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15 APR 1978 SPEECH BY MR ONG TENG CHEONG, ACTING MINISTER FOR CULTURE,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION
OF CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE GRAPHIC ART ON FRIDAY 7 APRIL '78
AT 7.30 PM AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM ART GALLERY.

The success story of Singapore as a developing nation is well known. Our per capita income has substantially increased over the last decade. Family planning has brought population growth down to an acceptable level. Singaporeans have as a result become more affluent and hence able to support higher levels of personal spending. Unfortunately our cultural development has not kept pace with our economic growth.

It is our aim to make Singapore socially and culturally a better place to live in. My Ministry has an important role to play in this respect. We will continue to promote art exhibitions, the performing arts and other creative pursuits. In this way we hope to instil and inspire in our people a true and enduring appreciation of the life-enhancing qualities of artistic expression.

Japan is a fully developed country, both economically and culturally. There is much in Japan that Singapore has been able to and still can emulate and learn from. This exhibition of paintings by Japanese artists will no doubt open yet another window to what makes modern Japan tick. Japan's success story and economic accomplishments are widely held in regard. I have no doubt that its artistic accomplishments, which reflect the skill, professionalism and talents of the artists will also be instructive and inspiring. We will certainly welcome more exhibitions of this nature.

It remains for me to thank the Japanese Embassy, the Japan Foundation, the International Contemporary Arts Exchange Association and the Nantenshi Gallery of Japan for making this exhibition possible.

It is now my pleasure to declare this Exhibition of Contemporary Japanese Graphic Art open.

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