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Cover Image: This photograph was taken at Basement 1 of the new National Library. The red bricks were salvaged from the former National Library at Stamford Road.

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A New Chapter

by Director, National Library



The re-opening of the National Library is indeed a momentous event in the history of modern Singapore and the National Library.



July 22, 2005 marks the beginning of a new era and a new milestone in the history of the National Library. We closed the chapter on the National Library at Stamford Road in April 2004 and now, just over a year later, we are ready to re-open the National Library at 100 Victoria Street in July 2005.

For many years, the National Library at Stamford Road had been serving our general public and researcher community in meeting their needs for reference materials. Many of our users have fond memories of the time they spent in the library, whether for the purpose of doing serious research, or meeting a friend or colleague to discuss a topic of interest.

In the early 1980s, the National Library was experiencing a shortage of space in accommodating more users and collections, and a proposal was submitted to the government to either extend or rebuild the library to facilitate the growth in collections and services. Serious planning and design work started in 1996 when the budget for a new library was approved by the government.

As there was inadequate space in the old Library to house all the collections that we had acquired through the years, one of the most challenging tasks facing librarians then was to make decisions on which materials were to be for open access and which to send to the warehouse for storage.

With this new Library, we are pleased to say that we are able to bring out almost the whole collection of some 500,000 items acquired over the past 47 years, and house them in this spanking new building. These include all materials published in Singapore that we have acquired under the legal deposit act, valuable collections that were donated to the National Library over the years, and some 5,000 rare titles, many issued by Singapore's earliest printing presses in the 1800s. Some of these materials are accessible through the digital library or microfilms. Others will be available upon request.

This, I feel, is the most important outcome we have achieved, to ensure that you, our valued customer has access to as much of the materials that we have painstakingly selected for you.

While the materials in print are very important to any library, we have also taken a deliberate decision to make available a wide range of digital materials, as these are becoming equally, if not, more important for reference and research. Our digital materials comprise the following: a selection of books digitised from our rare collection, a few dating back to the 1600s, most dating back to the 1800s; materials which are born digital, for example books and poems written by local authors who have very kindly deposited their creative works with us; those that we have re-packaged from published materials, according to themes or subject matter, such as customs, early history of Singapore, and images from the British Library; and content that comes from information service providers who provide commercial database services.

Many of these will be new to you, as it is the first time we are making these materials accessible. I hope you will make full use of the wide range of materials that we have put together for you, and make the National Library your first-stop of call whenever you need to do reference or research into any particular area.

As the National Library re-opens its doors to the public, we take this opportunity to highlight to you some of the collections and services available, and to bring to you a glimpse of the many programmes and events scheduled to take place at the new Library through this library journal. This quarterly journal will provide a regular update on news and events at the library to inform the public, practitioners and academics. This journal is meant specifically for you, the Library user and we hope that you find it informative and interesting.

The re-opening of the Library is indeed a momentous event in the history of modern Singapore and the National Library. We invite you to be part of our history and to take part in the festivities, events and programmes organised for you.

We look forward to seeing you at the Library!

Ngian Lek Choh (Ms)
Director
National Library



A Knowledge Hub

By Ambika Raghavan, Senior Reference Librarian,
Lee Kong Chian Reference Library

Hailed as the “people’s library for the knowledge age,” the new National Library is designed as a unique and modern library to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Standing 16 Levels above ground at Victoria Street, the focus of the Library will be on providing access to a comprehensive range of reference and research collection, services and facilities to promote lifelong learning for all communities and enable knowledge acquisition to create lasting social and economic impact for Singapore. It is worth noting that the Library is situated in the heart of the Arts, Culture, Learning and Entertainment belt thus making it the one-stop point for information and research needs amongst researchers, professionals, scholars and students.

Compared to the old National Library building at Stamford Road, the new one is five times bigger with a gross floor area of 58,500 sq m. The building comprises two blocks with distinctive characteristics. One showcases the Library’s contemplative side in the rectilinear block housing the bulk of the Library’s collections. The curvilinear block manifests the Library’s dynamic side with most of the programmes and events held there.

Lee Kong Chian Reference Library

The Reference Library had its humble beginnings in 1951 at the Raffles Library and Museum. On 12 November 1960, the National Library moved to its new premises at 91 Stamford Road. The Reference Department was renamed as Reference Division in 1963 and later renamed again as Reference Services Division (RSD) in 1970. It remained as RSD until January 1998 when the National Reference Library was formed with the establishment of the National Library Board. The old National Library was a landmark and was closed on 1 Apr 2004.

The reference library at the new National Library is named the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library to commemorate a philanthropist and founder of the Lee Foundation, the late Dr Lee Kong Chian, who had made valuable contributions in the fields of public library service. He had donated S\$375,000 in 1953 for the development of the former National Library. Fifty years on, his son donated another S\$60 million towards the new Library. This donation was the largest ever made to any public organisation in Singapore from a corporate sector benefactor.

The Lee Kong Chian Reference Library spans seven floors from levels seven to thirteen. It has over half a million items in its collections on various disciplines.

Level 7:

Social Science & Humanities and Science & Technology Collections

The former includes works on education, government, social policy and culture while the latter features information on life sciences, biotechnology, material sciences and engineering.

Level 8:

The Arts and Business Collections

Art lovers will be treated to works on visual arts, architecture and creative design. The National Library hopes to contribute to the cultural capital and the development of a vibrant creative arts industry in Singapore. Also housed on this floor is the Business Collection comprising selected market research, specialised country and annual reports, business and trade directories as well as guidebooks.

Level 9:

Chinese, Malay and Tamil Collections

The Chinese, Malay and Tamil Collections are developed to support the library as a centre of excellence for research on Chinese, Malay and Tamil Studies. The Chinese collection covers materials on arts, business, education, history and geography with special focus on resources on China, traditional Chinese medicine and healthcare as well as Chinese overseas. The Malay collection covers all aspects of community life in the Malay Archipelago, including socio-economy, politics, culture, religion, language and literature. The Tamil collection focuses on religion, language, arts and literature.

Level 10: The Donors' Collections

Private collections of individuals, organisations and societies that provide valuable sources of information on Singapore's history, social and cultural heritage are kept on this floor. Some of these include the Ya Yin Kwan collection donated by Tan Yeok Seong and collections donated by Tan Swie Hian.

Level 10: Asian Children's Collection

The Asian Children's Collection covers literary and research materials related to children's literature in the four official languages. This is an ideal resource for educationalists, illustrators and anyone interested in the use and production of children's reading and writing materials from an Asian perspective.

Level 11: Singapore and Southeast Asian Collections

These form the core collection of the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library with over 200,000 items, including items inherited from predecessor libraries such as the Raffles Library. Special formats in the form of microfilms, maps, audio-visual materials, ephemera and posters are housed in this location.

Level 13: Rare Materials Collection

Includes extremely valuable and rare publications, mostly from the 19th and early 20th centuries, many of which were issued by Singapore's earliest printing presses. This collection contains some of the important treasures of Singapore's history and literary heritage such as Jawi manuscripts, Malay and Southeast Asian language dictionaries, directories, almanacs, scholarly journals and casual and serious accounts of travels in the Malay Archipelago and Southeast Asia.

Basement 1: Central Lending Library

Located at Basement 1, the Central Lending Library focuses on offering visual, creative and literary art, business and management collections and award winning literature to its patrons, mainly the arts and business community in the area. Compared to the Reference Library, it fans out to a much broader group of users such as children, youths and adults.

