

# *Singapore Government*

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**SPEECH BY MR DAVID T E LIM, MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE AND INFORMATION AND THE ARTS, AT THE OPENING OF ARTSINGAPORE ON 28 SEPTEMBER 2000 AT 7.15 PM AT [ARTRIUM@MITA](mailto:ARTRIUM@MITA), MITA BUILDING.**

Good evening to all.

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1. It is my pleasure to launch ArtSingapore. I am told that it is the world's first fair for contemporary Southeast Asian Art today.
2. I am delighted that the Art Galleries Association has organized this premier ArtSingapore fair. I am even happier to learn that there are 11 established local galleries, and 6 well-known foreign galleries from around the region taking part. This collaboration showcases both Singaporean and Asian art. I hope the success of this venture will encourage many more collaborations in the future.
3. The development of the Arts has long been pursued for the important role it plays in developing a nation's culture and ethos. In Singapore, this continues to be

a fundamental reason for the government's support for the arts. But as our nation moves into the new economy, the Arts will play a new and equally important role. The Arts will be an essential part of the new knowledge infrastructure that we are building to support the new economy.

4. Talents will drive the new economy. But talents need to be nurtured and energized. The vibrancy of the environment they work and live in will contribute, in no small way, to how well they do. Talents will seek out not only places where they can pursue their work, but where they can enjoy lifestyles that are stimulating and exciting. Therefore, for Singapore to compete against other countries to keep our talents, and to attract global talents to come to Singapore, we will also need to develop an environment that they will find intriguing, stimulating and satisfying. A lively arts scene contributes significantly to the creation of this environment.

5. The ArtSingapore fair is therefore significant not just because it is the first of its kind, but because it helps to add yet another dimension to the Arts environment in Singapore. This is another small step towards our aim to be a global arts and talent city.

6. In conclusion, I wish to commend the Art Galleries Association for the dedication and effort put into organizing this event. Also, I would like to thank all the sponsors and the media for supporting this event. I wish all a visual feast of some of South East Asia's best collections.

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