchestra and the Singapore Chinese Orchestra
  - v. Develop the Singapore Conference Hall into a Nanyang Centre for the Arts, to promote Nanyang-style music and culture
- c. Optimise funding to meet art companies' specific organisational and developmental needs
- i. Review our grants and assistance schemes to support different developmental needs and improve self-sustainability
  - ii. Streamline funding requirements and key performance indicators

“The test of the artist does not lie in the will with which he goes to work, but in the excellence of the work he produces.”

St Thomas Aquinas

51 Singapore's vibrant arts and culture scene today was unimaginable 20 years ago. In the 1980s, we were mocked by the international media as a “cultural desert”. A buzzing arts and culture landscape was a mere mirage. Today, the mirage has become a miracle.

52 Our major institutions, in particular the Esplanade: Theatres on the Bay and the National Library, are of equal standing to leading regional institutions, while Singaporean talent, museums and arts companies frequently collaborate with renowned international players. Today, we have a healthy stable of established arts companies across all genres, some of whom are poised to play a bigger role in national cultural development. We also have a growing number of new collectives, emerging companies, young talent and institutions that are finding their footing locally, regionally and internationally. We owe the miracle of our current arts and

culture landscape to the vision and foundations laid by the ACCA and RCPs, and the conviction, courage and sheer grit of our arts and culture pioneers.

53 Having built up our current stable of cultural icons, we must now lift them to the next level – the top tier of the international stage. We need to develop iconic cultural institutions and personalities that are recognisable world-wide as being Singaporean, represent the Singapore brand, and serve as an aspiration for the generations to come. Our cultural icons – the pinnacles of our artistic achievement – must be a source of national pride. At the same time, we must nurture our emerging arts institutions, companies and talent to fulfil their full potential.

#### **Voices from the ground**

“A Renaissance Singapore shouldn’t be afraid to be cutting edge; if Michelangelo was afraid, we wouldn’t have the Sistine Chapel.”

- Young male Chinese visual artist, commenting at one of the ACSR public forums

54 Raising the quality of our arts and culture offerings may appear to be a contradiction with extending arts and culture to the masses. There seems to be a trade-off between pushing our artworks to the cutting edge on the one hand, and making them more understandable to the man-in-the-street and encouraging practising enthusiasts to produce artworks on the other. This is not necessarily the case. The key is to provide a diversity of offerings to cater to different needs, while developing the appreciation ability of new audiences, and the capabilities of practising enthusiasts. In widening the diversity of arts and culture offerings, there needs to be greater tolerance of the more unconventional, experimental or controversial works, and gracious acceptance that not all works suitable are for everyone.

55 Different art forms are at different stages of development. For example, our theatre and classical music scenes, with a longer history of public and private patronage and support, are better developed, while our dance, popular music and film sectors, though with a shorter developmental history, are fast emerging as areas to watch in Singapore’s cultural scene. In the meantime, the visual arts scene in Singapore is booming, with our stable of excellent museums, a healthy ecosystem of commercial galleries and support services, and international art-fairs such as Art Stage.

56 We must **create multiple, focused developmental pathways and support frameworks** catered to the specific needs of each art form, taking into account its unique strengths, stage of development and potential. At the same time, we must **foster innovation** in our art forms. On the one hand, this could be in the form of pushing the frontiers of the cutting edge. On the other, it could come from extending the artworks to a broader base of appreciative audiences, innovating populism in a way that makes these art forms accessible, without compromising standards.

57 The need to raise quality and foster innovation in our art forms extends to their traditional, time-honoured incarnations – the traditional arts. Traditional arts are the backbone of our cultural heritage. The initiatives targeting the various art forms should apply equally to their more traditional manifestations. The traditional arts groups will need to resolve for themselves the dilemma between maintaining the “purity” of their art forms, and innovation to create fresh products and attract new audiences.

58 The ACSR recommends the following:

a. Spur the growth of emerging and established art forms. Singapore’s cultural landscape is made up of diverse players. We should not adopt a one-size-fits all approach. We should not pick winners too early, nor allow excessively rigid developmental frameworks. Rather, we should adopt a targeted approach for each individual art form, giving each the push it needs at its specific stage of development. This will allow talents and organisations the space to explore and evolve in their pursuit of excellence.

i. **Theatre: Boost funding to raise standards of content, practice and professionalism**. With the longest developmental history of all the art forms in Singapore, the theatre scene resonates strongly among Singaporeans and enjoys strong audience support. There are also close synergies between the theatre scene and the film and television industry, with many prominent stage actors also starring in local television productions. Theatre thus plays a critical role in promoting and celebrating Singapore’s culture and identity, not just to Singaporeans, but to visitors to our shores. Recognising this, we can:

▪ Invest in the development of more talented playwrights and better scripts. A good story, with original and compelling plots and characters, and a distinctive setting, would attract audiences, whether local or international.



- Strengthen support for incubation and gestation of works from script to stage. Performances look effortless on stage, but their production is the result of many months of hard work, from casting and rehearsals, to costuming and set production, to fine-tuning in the countdown to the premiere. Support is needed for every step of the way, before it reaches the applause from the audience.
- Enhance infrastructural support by developing purpose-built mid-sized theatres, upgrading existing theatres, or imposing presentation venues as a requirement in land sales. Many theatre productions, both local and international, are best experienced in a medium-sized setting. Mid-sized theatres also allow original productions to be “tested out” on smaller audiences while incurring smaller production costs, before graduating to larger venues. Singapore currently lacks sufficient mid-sized theatres for the theatre industry to reach its full potential.

ii. **Music: Develop home-grown talent and companies in the music sector.** Singapore has carved out a strong presence for itself in the commercial Mandarin popular music scene in Asia. Given our strong and growing base of talents (including artistes, composers, lyricists, arrangers and producers) and supporting services (such as artiste management agencies and recording studios), Singapore is poised to take its popular music industry to the next level. We can:

- Groom and recognise new talent through scholarships, training programmes, partnerships with overseas institutions, and greater opportunities for showcase and exposure.
- Support local music compositions. One suggestion from the public is to encourage the Singapore Symphony Orchestra (SSO) and local drama serials to commission and play locally-composed music.
- Foster collaborations among production, music, music licensing/publishing and media companies, to produce, aggregate and distribute content for which there is growing demand (such as music videos, concerts, and behind-the-scenes peeks).

- Develop a vibrant Singapore-based business ecosystem that is attractive to international music companies, to anchor strategic functions in Singapore for regional or global markets.
- Inject greater investment into home-grown music festivals and concert organisers, so that they can scale up, enhance their programming, and introduce new lifestyle and talent development components.

iii. **Dance: Support the development of dance excellence, choreography, education and professionalism.** Singapore's dance scene has grown tremendously in recent years. We now have a strong pool of practitioners and an appreciative though niche audience base. Our dance professionals have strong foundations in Western classical dance forms (e.g. ballet, jazz and contemporary), but are able to tap on Singaporean's multi-cultural Asian heritage to develop contemporary dance pieces with strong ethnic flavour. We can:

- Review Government assistance to dance companies with the potential to be of international standing. Government assistance should be structured to incentivise dance companies to reach their full potential.
- Build a dance centre that will serve as a focal point for experimentation and innovations grounded in Asian and Southeast Asian ethnic practices. This dance centre will champion collaborations, content creation, research, and training in this area.

### **Box 6. Shanghai's performing arts scene**

Shanghai, well-known as the gateway to the East, has a performing arts scene that is fast matching its stature. A quick glance at the city's one-stop web portal for events – the Shanghai Cultural Information homepage – reveals a busy calendar of new theatre productions, Broadway musicals, pop concerts, dance and traditional Chinese arts performances.

Another glance at its performing arts venues turned up more than 45 venues of differing sizes – performing arts centres with multiple venues, such as the iconic Shanghai Grand Theatre and the Shanghai Dramatic Center; large spaces like

Shanghai Culture Square or People Grand Theatre; as well as mid-sized, small and niche venues such as the Shanghai City Theatre, the Lyceum Theatre and the Shanghai Oriental Theatre.

Recently, municipal representatives announced the development of “Shanghai’s Broadway” at a 70,000 square metre site around a former cement factory on the banks of the Huangpu River within the next few years. The aim is to turn the old cement plant itself into a “top-level theater like the Sydney Opera House,” and the entire area into a hotspot for musical performances that “could rival New York’s famous theater area.”

Alongside the core cultural cluster, there will also be other business and entertainment facilities, supporting synergies between arts organisations and other media and entertainment corporations. An adjacent area will further contain a riverside business centre, as well as a 250-metre tall iconic skyscraper, underscoring local authorities’ intentions to cement this location as a destination in itself.

If constructed, Shanghai’s new “Broadway” on the Huangpu river can be expected to give a boost to the city’s performing arts ecosystem, supporting the development of more original performing arts content, drawing even more mainland audiences to the city, as well as providing employment for students at the city’s arts institutions, such as the Shanghai Theatre Academy. More importantly, it would give a boost to Shanghai’s efforts to re-position itself as not just the economic and financial capital of China, but also a leading culture and entertainment hub in the region.

