



## **Media Release**

### ***For Immediate Release***

## **SINGAPOUR EN FRANCE – LE FESTIVAL (26 MARS – 30 JUIN 2015) Singapore Festival in France (26 March – 30 June 2015)**

### **Celebrating Singapore's Golden Jubilee Overseas and 50 Years Of Singapore-France Diplomatic Relations with the Best of Singapore's Arts And Culture**

**SINGAPORE, 10 September 2014** – For the first time, France has invited Singapore to present the best of its contemporary arts and culture and heritage in a large-scale showcase. Anchored by a core series of visual, performing arts and film programmes complemented by design and lifestyle related projects, *Singapour en France – le festival (Singapore Festival in France)* reflects the unique and diverse practices in Singapore's arts and cultural landscape.

2 The Festival is co-organised by the National Heritage Board (NHB), the National Arts Council (NAC) and Institut français (IF), France's agency for international arts and cultural projects, and supported by Singapore's Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as France's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development, and Ministry of Culture and Communication. Held in prestigious institutions in key French cities, the Festival is one of the international celebrations for our golden jubilee year, and also marks 50 years of diplomatic ties between the two countries. Cultural exchanges between France and Singapore have been facilitated by the cultural Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the two countries since 2009, and this festival is one of the major outcomes of this agreement.

3 The 3 month-long Festival will open to the French public on 26 March 2015 with an exhibition *Secret Archipelago* and a durational performance *The Singaporeans* at Palais de Tokyo in Paris, the largest contemporary art centre in Europe. *Secret Archipelago* is curated by NHB in collaboration with Palais de Tokyo. *The Singaporeans* is a 6-hour site-specific performance directed by Ong Keng Sen, Festival Director of the Singapore International Festival of Arts.

4 *Singapour en France – le festival* follows the signing of a separate MOU between NHB and IF in June last year to organise the event. Artistic Director for *Singapour en France*, Mr Tan Boon Hui, says, "We are heartened by the tremendous interest and commitment that prestigious French cultural institutions have shown in presenting our artists and creative talents at their venues. The unique ability of our artists and creative talents to find that delicate balance between authenticity to our cultural roots, and also the courage to transcend them is a strong feature of our creative scene. The artistic expressions presented, while diverse and multidisciplinary, are also all forward-looking and strive to create a new original artistic language for our times. We look forward to capturing the French and European publics' imagination with *Singapour en France*." Mr Tan is also Group Director for Programmes at NHB.

5 Ms Elaine Ng, member of the *Singapour en France* Programme Committee and the Director for Sector Development (Traditional Arts & Dance), NAC adds, "The artists and arts groups were selected by the established French venues, many of them performing in these sought-after spaces for the first time. We hope that everyone in Singapore will take pride in

the achievements and ability of our artistic and creative talents to continue to make waves and gain acclaim for their work overseas.”

6 Mr Xavier Darcos, President of Institut français, says, “As the implementing agency of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development, and the Ministry of Culture and Communication, Institut français is proud to be part of the organisation of *Singapour en France - le festival*. As its name suggests, we have all worked towards making the festival very special, and making sure that people in France will get the best of the incredibly diverse cultures Singapore offers. The festival stands as an outstanding opportunity for culture lovers in many cities in France to be exposed to cultural forms, traditional and contemporary, that are still unknown here. We believe that the festival will strengthen ties between our peoples.”

7 The Festival continues with a classical music concert featuring a soloist from the Singapore Chinese Orchestra with the Orchestre de Bretagne conducted by Singapore conductor Darrell Ang at La Philharmonie of Cité de la Musique in Paris; productions by Frontier Danceland at Le Tarmac and by Ramesh Meyyappan at the International Visual Theatre in Paris, as well as a concert of ancient *nanyin* music by Siong Leng Musical Association at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord in Paris, La Comète in Châlons-en-Champagne and Le Lieu Unique in Nantes. The list of confirmed core programmes is in Annex A.

