

# Singapore Government **PRESS RELEASE**

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Release No: 19/DEC  
04-3/83/12/11

83-0576-372

**SPEECH BY MR WAN HUSSIN ZOOHRI, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY  
(HEALTH AND CULTURE), AT THE FESTIVAL OF DANCE 1983  
BUFFET RECEPTION AT MING COURT HOTEL ON SUNDAY  
11 DECEMBER 1983 AT 8.00 PM**

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The Second Singapore Festival of Dance - no doubt the premier dance activity of the year - ended yesterday. Some 500 artistes from 35 cultural organisations and a modern dance company from the Federal Republic of Germany participated. Judging from the enthusiastic response to the Festival performances, the Festival has been a success. I would like to extend my congratulations to all the participating artistes and the members of the Festival Committees on this achievement.

In the process of making the arts accessible to the public, the Ministry of Culture and the National Theatre Trust have been organising regularly various cultural activities such as arts festivals. More can be achieved but this will require the wholehearted support of artistes as well as their patrons.

The arts - painting, literature, music, drama and dance - are indeed an important component of life, like victuals. Of course, people immediately enjoy food and drinks, whereas some may fail to realise the value of the arts. The prime ways by which people acquire a taste for the best in the world of arts are family influence, education and frequent opportunities to participate in artistic endeavours. The problem is that for many, both the family and the education system are not in a position

to provide adequate exposure to the arts. On finishing their formal education, most young people often find that there is even less incentive and encouragement for them to explore the arts. Therefore, for the creation of a vibrant cultural environment, for the blossoming of local cultures, our artistes and cultural organisations play a predominant role. Our artistes, besides giving support to the organisation of the various national cultural projects, should also volunteer their services to impart their skills and experiences to the young and the enthusiastic. How can we broaden our cultural base and upgrade the standard of our arts if our experienced artistes fail to assume a bigger responsibility in helping to build up our talents?

Like many other activities organised by the Ministry, the Festival of Dance was heavily subsidised. It cost the Ministry and the National Theatre Trust more than \$100,000 to organise it. The total expenditure would have been even higher if manpower and theatre rental costs were included. The revenue from the Festival, on the other hand, estimated at \$30,000, could cover only about 30 per cent of the total expenditure. Our artistes should therefore value and make full use of every such opportunity provided to develop their talent.

To improve both knowledge and understanding of the arts, the Ministry will continue its effort in encouraging artistic achievement and organising cultural events for the masses to participate. Within this framework, the Festival of Dance will be organised biennially alternating with the Festival of Arts. However, I must reiterate the government's role: that of helping to lay the groundwork for cultural development. Much of the eventual success in the overall process of cultural development vitally depends on your effort and the support given by the public. Only through your hardwork and dedication can we

expect to bountifully harvest cultural products, best reflected in quality performances in future arts, drama and dance festivals.

Once again, may I congratulate all the participants at this Festival and extend my gratitude to the Goethe Institut, Singapore, for its help in bringing in the Tranzforum Koln to add to the success of the Festival.

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