

RENAISSANCE CITY REPORT

Culture and the Arts in Renaissance Singapore



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Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1 The arts and cultural scene of Singapore has made good strides since the 1989 Report of the Advisory Council on Culture and the Arts. The development of institutions and infrastructures has put in place much “hardware” for culture and the arts. It is now necessary to give more focus on the “software” aspect.
- 2 The Ministry of Information and The Arts (MITA) has produced a report, in consultation with members of the cultural community, that articulates a vision of Singapore as a world-class city supported by a vibrant cultural scene, and outlines the strategies required to take Singapore there. This report was accepted by the Singapore Government and announced in Parliament by Mr Lee Yock Suan, Minister for information and the Arts, on 9 March 2000.
- 3 This Report has two aims:
 - a. To establish Singapore as a global arts city. We want to position Singapore as a key city in the Asian renaissance of the 21st century and a cultural centre in the globalised world. The idea is to be one of the top cities in the world to live, work and play in, where there is an environment conducive to creative and knowledge-based industries and talent.
 - b. To provide cultural ballast in our nation-building efforts. In order to strengthen Singaporeans’ sense of national identity and belonging, we need to inculcate an appreciation of our heritage and strengthen the Singapore Heartbeat through the creation and sharing of Singapore stories, be it in film, theatre, dance, music, literature or the visual arts.

Benchmarking Cities

- 4 It is useful to look at comparative data across cities to obtain a clearer picture of where Singapore stands in terms of cultural development. While we are in the top league of cities in terms of economic indicators, we fare less well on the cultural indicators, in terms of talent pool, facilities, activities, audience figures and level of state funding for the arts. We should aim to reach a level of development that would be comparable to cities like Hong Kong, Glasgow and Melbourne in five to ten years. The longer term objective would be to join London and New York in the top rung of cultural cities.

Culture and Creativity in the Future Economy

- 5 Culture and the arts are important to us because they enhance our quality of life, contribute to a sense of national identity and add to the attractiveness of our country.

- 6 Apart from the direct economic benefits that accrue to arts and cultural activities, creative and artistic endeavours will also play a decisive role in the future economy. To ensure sustained growth in the long run, Singapore must forge an environment that is conducive to innovations, new discoveries and the creation of new knowledge. Knowledge workers will gravitate towards and thrive in places that are vibrant and stimulating. Building up a cultural and creative buzz will thus help us to attract both local and foreign talents to contribute to the dynamism and growth of our economy and society.

Vision of a Renaissance Singapore

- 7 Renaissance Singapore will be creative, vibrant and imbued with a keen sense of aesthetics. Our industries are supported with a creative culture that keeps them competitive in the global economy. The Renaissance Singaporean has an adventurous spirit, an inquiring and creative mind and a strong passion for life. Culture and the arts animate our city and our society consists of active citizens who build on our Asian heritage to strengthen the Singapore Heartbeat through expressing their Singapore stories in culture and the arts.

Roles of the Players

- 8 In order for this to happen, the state, the arts community, the private sector and individual Singaporeans will have their own roles and responsibilities to fulfil. The state and the private sector must provide support and space for the development of the arts. The arts community must strengthen its sense of professionalism and accountability. The private sector and individual citizens must engage in a fruitful and symbiotic partnership with the arts community.

Strategic Directions and Recommendations

- 9 Six key strategies for developing the arts and heritage sectors are proposed:
- i) Develop a strong arts and cultural base
 - Expose students to the arts as an aesthetic experience as well as to broaden their understanding and appreciation of the creative possibilities in our world. The current Arts Education Programme should be expanded with additional funding of another \$400,000 per annum. Consider expanding the role of the Arts Education Council to include overseeing the systematic introduction of arts education at the junior college, secondary and primary school levels.

- Set up a Singapore Studies Department or Programme at the NUS to offer courses relating to the people, society, heritage and culture of Singapore.
 - Allocate \$500,000 a year for the next five years for the National Arts Council (NAC) to fund or undertake research and documentation projects in culture.
- ii) Develop flagship and major arts companies
- Allocate to NAC an additional \$5 million per annum over the next five years to support up to eight major arts companies. Funding could be on a two-year cycle to give arts groups greater flexibility.
 - Provide \$200,000 per annum to develop technical and managerial skills among our arts and heritage managers and administrators.
- iii) Recognise and groom talent
- Mount concerted effort to discover, groom and recognise artistic talents. Initiatives recommended include:
- Beef up scholarship funding by \$300,000 per annum to send local and foreign talents for training.
 - Set up a “New Artist Discovery Scheme” with an initial sum of \$200,000 per annum to fund promising projects proposed by fresh talents.
 - Accord greater recognition to Singaporean artists or arts groups who have attained high standards of excellence in their field. They could be designated as cultural ambassadors or recognised as arts laureates. Create an annual \$200,000 fund to support projects or commission works by recipients of Cultural Medallions.
 - Upgrade the current Singapore Youth Festival (SYF) into an international event that will include the participation of foreign schools. The Ministry of Education, National Youth Council and NAC should work together to develop the SYF into an event to showcase young and budding talents.
- iv) Provide good infrastructure and facilities
- Expand NAC’s successful Arts Housing Scheme to include a further 7,000 square metres over the next five to seven years. Arts housing should expand strategically and systematically to create belts of cultural activities.