8 Other events in the pipeline include:

- *Art Garden*, a family-friendly art exhibition of interactive and engaging works by Singapore artists, at the Gare Saint-Sauveur in Lille;
- *Open Sea*, an exhibition at Musée d’art contemporain de Lyon in Lyon;
- *Lear Dreaming* by TheatreWorks (Singapore) at Théâtre des Abesses in Paris;
- *Between* by choreographer Christina Chan and Frontier Danceland at Centre Chorégraphique National in Tours;
- design and architecture exhibition *1000 Singapores* by DesignSingapore Council;
- a 50-year retrospective of Singapore cinema from pre-1965 by the National Museum of Singapore and Singapore Film Commission at the Cinémathèque française in Paris.

There will also be residencies for visual artists at the FRAC (Fonds Régional d’Art Contemporain or Regional Contemporary Art Fund) Centre in Nantes and for writers at the ÉCLA Aquitaine creative writing residency in Bordeaux. Other programmes will be announced subsequently.

9 To open the Festival to a wider range of Singapore and French artists, institutions and private partners in visual arts, theatre, dance, film, design and architecture, as well as from other fields including science, technology, education, gastronomy, business or sports, a call for partnership projects to be supported under the festival umbrella has been launched. Projects that may qualify for accreditation under the Festival include those that involve partners in, or promote long-lasting dialogue between, Singapore and France, or are participating in other festivals or major events. The Call for Partnership Projects closes on 1 December 2014. More information for submissions is in Annex B.

Please refer to the following attachments:

- **Annex A** for a list of *Singapour en France – le festival* programme
- **Annex B** for Call for Partnership Projects details

For more information, please visit [www.nhb.gov.sg/singaporefestivalinfrance2015](http://www.nhb.gov.sg/singaporefestivalinfrance2015).

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**About Singapour en France – le festival 2015**

The *Singapour en France – le festival* (26 March – 30 June 2015) presents an opportunity to discover the art, culture and heritage of Singapore – one of the most unique city-states in the world. The Festival marks a special year celebrating 50 years of Singapore's Independence, as well as 50 years of diplomatic ties between Singapore and France.

Singapore has historically been a gateway to Southeast Asia and the larger Asian region beyond. As a major trading post for the exchange of goods and ideas since the 14th century, Singapore has always participated in the wider world beyond its shores, while remaining rooted to its region. The multi-ethnic and multicultural mix of its people reflects this geographical context and historical experience. Attributes such as the country's openness to the world, a "can-do" attitude, as well as a sensitivity to the nuances of local cultures have nurtured an artistic and creative community that draws inspiration from international movements and influences, while at the same time striving to create expressions that push beyond the boundaries of western artistic canons and forms. Artists in Singapore have become adept at both looking forward and looking back; at adapting and experimenting. The youthful and adventurous spirit of this festival is expressed through the ability of our artists to invent and push into new areas of expression.

*Singapour en France – le festival* is co-organised by the National Heritage Board (Singapore), the National Arts Council (Singapore) and Institut français (IF), France's agency for international arts and cultural projects, and supported by Singapore's Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development, and Ministry of Culture and Communication in France.

### **About the National Heritage Board**

The National Heritage Board (NHB) was formed on 1 August 1993. As the custodian of Singapore's heritage, NHB is responsible for telling the Singapore story, sharing the Singaporean experience and imparting our Singapore spirit. NHB's mission is to preserve and celebrate the shared heritage of our diverse communities, for the purpose of education, nation-building and cultural understanding. It manages the national museums and heritage institutions, and sets policies relating to heritage sites, monuments and the national collection. Through the national collection, NHB curates heritage programmes and presents exhibitions to connect the past, present and future generations of Singaporeans. NHB is now a statutory board under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. Please visit [www.nhb.gov.sg](http://www.nhb.gov.sg) for more information.

### **About the National Arts Council**

The National Arts Council (NAC) was set up to spearhead the development of the arts in Singapore while advancing the country's aspiration to be a distinctive global city for the arts. NAC's mission is to nurture the arts and make Singapore's rich and diverse culture an integral part of people's lives. Anchored on the twin strategies of excellence and engagement in the arts, NAC aims to build a vibrant arts sector by creating a conducive environment where the arts is accessible to all, and artistic talents have the necessary resources and capabilities to excel and achieve long-term sustainability.

