

SPEECH BY TUAN HAJI YA'ACOB MOHAMED, MINISTER OF STATE (PMO)
AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF "ART FOR EVERYONE"
AT KAMPUNG UBI COMMUNITY CENTRE ON THURSDAY, 29 JULY AT 8.00 PM

Before I say a few words, allow me firstly to congratulate the Ministry of Culture and People's Association for organizing this "Art for Everyone" series. The exhibition now being held at the Kampung Ubi Community Hall is the 36th in this series being conducted throughout the Community Centres in our Republic.

Our Republic is not a cultural desert because we have an abundant supply of artists who are well known both at the national and international level.

There are many young and talented artists in Singapore. Quite a number of artists have held exhibitions on their own but many, particularly the younger ones, are unable to do so partly due to financial difficulties. "Art for Everyone" therefore fits in nicely by providing opportunities for our young artists to continue with their artistic pursuit by having their art works displayed and sold.

The promotion, enhancement and popularising of all types of healthy culture in Singapore for the benefit of our citizens, is not just the responsibility of the government alone. Individual who can afford, civic organisations as well as the private sector also could contribute a lot by giving encouragement and support to local artists particularly our young artists. They could, for instance, sponsor art exhibitions, purchase art works for display at their offices, houses, etc.

In a multi-lingual and multi-cultural Republic like ours, exhibitions such as these are very useful indeed. These efforts could attract not only our artists from the various races but also art enthusiasts towards our goal of a national identity because there is no language barrier in the evaluation and appreciation of art. And to achieve our objective in this particular pursuit, I would call upon our artists to utilise as materials the ways of life in our Republic to produce their work, so that our artists can truly produce works that mirror the national arts of Singapore at the present time.

In our efforts to promote, enhance and spread art, Community Centres can not only organise exhibitions but also attract our youths who are talented and inclined towards art by conducting classes or courses in their Community Centres, especially Kampung Ubi Community Centre which was at one time well-known for nurturing our talented youths in this field.

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