- Consider building film-making facilities such as a standard film studio coupled with a digital studio within the next five years to establish Singapore as the regional hub for post-production work in films.
- Continue to cater for good cultural facilities such as the extension of the Singapore History Museum, the refurbishment of old Parliament House as an arts and cultural centre, and the development of a national arts gallery at Queen Street.

v) Go international

- Allocate an additional \$700,000 per annum for NAC to reinforce our efforts to promote our artists overseas and for NHB to bring our exhibitions overseas. This fund can also be used to help our overseas missions showcase our arts and heritage.
- Strengthen cultural relations with other countries to facilitate cultural exchanges and forge partnerships with other cultural agencies.
- Encourage and facilitate international co-productions and collaborations involving Singapore and overseas talent.

vi) Develop an arts and cultural 'renaissance' economy

Create vibrant arts and cultural activities:

- Allocate an additional \$1.5 million per annum to make events such as the Singapore Arts Festival and Singapore Writers' Week the leading ones in Asia. Upgrade the National Piano and Violin Competitions into regional competitions.
- Initiate a Sculptural Biennale to showcase sculptures from all over the world in our indoor and outdoor venues, with funding of \$500,000 for each Biennale.
- Create a new biennial mini arts festival similar to the Boston arts festival around the Waterloo and Fort Canning areas with funding of \$1 million for each festival.
- Develop more outreach programmes such as concerts in the park and lunchtime concerts.
- Seek to host respected arts awards such as the Commonwealth Book Prize on a permanent basis or as often as possible.
- Develop our own prestigious regional art awards. Set up a fund of \$1 million over the next five years to develop a regional award in the visual arts. Upgrade the Golden Point awards for literature into a regional competition.

Strengthen arts marketing and cultural tourism:

- MITA should work with the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) to promote arts and cultural tourism through:
 - a) capitalising on opportunities in conferences, conventions and exhibitions (e.g. medical conventions, architectural conventions);
 - b) systematic international marketing of our arts and cultural activities by working with foreign media, travel writers and tourism industry operators; and
 - c) developing an online ticketing system to better promote advance ticket sales for performances and exhibitions in Singapore.
- Set up an Arts Marketing Task Force to systematically develop marketing practices in the arts industry that would attract more audiences and sponsors from Singapore and abroad. This should be supported by \$500,000 over three years to enable it to commission market research, identify potential marketing opportunities and advise on marketing plans.

Increase incentives for arts sponsorship:

- Study how tax incentives can be extended to encourage corporate sponsorship for culture.

Promote Singapore as an international arts events hub:

- Encourage international arts events to be staged in Singapore. Consider concessionary measures in areas such as the withholding tax on income earned by foreign performing artists and tax on income earned by show presenters from arts productions.
- Set aside \$500,000 over three years to organise an international performing arts market with an Asian focus to attract our neighbouring countries to market their arts groups and productions to festival directors and impresarios.
- Promote the development of art auction houses through the judicious use of pro-business packages.

10. These proposals will require an increase in the long-term level of funding for arts and heritage. For a start, MITA is proposing additional funding of \$50 million over the next five years for the new programmes and schemes proposed here. This does not include capital expenditure and additional recurrent expenditure from development projects.
11. The Renaissance Singapore vision and recommendations will help us establish a strong position as a premier cultural city in Asia. These initiatives in culture and the arts will demonstrate the Government's resolve in pursuing policies that will secure a bright, vibrant and creative future for Singaporeans in the 21st century.

CHAPTER ONE

The 1989 Report...Ten Years Hence

“We have reached a stage in our economic and national development when we should devote greater attention and resources to culture and the arts in Singapore. Culture and the arts add to the vitality of a nation and enhance the quality of life.”

- PM Goh Chok Tong (then 1DPM and Minister for Defence) in a written response to the Report of the Advisory Council on Culture and the Arts in April 1989.

Chapter One

Introduction

1. The 1989 Report of the Advisory Council on Culture and the Arts is widely regarded by policy-makers and the arts community as a watershed in the development of the arts, heritage and cultural scene in Singapore.
2. Chaired by then 2DPM Ong Teng Cheong, the Advisory Council presented Government with a comprehensive slate of recommendations designed to make Singapore a culturally vibrant society by the turn of the century.
3. This chapter reviews the main thrusts of the 1989 Report and assesses the transformations that have taken place ten years hence.

The 1989 Report in Brief

4. The 1989 Report affirmed that culture and the arts mould the way of life, the customs and the psyche of a people. It asserted that culture and the arts were important because they:
 - a) give a nation its unique character;
 - b) broaden our minds and deepen our sensitivities;
 - c) improve the general quality of life;
 - d) strengthen the social bond; and
 - e) contribute to our tourist and entertainment sectors.
5. The Report recommended that the thrust of Singapore's cultural development should be to realise the vision of a culturally vibrant society, defined as one whose people are well-informed, creative, sensitive and gracious, by 1999. In addition, our multi-cultural heritage made us unique and we should promote excellence in our multi-lingual, multi-cultural art forms. Singapore was also identified as having the potential to be an international exhibition centre and a market for works of art and a regular performing venue for world class troupes.
6. The Advisory Council assessed that cultural development in Singapore was impeded by the lack of:
 - a) funds
 - b) knowledge
 - c) qualified professionals
 - d) publicity
 - e) cultural facilities
 - f) educational opportunities
 - g) streamlined licensing procedures; and
 - h) co-ordination on heritage matters

7. The Advisory Council made recommendations in four main areas:
 - a) organisational improvements;
 - b) improvements in our education system;
 - c) improvement of cultural facilities; and
 - d) greater efforts in promoting the arts.