For information on NAC's programmes and initiatives, please visit [www.nac.gov.sg](http://www.nac.gov.sg).

### **About Institut français**

The Institut français is in charge of implementing France's cultural action abroad. The agency was set up by the July 27, 2010 French Foreign Cultural Action Act and its enabling decree of December 30, 2010. Under the supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development, its role is to act as the conduit for a new, more ambitious "diplomacy of influence", within the framework of French governmental policies and priorities. It will help to promote French influence abroad through greater dialogue with foreign cultures, while responding to the needs of France via a policy of listening, partnership and openness to other cultures. The Institut français replaces the Culturesfrance association, with the legal status of a "Public Industrial and Commercial Undertaking". Its President is Xavier Darcos. Please visit [www.institutfrancais.com](http://www.institutfrancais.com) for more information.

## ANNEX A - SINGAPORE FESTIVAL IN FRANCE 2015 PROGRAMMES OVERVIEW

**\* as of 10 September 2014**

### 1. ***Secret Archipelago***

Presented by National Heritage Board (Singapore) in collaboration with Palais de Tokyo (Paris, France)

Date: 26 March to 17 May 2015

Venue: Palais de Tokyo, Paris



*Bliss* by Rizman Putra. Photo courtesy of the artist.

*Secret Archipelago* excavates ideas and practices in contemporary art by artists from the Southeast Asian region through newly commissioned artworks. Covering an area of more than 2 million km<sup>2</sup> and traditionally known as the Malay Archipelago, Southeast Asia, a resource-rich land and sea mass, is the largest of its kind. It is the region where Singapore finds itself pivoted in, performing a role akin to an axis of political, economic and cultural developments and exchanges even before European colonisation in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This large-scale exhibition is the second project by NHB at the Palais, one of the most inspiring contemporary art centre in Europe. Besides the new works and installations, *Secret Archipelago* includes a series of appearances and interventions by invited artists, performance art pieces and curator talks.

### 2. ***The Singaporeans***

Directed by ONG Keng Sen, Festival Director, Singapore International Festival of Arts

Date: 26 and 27 March 2015

Venue: Palais de Tokyo, Paris



Ong Keng Sen. Photo courtesy of TheatreWorks (S) Ltd.



On the first two opening days of the Singapore Festival in France, ONG Keng Sen, festival director of the Singapore International Festival of Arts, presents *The Singaporeans*, a 6-hour durational performance that will debut at Palais de Tokyo before returning to Singapore in August for the Singapore International Festival of Arts. The piece features archival materials, videos, films and performers mingling with the audience in a continuous performance throughout the night.

3. ***Est/Ouest – Nord/Sud***

Presented by Orchestre Symphonique de Bretagne and Cité de la Musique  
Conducted by Darrell ANG, featuring *pipa* soloist from Singapore Chinese Orchestra

Date: 29 March 2015

Venue: La Philharmonie, Cité de la Musique, Paris



Darrell Ang. Photo courtesy of Darrell Ang.

Darrell ANG, a Singaporean conductor, will conduct the Orchestre Symphonique de Bretagne in a classical concert featuring a *pipa* soloist from Singapore Chinese Orchestra as well as music and composers from all over the world. The concert is performed at the La Philharmonie of Cité de la Musique, one of the key music institutions in Paris.

4. ***Akalika 7***

by Frontier Danceland (Singapore) with KHAM Compagnie (France)

Dates: 7-10 April 2015

Venue: Le Tarmac, Paris



Frontier Danceland. Photo by Jessica Farinet.

Frontier Danceland collaborates with choreographer Ole KHAMCHANLA and his company KHAM Compagnie to create a new work *Akalika 7* in a three-phased residency.

The residency and performance is co-produced by Le Pacifique, CDC Grenoble, Le Tarmac and l'Espace Paul Jargot in Crolles.

5. **Art Garden**

Presented by National Heritage Board (Singapore) and lille3000 (France)

Date: 15 April to 16 August 2015

Venue: Gare Saint-Sauveur, Lille



*Walter* by Dawn Ng. Photo courtesy of National Heritage Board.