Sources:

Shanghai Daily, 2011. “Plan for ‘Shanghai Broadway.’” 22 Nov. Available at: <http://news.cultural-china.com/20111122092629.html>

Shanghai Cultural Information website, for Shanghai Events and Venues listings. Available at: <http://www.culture.sh.cn/english/>

Shanghai Municipal Government, 2010. Highlights of September 22 Press Conference on Shanghai cultural and creative industries development and statistics in 2010. Available at: <http://en.shio.gov.cn/presscon/2011/09/27/1151680.html>

iv. **Visual Arts: Position Singapore as a major hub for contemporary visual arts.** Over the last 20 years, Singapore's visual arts scene has seen the establishment of major public museums and events, the growth of commercial galleries, private museums and art fairs, the development of world-class facilities such as the Singapore Freeport<sup>25</sup>, as well as growing international recognition for our artists. Building on this momentum, we can:

- Encourage research and critical discourse on contemporary Asian art through a Centre for Contemporary Art at Gillman Barracks. Gillman Barracks, slated to be a new lifestyle and fine arts cluster, will also showcase the works of cutting-edge international artists to the industry and the public, as well as support a fine arts ecosystem of commercial galleries, auction houses, artist studios, conservation agencies and storage facilities.
- Reinvent the Singapore Art Museum as a Museum of Contemporary Art – an architecturally iconic space dedicated to presenting cutting-edge, multidisciplinary works. This museum will position Singapore as an exciting new destination for contemporary art creation and showcase.
- Support public exhibitions of private collections. This encourages private collectors to be plugged into the national art discourse, raises the profile of emerging talent, and improves public access to quality private collections that would otherwise not be available for view.
- Support the development of private museums to exhibit private art collections for public enjoyment and learning. Similarly, this would encourage passionate individuals and organisations to be engaged in Singapore's visual arts development and discourse, and also encourage greater acceptance of art as a part of everyday life in Singapore.
- Develop a signature Visual Arts Prize – the first contemporary international art prize in Asia. In conjunction with the award of this prize, we can engage leading global artists in a

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<sup>25</sup> The Singapore Freeport is a high security storage facility located at Changi, which provides premium storage space for artworks, collectibles and other luxury items by local and international clients.

discussion on the global art scene, create high-profile developmental and promotional opportunities for local and regional artists, and attract corporate sponsors, art dealers and art investors to Singapore.

v. **Literary Arts: Increase exposure for local literary content** through schools, opportunities for interactions between writers, and the adaptation of literary works for other media. Despite the relatively long history of the Singapore literary arts scene, and the richness and variety of local literary works, there is still little local appreciation of local writing. To address this, we can:

- Incorporate more local literary works into the English language and mother tongue curricula in schools, to raise awareness and appreciation of our literary arts, and ensure that more of the next generation become new supporters for local writing.
- Create avenues for potential writers to exchange ideas and improve critical thinking skills. This would encourage a strong culture of writing and cultivate a better understanding and appreciation of literary arts.
- Enhance existing literary arts mentorship programmes, to help mentees to not only develop their writing, but also publish their works.
- Strengthen support for intermediaries to adapt our literary works for other creative media, including stage, television and film. This would greatly enhance the exposure of the works to the mainstream audience.

vi. **Film: Enhance support for non-commercial films with artistic, heritage or cultural significance**. Singaporean filmmakers are gaining recognition locally and internationally through film festivals, our own international cultural showcases, and a recent spate of commercially successful productions such as Royston Tan's *881* and Jack Neo's *Money No Enough* series. The ACSR's quantitative survey also shows that film is the art form that Singaporeans are most proud of, after classical music. To better recognise their contributions to developing Singapore's cultural identity, we can:

- Provide seed funding for smaller budget films with artistic, heritage and cultural significance through the Short Film Grant and First-Time Feature Fund. Often, film-makers, especially first-timers, find it a challenge gaining support for their films. More support is needed for these films to fulfil their artistic potential.
- Promote local films with worldwide Art-house or Festival distribution potential to attract private investment.
- Seed a community-led Singaporea film foundation to foster a culture of patronage for film through donations from the private and people sectors.
- Set up and maintain a Singapore film archive with open access to the public.
- Shape the Singapore International Film Festival to feature more local talent and films, as well as greater opportunities for local talent to network with foreign professionals.

### **Voices from the ground**

“As a foreign supporter of Singaporean films, I find independent and locally-rooted films more uniquely Singapore; I appreciate them more than big-budgeted productions.”

- Comment from “Matsushita Yumi”, posted on the ACSR’s online consultation portal

- b. Boost funding and infrastructural support for major national cultural institutions. Our national cultural institutions – the National Museums, the Esplanade and national performing arts companies, have achieved a certain regional repute for their quality of programming, content and technical expertise. However, to reach the next stage of excellence, they will need more funding, better infrastructure, and shifts in the way they are managed. We need to develop our cultural institutions as internationally-renowned icons, able to create innovative and cutting-edge content, attract exceptional talent, competently assert their presence alongside other luminous cultural

institutions in major global cities, and catalyse development in the rest of the industry.

We need to:

i. **Develop mid-sized performance spaces at the Esplanade**, to complement its large and small spaces. The Esplanade's ability to support creation of local content and develop industry capabilities (in technical theatre, programming, and venue and production management) is currently constrained by its lack of mid-sized venues. Such mid-sized venues of 500 to 900 seats would enable a balance between scale and intimacy that is sought after in many international and regional performing arts productions, thereby allowing a greater diversity of programmes to be showcased at the Esplanade. The development of mid-sized performance spaces at the Esplanade would also complement the initiatives that spur the growth of the performing arts, by providing infrastructure of the appropriate size for their showcase.

ii. **Revamp and expand the galleries at the Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM)**, introducing interactive galleries and enhanced exhibition displays to strengthen audience engagement. ACM has established a regional reputation and niche for itself in presenting Asian material cultures worldwide. Given the growing interest worldwide in Asia and Asian cultures, we can also take the opportunity to develop a Centre of Inter-Cultural Research managed by the ACM. This Centre can anchor Singapore and the ACM as a regional centre for Asian cultures, ethnography and anthropology. Through partnerships with like-minded overseas institutions and museums, it can evolve to become a centre for field-based research and an academy, training researchers, academics, conservators, curators and archivists, as well as jointly publishing research with international museums. There is also scope for our national museums to collaborate with other overseas museums on travelling exhibitions.

iii. **Enhance and better manage Singapore's national collections of artefacts and artworks through a National Collection Framework (NCF)**. The NCF will focus our collection strategy on artworks and artefacts relating to Singapore's history, nationhood and identity, Singapore's place in the region and links with immediate neighbours, as well as Singapore's ancestral and ethnic cultures.

iv. **Scale up funding to the Singapore Symphony Orchestra (SSO) and Singapore Chinese Orchestra (SCO)**. All global cities in America, Europe and Asia have top-rate classical orchestras featuring prominently in the city's marketing and embraced by locals and foreigners alike. These orchestras often showcase celebrity conductors, performers and guests, have busy performance and recording schedules, and boast a prominent presence in the city's cultural, events and social calendars. Additional funding is needed to enable SSO and SCO to better attract and retain top talent, while nurturing and promoting young musicians, so they can undertake more ambitious and innovative artistic direction and programming, and make a bigger impact for themselves and for Singapore in the very competitive international scene. Additional funding can further support our orchestras' efforts to develop new audiences in schools and the community, and our orchestras' succession-planning.

v. **Develop the Singapore Conference Hall (SCH) into a Nanyang Centre for the Arts**. In tandem with the proposed development of an Inter-cultural Research Centre within the ACM, we could also develop the SCH – the SCO's home – into an equivalent centre for inter-cultural research and development for music. This Centre can be an iconic home for Nanyang-style music (music with influences and elements from Southeast Asia), which is unique to Singapore and distinguishes the SCO from other regional Chinese orchestras. The Centre can also offer a variety of ways for Singaporeans and visitors to interact with Nanyang culture and learn more about the region's art, history and traditions.

c. **Optimise funding to meet arts companies' specific organisational and developmental needs**. During the ACSR's public consultations, arts practitioners have repeatedly highlighted the importance of funding the production of arts and culture works. The current range of organisational development, content development and presentation grants has contributed to Singapore's healthy stable of professional arts companies and vibrant arts calendar. However, to achieve excellence in our cultural organisations and talent, we need to enlarge the funding pool for the artist community, allowing mature arts companies to reach the next phase of their development, as well as newer arts companies to reach their potential. Arts funding should also support semi-professionals and hobbyists who may not pursue the arts as a career, but whose competencies are at a near-professional level.



While broadening the audience base for arts and culture needs to go hand-in-hand with raising the quality of arts professionals and offerings, resources should not be diverted away from the latter to the former. Rather, separate resources need to be allocated to ensure that both strategic priorities of engagement and excellence are met.