The main recommendations of the Advisory Council are provided in greater detail in Annex A, together with brief notes on the progress in implementation ten years hence.

Assessment

8. The most visible accomplishments since 1989 have been the development of institutions and infrastructures. The Report paved the way for the formation of statutory bodies such as the National Arts Council, the National Heritage Board and the National Library Board and the development of infrastructures such as the Singapore Art Museum, the Asian Civilisations Museum and The Esplanade – Theatres On The Bay. These developments have enriched the arts and heritage scene in Singapore, keeping pace with and sometimes even exceeding the expectations of the population. A snapshot of the current state of culture and the arts in Singapore will be provided in Chapter Two.
9. Some commentators have remarked that the 1989 Report had put in place much “hardware” for culture and the arts and that what was necessary now was to give more focus on the “software” or “heartware”. It is argued that instilling in our people a sense of the aesthetics and an interest in our heritage should be the next step in our nation’s development.
10. In the ten years after the Advisory Council’s Report, Singapore has developed to a stage where culture and the arts have assumed a greater degree of importance. Some of the “new” imperatives for promoting culture and the arts will be elaborated on in Part Two of this report.
11. We need to recognise the enhanced role of culture and the arts in the future development of our nation’s society and economy. Various government agencies have mapped out plans to ensure that the strategic concerns of Singapore in areas such as education, urban planning and technology have been addressed. But as yet, there has not been a holistic and comprehensive re-examination of Singapore’s arts and cultural scene. This is a gap which this report will begin to address, specifically by providing the vision and strategic directions for the promotion of arts and culture in Singapore in the 21st century.

CHAPTER TWO

State of the Arts

“...from invisible to explosive...”

- New York Times (25 Jul 99), describing the Singapore arts scene.

Chapter Two

Introduction

1. This chapter seeks to provide a sense of Singapore's state of cultural development. This is not meant to paint a comprehensive overview of culture and the arts, but merely to capture a snapshot of the current cultural scene using some quantitative and qualitative indicators.

Cultural Events and Productions

2. Singapore's cultural scene has become more vibrant over the past decade. Total number of performing arts activities and visual arts exhibitions increased by some 150% from about 1,700 in 1989 to some 4,200 in 1998. Ticketed attendance for performing arts increased by 46% from 562,000 in 1989 to some 822,000 in 1998 – this translates to an average of 2,250 ticketed patrons a day.

	Performing Arts		Visual Arts	
	No. of activities (ticketed & non-ticketed)	Ticketed Attendance	No. of exhibitions (ticketed & non-ticketed)	Ticketed Attendance
1989	1,485	562,000	212	(not captured)
1998	3,777	822,000	399	184,000*

* Includes attendance of exhibitions held at the Singapore Art Museum only.

Table 2-1: Growth in activities and attendance at arts events

Theatre	433,000
Music	258,000
Dance	89,000
Other performing arts	42,000
Visual arts	184,000
Total	= 1,100,000

Table 2-2: Breakdown of ticketed attendance for 1998

3. Theatre is the most popular form of performing arts, contributing to 65% of ticketed performances and 53% of total ticketed attendance in performing arts in 1998. This is followed by music (22% of total ticketed performances and 31% of total ticketed attendance) and dance (10% of total ticketed performances and 11% of total ticketed attendance). Local arts groups are the main players of our vibrant arts scene, contributing 83% of total ticketed activities and 70% of ticketed attendance.

4. A wide range of festivals takes place throughout the year. The major ones include the Singapore Arts Festival (June, three weeks), Singapore International Film Festival (April, two weeks), International Comedy Festival (April, three weeks), The Substation's Septfest (September, one month), Singapore Writers' Festival (September, one week) and Nokia Singapore Art (December - January, two months).
5. The opening of the Singapore Art Museum in January 1996 and the Asian Civilisations Museum in April 1997 has added breadth to the cultural scene. Blockbuster exhibitions such as *Masterpieces from the Guggenheim Museum* (1996), *The Origins of Modern Art in France* (1998) and *Eternal Egypt: Treasures from the British Museum* (1999) heighten awareness and interest in our museums. A 1998 survey of leisure attractions by Singapore Tourism Board showed that the "museums/heritage/history" category was the only one that registered an increase in visitorship.

Blockbuster Exhibition	Attendance
Masterpieces from the Guggenheim Museum (1996)	58,050
The Origins of Modern Art in France (1998)	66,700
Eternal Egypt: Treasures from the British Museum (1999)	102,000

Table 2-3: Attendance at blockbuster museum exhibitions

6. The Singapore Film Commission was set up in April 1998 with seed money to support the growth of the local film industry. Its mission is "to nurture, support and promote, Singapore talent in film-making, the production of Singapore films and a film industry in Singapore." There has been a renewed interest in recent years in Singapore-made films.