Curated by NHB in collaboration with lille3000 at the Gare Saint Sauveur, the exhibition will feature a family-friendly contemporary art selection of interactive and engaging works by Singapore artists. This exhibition is part of a series of NHB's popular *Art Garden* presentations. Featuring a line-up of artists from Singapore, *Art Garden* examines the metaphor of the Garden as a construct that extends and mutates the essence of what is artificial and real. Inherent in *Art Garden* is a balance between acts of intervention and unpredictability, the orderly and the untamed, knowledge and invention. The line between reality and illusion blurs in this *Art Garden* journey that is full of curiosity, humour and irony.

The exhibition will occupy a 2000 m<sup>2</sup> space at the Gare Saint-Sauveur, a former train station for goods in Lille. The city of Lille was appointed the European Capital of Culture in 2004.

# National Archives of Singapore

6. **Open Sea**

Presented by National Heritage Board (Singapore) in collaboration with Museum of Contemporary Art, Lyon (France)

Date: 16 April to 12 July 2015

Venue: Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon



*All Lines Flow Out*, Charles Lim. Photo courtesy of artist.

*Open Sea* illustrates the contemporary psyche, aesthetics and inter-connectedness of Southeast Asia through a collective presentation of 30 existing and newly commissioned artworks and performance art pieces. The works echoes the region's multifaceted local and social landscape, where methods and sensibilities are rooted within its hybrid cultures and practices. Historically known for its maritime routes which were alternatives to the over-land Silk Route, the region opened channels for global trade, travel and migration. This gave rise to the meeting and hybridisation of cultures and languages, the import of religions, diverse spiritual beliefs and an emergence of syncretic practices that are still visible and remain in the consciousness and daily practices of its people today. Spread over 2000 m<sup>2</sup> of gallery space at the Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon (Museum of Contemporary Art of Lyon), *Open Sea* invites visitors to be introduced to, and be immersed in ideas percolating the artworks through workshops, artist and curator talks as well as 'live' performance art events.

## 7. ***Soul Journey***

by Siong Leng Musical Association (Singapore)

Dates & Venues:

11 May 2015 - Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord, Paris

12 May 2015 - La Comète, Châlons-en-Champagne

13 May 2015 - Le Lieu Unique, Nantes



Siong Leng Musical Association

Siong Leng presents the ancient *nanyin* music in a multi-sensory and multi-disciplinary performance. Their first stop will take place at the beautiful historic Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord which opened in 1876, widely known as Peter Brooke's Theatre. Thereafter, the group will tour to Nantes and Châlons-en-Champagne for two more concerts.

## 8. ***Butterfly***

Devised and directed by Ramesh MEYYAPPAN

Presented by International Visual Theatre (Paris, France)

Dates: 9-14 June 2015

Venue: International Visual Theatre, Paris





Photo courtesy of artist.

*Butterfly* is a new production by Ramesh MEYYAPPAN, a deaf Singaporean theatre maker. This modern, fantastical adaptation of *Madame Butterfly* uses visually poetic narrative and beautiful, handcrafted puppets to tell the tragic tale of Butterfly, a kitemaker, whose lover has left her, alone and isolated. A prolific artist, Ramesh debuted *Butterfly* at the Esplanade-Theatres by the Bay in Singapore in July 2014.

#### 9. ***Lear Dreaming***

Presented by Théâtre de la Ville (Paris, France) and TheatreWorks (Singapore)

Dates: 10-13 June 2015

Venue: Théâtre des Abbesses, Paris



*Lear Dreaming* (2012). Photo by Albert K S Lim. Courtesy of TheatreWorks (S) Ltd