We can:

i. **Review our grants and assistance schemes to support different developmental needs and improve self-sustainability.**

Public grants and assistance schemes have the greatest potential to professionalise and raise the standards of the scene. The new grants and assessment framework should differentiate between funding for established and emerging companies, with the understanding that companies at different stages of development have different needs and responsibilities. For established companies, funding is needed to drive education, outreach and industry development, and raise their international standing. For emerging companies, funding is needed for growth at the early stages of their development. To ensure greater self-sustainability and financial prudence, the new framework should introduce more matching grant components, as well as promote collaborations with intermediaries such as producers, presenters and galleries. In addition, funding bodies can work more closely with arts groups, to better understand their needs, refine funding proposals, and customise funding, within broad and realistic parameters, to support varying stages of growth.

ii. **Streamline funding requirements and key performance indicators.**

Imposing requirements and key performance indicators on our arts practitioners and arts companies is necessary to ensure that funding achieves the intended outcomes. However, some artists have fed back that some of these requirements, such as having to partner arts educators, take up an excessive amount of time, leaving them with little time to devote to their art. A balance needs to be struck between accountability to the public and giving the artists the time and space they need. The funding requirements and key performance indicators should be reviewed and streamlined. In the meantime, artists who are keen to partner arts educators should take up funding schemes tied to arts education, while those who wish to focus on their art can focus on other funding schemes that better meet their needs.

## **V Invest in talent, support professional aspirations**

### Key stakeholders

- Full-time arts and culture professionals
- Semi-professional practitioners and practising enthusiasts
- Arts students and young aspiring professionals
- Arts educators
- Arts educational institutions

### Summary of recommendations

- a. Support and encourage aspiring young talent
  - i. Expand Ministry of Education's "Central Talent Development Framework" for CCAs to a wider range of art forms
  - ii. Coordinate the development of young cultural leaders across all schools
  - iii. Strengthen Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and LASALLE College of the Arts' curricula and profiles
  - iv. Set up a mentorship and apprenticeship framework for students in arts and culture
  - v. Fully fund local and overseas scholarships for undergraduate and postgraduate arts and culture courses
- b. Provide more and better opportunities for current practitioners to upgrade capabilities
  - i. Introduce new Continuing Education and Training (CET) providers to meet skills development and professionalisation needs
  - ii. Improve range of and access to CET programmes
  - iii. Develop a training framework for arts and culture instructors
  - iv. Extend the mentorship and apprenticeship framework to young arts practitioners and professionals
- c. Foster a supportive environment in which communities of creative professionals can thrive
  - i. Provide stronger recognition and support for freelancers

- Set up Professional Employer Organisations to perform administrative functions such as finance and accounting
  - Set up a Freelancers' Association to advance freelancers' interests
  - Expand the range of Workforce Skills Qualifications competency units for the creative industries
- ii. Relax rules and regulations at designated areas and times
  - iii. Set up a national content database for Singapore arts and culture
  - iv. Invest more in experimentation, creation and incubation of new content

“The person born with a talent they are meant to use will find their greatest happiness in using it.”

Goethe

59 People are the bedrock of arts and culture. Our star talent and cultural institutions are only as excellent as the qualified professionals who make them so – the writers, artists, musicians, performers, administrators, programmers, impresarios, business professionals, presenters, technical specialists, marketers, critics, educators and many more in a range of specialised roles. Our arts and culture professionals, in turn, did not attain their current levels of professionalism by themselves. They were the grateful recipients of the training and support of mainstream schools, arts educational institutions, continuing education programmes, arts instructors and mentors.

60 To support the development of excellent cultural institutions and offerings, we need to invest substantially in talent, **attracting and developing the full range of artistic, professional and technical capabilities** to meet the demands of the industry and the creative process.

61 In Singapore today, arts and culture are unfortunately still viewed as a “good-to-have,” a luxury catered to those who can afford it. This has spawned perceptions that arts and culture-related professions, typically craft-oriented and characterised by micro-businesses and freelance work, lack prestige and are not viable careers, vis-à-vis more “traditional,” high-paying and employment-oriented professions such as engineering, medicine, finance and law. Success is generally still defined in terms of

securing a good, high-paying job, rather than in being able to fulfil one's personal aspirations.

62 While the financial returns of working in the cultural sector may be generally less significant than these other professional sectors, the personal and societal returns from being involved are tremendous. Being recognised in the cultural sector and highly paid is also by no means impossible, as a few of our star talent have demonstrated. The risks, however, are higher, and the hard work and passion required, substantial. As emphasised during the ACSR's public consultations, a change in perceptions is necessary: a career in arts and culture is as viable as any other in the nation, and culture sector professionals, like other professionals, are upstanding contributors to the economy and society.

63 To this end, just as we do for any other industry, we need to provide **practitioners and supporting professionals in the arts and culture sector the quality training and developmental opportunities** that would amply prepare them to meet the demands and high standards of the industry<sup>26</sup>. This would complement the initiatives that spur the growth of the various art forms, and develop the arts companies. Better quality training and development would also enhance respect for the profession, and boost prospects for employment and pay, whether as employees of a cultural organisation, or as freelancers.

64 We must also **ensure that practitioners enjoy due recognition for their achievements**. Better recognition will place a premium on practitioners' works, allowing them to fulfil personal and career goals, and encourage them to contribute to the promotion and development of the sector in return. As in other industry sectors, top and promising talent should be identified and groomed. Their success will help to change prevailing perceptions.

65 The ACSR recommends the following:

- a. Support and encourage aspiring young talent. Singapore's arts education landscape has grown in recent years. In addition to diploma-level programmes, the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) and LASALLE College of the Arts now offer degree-level programmes in partnership with overseas institutions, while the School of the Arts (SOTA) moved into its city campus in 2010. Our polytechnics and universities offer a variety of courses in fine and applied arts, and private institutions (such as New York University's

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<sup>26</sup> In the next five years, it is estimated that at least 500 new jobs in arts and culture will be created annually due to the manpower requirements of the two Integrated Resorts, the demand for trained arts teachers by the Ministry of Education, and the opening of the National Art Gallery in 2014.

Tisch School of the Arts) have set up regional campuses in Singapore. Still, given the uneven quality of training and instruction, as well as the limited range of courses offered across institutions and levels, young, aspiring artistic talent lack a comprehensive and coherent developmental pathway, from pre-tertiary education to pre-employment training. We must strengthen our existing institutions, and offer emerging talent in the field the same breadth of opportunities to excel as their counterparts in other academic fields.

i. **Expand Ministry of Education (MOE)’s “Central Talent Development Framework” for CCAs to a wider range of art forms.**

The current framework provides talented students in concert band, choir and Chinese orchestra CCAs access to showcase opportunities and higher-quality instruction (workshops and master-classes for further development) at MOE’s Music Talent Development Centre (MTDC). We should extend this to more art forms such as drama, dance, visual arts and literary arts, complementing the MTDC with other genre-specific Arts Talent Development Centres, which will be recognised centres for young talent development, and set standards for the amateur arts and culture scene. In the same vein, the current two pinnacle organisations for talented young musicians – the Singapore National Youth Orchestra and Singapore Youth Chinese Orchestra – can also be complemented by equivalents in a wider range of art forms.

ii. **Coordinate the development of young cultural leaders across all schools** through a centralised “Cultural Ambassador Development Framework”.

We can groom young enthusiasts who demonstrate interest in culture and heritage (including National Education Ambassadors, leaders of arts and culture CCAs, and Humanities Scholars) through setting up a formal network that includes development programmes for deepening knowledge and competencies, and opportunities for collaborative projects and community involvement. The aim of the framework would be to equip these leaders with the skills to communicate and transfer their passion for and knowledge of culture to their peers, creating a “multiplier” effect.

iii. **Strengthen NAFA and LASALLE’s curricula and profile.**

NAFA and LASALLE are Singapore’s two fully specialised tertiary-level Arts Institutions (AIs), with a long history of involvement in Singapore’s arts and culture scene. For their next phase of development, we need to build their capacities by supporting their hiring of a larger pool of full-time, dedicated faculty members, and facilitating partnerships with experienced practitioners, who can be brought in as adjunct faculty. In

addition, their curricula can also be better tailored to meet prevailing industry demands through introducing opportunities for students to gain more industry exposure and to go on overseas exchanges. In the longer term, we can study the possibility of evolving the AIs to become a full-fledged Arts, Design and Media university with its own degree programmes, and a centre for thought leadership and research in Asian arts and culture, offering cross-cultural exchanges and residencies. This would meet young local and regional talents' aspirations to pursue degree-level certification in the arts, and provide for greater flexibility in the development of courses suited to a local or Asian context. The goal would be to position Singapore as the place to be for quality arts education and training *in* the region, *for* the region.

iv. **Set up a mentorship and apprenticeship framework for students in arts and culture.** Traditionally, education in arts and culture was primarily through a mentorship and apprenticeship model, where a novice learns his craft through years of practice, research and creation with a master in the field. Introducing a mentorship and apprenticeship framework in Singapore would enable aspiring entrants and potential leaders in the cultural sector to learn from the best in their genres, facilitating the transference of not just fundamental skills and knowledge, but also codes of practice and professional conduct that will facilitate their transition into professionals. This framework needs to be tailored to meet the specific needs and interests of participants, ensuring consistency of teaching and pedagogy only in areas that cut across genres, such as managing intellectual property. As part of this framework, we can offer grants to interested arts professionals and organisations in support of them taking on mentees/apprentices, and facilitate consultation, networking and possible matching between mentee and mentor / mentoring organisation. Additionally, as highlighted during the public consultations, we need to keep in mind that mentorship and apprenticeship are highly dependent on personal chemistry and spontaneity. The implementation of this mentorship and apprenticeship framework should not be overly formalised and structured.

#### **Voices from the Ground**

“I want to see how a more established artist works his network, hang out with him even after work to see how he interacts with his peers. You can learn a lot more

than in the classroom.”