Year	No. of Local Films
1995	1
1996	2
1997	3
1998	4
1999	7

Table 2-4: Growth in local film industry

It's really sad if we keep watching other people's images on our screens. It would be nice to see something we recognise, have our own visuals and vocabulary.

■ Kelvin Tong,
co-director of Eating Air

Artists and Arts Groups

7. There were 190 arts companies and 213 arts groups/societies in Singapore in 1998. However, the number of major arts groups¹ number only about 18, about half of which are drama groups.
8. The works of our major arts groups are increasingly being sought after overseas. Some examples are TheatreWorks' *Lear* (Hong Kong, Jakarta, Perth, Berlin, Copenhagen), The Theatre Practice's *Spirits Play* (Hong Kong), Singapore Dance Theatre's tour to Australia and ACTION Theatre's *Chang And Eng* (Beijing) and *Mail Order Brides + other Oriental Takeaways* (New York City).
9. A number of individual artists have also made a name for themselves in Singapore and abroad. They include painters Liu Kang and Tan Swie Hian, writer Catherine Lim, director Ong Keng Sen, violinist Siow Lee Chin and actor/director/filmmaker Glen Goei.

Community-based Arts

10. Apart from the arts companies and societies, our grassroots cultural organisations have also helped to contribute to the vibrancy of the arts scene. The People's Association (PA) plays a significant role in promoting the arts through performances and courses held at community centres/clubs. As at 31 Mar 99, there were 602 cultural and interest groups at the community centres/clubs. Courses on folk dances, ballet, painting, pottery, music classes and drama are available to the public. In 1998, about 100,000 people participated in 8,541 classes covering 58 types of cultural courses.
11. Community-based arts groups such as Braddell Heights Symphony Orchestra, Keat Hong Chinese Orchestra, and Victoria Chorale receive funding from NAC for their arts activities. Some of these cultural groups have also participated in exchange programmes with their counterparts overseas, performed in the Singapore Festival of Arts Fringe, Chingay Festival and National Day Parade.

Cultural Facilities

12. Besides the three theatres run by the NAC – Kallang Theatre, Victoria Theatre and the Drama Centre, there are a host of other performing arts venues in Singapore. These range from Black Boxes to small theatres like Jubilee Hall at the Raffles Hotel (388 seats), mid-sized venues like the DBS Auditorium (579 seats), to large venues like the Singapore Indoor Stadium (12,000 seats).

¹ The National Arts Council defines "major arts group" as a company driven by artistic vision and leadership and which produces work of sustained and consistent performance quality. It is effectively managed by a core of full-time artistic and administrative personnel, dedicated to nurturing new works, new talent and new audiences.

13. NAC's Arts Housing Scheme has also spawned thriving cultural centres such as The Substation, Stamford Arts Centre and Sculpture Square and created belts of artistic activities along places such as Waterloo Street. An exciting future development will be the refurbishment of Old Parliament House into an arts and cultural centre.
14. The Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay, now under construction, will be Singapore's premier performing arts centre when it opens in 2002. Built on the Marina Bay waterfront in the neighbourhood of other heritage, arts and entertainment facilities, it will comprise a 1,800-seat Concert Hall, a 2000-seat Theatre, three performing and rehearsal studios and outdoor performing spaces.
15. Cultural repositories include the National Archives, Singapore History Museum, Singapore Art Museum, Asian Civilisations Museum, Lee Kong Chian Art Museum and the Changi Prison Chapel.

Reaching Out and Building Audiences

16. In 1993, the Arts Education Programme (AEP) was launched in our primary and secondary schools and junior colleges. The aim of the AEP is to promote an appreciation of the arts among students. By instilling a sense of aesthetics in our young, we are building the audiences of the future. In 1998, the AEP reached out to more than 200,000 students (about half the student population) with programmes ranging from music, dance, drama to animation films.

	FY 1996	FY 1997	FY 1998
AEP Expenditure	\$444,900	\$724,363	\$681,000
NAC subsidy per student	\$2.50	\$3.80	\$3.30
No. of students reached	180,000	192,000	204,000
No. of schools reached	215	240	254
No. of activities	1,132	1,375	1,412

Table 2-5: Reach and expenditure² of Arts Education Programme

17. There are various outreach programmes to bring arts and cultural activities to Singaporeans. These include the Concerts in the Park series, Community Arts series, Sing Singapore and Poems on the Move.

² The AEP is also generously supported by Edusave and by grants from the Singapore Totalisator Board.

18. An innovative initiative was the launch of the arts radio station, Passion 99.5FM. The station airs infotainment arts programmes, music, radio plays, as well as previews and reviews of shows in our cultural scene. Besides making the arts more accessible to people, Passion 99.5FM also provides a voice and forum for the arts community. Within a year of its official launch in April 1998, the station had doubled its weekly listenership to 60,000. (Source: Radio Diary Survey by AC Nielsen, 29 Mar – 23 May 99.)
19. The National Heritage Board's (NHB) museums have been able to attract healthy numbers of Singaporeans and visitors. In 1998, more than half a million people visited NHB's exhibitions and attended special fringe activities, performances, educational programmes and special events. Each year, more than 150,000 school children visit NHB museums as part of their National Education curriculum.