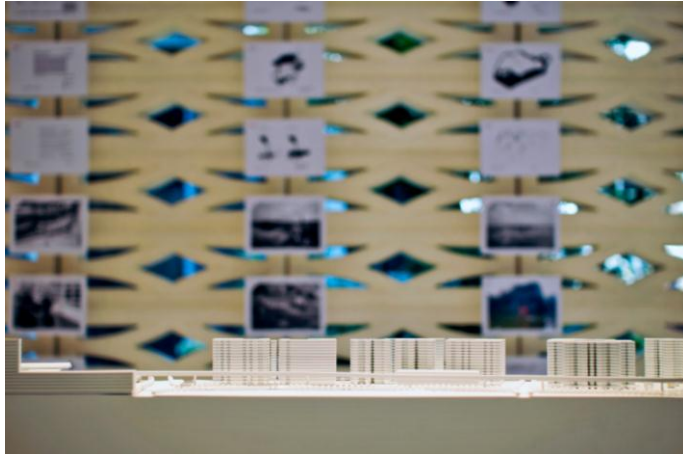
*Lear Dreaming* is directed by ONG Keng Sen based on Shakespeare's *King Lear*, and first produced by the Japan Foundation Asia Centre in 1997. The work premiered to critical reception in Tokyo, Osaka and Fukuoka has since toured to six cities in Asia-Pacific and Europe including the Theater der Welt in Berlin. The performance will feature top-notch performing artists from Asia and will be performed in Bahasa Indonesia, Japanese, Mandarin and Korean with English subtitles.

#### 10. ***1000 Singapores***

by DesignSingapore Council in collaboration with Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine (Paris)

Dates: 16 June to mid-September 2015

Venue: Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine, Paris



*1000 Singapore* by DesignSingapore Council. Photo courtesy of DesignSingapore Council.

A small island city-state. One compelling housing model from a place in Southeast Asia. Organised by the DesignSingapore Council, *1000 Singapore* is a model of the compact city. The exhibition, originally presented at Venice Biennale 2010, is updated, expanded and refreshed for the Singapore Festival in France 2015.

In the new content, *1000 Singapore* demonstrates Singapore's strategies for sustainable urbanism, land intensification and business expansion. Diagrams and models, drawings and photographs will illustrate the impact of the urban models exported to China, Central Africa, India and Vietnam. Complementing the exhibition is a forum where Singaporean and French architects can explore the potential for them to collaborate in architecture planning and urban strategies.

*1000 Singapore* is curated and designed by Khoo Peng Beng, Erik G. L'Heureux and Florian Schätz.

#### **11. Retrospective of Singapore Cinema**

by National Museum of Singapore, Singapore Film Commission and Cinémathèque française (Paris, France)

Dates: 17 June to 8 July 2015

Venue: Cinémathèque française, Paris

## National Archives of Singapore

On the occasion of the 50th year of Singapore's independence, the National Museum of Singapore presents a film programme featuring significant films in the development of Singapore Cinema, in partnership with the Cinémathèque française in Paris, and the Singapore Film Commission. The event will run for a period of 3 weeks and is one of the key closing events of the festival. The programme is complemented by talks and discussions involving Singapore film directors and notable French film critics.

## **ANNEX B - SINGAPORE FESTIVAL IN FRANCE 2015**

### **Call for Partnership Projects**

The festival organisers National Heritage Board (NHB) and Institut français (IF) would like to welcome Singapore and French institutions and private partners from the fields of Art, Performing Art, Design, Architecture, Films, Literature, Science, Research, Technology, General Education, Higher Education, Gastronomy, Business, Sports, etc. to submit possible projects that could be associated and co-branded with the festival.

Proposals will be reviewed by both NHB and IF. Accredited projects aligned to the festival would be listed under the festival umbrella and benefit from the broad Festival marketing support. Relevant projects may also be considered for additional grant support from the National Heritage Board and Institut français.

#### Selection Criteria

Projects with one or more of the following criteria will be considered for accreditation under the Singapore Festival in France and grant support:

- Original and innovative projects;
- Track record of the organisation or individual presenting the project;
- Strength of the projects, including the potential to make a significant and lasting dialogue between Singapore and France;
- Projects developed under existing platforms such as festivals and biennales;
- Projects involving Singapore and French partners;
- Projects must fall within the 26 March-30 June 2015 duration of the festival;
- Projects that would be able to travel in France, Singapore and/or other identified countries subsequently in 2015

Details and application form for the Call for Partnership Projects is available from the following websites:

National Heritage Board: [www.nhb.gov.sg/singaporefestivalinfrance2015](http://www.nhb.gov.sg/singaporefestivalinfrance2015)

Institut français: [www.institutfrancais.com/fr/singapour-en-france-le-festival](http://www.institutfrancais.com/fr/singapour-en-france-le-festival)

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