- Young male Chinese arts student, commenting at one of the ACSR’s focus group discussions

v. **Fully fund local and overseas scholarships for undergraduate and postgraduate courses in arts and culture**, while retaining the flexibility of offering partial scholarships. These will provide young talent in arts and culture with scholarship options that are equally attractive as those offered for other areas of study, underscoring the viability and importance of the cultural profession. Fully-funded scholarships will enable aspiring talent to pursue full-time studies in craft-based, arts management or technical fields, without having to raise additional funds to support tuition and living expenses. This would in turn afford them the time and mental capacity to focus on their studies, and to seize performance, exhibition or internship opportunities outside their formal curriculum, for better professional development. We can chart out revised service commitment guidelines to maximise the contribution of returning scholars to the Singaporean cultural sector, and groom them as future leaders in their fields. The ACSR’s public consultations have reaffirmed that enhancing arts and culture scholarships would have a strong impact on raising levels of artistic excellence.

b. Provide more and better opportunities for current practitioners to upgrade capabilities. For Singapore’s arts and culture scene to reach the next stage of professionalism and artistic excellence, all our current practitioners and supporting professionals need to have the opportunity to continually upgrade their capabilities, equipping themselves with the latest industry-relevant skills and knowledge. Through improving existing and introducing new training and development programmes, we can make it easier for practitioners to seek professional upgrading, strengthening the quality and value of their work, and enhancing their employability within the arts and culture sector, and in other related sectors such as tourism, events and entertainment, media and design. This would also provide a continuation of the training initiatives at the pre-tertiary and tertiary levels, post-graduation.

i. **Introduce new Continuing Education and Training (CET) providers** to meet skills development and professionalisation needs. New CET providers will be introduced to meet critical industry skills gaps by offering structured training programmes in arts management,

arts education, art form-specific practice, and supporting / technical professions such as technical theatre, production design and management, and conservation. We can expand the current capacities of existing providers such as the National Book Development Council and the Singapore Drama Educators' Association, providing them with greater funding support for larger and better quality programmes. We can also expand the mandate of NAFA, LaSalle and the polytechnics to include the deployment of CET programmes, and groom leading arts organisations and associations as new CET providers for their respective art forms. This would allow for a more industry-led model of development and continuous improvement.

ii. **Improve range of and access to CET programmes.** We can work with partners such as the Workforce Development Agency (WDA) to expand the current range of CET pathways for the cultural sector. This would plug critical gaps in the CET landscape, in particular, gaps in arts education (including art form-specific programmes for training instructors and educators) and in arts management. We can also explore setting up programmes and channels that facilitate artistic collaborations between practitioners of different art forms, given the importance of such collaborations in refining one's craft. Recognising that both time and cost could be a barrier to CET participation, particularly when a significant number of arts and culture professionals are freelancers for whom time spent on training means income forgone, we can work with WDA to provide course fee subsidies and absentee payroll support, as well as to mitigate the impact of loss of potential income arising from participating in CET. In addition, we can introduce more short-term, industry-oriented CET programmes to grant working professionals and practising artists more options and greater flexibility in their training.

iii. **Develop a training framework for arts and culture instructors.** This would expand the capacity of arts and culture educators to teach, enhance their employability, and raise the overall standards of arts and culture education. This framework can provide instructors, particularly those in specialised arts schools, with upgrading in both professional skills for improving their craft and instructional skills for imparting their craft to others. In the area of instructional skills, we can work with qualified training providers develop certificates or other qualifications in pedagogy. In the area of professional skills, we can deploy CET providers in the provision of short-term training. These



courses can be subsidised for greater affordability and accessibility to instructors, many of whom also double up as practising professionals.

iv. **Extend the mentorship and apprenticeship framework to young arts practitioners and professionals.** Current practitioners and professionals should also have the opportunity to learn from master-mentors or leading industry organisations as part of their career and professional development, so that they may be future leaders in the arts and culture sector.

c. Foster a supportive environment in which communities of creative professionals can thrive. It is not sufficient to provide a pipeline of qualified, well-trained talent and supporting professionals for the arts and culture sector. These talent and professionals must be immersed in a supportive and open environment where they can practice their craft to the best of their abilities and aspirations, and gain due exposure, recognition and remuneration for their work. A conducive and more rewarding environment would lead to greater retention of talent in the arts and culture sector, and a more exciting array of quality creative output.

i. **Provide stronger recognition and support for freelancers.** Freelancers form a significant proportion of our creative workforce and are expected to grow in number as the sector continues to expand. While freelancers contribute greatly to the dynamism of our cultural landscape, they do not enjoy the same support services (such as in contract negotiation, workplace and legal representation, business management and marketing) as their counterparts employed in an organisation. The difficulties faced by freelancers, particularly in terms of depressed wages and inadequate collective representation, was a recurrent point made in public consultations.

### **Voices from the Ground**

“Production houses are not paying sub-contractors because they have cash flow problems. The freelancers are at the bottom of the food chain and paid even lower.”

- Middle-aged male Malay artist, commenting at one of the ACSR’s focus group discussions

To reduce their administrative burden to enable them to focus on creative work, we can:

- Set up Professional Employer Organisations (PEOs) to perform administrative functions such as finance and accounting. These PEOs would accept jobs on behalf of freelancers, negotiate contracts with clients, resolve payment and claims issues, and serve as surrogate employers<sup>27</sup>. We should consult the industry on the specific roles that the PEOs should perform that would be most useful to the freelancers, ensuring that fees paid by freelancers are affordable and do not depress wages further.
  - Set up a Freelancers' Association in the longer term to develop and propagate industry best-practice, to advance the interests of the industry, explore amendments to employment policies, and champion legislative review. The aim is to better recognise and protect the cultural sector's independent workforce.
  - Expand the range of Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) competency units for the creative industries (including the arts and cultural sector). Under the "Foundational Skills" course offerings, we can include courses in basic accounting and business administration to meet existing demand from freelancers for training in these areas.
- ii. **Relax rules and regulations at designated areas and times.** Rules and regulations (such as the need for busking licences, the use of "back-lanes" for arts and culture, and lighting and noise control regulations) can be reviewed in certain precincts to increase the vibrancy and encourage more spontaneous ground-up initiatives from communities of creative professionals. We can go one step further to explore setting up "No Censorship Zones" at designated areas (similar to Speakers' Corner), if these can complement the branding, identity, programming, marketing strategies and public order considerations for the precinct. In addition to professionals, this would also provide opportunities for practising enthusiasts to perform, complementing the

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<sup>27</sup> Enabling freelancers in turn to tap on WDA's schemes for offsetting the loss of income arising from taking up training.

initiatives that sustain/deepen the lifelong engagement of hobbyists. It would create more spaces for arts practitioners to freely perform and engage in their craft – an issue raised during our consultations – and complement the recommendations on bringing arts and culture to most-frequented public spaces island-wide.

iii. **Set up a national content database for Singapore arts and culture.** This database will aggregate, archive and promote local cultural content – works produced by Singaporean artists and companies, in Singapore, or about Singapore. These works can be collected from various sources (including institutional archives and online platforms such as SGCOOL and musicSG) and made publicly available at a national level, with related information on their authorship, creation and significance. This database will support research, content and curriculum creation by students, educators, academics and practitioners. It will also serve as a yardstick and reference point in arts education and capability development; a legacy and form of recognition for local practitioners and creative communities; as well as a platform facilitating networking and information-gathering between event organisers and arts and culture groups. It would complement the ArtsCultureSG portal, by providing a more in-depth database of cultural content for those who wish to delve deeper.

iv. **Invest more in experimentation, creation and incubation of new content.** To further support the creation of quality cultural content and products by our creative professionals and organisations, we can channel more funding towards the National Arts Council’s “Arts Creation Fund,” which enables the creation of new works with local and Asian flavour. We can also provide programmes and support schemes for the incubation of these works, while working through intermediaries (literary agents, galleries, artiste management companies, concert promoters and impresarios) to promote them in domestic and international markets. This new content, in turn, would contribute to the programming of infrastructure such as the Regional Cultural Centres and the mid-sized performing spaces at the Esplanade, as well as online content aggregators such as ArtsCultureSG and the national database of arts and culture content.

## **VI Work with partners to achieve new heights**

### Key stakeholders

- Businesses and corporations
- Philanthropic organisations
- Patrons and philanthropists
- Volunteers
- Government agencies

### Summary of recommendations

- a. Incentivise greater philanthropy and corporate sponsorship
  - i. Expand tax incentive schemes to incentivise greater giving
    - Waive Goods and Services Tax (GST) on donations, acquisitions and loans to the national collection and national museums
    - Enhance the Public Art Tax incentive Scheme to include moveable artworks
  - ii. Establish a Matching Grant Scheme for arts and culture donations
  - iii. Integrate arts and culture into companies' Corporate Social Responsibility efforts
- b. Encourage the showcase of private collections
  - i. Establish grant schemes to encourage the use of commercial spaces as galleries for private collections
  - ii. Establish a Museum of Private Collections
  - iii. Expand the 2.5 times tax deduction scheme to include operating cost of private museums
- c. Establish an "Arts and Culture Champions" volunteer recognition scheme
- d. Develop a dynamic marketplace for arts and culture
  - i. Adopt a coordinated national programming and marketing approach for arts and culture
  - ii. Coordinate demands for physical spaces into clusters

- iii. Ramp up efforts to grow arts business in Singapore
- iv. Extend GST waiver on “goods intended for sale during art auctions” from three to six months
- v. Set up a venture capitalist scheme to support the co-development of cultural businesses
- e. Review and enhance the organisational structures and capacity of Government arts and culture agencies
  - i. Review the organisational structures of MICA’s arts and culture agencies
  - ii. Strengthen whole-of-Government and whole-of-sector partnerships in implementing ACSR recommendations
  - iii. Identify place-making agencies to champion the development and marketing of arts and culture precincts

“No one can whistle a symphony. It takes a whole orchestra to play it.”