Supporting the Arts

20. Funding for the arts in Singapore has always relied on close partnership between the state, the corporate sector and the arts community. Public funding for the arts are largely channelled through the NAC and the Singapore Totalisator Board. For FY99, NAC received \$2.98 million for direct disbursement to artists and arts groups and a further \$3.19 million in the form of market rental for buildings under the Arts Housing Scheme. Recurrent funding from the Singapore Totalisator Board amounts to about \$5.80 million for FY99, with about \$0.60 disbursed as direct grants to arts groups through the ArtsFund³ and the rest going to the Singapore Symphony Orchestra (SSO) and the Singapore Chinese Orchestra (SCO).
21. Endowment and trust funds have also been set up to support our three flagship arts companies (SSO, SCO and Singapore Dance Theatre) with contributions coming mainly from the government (to date, about \$40 million) and from the Singapore Totalisator Board (about \$50 million).
22. The Arts Housing Scheme provides artists and arts groups with spaces converted from vacant buildings at subsidised rentals for training, practice, performing and administration. Currently, the scheme manages more than 26,700 square metres of floor area for 56 arts organisations and 26 visual artists. Examples of arts housing are Telok Kurau Studios for visual artists, the Young Musicians' Society Arts Centre and the Singapore Calligraphy Centre.

³ The ArtsFund is chaired by Mdm Li Lienfung. Separately, Arts Network Asia, a group of independent artists primarily from Southeast Asia and currently managed by TheatreWorks, was set up in Sep 1999 and it will provide 8-10 awards totalling US\$87,500 in the year ending Dec 2000 for collaborations and exchanges among Asian artists.

23. Formal training and recognition of for our budding artists received a boost with the government's acceptance of the recommendations in the Report of the Committee to Upgrade LASALLE-SIA and NAFA. From 1999, both arts institutions are given polytechnic-level subsidies as well as extra funding to improve their facilities and teaching staff. A new Institute of the Arts will be set up at the National University of Singapore to develop and conduct degree-level programmes in the performing arts by 2001.
24. Annual awards are presented to individuals and corporations to recognise and encourage local artistic talents and supporters of the arts. The Cultural Medallion Award is presented to outstanding individuals in artistic and cultural circles to recognise their achievements in their respective fields. It is the highest recognition of excellence in the fields of music, dance, drama, literature, the visual arts and photography. The Young Artist Award recognises and encourages the development of young artistic and creative talent. The Patron/Friend/Associate of the Arts Awards recognise sponsors who have contributed significantly to the arts.

Foreign Assessments

25. Foreign (mostly western) commentators have taken note of the transformation of the Singapore cultural scene, particularly over the last few years. Singapore was once written off as a sterile cultural desert. Now the New York Times (25 Jul 99) describes the flourishing Singapore arts scene as having gone "from invisible to explosive". The Financial Times (14 Jul 99) was impressed with the Singapore government's generous arts housing policies and East-West blend of programming in the Singapore Arts Festival.
26. Attention is often focused on how the cultural climate has become more liberal, and speculation on whether Singapore can keep to this course. TIME magazine's cover story for the week of 19 Jul 99 was on the loosening up of Singapore - "Singapore Lightens Up". It said Singapore was getting creative and even "funky", with its society transformed "in ways that until recently seemed impossible".

Conclusion

27. The Singapore arts and cultural scene is being fuelled by an increasingly educated profile of younger Singaporeans. Three quarters of the Singapore Arts Festival audience is less than 40 years old. Former information and arts minister BG George Yeo observed recently that the concert halls and theatres were packed with younger people and not greying audiences, and that the younger generation is changing the nightclub and cultural scene in Singapore (Business Times, 21 Oct 99).
28. This is thus a critical juncture for the state of the arts in Singapore. Having secured the economic necessities of life, Singaporeans are discovering the allure of culture and things aesthetic. The potential for Singapore to develop into a renaissance city of Asia is high.

CHAPTER THREE

Benchmarking Cities

“It’s interesting that they (leading-edge informational activities) are especially concentrated in the highest-level global cities – London, New York, Tokyo…….Those places with a unique buzz, a fizz, a special kind of energy, will continue to be as magnetic as ever for the production of products and above all the performance of services.”

- Professor Peter Hall of University College London, at the City of Melbourne’s Benchmarking Cities 1998 Conference.

Chapter Three

Introduction

1. Benchmarking is a way of establishing baselines for measuring current and future performance of organisations, and academics and commentators have extended this to cities. Benchmarking also means the search for best practices that lead to superior performance.
2. As a city-nation-state, Singapore will have constraints and advantages over other cities that belong to a larger political entity. Nonetheless, if the aim is for Singapore to be a world class cultural city, then benchmarking will be an important exercise to guide and to track our progress.
3. It is useful to look at comparative data across cities to obtain a clearer picture of where Singapore stands compared to other cities in terms of cultural vibrancy. Besides New York City and London, we should also study cities that offer better comparability at least in terms of population size and cultural development. For this reason, we will also compare data from Hong Kong, Melbourne and Glasgow.