In short, the National Library of Singapore promises to be a fusion pod for learning, discovering and application of knowledge through its many activities, programmes and wealth of information.

Come visit us. You will be enthralled by the quality of information service and our knowledgeable reference specialists.

Services

Onsite and remote information services are provided by the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library. Patrons can get access to information through counters at levels 7, 8, 9 and 11. They can also submit their enquiries through telephone, email, fax as well as postal mail. A Fiction Advisory Service, which offers advice to users on the type of fiction titles to read will be provided at the Central Lending Library.

In addition, self-help services are always available at Library e-Kiosks placed at strategic locations in the library for directional, circulation and other enquiries.

Digital and Electronic Resources

The Library hopes to push more digital content through the NLB Digital Library at www.nlb.gov.sg. These include a greater selection of databases, images, unpublished works of local authors, digitised rare materials and thematic articles on Singapore heritage and other materials from partner libraries like the British Library.

Members of the public can access an array of some 40 online databases to support the specialised collections at the Library. *Factiva*, *Proquest*, *REALIS (URA Real Estate Information System)*, *GMID (Global Market Information Database)*, *Kompass*, *Bibliography of Asian Studies* and *Grove Art Online* are some of the databases, which will be made available online at the multimedia stations at a nominal fee.

Exhibitions

Library patrons can also enrich their learning experience about the history of the Library's heritage as well as thematic events through exhibitions and public programmes. Two exhibitions are currently in development:

- *Zheng He* and *Maritime Asia* exhibition, which celebrates the 600th anniversary of the maiden voyage of Admiral Zheng He, is scheduled to display from 13 August 2005 to 10 February 2006.
- *History of the National Library of Singapore* exhibition, which will be a permanent feature describes the Library's heritage from the 1800s.

Programmes

The Library will also host a variety of programmes and performances for its various audiences. In addition, visitors to the Library can get an overview of the Library's services, collections, architecture and exhibitions by joining the Library's public guided tours. They can also sign up for special collection tours.

Services at the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library

By Chow Wun Han, Manager, Lee Kong Chian Reference Library

Reference & Information Services

The Lee Kong Chian Reference Library provides advisory services for research assignments, business ventures and personal interest. Our reference librarians can provide answers to queries, suggest useful search strategies and guide you to relevant and useful resources available at the Library. Researchers from academic to business fields may also make an appointment with qualified reference librarians specialising in the subject area to help clarify and locate what you need.

Reference Point

In addition to the on-site reference and information services, Reference Point also satisfies your reference needs from the comfort of your home. You can email, mail, fax or call Reference Point whenever you have an enquiry.

Audio-visual Services

A wide range of audio-visual materials on many topics ranging from business and management to the arts may be viewed within the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library. Our audio-visual materials include videotapes, laser discs, digital videodiscs (DVD), video compact discs (VCD) and compact discs. Customers may browse our catalogue to check for titles before applying to view them.

Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery

Interlibrary loan is available for libraries and government organisations that wish to borrow items from NLB libraries or overseas libraries. This service allows institutional members convenient access to the vast materials from our network of libraries.

The Document Delivery Service supplies documents from NLB's print and microfilm collections as well as databases of selected overseas libraries for individuals, government organisations, corporate members, NLB's institutional members and overseas libraries, subjected to the copyright law. Customers may request for details from the Reference Counters at the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library.

Repository Used Collection (RUR)

The Lee Kong Chian Reference Library also provides for consultation access to the older Repository Used Reference (RUR) materials stored outside the Library's premises. Customers can place a reservation for a RUR



book at \$1.55 per item; once the book arrives at the library, customers will be notified by post and will be able to consult the RUR item within the Library only.

Printing, Photocopy and Reprographic Services

Customers can print downloaded documents from websites and databases at the multimedia stations, available on levels 7, 8, 9 and 11 at \$0.30 per A4 copy. For our customer's convenience, black and white photocopying services at \$0.05 per A4 copy are also available on levels 7, 8, 9 and 11, while quality colour photocopying services are available on levels 8 and 11 at \$0.50 per A4 copy.

Customers can also obtain black and white photocopies from microfilms at the photocopying service on level 11. For better quality printouts from microfilms, customers can place a reprographic order at the Reference Counter.

Digital Content

An increasing amount of e-content, whether digitised from our local collections or acquired from our partners and commercial providers, is available through the digital library portal at www.nlb.gov.sg. The digital library portal contains 40 online databases and electronic journals that support researchers by its convenient search and access. Digital content covers Business information, Art, Social Sciences, Science and Chinese databases. Highlights of our databases include *Britannica Online*, *Grove Art Online*, *Forrester Research*, *GMID (Global Market Information Database)*, *Euromonitor*, *REALIS (URA Real Estate Information System)*, *China Infobank* and *Singapore Pages*.

Singapore Pages: National Library Board's Online Heritage Collection

By Nor-Afidah A. Rahman, Senior Reference Librarian, Lee Kong Chian Reference Library

Background

When NLB planned to showcase its heritage collection online in 2003, they thought of an appropriate name to give to the portal - a name that would instantly invite people to thumb through Singapore's history and culture. A myriad of interesting names were thrown up, but one stuck as it was at once a simple yet consummate description of how the Singapore experience gets documented - through our pages. *Singapore Pages*, NLB's gateway to online and print resources on Singapore was thus born and officially launched on 31 October 2003.



To bridge the gap between these rare gems and their potential users, NLB started an initiative to identify and digitise them, a task that would take the Library through several phases. The initial phase involved a collaboration with the British Library that led to a trial digitisation of 38 of their rare items. From the NLB's heritage collection residing at the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library, another 38 rare items were identified and digitised. Needing a platform to showcase these 76 items, NLB created *Singapore Pages*. Thus began NLB's journey to bring to Singaporeans and to the world written words and images that tell the Singapore story.

Prelude to Singapore Pages

Among the treasures at the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library are our rare books and manuscripts. The need to preserve these older and valuable items for future generations meant that they have to be kept under restricted access. At the same time, there are other older and valuable collections on Singapore that reside in overseas institutions. By virtue of distance and restricted access policy, these collections are out of reach for most Singaporeans. One such collection resides at the world-renowned British Library - the Oriental & India Office Collection. From this collection, of most significance to Singapore are the early printed books and periodicals from Malaysia and Singapore that include works from mission presses, lithographed works from early Muslim presses, Peranakan books in Malay, and a wide range of government and official records.

Highlights of Singapore Pages

Digitised Collection and The Singapore Story

Arising from NLB's digitisation of the rare imprints, more than 13,000 digital images documenting Singapore's history and culture are now available in *Singapore Pages' Digitised Collection*. These include early Singapore imprints and primary sources such as government records and manuscripts that are commonly referred to by researchers. They have significantly augmented the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library's Singapore and Southeast Asian Collections, for many a story can be told when the age-old printed books are supplemented by the new-age online materials. Whether they tell of the challenges and triumphs that shaped the remarkable lives of our forefathers or of the milestones that punctuated Singapore's growing up years, these stories are weaved from the lines of the printed as well as the online pages. *Singapore Pages* have captured and displayed these stories under its researched articles section called *The Singapore Story*.



One such story is *The Life and Times of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles*, Singapore's founder. The writing of this article made use of old imprints that form part of *Singapore Pages' Digitised Collection*, specifically on Raffles. They are:

1. Boulger, Demetrius C. (1897). *The life of Sir Stamford Raffles*. London: H. Marshall.
2. Raffles, S. (1830). *Memoir of the life and public services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, particularly in the government of Java, 1811-1816, and of Bencoolen and its dependencies, 1817-1824: with details of the commerce and resources of the Eastern Archipelago and selections from his correspondence*. London: J. Murray.
3. Raffles, T. S. (1824). *Statement of the services [to the court of Directors of the East-India Company]*. London: Cox and Baylis.
4. *Singapore local laws and institutions, 1823*. (1824). London: Printed by Cox and Baylis.