H.E. Luccock

66 The Government has been largely responsible for initiating Singapore’s cultural development and lifting our cultural scene to its current level of vibrancy. However, the Government cannot sustain cultural development by itself. Investing in talent and our cultural institutions will require substantial resources. The private sector, the community and the non-profit sector will need to do their part. Together with the Government, we can help our arts and culture sector achieve the next stage of development.

67 In this next phase, there will be many opportunities for businesses, non-profit organisations and individuals to assume greater ownership over the cultural scene and accord greater recognition to the social value of arts and culture. This sense of ownership can arise not only from providing greater funding support, but also from spearheading new programmes, assistance and recognition schemes, and developing a healthy market for arts and culture products and events. Businesses and the community have a wealth of resources that can be mobilised in support of arts and culture. This joint-investment and partnership model between the Government, the private sector and the people must form the basis of our strategy for the future.

68 To ensure the long-term, sustainable growth of our cultural sector and institutions, we must **give the private sector and the people a greater stake in supporting our cultural development**. Diversifying the base of funding support would reduce the arts industry's reliance on Government funding, hence freeing artists to explore domains that may not enjoy public funding, such as more controversial social and political content. This support is also important for the international networks that businesses and the community could bring, allowing our cultural institutions and talent to establish a presence beyond our shores, welcoming foreign cultural institutions and talent to Singapore, and facilitating collaborations between local and international players.

69 We must **ensure that our support systems, organisational structures and developmental programmes support greater collaboration**, not only across public sector agencies, but also across businesses, non-profit organisations and the community. This will facilitate the initiation of more ideas and projects from the ground, enable public sector agencies to implement arts and culture policies better, and encourage businesses and the community to partner the Government in a manner that serves the interests of all parties.

70 The ACSR recommends the following:

a. Incentivise greater philanthropy and corporate sponsorship, to foster a nation of patrons of arts and culture. Government funding currently makes up about 80% of funds invested in arts and culture. Given rising affluence and a burgeoning public interest in heritage matters, we can grow the private giving pie by facilitating greater individual giving, particularly from loyal audiences and active participants<sup>28</sup>. We can also encourage greater cultural philanthropy from foundations and high net-worth individuals, who would view giving as an opportunity to contribute to a lasting national legacy. These advocacy and fundraising efforts should be fronted by cultural organisations themselves, with the Government putting in place facilitative policies, such as an advantageous tax framework, more and better information for potential donors, and training opportunities for fundraisers, that would create a climate for giving.

i. **Expand tax incentive schemes to incentivise greater giving**, to catalyse private-sector driven development in the cultural sector.

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<sup>28</sup> Based on "Arts Philanthropy: The Facts, Trends & Potential", UK Arts & Business, 2010, potential for the arts is greatest in turning individuals who already engage with the arts into supporters of arts and culture causes through ticket sales and attendances, and related products and services.

### **Voices from the ground**

“Companies are after all profit-seeking entities. Having tax breaks means cost savings. This definitely makes support attractive”

- Middle-aged male Chinese businessman, commenting at one of the ACSR’s focus group discussions

We can:

- Waive Goods and Services Tax (GST) on donations, acquisitions and loans to the Singapore Collection and national museums. Currently, GST is charged on all imports of artworks for display in museums, and donations of artworks purchased overseas. GST is also charged on artwork and artefacts loaned to the National Collection for display at the national museums and institutions. Waiving GST on donations, acquisitions and loans would reduce costs for the donor, lender and museum, and make the exchange more attractive.
  - Enhance the Public Art Tax Incentive Scheme (PATIS). PATIS allows private organisations and individuals who participate in donating, commissioning, displaying and maintaining public art to claim double tax deduction. However, the scheme only covers immovable artworks such as sculpture and location-specific installation art within and around corporate and commercial developments in the city centre. PATIS should be enhanced to include moveable artworks such as paintings.
- ii. **Establish a Matching Grant Scheme** to encourage more companies and donors to give with the assurance that their contributions to arts and culture organisations will be doubly effective in impacting beneficiaries. A Matching Grant Scheme would also be a tangible symbol of the shared responsibility between businesses, the community and the Government in driving cultural development, ensuring a more equitable funding model for the sector in the longer term. Donations can be matched at differing ratios depending on the specific profile and need of the arts company. The scheme could be

anchored on an Endowment Fund, which would represent the Government's long-term commitment to and investment in bolstering its nation- and identity-building efforts through arts and culture.

iii. **Integrate arts and culture into companies' Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts.** Companies can be encouraged to view their support for arts and culture as a form of CSR, especially if support is directed towards community arts and culture, or using arts and culture in social sector programmes. These programmes bond people from all walks of life and promote social causes (such as active aging). Companies' support for certain genres of arts and culture could kill two birds with one stone, contributing to their corporate image and branding, while achieving their goals for contributing back to society.

b. Encourage the showcase of private collections. Besides leveraging on community facilities such as libraries, community clubs, sports facilities and schools as spaces for arts and culture, we can also put vacant State properties and commercial buildings to better use as arts and culture spaces, such as exhibition spaces for private collections. In addition, there is potential to encourage the setting up of more private museums. We can:

i. **Establish grant schemes to encourage the use of commercial spaces as galleries for private collections.** These spaces could also be put to other arts presentation, practice and rehearsal uses. A private museums grant could be considered to encourage interested collectors to set up private museums.

ii. **Establish a Museum of Private Collections.** A vacant State building could be leased at a nominal fee to private collectors and/or community enthusiasts, to provide affordable small- and medium-sized gallery spaces to showcase their private collections and works.

iii. **Expand the 2.5 times tax deduction scheme.** Currently, contributions to culture and arts via Institutes of Public Characters (IPCs) are entitled to 2.5 times tax deduction. To encourage the setting up of private museums, we could expand the 2.5 times tax deduction scheme to include the operating cost of private museums. The scheme could be expanded further to include opening private spaces and facilities for arts and culture use (such as administrative use by arts groups, conducting of classes and workshops, and rehearsal and practice), maintenance of sculptures, and investments in/contributions to artistic or culturally significant Singapore films.



- c. **Establish an “Arts and Culture Champions” volunteer recognition scheme.** The scheme would recognise individuals and companies who have volunteered actively in arts and culture activities, including arts and culture practitioners who have made an exceptional effort to teach, share or engage with the community in a meaningful way.

### **Box 7. New York’s philanthropists and arts and culture champions**

New York is home to one of the largest concentrations of arts and culture institutions in the world – more than 500 galleries; 375 non-profit theater companies; 330 dance companies; 150 museums; 96 orchestras; 38 Broadway theaters; 24 performing arts centers.

The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs has a 2011 budget of USD141 million and a capital budget of USD\$613 million over the next five years. This is surprisingly small, compared to the Singapore Government’s programme spending on arts and culture, which was projected in 2011 to average around S\$365 million a year from FY2011 to FY2015. The small budget of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs is almost unimaginable, given the scale and vibrancy of New York’s arts and culture scene, one of the most dynamic in the world. How does New York sustain its arts sector, with so little public funding?

The bulk of funding for the arts actually comes from the private sector, wealthy individuals and the super-rich – families such as the Guggenheims and the Rockefellers. In addition, New York also benefits from a thriving ecosystem of third party, non-profit organisations that complement the public sector in building audiences, strengthening cultural sector capabilities, soliciting for sponsorship and patronage, place-making and management, and advocating the arts in general.

- The **Alliance for the Arts** aims to advocate the arts in New York through research and audience development.
- The **Arts and Business Council of New York** specialises in building partnerships between arts organisations and businesses.
- **New 42nd Street, Inc** oversaw the redevelopment of historic theatres in the heart of the Broadway Theatre District. It played a significant role in turning around the urban decay and decline of Times Square in the 1980s.

- The **New York Foundation for the Arts** provides awards, fellowships, matchmaking services, and information resources to support the artistic and career development of individual artists.
- The **Bryant Park Corporation** is a privately managed place-making agency. Established to restore the historic Bryant Park, it has been a huge success, positioning the Park as an events space, a prime tourist destination, and enhancing the real estate values of neighbouring developments.