The Buzz of London and New York City

4. A survey of senior executives from international performing arts companies, conducted by World Cities Research in 1998, found that New York City and London stood head and shoulders above other cities in terms of the performing arts. Visitors to these two cities immediately associate them with opportunities to partake of their cultural offerings, be it going to the theatre, visiting the museum, attending a concert, browsing their bookshops or simply, soaking in the “culture” on the streets.
5. What is it that makes London and New York special? On a very basic level, the answer could be that there is so much happening every single day of the year. The sheer numbers and variety of cultural activities contribute greatly to the non-stop buzz of London and New York. This in turn is a function of their positions as cosmopolitan cities that embrace (and attract) large numbers of people from different parts of the world for business, leisure, education and creative pursuits.
6. In order to attract foreign talent to Singapore, we must not only provide the economic case to them, we must also ensure that our city is vibrant so that residents can enjoy a good quality of life. Singapore has in a sense no world class institutions of higher learning or research laboratories etc. that would attract people here on their own merits.
7. Singapore aims to be a hub for business, financial services, electronic commerce, travel, tourism, telecommunications, information, education and innovation. Together with our policy to attract foreign talent here, it dovetails well with our desire to create a buzzing cultural city here.

Comparing Indicators

8. The indicators we will look at are culled from a variety of sources. While not completely comparable, they offer a rough gauge of the gap between Singapore and the other cities.
9. We will take a cursory look at how Singapore compares with other cities in terms of the numbers of professional arts companies, arts facilities, arts activities (and attendance figures) and the level of public expenditure on the arts.

Talent Pool

10. The pool of professional practitioners in Singapore is very small compared to the other cities. As table 3-1 shows, Hong Kong and Glasgow have more than twice the number of major arts companies compared to Singapore.

Talent Pool	Singapore 1999	London 1994	New York 1995	Glasgow 1996	Hong Kong 1996	Melbourne 1999
Population (mil)	3.3	6.9	9.0	3.0	6.2	3.2
Total no. of major arts companies	18	209	214	37	38	24

Table 3-1: Number of major arts companies

11. The recently-adopted recommendations⁴ of the Committee to Upgrade LASALLE-SIA and NAFA to develop tertiary arts education will in time enlarge the numbers of artistically talented individuals who will pursue the arts as a viable career option. The experience of Hong Kong, Melbourne and Glasgow show that Singapore still has a lot more room for this area to grow.

Arts Facilities

12. Chapter One noted that one of the most visible accomplishments since 1989 has been the development of arts infrastructure. However, in terms of arts facilities, Singapore still lags behind Glasgow and Melbourne - two other cities of comparable population size.

Arts Facilities	Singapore	London	Glasgow	Melbourne
No. of Theatres	17	186	29	37
No. of Concert Halls / Music Venues	5	19	7	7
No. of Museums	18	92	11	47

Table 3-2: Number of arts facilities

⁴ Two of the key recommendations include the provision by Government of polytechnic level funding to NAFA and LASALLE-SIA from FY99 onwards for development and recurrent budgets, and the offering of diploma, advanced diploma and eventually degree courses by NAFA, LASALLE-SIA and NUS.

Arts Activities and Attendance

13. An approximate proxy for the vibrancy of the arts and cultural scene is the quantity of cultural activities and the attendance at these activities. Singapore appears to fare well compared to Hong Kong in terms of activities but attendance figures are proportionately lower. In the case of Glasgow, its number of activities and attendance were much higher than Singapore.
14. Increasingly, we would need to develop and consider qualitative indicators for the cultural scene in Singapore. We should not be satisfied with a cultural scene that panders to the lowest common denominator. We need to develop high standards of documentation and critical discourse and welcome qualitative benchmarking against international standards.

Cultural Activities and Attendance	Singapore 1998		Glasgow 1996/97		Hong Kong 1996		Melbourne 1995	
	No.	Attendance ('000)	No.	Attendance ('000)	No.	Attendance ('000)	No.	Attendance ('000)
Ticketed performing arts activities	1,749	822	2,798	1,049	1,604	1,756	n.a.	1,924
No. of ticketed visual arts exhibitions	19	184 ^a	204	2,252	78	371 ^b	n.a.	1,202
Total attendance	1,006,000		3,301,000		2,127,000		3,126,000	
Population (million)	3.86		3.0		6.2		3.2	
<u>Total attendance</u> Population	0.26		1.10		0.34		0.98	

Table 3-3: Cultural Activities and Attendance

Notes

a : Includes only attendance from Singapore Art Museum

b : May include visual arts exhibitions and other types of exhibitions as no breakdown is available.

Arts Funding

15. Although it is difficult to make direct comparisons across countries for arts funding, it is clear that while Singapore has invested a fair amount in cultural infrastructure, this is not matched by funding in software for culture and the arts. Annex B compares government funding for the arts in Singapore with London, New York City, Glasgow, Hong Kong and the Australian State of Victoria. On a per capita basis, government operating expenditure on the arts in Singapore is about half that of Victoria, Australia and less than a third that of Hong Kong.