The Singapore Story

Features researched packages on people, events and places that have made their mark on Singapore. Each package provides a narrative on a particular theme, and is enhanced with images from the virtual shelf collection.

 **The Early Years**

 **Landmarks**

 **Literary Heritage**

 **Life & Times**


 **LifeLine**

The Singapore Story is an attempt at sifting out interesting details about Singapore's history from the digitised pages. Our Singapore and Southeast Asian librarians then re-enact the past by combining these details and other nuggets that they have unearthed from the Singapore and Southeast Asian Collections. Applying the adage, "a picture is worth a thousand words", *The Singapore Story* write-ups are peppered with images taken from the digitised pages.



SingaporeStory

The Life and Times of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles



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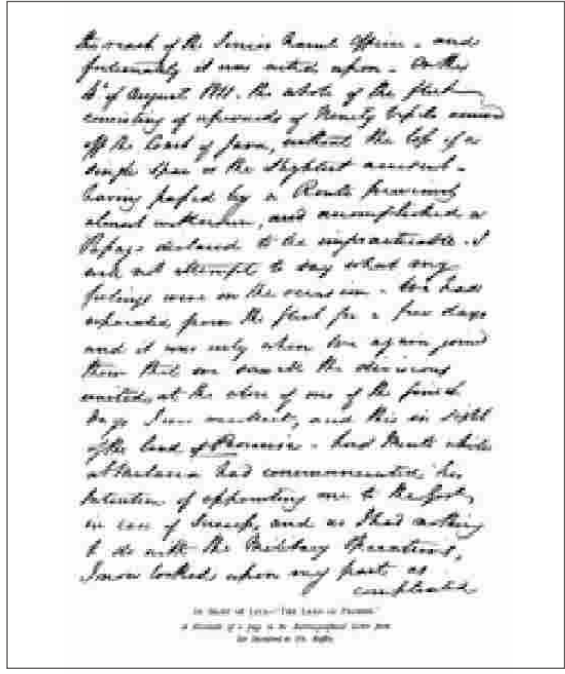
Feature Articles
[Sir Stamford Raffles' Family](#)
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Sir Stamford Raffles, founder of Singapore. Makepeace, W., Brooke, G. E., & Braddell, R. St. J. (Eds.). (1921). *One hundred years of Singapore, being some account of the capital of the Straits Settlements from its foundation by Sir Stamford Raffles on the 6th February 1819 to the 6th February 1919* (p. 8). London: J. Murray.

Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles (b. 6 July 1781, off Port Morant, Jamaica – d. 5 July 1826, Middlesex, England) is famously known as the founder of modern Singapore. Besides being an outstanding colonial administrator with great vision, Raffles was also an accomplished scholar on the history and natural science of Southeast Asia. This biographical trail of Raffles provides an account of his life and times, including his private life, the main events and activities in his career as well as his achievements.

Private Life

This section highlights some of the key events that took place in the personal arena of a man largely known for his diplomatic achievements. Included are accounts of his birth at sea, details of his family life, and his early death at the age of 45.



Sample of Raffles' Handwriting

Another story that tapped on the wealth of *Singapore Pages' Digitised Collection* is *First Impressions Matter...*, an article that visits some of the popular notions about early Singapore. Using classic texts like the works of Munshi Abdullah and Makepeace, the article has several imagery of landscape in colonial Singapore. Altogether, the article made references to 15 digitised titles, including:

1. Abdullah Abdul Kadir, Munshi. (1918). *The autobiography of Munshi Abdullah*. (Shellabear, W. G, Trans.). Singapore: Methodist Publishing House.
2. Abdullah Abdul Kadir, Munshi. (1874). *[Hakayit Abdulla]: Translations from the Hakayit Abdulla (bin Abdulkadar), Munshi*. London: H.S. King.
3. Bennett, George (1834). *Wanderings in New South Wales, Batavia, Pedir Coast, Singapore, and China*. London: R. Bentley.
4. Cameron, J. (1865). *Our tropical possessions in Malayan India: Being a descriptive account of Singapore, Penang, Province Wellesley, and Malacca; Their peoples, products, commerce, and government*. London: Smith, Elder.
5. Makepeace, W., Brooke, G. E., & Braddell, R. St. J. (Eds.). (1921). *One hundred years of Singapore, being some account of the capital of the Straits Settlements from its foundation by Sir Stamford Raffles on the 6th February 1819 to the 6th February 1919*. London: J. Murray.



First Impressions Matter...: Old Transport in Carts and Wheels

NORA (NLB Online Repository of Artistic Works)

More recently, to the delight of creative writing enthusiasts, NLB launched *NORA* on 27 January 2005. *NORA* is a compendium of works by renowned and aspiring writers who contribute to a repository of drama, fiction, poetry and other writings. Comprising mostly unpublished as well as out-of-print works, the who's who of *NORA* include Madeline Lee, Eleanor Wong, Alvin Pang (these three are the pioneers of *NORA*), Edwin Thumboo, Ovidia Yu, Haresh Sharma, Goh Poh Seng and the late Kuo Pao Kun.



In the Works

Come November, or when the new National Library officially opens, *Singapore Pages* will be bringing out more of the old stuff and the not so old ones. Look out for another exciting list of digitised titles and more stories about Singapore. The new addition to the digitised rare works include:

1. *Travels in South-Eastern Asia*. (1831). London: C.J.G. & F. Rivington.
2. Thomson, J. T. (1865). *Sequel to some glimpses into life in the Far East*. London: Richardson.
3. Florence, C. (1889). *To Siam and Malaya in the Duke of Sutherland's yacht 'Sans peur'*. London: Hurst and Blackett.
4. *Photographic views of Singapore*. (1930). Singapore: H.P. Cork.
5. Nakhodá Múda. (1830). *Memoirs of a Malayan family*. London: Oriental Translation Fund.
6. *Malaya in monochrome: [a souvenir of the British Empire Exhibition]*. (1924). Singapore: Published for the Malayan Govt. by Houghton-Butcher (Eastern).

These will definitely provide the fodder necessary for churning out more interesting stories about old Singapore. *NORA* will also grow and will include contemporary non-English works. Visit us at www.nlb.gov.sg.

SingaporeStory

First Impressions Matter...

A glimpse of early colonial Singapore through written and visual impressions.

I remained lost in the thoughts aroused in me by the unexpected sight of the commercial achievement of the English. On this shore where not twenty years ago were grouped a few wretched Malay villages, half fishermen, half pirates, where virgin forest extended to the seashore, where the tiger hidden in the jungle awaited his prey, where a pirate canoe scarcely disturbed an empty sea, has risen today to a huge town, bustling with an industrious population. Here the gardens of sumptuous palaces are spread along the water's edge; here the stranger may take a breath of air at dusk, alone and unarm'd, as safe from the tigers which have fled into the depths of the jungle as from the bandits who are kept in check by the vigilant eyes of a tireless police; and this hospitable shore has become the centre for ships of all nations. (Julius Rier, Head of French commercial mission to China and the Indies, 1843-46)

Falconer, J. (c. 1867). A vision of the past: A history of early photography in Singapore and Malaya. The photographs of G. R. Lambert & Co., 1880-1910 (p. 10). Singapore: Times Editions.