Sources:

Alliance for the Arts Homepage: [www.allianceforarts.org](http://www.allianceforarts.org)

Arts & Business Council of New York homepage: [www.artsandbusiness-ny.org](http://www.artsandbusiness-ny.org)

New 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Homepage: [www.new42.org](http://www.new42.org)

New York Foundation for the Arts Homepage: [www.nyfa.org](http://www.nyfa.org)

Bryant Park Corporation homepage: [www.bryantpark.org](http://www.bryantpark.org)

d. Develop a dynamic marketplace for arts and culture. In response to growing interest in Asian arts and culture in the region, Singapore should continue to develop high-profile public and commercial platforms (such as art fairs, festivals and events, industry-based trade fairs, and physical clusters of industry players and activities) in specific art forms, to extend Singapore's access to domestic, regional and international content, talent and markets. A healthy marketplace will draw major players in the arts and culture world to Singapore, creating the buzz that is essential for raising our standing as a global city for arts and culture. We can:

- i. **Adopt a coordinated national programming and marketing approach for arts and culture.** We can coordinate agencies' programming and events calendars to cluster trade, content and presentation platforms for specific art forms. For example, in the performing arts, we can cluster the National Arts Council's Singapore

Arts Festival<sup>29</sup> and the Esplanade's ConversAsians<sup>30</sup> in the same period.

ii. **Coordinate and aggregate businesses, content creators and supporting services demands for physical spaces into clusters** for specific art forms. This would create a critical concentration of activities and players at cultural “hotspots” across the island. For example, in the area of visual arts, the upcoming Gillman Barracks will bring together commercial galleries, residency studios, exhibition spaces and a non-profit Centre for Contemporary Art.

iii. **Ramp up efforts to grow arts business in Singapore.** Through the work of the Economic Development Board's Lifestyle Programme Office, we can continue to attract top international and Asian players in the arts, including galleries, auction houses, festivals and fairs. The presence of more of these players will fuel the growth of the arts business sector in Singapore, allowing for the establishment of more platforms for idea and business exchange. The goal is to position Singapore as *the* international focal point for arts businesses to access Asia (and vice-versa), as well as a broker and aggregator of talent, content and services.

iv. **Extend GST waiver on “goods intended for sale during art auctions” from three to six months.** Under the Temporary Import Scheme, goods intended for auction are allowed to remain in Singapore without incurring GST for up to 3 months. However, feedback from auctioneers is that 3 months is insufficient to see to the sale of artwork. Extending GST till six months would provide greater flexibility for auction houses and international private collectors to hold pieces in Singapore for longer periods of time before and after sales. This would maximise their use of art storage, logistics, conservation and other supporting services in Singapore.

v. **Set up a venture capitalist scheme to support the co-development of cultural businesses** between arts and culture

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<sup>29</sup> The Singapore Arts Festival is Singapore's signature performing arts event, held in July annually and organised by the National Arts Council. The Festival showcases the best of local and international theatre, dance and music performances and performing groups.

<sup>30</sup> *ConversAsians* is a biennial event that celebrates and explores the creative journeys of Asian artists. From established masters to the rising stars of the younger generation, featured are creators from across disciplines who have proven exceptional and inspirational through innovation and distinction. The event consists of talks, workshops, and presentations of works-in-progress, performance excerpts and full-length productions, and is targeted at producers, presenters, artistic directors, curators, artists, arts students, or anyone with a keen interest in Asian arts.

enthusiasts and mature arts groups/arts practitioners. The scheme would help arts and culture enthusiasts with impactful community projects to develop their programmes as for-profit start-up businesses, rather than maintaining operations at a cost-recovery, in partnership with arts and culture professionals. In addition to funding, we can provide comprehensive support such as opportunities for exposure and networking, not only to seed of these businesses, but also to assist them in attaining self-sustainability.

### **Box 8. Art Dubai – A marketplace for arts and culture**

Dubai's plans for cultural development capitalise on it being a centre for commerce and trade, and also on its identity as the cosmopolitan hub of the Middle East. It promotes itself as an "Arabian global city" – a multi-cultural city with over 200 different nationalities living together, and retaining a strong Arabian character and heritage. This branding is reflected in its signature art fair, *Art Dubai*, which takes place annually in March, and brings the most prominent personalities and businesses in the art world to Dubai.

Seeing its sixth edition in 2012, the annual *Art Dubai* is primarily a commercial affair, featuring top-tier galleries from all over the world (the upcoming fair will feature 70 galleries). It has an extensive programme of artist and curator residencies, commissioned art projects, public education forums, masterclasses and workshops, internship programmes, and other tours and activities. Significant professional and fringe events surrounding the Fair include:

- *The Global Art Forum* – a conference for visual arts professionals world-wide. Prominent artists, curators, art critics, museum directors, and other art professionals are invited to speak or participate at this event.
- *The Abraaj Capital Art Prize* – a signature visual arts prize awarded to talented artists from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia, for new work that breaks new ground and is reflective of the region's heritage.
- *The Sikka Art Fair* – a fringe art fair held in Dubai's beautifully-preserved heritage quarter, al-Bastakiya, which showcases emerging Emirati and other artists residing in Dubai.
- *The Sharjah Biennial* – a contemporary art event held every two years in neighbouring emirate Sharjah, which has been going strong for 20 years,

known for its cutting-edge and sometimes controversial presentations.

- Major auctions of Middle Eastern Contemporary Art and other luxury goods and collectibles by auction houses such as Christie's and Sotheby's.

Strong government support, a resident population of wealthy Emiratis and expatriates, a healthy gallery scene and a relatively more liberal environment than other cities in the region, have attracted artists from all over the Middle Eastern region to live and create in Dubai, affording Dubai's cultural scene a very distinctive flavour and identity, and allowing it to quickly secure a niche in the international art market.

Sources:

Art Dubai Homepage, at: <http://www.artdubai.ae>

Dubai Culture Homepage, at: <http://www.dubaiculture.ae/en/>

e. Review and enhance the organisational structures and capacity of Government arts and culture agencies. It is important that our Government agencies and institutions for arts and culture are structured in a way that allows them to respond better to the needs of the landscape, and collaborate effectively with businesses, the community and non-profit organisations in implementing the ACSR's recommendations. We must put in place new organisational structures within Government that will facilitate collaborations with external partners, while ensuring that arts and culture agencies can better serve the arts and culture sector and the general public.

i. **Review the organisational structures of MICA's arts and culture agencies.** MICA's key arts and culture agencies – the National Arts Council (NAC), the National Heritage Board (NHB) and the National Library Board (NLB) – were formed 20 years ago as part of the recommendations of the Advisory Council for Culture and the Arts (ACCA). Since then, our cultural scene has grown significantly. With the ACSR identifying new areas for our cultural development, it is timely to re-examine the efficacy of the roles and structures of these agencies, so as to maximise the impact of our future investment in the sector.

We can:

- Strengthen coordination for sector development and promotion functions that cut across all genres (such as community engagement, talent development, precinct development, infrastructure management, and promotion of the sector) to strengthen synergy, minimise duplication of efforts, and present a consolidated front to the public and external partners.
- Build capacity and expertise, both within MICA's agencies, as well as also within a wide range of corporate, non-profit, individual and community partners, so as to implement new focus areas and further expand our reach in achieving the ACSR objectives. For example, an agency responsible for the active and concerted cultivation of corporate donors for arts and cultural causes could be established.
- Evolve new operating models for greater operational responsiveness, community involvement and ownership. As our society matures and our cultural landscape grows, there is scope to better structure our cultural institutions such that they are more public-oriented, and geared towards facilitating greater community ownership and cultural philanthropy. There is also scope to draw on corporate best practices in revenue-generation, governance and accountability to institute greater operating efficiencies.

ii. **Strengthen whole-of-Government and whole-of-sector partnership** in implementing ACSR recommendations. In particular, we can tighten coordination between Government agencies in areas that cut across and impact multiple agencies, such as arts education, community engagement, precinct development and skills development. Agencies could also collaborate to jointly fund projects that cut across their respective domains. This will ensure that all parties' intended objectives are collectively met.

iii. **Identify place-making agencies** to champion the development, rejuvenation and marketing of major arts and culture precincts, implementing and managing initiatives that would strengthen the precincts' distinctive identities. The place-making agency would work

with stakeholders in the immediate vicinity (such as arts and culture groups, schools and commercial establishments) to better market and programme activities in the precinct, and oversee infrastructural enhancements to make the precinct more conducive for arts and culture and community use. The agency can also offer services to arts and culture organisations, including facilitating exchanges with Government agencies to obtain the necessary licences and approvals for events; and providing guidance on marketing, programming, and event organisation, particularly to amateur groups. These services would allow arts and culture groups to save time and effort, and minimise bureaucracy in the planning and running of events in the precincts.

## Conclusion – The painting of a dream

"I dream my painting, and then I paint my dream."

Vincent van Gogh

71 The ACSR's vision for 2025, **a nation of cultured and gracious people, at home with our heritage, proud of our Singaporean identity**, is a statement that we are not content to be an economic and financial hub. Rather, we yearn to take up our mantle as a Leading Global City and Endearing Home. Like the arts and culture capitals of yore, our status as a centre of trade and confluence of ideas, open to talent, with the pre-requisite wealth, puts us in a position of strength. We are ready to take our place alongside other arts and culture capitals of the world – past, present and future.

72 In doing so, we do not seek to be like Florence, Mumbai, Shanghai, London or New York. The ACSR's vision for 2025 is to be at home with *our* heritage, proud of *our* identity, not to be a clone. In shaping our cultural landscape, we have to find our own way, be true to ourselves, and mould our cultural scene in a way that reflects our heritage, who we are and what we aspire to be.