The economist, J M Keynes, arguing in 1936 against the neglect of the arts by the estate, wrote that

“we have persuaded ourselves that it is positively wicked for the state to spend a halfpenny on non-economic purposes.....If there arises some occasion of non-economic expenditure which it would be a manifest public scandal to forgo, it is thought suitable to hand round the hat to solicit the charity of private persons.”

16. Support for artists and the processes of art making and art appreciation in Singapore needs to catch up with the investments in cultural facilities. This is the only way to ensure that our performing spaces and cultural institutions can come to life and Singaporeans can enjoy a city with a thriving cultural buzz. This is one of the key thrusts of this Report. .

Singapore - Cultural Capital of Asia?

17. Singapore's arts scene has not developed at the same pace as our economic sector. While we are in the top league of cities in terms of economic indicators, we fare less well on the cultural indicators. We should aim to achieve a level of cultural vibrancy that would be comparable to the cities of Hong Kong, Glasgow and Melbourne in five years. Our longer term objective would be to join New York and London in the top rung of cultural cities.
18. Cultural development is less amenable than economic development to 'short cuts' such as knowledge transfer and foreign direct investment; it could be argued that a country's cultural milieu needs more time to brew. However, it is helpful for us to be more conscious about developing this aspect of our country. For example, the comparisons in this chapter indicate that there is scope in Singapore for more attention to be given to the development of major arts companies. Such companies can play an important role in developing audiences and adding to the quantity and variety of arts activities here.
19. It is culture that animates cities. Culture captures the soul and *zeitgeist* of a people. As our population becomes more affluent and as our society matures, culture and the arts will become more important if we are to succeed in developing Singapore into a world class home for Singaporeans.

CHAPTER FOUR

Culture and Creativity in the Future Economy

“The greatest resource possessed by any nation is the imagination of its people. Imagination nourishes invention, economic advantage, scientific discovery, technological advance, better administration, jobs, communities and a more secure society. The arts are the principal trainers of imagination. They can enrich, not replace, the literacy, numeracy, science and technology we need for prosperity.”

■ from The Rt Hon Chris Smith’s [Creative Britain](#) (1998)

Chapter FOUR

Introduction

1. It is *de rigueur* in a report such as this to reaffirm the importance of culture and the arts to us as a people and as a society. The 1989 Report of the Advisory Council on Culture and The Arts devoted its first chapter to this, explaining that “the encouragement of a keen aesthetic sense among Singaporeans and the improvement in the standard of our arts will benefit us and our society because culture and the arts:
 - a) enrich us as persons;
 - b) enhance our quality of life;
 - c) help us in nation-building;
 - d) contribute to the tourist and entertainment sectors.”
2. The 1989 Report added that “culture and the arts are the manifestations of the human spirit, the products of man’s creativity and imagination...they give a nation its unique character and provide the much needed social bonding to hold the people of a nation together”. These observations are timeless and will feature again when we examine our vision of a Renaissance Singapore in the next chapter.
3. As Singapore reaches developed nation status, the impetus to foster a culturally vibrant society takes on multiple dimensions. In this chapter, we focus on the economic imperatives for the arts, taking into cognisance the greater role that creative and artistic endeavours will play in our future economy. We will look at the economic impact of the arts, the role of creativity in the future economy and the impact of culture to the attractiveness of Singapore. It is argued that our future economic prosperity is tied to our success in generating that creative and cultural buzz for Singapore.

Economic Impact on the Arts

4. Arts and cultural activities can have substantial flow-on economic benefits. Considerable returns can arise from spin-offs of the arts such as books, merchandise, videos, film rights and CD-ROMs. Arts tourism adds considerably to the multiplier effect. Research in Australia and America has calculated that for every dollar spent on the theatre box office, an additional average of some \$1.70 is spent on the local economy through, for example, travel, hotels and restaurants.
5. In Jun 97, the Singapore Tourism Board commissioned a study on the impact of the arts and entertainment industry on Singapore’s economy. The study was undertaken by the Applied Research Corporation of NTU and was concluded in 1998. The study estimated that by 2002, the multiplier effect of the arts and entertainment industry will be 2.8. This means that for every \$1 spent directly on the arts, another average \$1.80 of income generated elsewhere is a related industry.

6. Another approach to quantify the economic impact of the arts is to base it on survey responses from people who attend arts events. An example is a study by the South Australian Tourism Commission to measure the economic impact of the Adelaide Festival of Arts, an important event in the world arts calendar. The study estimated that the festival provided a stimulus to Gross State Product of A\$13 million, and attracted an additional total of 8,550 visitors to the State. It has also been estimated that the Edinburgh Arts Festival attracts estimated audiences of 745,000 and contributes an extra £17 million to Edinburgh and the Lothian region each year.
7. The arts can constitute a business sector in its own right, as the healthy growth in recent years of art galleries and arts presenters in Singapore attest to. And the economic impact of the cultural activities generated for a growing audience here is not to be sniffed at.