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Pictures from *First Impressions Matter...*: Ladies' Lawn Tennis Club (top) and the Esplanade

Istoria: Celebrating Singapore's 40 Years

By Wan Wee Pin, Assistant Manager, Invent



It is that time of the year again when we bring out the national flags that have been hidden in our drawers and hang them out on the veranda of all HDB flats as a sign of our loyalty and love for the country...or more likely out of fear of being the odd one out or losing out if there are any benefits to be gained. Yet that "kiasu" character tells more about us as Singaporeans than any superficial singing of community songs or reciting of the pledge.

The magical concoction of loyalty and patriotism - if I had the formula for this potion, I would have bottled it up and made millions from it - especially in a place

like Singapore that places a premium on everything Singaporean (except of course our local English songs...).

Istoria is H-istoria without the "H" - it is the Greek equivalent of the word "History" but more than that, it carries with it additional meanings like story and tale.

Istoria is also an attempt then to tell the stories behind our past that make us who we are. It is the National Library Board's potpourri of programmes, events and exhibitions that allow us to get in touch with our own identity and to reconsider just what are our own stories and what make them ours.

So if you are still searching for your own identity or if you feel that being Singaporean means more than just Phua Chu Kang, the Merlion or char kway teow, then join us. We don't promise that you will find the answers but hopefully you will find your meaning in searching for them.

What's on Show at the New Library?

At the new National Library, we have a whole series of exhibitions lined up in the months of August to October that run the gamut from genealogy to urban planning to even national day parades. Run through this preview of the exhibitions and see which one catches your fancy.

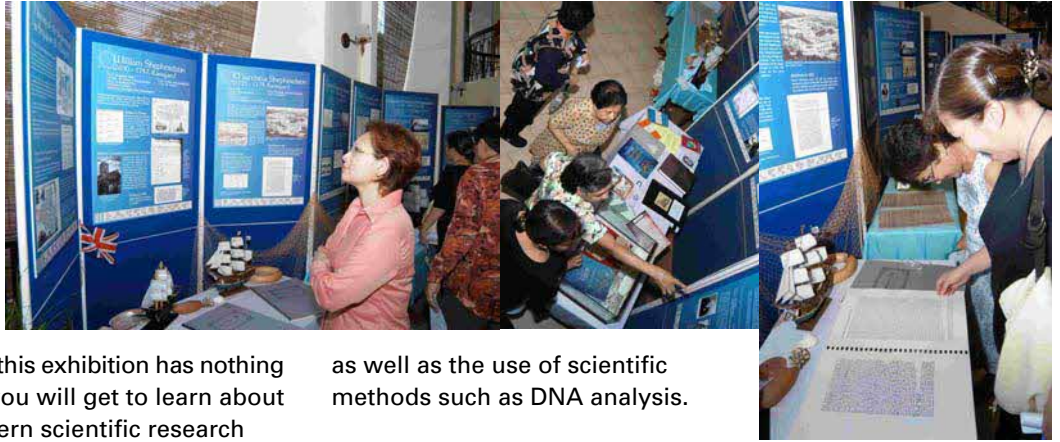
Starting in July, there is an exhibition called *Shaping Singapore - Aspirations and Achievements* that will attempt to deconstruct this beautiful city of ours and to explore the process of how it was shaped into the metropolis that it is today. Developed by the Urban Renewal Authority (URA), this exhibition promises to also provide a glimpse into the opportunities for business, good life and fun that may arise in Singapore over the next 30 years.



When : 22 July to 3 October 2005
Venue : Level 7 & 8 Promenade

Don't the shots shown here remind you of something? Yes! A definite must-see for those who love to go for condominium launches!

For the homely kind of people, the family always comes first but do you actually know anything about your own family history? Well wonder no more as you proceed up a floor to see an exhibition that provides you with everything you need to know to get started.



Entitled *Who Am I? The Joy of Discovering Your Family History* - this exhibition has nothing to do with Jackie Chan. Instead you will get to learn about the resources available, the modern scientific research methods and even a real-life case study into the process of tracing your own genealogy.

as well as the use of scientific methods such as DNA analysis.

When : 2 - 31 August 2005
 Venue : Level 9, Promenade

The Shepherdson family will prove an inspiration as you journey together with them into their 400-year family history to the times of Captain Francis Light and Sir Stamford Raffles. Learn about their research methods in uncovering the past using traditional research sources

Watch out for their collection of artefacts that include books dating back to the 1700s as well as an antique gramophone!

Confucius said, "Family harmony is the foundation of a peaceful nation", and if that is true, then the next exhibition is a natural progression from the previous ones. August will find the whole of Singapore in a festive mood as they wait to celebrate the nation's birthday and what's National Day without the National Day Parade?

the nation's biggest birthday party and what it means to be "Singaporean".

When : 3 August to October 2005
 Venue : Level 11, Promenade

Nation on Parade pays tribute to 40 years of the National Day Parade as well as nation building in Singapore. In this exhibition, you will discover what goes into the making of

For the patriots among us, this is like your greatest dream come true.

Photographs have been described as paintings of the soul and this travelling photo exhibition promises something for everyone. Simply termed *160 years of the Straits Times in Photos*, the highlights will obviously include the first Straits Times published in 1845 plus 160 of the most memorable pictures that have appeared in the paper, many capturing the milestones of the nation's history, including significant events.

While these official photos are important touchstones, what really make this exhibition interesting are the candid and unexpected shots that show up the lighter side of life. After a while you will begin to wonder what happened to the people in these photos and the stories will begin.

When : 10 - 31 August 2005
 Venue : Level 13 Promenade & Rare Book Gallery

The camera makes everyone a tourist in other people's reality, and eventually in one's own.
 - Susan Sontag



The Singaporean Identity:



Is it a Futile Chase?

By Wan Wee Pin, Assistant Manager, Invent



For a young country like Singapore, we have always been grappling with our own identity and position in the world and until today, we don't seem to be anywhere nearer to finding an answer.

There have been corporate attempts to define who we are to the world for both cultural and economic reasons - through common icons like the orchids, or the Merlion or even the Singapore Girl - but all they have succeeded in doing is to build a stereotype of ourselves that we don't even recognise.

Identity is not about creation; it is about evolution. It has to grow from ground up, a shared vision of belonging and commonality that emerges from within. Since prehistoric times, the binding of tribes together has been dependent on the ability to “communicate” with each other. The word “communication” comes from the Latin root “cum” which means “with” or “together with” and “unio”, the Latin for “union” from which our English word directly comes. Hence, communication refers to “union with” or “union together with”.

This creates an immediate challenge for a multi-racial society like Singapore's. With four main languages and countless other dialects and variations, it has not been easy finding a happy medium. The problem had been compounded by the challenges that the Chinese language has posed to the Chinese community. Their struggles have been well documented and some would even argue had impacted the shaping of the Singaporean identity.

More than just language, many would also point to Genealogy as playing an equally key role. The establishment of family and family roots is what constitutes identity for a lot of people, especially in the Asian context. However we are no closer to the Holy Grail with many of us having

ancestors who migrated from China, India and many other countries. How well do you know your own family history?

Yet the mixture of cultures and histories within a fixed confine has their own benefits. Undeniably the diversity has provided a large palette for the mixing and matching of ideas and influences. This has given rise to the latest phenomenon known commonly as Fusion. Fusion is combining two vastly different things to create something that is refreshing and new. Are we then able to harness our inherent qualities within a melting pot to achieve new breakthroughs?