73 The ACSR's twin strategy of **engagement and excellence** will put us firmly on the road, but **partnerships** must be our sustenance for the long journey. The Government is but one of the players in the road to 2025; corporations, non-profit organisations, communities and individuals, including the average citizen, must all play their role. Whether as patrons, audiences, supporters, hobbyists or practitioners, **every Singaporean must integrate arts and culture as an essential part of life**, if we are to achieve our vision for 2025.

74 Our 2025 vision is not a distant dream. We build upon solid foundations laid in the last 20 years. The dream of the visionaries behind the ACCA and RCPs has become a reality. So, too, can our dream for 2025. Like van Gogh, we must paint our dream, and paint it boldly.

75 What will our painting look like in 2025?

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## ANNEX A – ACSR STEERING COMMITTEE AND WORKING COMMITTEES

1 The **ACSR Steering Committee** represents a wide range of interests and expertise. It includes academics, industry leaders, community leaders, arts and culture leaders, as well as respected and emerging practitioners from the fields of visual, performing and literary arts, heritage, design and media. Included also are high-level representatives from public agencies that have a stake in arts and cultural development.

### The ACSR Steering Committee

1. Mr Lee Tzu Yang                      Chairman  
Arts and Cultural Strategic Review  
  
Chairman  
School of the Arts, Singapore

Members (in alphabetical order)

2. Ms Zaihirat Banu                      Chief Executive Officer  
Oak3 Films Pte Ltd
3. Mr Theseus Chan                      Founder and Creative Director  
WORK Advertising Pte Ltd
4. Mr Chan Yeng Kit                      Permanent Secretary  
Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts
5. Mr Lucas Chow                      Executive Director  
Far East Organisation Pte Ltd
6. Mr Chua Thian Poh                      Chairman and Chief Executive Officer  
Ho Bee Group
7. Ms Ho Peng                      Director-General of Education  
Ministry of Education
8. Mr Robin Hu                      Senior Executive Vice-President (Chinese  
Newspapers Division)  
Singapore Press Holdings  
  
Chairman  
Singapore Chinese Orchestra
9. Mr Iskandar Ismail                      Founder and Managing Partner

- Yellow Box Studios Pte Ltd
10. Mr Michael Koh  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Heritage Board  
  
Chief Executive Officer  
The National Art Gallery, Singapore
  11. Prof Lily Kong  
Vice-President (University and Global Relations),  
National University of Singapore
  12. Mr Chris Lee  
Founder and Creative Director  
Asylum Creative Pte Ltd
  13. Mr Aaron Maniam  
Literary arts practitioner  
  
Director (Institute of Policy Development)  
Civil Service College
  14. Mr Mok Wei Wei  
Managing Director  
W Architects Pte Ltd
  15. Mr Ng Lang  
Chief Executive Officer  
Urban Redevelopment Authority
  16. Mr Benson Puah  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Arts Council  
  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Esplanade Co Ltd
  17. Ms Vemala  
Rajamanickam  
Consultant  
Allen & Gledhill LLP Advocates & Solicitors
  18. Ms Audrey Wong  
Programme Leader (MA Arts and Cultural  
Management Programme)  
Faculty for the Creative Industries  
LASALLE College of the Arts
  19. Mr Yam Ah Mee  
Chief Executive Director  
People's Association

2 The members of the **ACSR Working Committees** also comprise a wide range of representatives from the private sector, the community, the arts, culture and creative industries, and the public sector. Each Working Committee is headed by two Co-Chairs, both of whom also sit on the Steering Committee.

### The *Product Working Committee*

1. Mr Robin Hu,  
Co-Chair  
Senior Executive Vice-President (Chinese  
Newspapers Division)  
Singapore Press Holdings  
  
Chairman  
Singapore Chinese Orchestra
2. Mr Michael Koh,  
Co-Chair  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Heritage Board  
  
Chief Executive Officer  
The National Art Gallery of Singapore

### Members (in alphabetical order)

3. Mr Randy Chan  
Principal Architect  
Zarch Collaboratives
4. Mr Anthony Chen  
Film writer/director
5. Ms Fun Siew Leng  
Group Director (Urban Planning and Design)  
Urban Redevelopment Authority
6. Mr Noor Effendy  
Ibrahim  
Artistic Director  
The Substation
7. Ms Kwee Wei-Lin  
Vice President  
Pontiac Land Group  
  
Chief Executive Officer  
Millennia Hotels Pte Ltd
8. Mr JP Nathan  
Director (Programming)  
The Esplanade Co Ltd
9. Mr Ngiam Kwang Hwa  
Managing Director  
Rock Records
10. Ms Lynette Pang  
Executive Director (Arts & Entertainment)  
Industry Development Group  
Singapore Tourism Board
11. A/P Quah Sy Ren  
Acting Head, Chinese Division  
Nanyang Technological University
12. Ms Nirmala Seshadri  
Dancer/Choreographer  
Founder and Artistic Director

- N Dance & Yoga
13. Mrs Sng Ngoi May      Executive Director  
Orchard 290 Pte Ltd
  - Chairperson  
Orchard Road Business Association
  14. Dr Tommy Tan      Chief Executive Officer and Founder  
TC Capital Pte Ltd
  15. Ms Yvonne Tham      Deputy Chief Executive Officer  
National Arts Council
  16. Ms Thien Kwee Eng      Executive Director (BMS, Consumer Business,  
Consumer Insights Energy & Chem, H&W, Log & Prof  
SvcS)  
Economic Development Board
  17. Mr Till Vestring      Managing Partner  
Bain and Company SE Asia
  18. Mr Yeo Chun Cheng      Director (Broadcast, Animation, Film and Music),  
Director (Singapore Film Commission Secretariat)  
and Chief Information Officer  
Media Development Authority

The *People Working* Committee

1. Ms Audrey Wong,  
Co-Chair      Programme Leader (MA Arts and Cultural  
Management Programme)  
Faculty for the Creative Industries  
LASALLE College of the Arts
2. Mr Benson Puah,  
Co-chair      Chief Executive Officer  
National Arts Council
- Chief Executive Officer  
The Esplanade Co Ltd

Members (in alphabetical order)

3. Mr Edward Chia      Group CEO, Managing Director & Co-founder  
Timbre Group Pte Ltd
4. Ms Jean Chia      Managing Director  
Pico Art International Pte Ltd
5. Mr Choo Thiam Siew      President

Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts

6. Mr Khairuddin bin Hori     Artist  
Senior Curator  
Singapore Art Museum
7. Mr Lee Ark Boon     Director (Manpower Planning and Policy)  
Ministry of Manpower
8. Ms Felicia Low     Artist
9. Mrs Esther Mok     Superintendent, Schools Branch North  
Ministry of Education
10. Mr Sung Lingun     Chief Executive Officer and Creative Director  
Peach Blossom Media
11. Mr Alvin Tan     Director (Heritage Institutions) and Director (Industry  
Development)  
National Heritage Board
12. Mr Jackson Tan     Founder  
Phunk Studio
13. Mrs Teo Khin Hiang     Academy Principal  
Singapore Teachers Academy for the Arts  
Ministry of Education
14. Mr Freddie Yeo     Chief Operating Officer  
Infinite Studios

The Participation and Partnership Working Committee

1. Mr Chua Thian Poh,     Chairman and Chief Executive Officer  
Co-Chair     Ho Bee Group
2. Mr Yam Ah Mee,     Chief Executive Director  
Co-Chair     Peoples' Association

Members (in alphabetical order)

3. Mr Mustafa bin Abu     Chairman  
Bakar     Malay Activity Executive Committees Council
4. Ms Elim Chew     President and Founder  
77<sup>th</sup> Street (S) Pte Ltd
5. Mr Gerard Ee     Chairman

- |                          |                                                                                              |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                          | Council for Third Age                                                                        |
| 6. Mr Khor Kok Wah       | Deputy Chief Executive Officer<br>National Arts Council                                      |
| 7. Mr Lee Suan Hiang     | Former Executive Director<br>Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts            |
| 8. Mrs Elaine Ng         | Chief Executive Officer<br>National Library Board                                            |
| 9. Ms Sum Chee Wah       | Director (Education Programmes)<br>Ministry of Education                                     |
| 10. Mr Alvin Tan         | Artistic Director<br>The Necessary Stage                                                     |
| 11. Ms Tay Ai Cheng      | Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Librarian, Public<br>Libraries<br>National Library Board |
| 12. Mr P Thirunal Karasu | Chairman<br>People's Association Narpani Pearavai                                            |
| 13. Dr Mary Ann Tsao     | President<br>Tsao Foundation                                                                 |

The *Place* Working Committee

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|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Mr Lucas Chow,<br>Co-Chair | Executive Director<br>Far East Organisation Pte Ltd      |
| 2. Mr Ng Lang,<br>Co-Chair    | Chief Executive Officer<br>Urban Redevelopment Authority |

Members (in alphabetical order)

- |                       |                                                              |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3. Mr Chew Tiong Heng | Director (Destination Marketing)<br>Singapore Tourism Board  |
| 4. Ms Jean Chia       | Executive Director<br>Pico Art International                 |
| 5. Ms Alice Chin      | Vice-President (Strategic Planning)<br>Council for Third Age |
| 6. Mr Ken Koo         | President<br>Red Dot Design                                  |