Since time immemorial, humans have often relied on the collection of items and keepsakes as totems of their own past and identities. In fact, the advent of photographs has almost conditioned the way we choose to remember what happened to us in the past. Just like flakes of our skin reveal a lot about who we are, archaeologists rely on artefacts to piece together our past like a jigsaw puzzle. A Turkish proverb proclaims, “It matters less to a person where they are born than where they can live.”

There are those who believe that History as a subject is Hegelian in nature; it follows a specific path that is predetermined by the purposeful movement of Spirit over time. Spirit is no more than a factual occurrence that the same things will happen again and again. As students, we learn that History travels in circles; throughout our past, humans commit the same mistakes again and again as if the lessons learned were no more than a passing memory. This brings about the saying that, “The more things change, the more they stay the same.”

However there are others who treat History as more than a retrospective study; it is a mystery, it allows for interpretation and different understanding. It does not claim to dismantle the cogs and wheels of humanity so that we can see how it works and master it intellectually.

History can thus be viewed differently and this occurrence can and will shape the evolution of our own historical narratives in the future.

Maybe the question to a collective Singaporean identity is not so elusive and difficult after all; maybe the simple answer may just be that Singapore is our home, it is where we live and where our home is, our hearts belong.

The Chinese Language and the Singaporean Identity (Talk in Chinese)

Personal tutor to Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew, Dr Chua Chee Lay will introduce the influence and impact relationships that the Chinese language has had on Singaporeans and how it has perhaps played a part in shaping the Singaporean identity.

When : Friday 5 August 2005
Time : 7.00pm - 9.00pm
Venue : Level 5, Imagination & Possibility Rooms

新加坡华语的演变和新加坡人的国家认同 (华语讲座)

蔡志礼博士将根据他的长期观察和研究,介绍新加坡特色华语的起源和发展以及在新加坡人的国家认同的过程中所扮演的角色和作用.

蔡志礼博士任职国家教育学院付教授,专授亚洲语言和文化,曾任新加坡内阁资政李光耀的私人华语导师.

日期 : 2005年8月5日
时间 : 傍晚7时正9时正
地点 : 国家图书馆五楼, 想象力和可能性节目区

Who am I? The Joy of Discovering Your Family History

Journey into the past with the Shepherdsons and learn how they uncovered their family's past and subsequent evolution into a fusion of various nationalities and races. You can also pick up tips on how to research and document your family history using traditional research sources as well as scientific methods such as DNA analysis.

Date : Saturday 6 August 2005
Time : 3.00pm - 5.00pm
Venue : Level 5, Imagination & Possibility Rooms

Singapore's Identity - A Healthy Tension of Opposites

Join Brian Richards as he talks about how Singapore can define her identity and participate in the greater world as well as discuss the opportunities for Singapore to become the capital of Asia with unique intellectual property in arts, culture, lifestyle, engineering and sciences.



Date : Saturday 13 August 2005
Time : 3.00pm - 5.00pm
Venue : Level 5, Imagination & Possibility Rooms



New Insights into Singapore History - Perspectives of Emerging Scholars

Join established scholars from the NUS History Department and their younger counterparts as they engage each other in discovering how this history can be viewed differently and how these views, and the academic pursuits that these scholars are currently embarking on, will shape the evolution of Singapore's historical narrative over the next two decades.

Date : Tuesday & Wednesday
 16 - 17 August 2005
Time : 9.00am - 5.00pm daily
Venue : Level 5, Imagination & Possibility Rooms

Lost Cities & Forgotten Past: The Archaeology of Down Town Singapore

Uncover the fertile archaeological past of the civic districts in this talk as Lim Chen Sian explores the ancient settlement of Temasek/Singapura and looks at the colonial period and contemporary Singapore.

Date : Friday 19 August 2005
Time : 7.00pm - 9.00pm
Venue : Level 5, Imagination
& Possibility Rooms



In addition, there are also programmes organised at the public libraries under the Istorica banner. There are three highlighted here. Check them out at a library near you!

Getaran@Bedok: Heritage Trail by Zubir Abdullah and Sri Warisan

Date : Saturday 13 August 2005
Time : 2.30pm - 4.30pm
Venue : Bedok Community Library
Speakers : Zubir Abdullah & Sri Warisan

Zubir Abdullah and Sri Warisan will take you on a heritage trail through songs and stories on places such as Telok Blangah.

Fusion Music

Date : Saturday 20 August 2005
Time : 6.00pm onwards
Venue : Ang Mo Kio Community Library

Join in for a night of audio treats, as various music schools come together to present an enchanting evening of fusion music.

Book Launch of "Anime by Wang Li Yang"

Date : Sunday 28 August 2005
Time : 3.00pm - 4.00pm
Venue : Jurong Regional Library

The publication of this manga book crafted and illustrated by the late Wang Li Yang in his final days showcases a truly laudable effort and proves that creativity is alive in Singapore.



Zheng He in Singapore?

by Jacqueline Fisher

The year 2005 marks the 600th anniversary of the legendary Ming dynasty Admiral Zheng He's first of seven voyages to South East Asia, and Singapore is getting into a party-mode, throwing a lavish birthday bash which includes a Village, a musical and even commemorative coins and stamps.



NLB is also setting sail on the tide of the Admiral's anniversary with the *Zheng He* and *Maritime Asia* exhibition and a series of programmes presented at the National Library throughout September and October 2005.

The exhibition will feature ancient publications, maps, photographs and artefacts but the real highlight is a replica of the ship (or baochuan) that he used. This is like the Millennium Falcon of its era and is definitely worth checking out!

With the exhibition lasting from 13 August 2005 to 10 February next year, you will have no excuse to miss it.

So Exactly Who is this Birthday Boy?

Admiral Zheng had a life story ripe for a big budget biopic. Born to a poor Chinese Muslim family 1371, he was taken captive at just age 10 by the Mongols to Nanjing.



Somewhere along the way, he lost more than his childhood, being made a eunuch.

Despite this unfortunate loss, Zheng He grew up to become a close confidant of the Emperor Yong Le. To demonstrate China's might abroad, the trusty Zheng He was given the title "Admiral of the Seven Seas" and he embraced this appointment by embarking on his now famous series of voyages.

Of course, befitting such a sweeping saga, there's also a poignant ending.

After a lifetime of seven-sea gallivanting, big-time China promoting and the collection of all kinds of loot, Zheng He died, supposedly in India whilst on his last voyage.

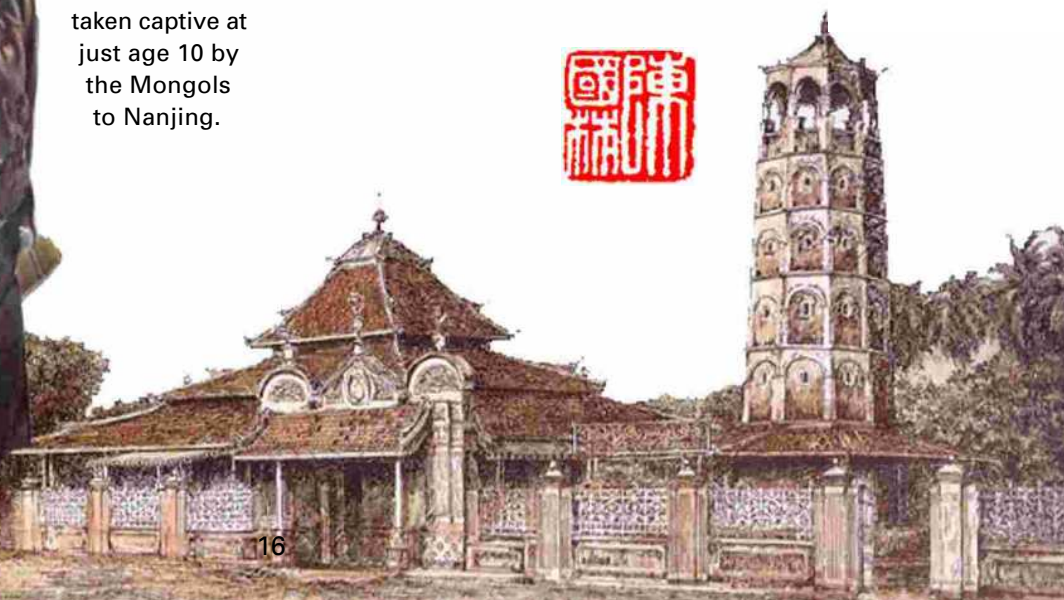
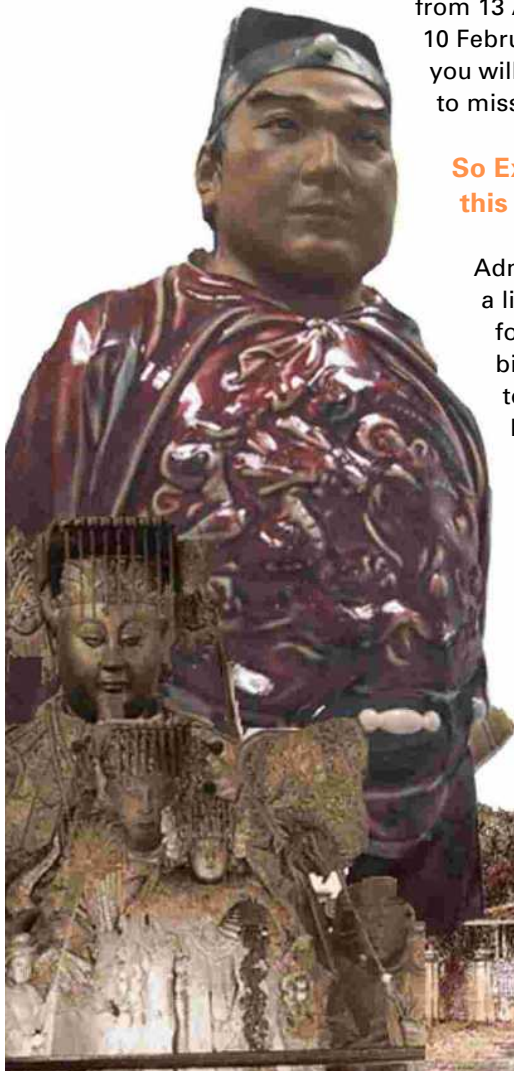
With him went China's maritime ambitions. The political climate had changed as succeeding emperors forbade overseas travel and stopped all building of oceangoing junks. Within a hundred years the greatest navy the world had ever known willed itself into extinction. The period of China's greatest outward expansion was followed by the period of its greatest isolation.

Roll credits. The only thing that seemed lacking was a love interest.

Link to Singapore?

Did you know that the Admiral himself has never set foot on this island?

Zheng He is purported to have used the legendary Dragon Tooth Gate rock structure as a navigational marker as he sailed by. This rock formation used to be located in the sea off Labrador park but was rather thoughtlessly blown up by the British in the 1880s.



Zheng He's legacy is often discussed but his voyages did not lead to a huge boost in trade, nor did he colonise any lands for China. It seems he was no more than the helmsman of the Emperor's travelling advertising campaign. The irony is that for 30 years, half the world was in China's grasp but it all came to nothing. The Zheng He phenomenon can thus be seen as a paradox.

Closer inspection suggests that there are plenty more of these contradictions to be found in the related subjects and topics. This forms the main theme for this series of programmes, which also aims to differentiate itself from the gamut of planned celebrations by using the Zheng He phenomenon as a jump-off point to explore related fields.

Talking Zheng - What is the Zheng He Phenomenon?

Join a panel of speakers including Dr Geoff Wade, Singapore Heritage Society's Dr Kevin Tan and Zheng He enthusiast Chung Chee Kit as they examine Zheng He as a socio-cultural-political phenomenon and take a closer look at the 600th anniversary celebrations from "outside the box".



The panel will discuss the reasons behind this phenomenon and will consider the sudden surge of interest in this man, and debate if the phenomenon has a broad-based following, or is purely driven by sectorial interests like tourism, historical interests or just media hype.

Date : Saturday 10 September 2005
 Time : 3.00pm - 5.00pm
 Venue : Level 5, Imagination & Possibility Rooms

Cartography Workshop

Have you ever wondered why in spite of advanced technologies and modern methods of map making, border disputes still exist and gross errors of judgment still occur in wartime? And how some of these accidents actually led to the discovery of great lands and adventures?

Join Associate Professor David Higgit of the NUS Geography Department as he explores the history of cartography, its innovations and how it is linked to the subject of exploration. He will introduce participants to simple map interpretation and demonstrate the use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) & Global Positioning Systems (GPS). He will also consider the different types of maps and their uses. Registration is required.

Date : Wednesday 14 September 2005
 Time : 7.00pm - 9.00pm
 Venue : Level 5, Imagination & Possibility Rooms



Zheng He and the Formation of Southeast Asian Architecture and the City

Dr Johannes Widodo will delve into the legacy of Zheng He as manifested in material culture throughout the Southeast Asian coastal cities, especially in the fusion of Chinese and Islamic elements in urban patterns (such as the "Datuk-kong" phenomena), hybrid mosques and temples, fusion architecture, and racially mixed settlements.

This presentation is aimed at promoting the spirit of peaceful co-existence among different racial and religious groups, and the celebration of cultural diversity, cherished by the multi-cultural communities in Southeast Asia since its early formation until now - things that we seriously need at the present.

Date : Saturday 24 September 2005
 Time : 3.00pm - 5.00pm
 Venue : Level 5, Imagination & Possibility Rooms

Zheng He's Voyages and the Malay Community

Very few Malays would know of the close ties that Admiral Zheng He had with the Malay Community. Zheng He himself was a Muslim who made a great contribution to the spread of Islam 600 years ago. Fewer would have known that there were actually experts and Islamic scholars amongst his crew. Join Mr Jaffar Kassim as he talks about the many contributions and impact that Zheng He had on the Malay community at this talk.

Date : Wednesday 28 September 2005
 Time : 7.45pm - 8.45pm
 Venue : Level 5, Imagination & Possibility Rooms

Pelayaran Zheng He dan Masyarakat Melayu

Laksamana Zheng He dilahirkan pada zaman Dinasti Ming yang mempunyai talian amat rapat dengan kaum Melayu. Zheng He sendiri adalah seorang Muslim yang telah membuat banyak sumbangan terhadap perkembangan Islam 600 tahun dahulu. Tidak ramai orang Melayu yang mengetahui perkara ini. Lebih kurang yang tahu bahawa terdapat pakar dan cendekiawan Islam di kalangan anak kapalnya. Bersama Encik Jaffar Kassim di ceramah ini dan dapatkan maklumat tentang sumbangan-sumbangan yang banyak diberi oleh Zheng He, serta kesan atau efek yang ditinggalkan olehnya ke atas masyarakat Melayu.

Bila : Rabu 28 September 2005
 Tarikh : 7.45pm - 8.45pm
 Tempat : Tingkat 5, Imaginasi & Kemungkinan

Who are the Peranakans?