7. Mr Look Boon Gee      Managing Director  
Look Architects Pte Ltd
8. Mr Danny Loong      Chief Creative Director and Co-founder  
Timbre Group
9. Mr Mok Wei Wei      Managing Director  
W Architects Pte Ltd
10. Mr Dinesh Naidu      Architectural writer
11. Ms Elaine Ng      Chief Executive Officer  
National Library Board
12. Ms Pang Siew Moi      Executive Vice-President (Network Programming and  
Promotions)  
MediaCorp Pte Ltd
13. Mr Muhammad Rezal  
bin Ramli      Chairman  
Tampines East Community Club Youth Executive  
Council
14. Mr Vernon Teo      Managing Director  
CPG Productions
15. Ms Yvonne Tham      Deputy Chief Executive Officer  
National Arts Council
16. Mr Raymond Toh      Director (Research and Planning)  
Housing Development Board
17. Mr Wong Chi Keong      Chairman  
Chinatown Business Association
18. Mr Phillip Yeo      Deputy Director (Building and Estates Management)  
Peoples' Association

## **ANNEX B – ACSR SECRETARIAT**

### **Steering Committee Secretariat**

Mr Liew Choon Boon	Senior Director (Industry and the Arts) Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts
Ms Tan Pei Shan	Deputy Director (Arts and Library) Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts
Mr Kennie Ting	Former Deputy Director (Arts) Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts
Mr Goh Wee Hou	Senior Assistant Director (Arts) Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts
Mr Joseph Tan	Former Assistant Director (Arts) Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts
Mr Ng Wai Keong	Manager (Arts) Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts
Mr Shaun Oon	Manager (Language and Learning) Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts
Mr Adrian Tan	Assistant Manager (Heritage) Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts

### **Product Working Committee Secretariat**

Ms Deanne Tan	Deputy Director (Singapore Heritage Festival) National Heritage Board
Ms Rachelle Tan	Former Deputy Director (Planning & Policy) National Arts Council
Mr Stanley Tan	Assistant Director (Language & Learning) Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts

### **People Working Committee Secretariat**

Ms Emily Ong	Deputy Director (Enterprise & Market Development) Media Development Authority
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Ms Yeow Ju Li	Deputy Director (Arts) Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts
Mr Jacks Yeo	Deputy Director (DesignSingapore Council) Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts
Mr Loke Wai Yew	Former Deputy Director (Media Policy) Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts
Mr Poh Chun Leck	Assistant Director (Media Policy) Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts
Ms Sandra Lim	Manager (Capability Development) National Arts Council

### **Participation and Partnership Working Committee Secretariat**

Mr Gene Tan	Director (National Library Arts and Singapore Memory Project) National Library Board
Ms Suenne Megan Tan	Director (Education & Programmes), The National Art Gallery (Singapore) National Heritage Board
Mr Winston Tan	Assistant Director (Heritage) Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts
Ms Avin Lee	Former Assistant Director (Arts Education) National Arts Council

### **Place Working Committee Secretariat**

Ms Joanna Lam	Deputy Director (Planning) Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts
Mr John Teo	Former Deputy Director (Policy) National Heritage Board
Mr Kevin Cheah	Assistant Director (Information Policy) Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts
Mr Eugene Lim	Assistant Director (Infrastructure Planning & Development) National Arts Council

Ms Gillian Anne Lee

Manager (Projects, Community Engagement Unit)  
National Heritage Board

## **ANNEX C – ACSR PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS**

1 To underscore the ACSR's conviction that cultural development should be driven in partnership with the private sector, the community and the arts and culture sector, a comprehensive series of public consultations, spanning a wide range of consultation channels, was undertaken between May and November 2011. The public consultations were intended to seek feedback and suggestions on the ACSR's preliminary recommendations, and ensure that the ACSR's final recommendations reflect the needs and aspirations of the stakeholder groups and the general public. In the process, no effort was spared in reaching as many groups as possible.

### Focus Group Discussions and In-Depth Interviews (May – June 2011)

2 The public consultation process commenced in May 2011, with focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders. These discussions and interviews encompassed the following:

- a. The perception of arts and culture in Singapore, as well as the role that arts and culture can play in society.
- b. The potential effectiveness of the ACSR's preliminary ideas in addressing the key issues and challenges.
- c. Suggestions on refinements to these ideas.
- d. Potential issues or opportunities that may arise in the implementation of these ideas.

3 The focus group discussions and interviews involved over 80 respondents across different age groups, genders and ethnicities, as well as varying levels of interest in the arts. The participants were chosen to represent one or more of the following groups of stakeholders:

- Community – youths, working adults and future retirees
- Thought leaders and practitioners from the arts and culture sector, including both artists and arts managers of varying levels of experience, and across various genres

- Arts students from NAFA and LaSalle and arts-related programmes/subjects in other institutions
- Arts educators
- Representatives from the private sector, including human resource managers, property owners of retail, entertainment or lifestyle venues, and events management companies
- Managers of public spaces (e.g. town councils) and community leaders involved in planning outreach / engagement programmes and activities

#### Online Public Consultation (August - September 2011)

4 Following the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, the ACSR launched a public consultation portal at [www.acsr.sg](http://www.acsr.sg).

5 The online public consultation was held between August and September 2011, during which the general public was invited to comment on the ACSR's preliminary recommendations, which had been refined after taking in feedback from the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. The aim was to reach out to as wide a range of the public as possible, including stakeholders who might not have been consulted through the more intimate focus groups earlier.

6 During the consultation period, the portal received close to 3,000 visits and over 100 comments. Respondents for the online consultation were free to post their comments "live" on the ACSR portal, without moderation from the website administrators.

#### Quantitative Survey (September 2011)

7 To obtain a representative sense of the public's support for the ACSR's preliminary recommendations, a quantitative survey was also commissioned in September 2011. The survey was telephone-based, involving more than 500 respondents, and controlled based on the 2010 population proportions for age, ethnicity and gender to ensure that the findings were representative of the Singapore population.

8 The vast majority of the quantitative survey respondents re-affirmed the value of arts and culture. More than 80% of the respondents agreed that a vibrant arts and culture landscape can enhance our quality of life, provide avenues for creative expression, allow us to better appreciate our heritage, and strengthen our sense of

belonging. About 90% felt that arts and culture activities are good platforms for social bonding and building interaction across communities.

9 The vast majority of the respondents also agreed with the ACSR's two key directions of bringing arts and culture to everyone, everyday, every day, and building capabilities of excellence. Close to 90% of the respondents felt that arts and culture activities should be brought within easy reach of all people, regardless of where they live and work. More than 80% supported building capabilities to maximise the creative potential of our people, cultivate inspiring cultural icons, and support the growth of promising arts groups and art forms.

#### Public Forums (September – November 2011)

10 Following the quantitative survey, the outcomes of the earlier public consultation channels were consolidated and incorporated into a draft ACSR final report, which was released to the public on [www.acsr.sg](http://www.acsr.sg).

11 Five public forums were subsequently conducted between September and November 2011, hosted by members of the ACSR Steering Committee. The public forums allowed the Steering Committee to dialogue directly with the public, share the considerations behind its preliminary recommendations, and seek the public's feedback on the ACSR's preliminary ideas and draft final report. Two of the public forums were held in English, while three of the forums were held in Mandarin, Malay and Tamil respectively, to ensure that the non-English speaking groups were not left out.

12 A total of more than 180 participants attended these forums. The participants included arts and culture practitioners, freelancers, arts administrators, media professionals, educators, students, grassroots representatives and the general public. The profile of the participants was relatively diverse, capturing the views of the different stakeholder groups.

#### Outcomes of Public Consultation

13 In general, the tone of the public consultations was cordial and enthusiastic, and the public's suggestions were generally constructive. The ACSR's key directions and recommendations were well-received, in particular those which recommended:

- a. Greater access to arts and culture activities.
- b. More avenues for expressing creativity.

- c. More opportunities and spaces for building social capital through arts and culture.
- d. Pursuing and achieving excellence in our cultural institutions, talents, and offerings.

14 Several themes recurred across the entire public consultation process. The recurring themes include the following:

- a. Changing perceptions. The public repeatedly highlighted that changing perceptions is needed for people to appreciate the relevance of arts and culture in their daily lives, engender a greater sense of ownership over the arts, and perceive arts and culture as a viable career.
- b. Balance between quality and accessibility. The public called for a balance between raising the quality of arts and culture offerings on the one hand, and providing opportunities for practitioners of all levels to participate in cultural production and broadening the arts and culture appreciation base on the other.
- c. Importance of arts education. The public stressed the importance of arts education from a young age as the foundation for lifelong engagement with arts and culture, and for developing the next generation of arts and culture professionals. The importance of learning and creating was also emphasised, over a single-minded focus on outcome and the finished creative product.
- d. Facilities for arts and culture. Both community practitioners and arts and culture professionals called for more affordable and better-equipped facilities for their activities. Some asked for more professional facilities at the community level, while others asked for smaller, more affordable performance venues in the city area.
- e. Freelancers' concerns. The public highlighted the multiple challenges faced by freelancers, such as the need to market their art, protect their rights, and raise their relatively low wages, and the need for collective action.
- f. Keeping traditional arts vibrant. The importance of keeping the traditional arts vibrant and enduring was also emphasised by the public. The issues raised included training and retaining traditional arts talent, balancing the tension between traditional arts and more modern interpretations, and showcasing traditional arts in the mass media.