According to local Malaccan folklore, the Peranakans were descendants of a Chinese princess Hang Li Poh and her entourage. As an unforeseen outcome of Zheng He's imperialist venturing, a group with a very strong and distinct identity - and one that is neither completely Chinese nor Malay - was born.

Peter Wee, a local Peranakan will adopt an investigative enquiry approach to explore how various aspects of the culture have evolved and consider: Where did the Peranakans come from? Who is or is not a Peranakan? What are the differences between the descendants of later settlers from the Southern coast of China and the Peranakans? And with the increase in inter-marriage, are there any real Peranakans left?

Date : Wednesday 12 October 2005
 Time : 7.00pm - 9.00pm
 Venue : Level 5, Imagination & Possibility Rooms

What Does it Mean to be an Explorer in Singapore?

The process of exploration itself is full of paradoxes. An expeditionary failure may even mark the beginning of one's success, as illustrated in the case of David Lim, who became a successful motivational speaker. Why do national expeditions include foreigners (e.g. Sir Edmund Hillary who was a Kiwi in a British expedition when he was the first man to scale Mount Everest)? What happens when there is nothing left to explore or climb?

In this panel discussion, local explorers including Stefen Chow from the NUS Mountaineers who recently returned from Everest, Wilfred Tok who has climbed the highest peak in the Americas, Anaconda, and Dr Chan Yew Wing, who has led and coordinated numerous expeditions to remote areas, will discuss these paradoxes and also consider the economics and sponsorship of exploring - what happens if a sponsored expedition fails?

This session will be chaired by Paul Sng, former broadcast journalist with 93.8Live!

Date : Saturday 22 October 2005
 Time : 3.00pm - 5.00pm
 Venue : Level 5, Imagination & Possibility Rooms

Bookworm Bonanza:

The 2005 Singapore Writers' Festival

By Jacqueline Fisher

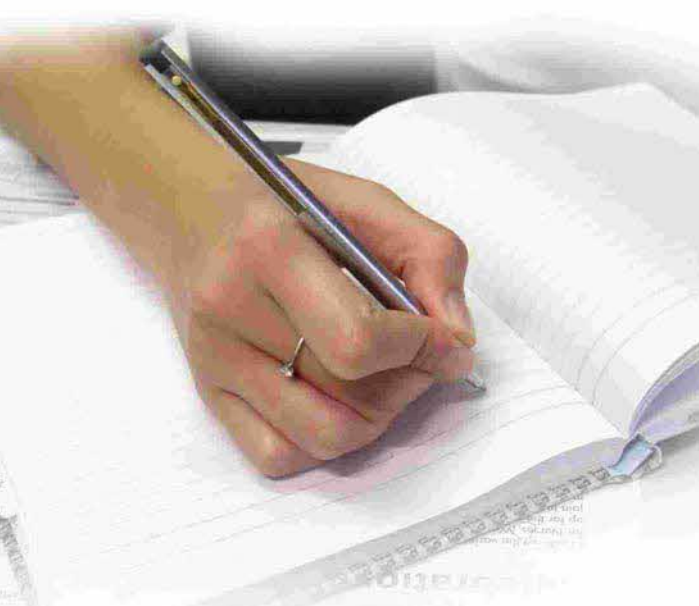
It's back. The biannual bookworm bliss-out that is the Singapore Writers' Festival returns from 26 August to 4 September 2005. But the text obsessed will have to tear their eyes from the page of their latest read, lest they miss out on a plethora of events featuring both local and international scribes. And fittingly, since it is libraries that ensure a writer's printed baby will always have a roof over its head, or at the very least, a shelf for its pages, NLB is supporting the fest and extending its hospitality to not only the books but also to many of the writers, who will speak right here at the National Library.

Whilst the eye-glazing total of 95 assorted talks, workshops and book readings may risk sending all but the intrepid book lover back to the safe embrace of their latest fiction find, never fear for I have bravely read ahead, with highlighter poised and can confidently recommend these festival offerings:



Voices from the Global City

Billed as an exploration of literary voices from the margins of society - those which usually can't be heard above the turgid drone of conformity - this series of talks mainly focuses on the experiences of ethnic minorities within seemingly cosmopolitan societies. One outstanding exception to this is author Jasmina Tesanovic whose book, *The Diary of a Political Idiot: Normal Life in Belgrade*, details the minutiae of living day by day in totally familiar surroundings whilst circumstances spin out of control, as recorded by the author during the bombing of her home town by NATO forces in 1999. Tesanovic's intimate chronicle is eerily effective in providing an alternative take on what for many is a faceless historical event which happened somewhere in Eastern Europe. And this is a rare chance to hear first hand from the diarist, who is also a filmmaker and artist.



Jasmina Tesanovic – Quotes

“ ...a political idiot. Idiot, in ancient Greece, denoted a common person without access to knowledge and information – all women, by definition, and most men... ”

“yesterday's fear [becomes] today's habit... ”

“I think that publicity is the main guardian angel of clean politics... ”

“ ...the weather, it is beautiful, we all enjoy and fear it: the better the weather, the heavier the bombings, but the better the weather, probably more precise bombings. I wish I only knew do we need good or bad weather to stay alive?... ”

Separated at Birth? Maybe not.... but who can deny these uncanny similarities ...?

Norman Spinrad

- Born in New York
- Lives in Paris
- Recently sang with a band called Heldon at a funeral
- Was once the President of the World Sci-Fi Council
- Is offering the rights to his next book for \$1 to anyone who will publish it properly
- In his book *The Druid King*, he made the transition to historical fiction



Juliet Marillier

- Born in New Zealand
- Lives in Perth
- Grew up surrounded by Celtic music and was a professional singer
- Has been called the High Priestess of Fantasy
- Offers space on her website for her fans to publish their short stories
- Her *Sevenwater Trilogy* features druids as the central characters



Science Fiction and Fantasy Writing

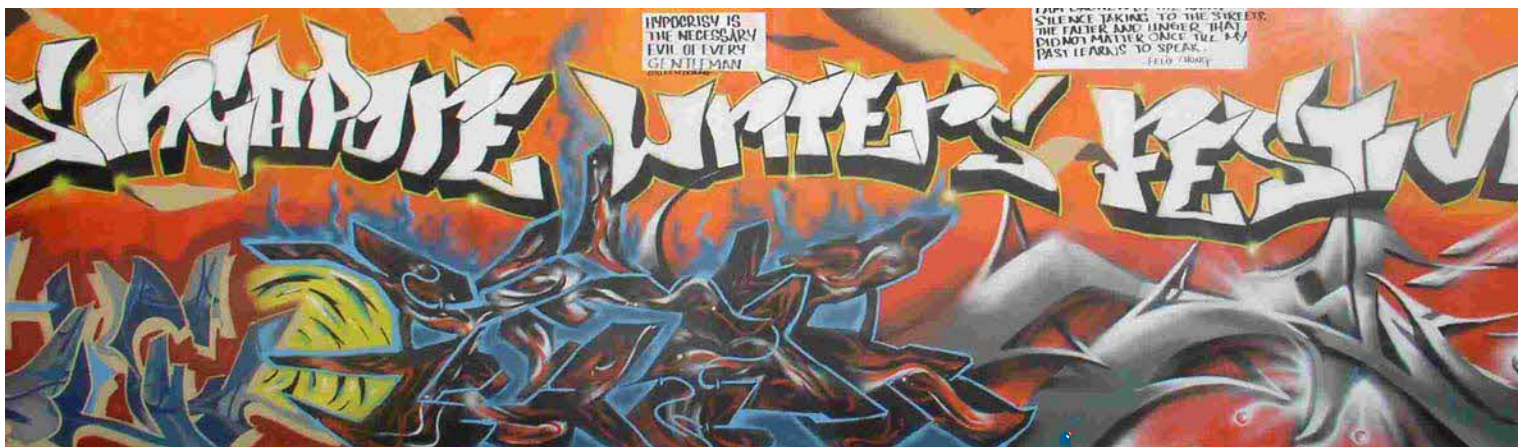
Although it still contains lingering vestiges of its less than glorious past as the domain of *Dungeons and Dragons* adoring dweebs, science fiction and fantasy have gained much in the "hip and edgy" stakes in the wake of a slew of sci-fi and fantasy movie blockbusters with *War of the Worlds* and Tom Cruise, *The Chronicles of Narnia* and lots of hobbits as its latest poster boys. In their literary form, these genres are also far from tired, as the 10 sci-fi events in the writers' festival will attest.

The National Library presents two of these featuring sci-fi/fantasy luminaries, New Zealand's Juliet Marillier and Norman Spinrad from the USA, who will discuss and read from their work. And even if neither cyborgs nor mythological beasts are page turners for you, the fact that these events will be held in the Library's futuristic, glass walled viewing pod perched on top of the new building and offering panoramic city views, might be enough to beam you up to this stationary starship enterprise.

Get that Book Away from Me...

Is your idea of a good read mulling over the song title displayed at the bottom corner of your favourite MTV? Then why not consider *Generation Txt*, a series of events delving into the multitudinous forms of text being born from music and fashion, from every imaginable hi-tech gadget (calling all of you who've succumbed to the call of the iPod) and of course via the fluorescent flash of colour from a graffitiist's

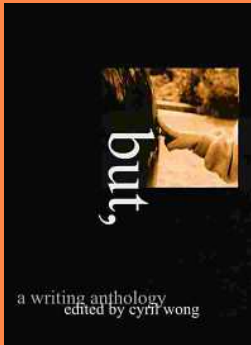
spray can. However, instead of risking arrest and a bad pun about our 'fine' city, you can be a perfectly legal deviant at the Library's Event Plaza on 27 August and revel in the underground literary art of spoken word artists (legit-speak for rappers) from the USA, accompanied by local graffiti crews giving the new National Library's walls an aerosol makeover (well, at least the walls' plywood cladding).



Last Page

Celebrate all aspects of life in Singapore with local literature from the Library's collection.

Singapore Poets



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But,: A Collaborative Writing Anthology

Edited by one of Singapore's most well-known writer and poet Cyril Wong, this anthology contains poetry and prose written by students from Hwa Chong Junior College, Victoria Junior College and Raffles Junior College.

Wong, Cyril (ed.). *But,: A Collaborative Writing Anthology*. Singapore: Hwa Chong ELDDS: VJC Writer's Circle, c2005.

Singapore Endings



All Rights Reserved, SNP Reference, 2005

Money, Death and You; All You Need to Know About the Transfer of Assets Through Wills, Trusts...

This is a layman's guide that provides practical advice for putting together a plan for transferring and preserving wealth for the next generation through various means.

Ong, Shirley. *Money, Death and You; All You Need to Know About the Transfer of Assets Through Wills, Trusts...* Singapore: SNP Reference, 2005.

Singapore Stories



All Rights Reserved, National Heritage Board, 2005

Attack of the Swordfish and Other Singapore Tales

Singapore may be slammed as a place, which has forgotten its past, but this book illustrates that the ol' Lion City has her fair share of intriguing local legends from days of yore.

Lim, Charlotte. *Attack of the Swordfish and Other Singapore Tales*. Singapore: National Heritage Board, 2005

Singapore Shockers



All Rights Reserved, World Scientific, 2005

Real or Not?: Health Scams and Beauty Fallacies Exposed

Complete with a catchy Singlish title, this quirky book delves into dodgy salons and funky treatment centres to expose suspect health and beauty fads, including bizarre breast enlargement methods, baldness cures and slimming therapies.

Ho, Andy. *Real or Not?: Health Scams and Beauty Fallacies Exposed*. Singapore: World Scientific, 2005.

Feedback Form

We value any feedback you may have about this preview issue. Please use this form to give us your comments and suggestions.

1. How would you rate the preview issue based on the following factors. (Please circle the most applicable option)

Description	How important are the factors to you?					How do you rate the preview issue?				
	Extremely important	Very important	Important	Fairly important	Not important	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor
Presentation	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
Content	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
Design/Layout	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
Writing style	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1

2. Did you find any articles particularly interesting or useful? Why?

3. What topics would you like to see covered in future issues?

4. What recommendations would you suggest for improving future issues?

5. Would you recommend this news journal to others?

Yes No Maybe

6. Your particulars

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Occupation :

Age group : 12 -19 yrs 20 - 29 yrs 30 - 39 yrs 40 - 49 yrs 50 yrs & above

Thank you for your feedback.

Please return the completed form to the Publishing & Research Services, National Library, 100 Victoria Street, #07-02, Singapore 188064 or by fax to 6333 7990 or drop it into the Feedback Box at the Reference Counters of the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library.

About Celebrating Knowledge

National Library Board, Singapore is organising a 2-day Conference on 14-15 November 2005. Information, knowledge professionals, librarians, academics and consultants can benefit from this conference through the exchange of views and ideas on the future and the impact of new digital technology on the library and learning. As a prelude, a Welcome Gala Dinner will be held on 13 November 2005 to promote networking opportunities.

Objectives of the Conference

- To create a forum for looking into the future of knowledge institutions and workers
- To provide a platform for establishing and promoting Singapore as the regional knowledge, research and business centre
- To foster international relationships between libraries and players in the knowledge world

Who should attend

- Information and Knowledge Professionals
- Library Managers and Professionals
- Information/Media Resource Managers
- Technology Service Providers
- Publishers
- Educators
- Content Providers
- Vendors
- Distributors
- Copyright Agents

Why you should attend

- Gain insights into the technological advances and industry developments of participating countries
- Network and discover opportunities for collaborations

Participating speakers include:

Prof Tommy Koh – Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SIN)
 Paul Saffo – Institute for the Future (USA)
 Michael Keller – Stanford University (USA)
 Howard Besser – New York University (USA)
 Jan Fullerton – National Library of Australia (AUS)
 Doug Johnson – Mankato Area Public Schools (USA)

Celebrating Knowledge

The Power and Potential
 An NLB Conference
 13 - 15 November 2005
 InterContinental Hotel, Singapore

Programme-at-a-Glance*

Sunday 13 November 2005

WELCOME GALA DINNER

Dinner Speech

Knowledge, Culture & Globalisation

Monday 14 November 2005

CONFERENCE DAY ONE

Keynote Address 1

Knowledge, Media and Libraries after the Bubble

Keynote Address 2

The Power of Learning Spaces

Plenary 1

The Potential of Convergence

Tuesday 15 November 2005

CONFERENCE DAY TWO

Keynote Address 3

A Knowledge-Based Web

Plenary 2

The Power of Collaboration

Plenary 3 (Parallel Track)

Power to the Knowledge Worker

Plenary 4 (Parallel Track)

The Potential of Technology

*subject to changes

Reply slip (Fax to: +65 6587 7132)

- I would like to attend the conference
 I would like to know more about the sponsorship opportunities

Name (Mr/Ms/Mrs/Dr/Prof): Job Title:

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For enquiries, please contact Ms Christine Khoo via email: christine@singex.com.sg or tel: +65 6587 7125

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