Creativity in the Future Economy

8. Singapore has enjoyed decades of economic growth that was based on strong economic fundamentals and the collective energy of the people.
9. The future will nonetheless be very different from the past. In the knowledge age, our success will depend on our ability to absorb, process and synthesise knowledge through constant value innovation. Creativity will move into the centre of our economic life because it is a critical component of a nation's ability to remain competitive. Economic prosperity for advanced, developed nations will depend not so much on the ability to make things, but more on the ability to generate ideas that can then be sold to the world. This means that originality and entrepreneurship will be increasingly prized.

“A critical input for sustaining growth in the long run is knowledge, or ideas, insights....This has important policy implications. It suggests that an economy cannot achieve fast long-run growth merely by having a high savings rate and investing lots of physical capital, or accumulating lots more buildings and machines. It must have in place policies which encourage new discoveries, new improvements and techniques.”

■ Professor Paul Romer, Stanford University

10. Singapore recognised this encroaching reality relatively early. The 1991 Strategic Economic Plan singled out the need to nurture creativity and innovativeness in Singapore's education system as a key strategy to realise our vision of a developed economy. The 1992 IT2000 report stressed that "skills, creativity and knowledge will become even more critical in determining success in international competition."
11. When opening a creative arts programme in May 1996, DPM BG Lee Hsien Loong said: "Creativity cannot be confined to a small elite group of Singaporeans...In today's rapidly changing world, the whole workforce needs problem-solving skills, so that every worker can continuously add value through his efforts." And in a landmark speech in June 1997 that launched Singapore on the course of "Thinking Schools, Learning Nation", PM Goh Chok Tong pronounced that "a nation's wealth in the 21st century will depend on the capacity of its people to learn. Their imagination, their ability to seek out new technologies and ideas and to apply them in everything they do will be the key source of economic growth."
12. What, however, is the relationship between the arts and creativity? Since early civilisations, the study and practice of the arts have been among the highest and most rigorous embodiments of human imagination and creativity. The ability to imagine, conceive and realise something new, to create something meaningful and valuable that never existed before is the single most prized quality of a work of art. The highest creative achievements in endeavours like engineering, architecture and even science are described as being "state-of-the-art".

When Sim Wong Hoo, Creative Technology chairman and two-time Singapore Businessman of the Year was selected in Dec 1998 to head a private sector committee that will help the Government create a pool of technopreneurs here, he said:

“We are not looking for the ‘me too’ type, who see something successful and say, ‘Me too, I can do that.’ They are followers. We’re looking for trail-blazers. There are more of them in the arts scene. They’re always creating new things.”

13. We will need this culture of creativity to permeate the lives of every Singaporean, more so than ever before. This will have to take place in our schools and in our everyday living environment. The education policies of many countries have begun to emphasise the importance of promoting creativity and innovation. We have to be wary that we do not merely equate creativity with a narrow form of problem-solving. The arts, especially where there is an emphasis on students producing their own work as well as appreciating the work of others, can be a dynamic means of facilitating creative abilities.
14. As technology improves and converges, it is software and content that will be widely sought after. “Entertainment”, in the broad sense of the word, will be a major industry of the future, and creativity in culture and the arts has a great deal to contribute in terms of offering new value propositions to consumers.
15. A vibrant arts and cultural scene will provide people with the stimuli and the opportunities to create products and services that are innovative and value-adding. Such an environment will help to nurture more of the trail-blazers that Sim Wong Hoo referred to (see box). Individuals who deploy arts and culture to create new value using new business models can be termed as “artspreneurs”. The new businesses that such “artspreneurs” generate will in turn feed the growth of arts and culture. These arts development and business formation loops will have a mutually reinforcing effect and will evolve with society to achieve greater heights in artistic and economic achievement.

Culture and the Attractiveness of Singapore

16. Most commentators that speak admiringly about the efficiency and effectiveness of the Singapore system cannot resist taking a few pot-shots at the alleged cultural sterility here. More recently, the line taken by the international media has shifted. TIME magazine focused its 19 Jul 99 issue on “funky” Singapore while the Financial Times talked about “cool Singapore” in its Jul 99 supplement.
17. What creates the “buzz” in Singapore? We should take a closer look at the role that cultural vibrancy plays in giving Singapore that extra dimension of attractiveness. We need to pay closer attention to culture and the arts as a significant factor in attracting foreign talent, as a legitimate demand of an increasingly sophisticated population, and as a means of enhancing the image of Singapore.

In Oct 1998, MITA commissioned a survey among expatriates to assess the importance of the cultural vibrancy of a city in deciding where to locate themselves and their companies. The majority of the 152 respondents felt that the cultural vibrancy of a city was an important or very important factor. Some key findings were :

- *Holding business and economic conditions constant, 72% felt that cultural vibrancy was important or very important in decisions to locate offices and regional headquarters.*
- *83% felt that cultural vibrancy was an important or very important factor in evaluating the satisfaction of their stay.*
- *78% felt that cultural vibrancy was an important or very important factor in considering their personal choice of location.*
- *72% cited the cultural experience as an important or very important component in their description of their residency in a city to family/friends/colleagues.*

Cultural vibrancy and foreign talent attraction

18. A pro-business administration and world-class business facilities are indeed key considerations in influencing foreign companies and foreign talent to work and invest in Singapore. They are necessary but not sufficient conditions for attracting talent, especially in a global village. Other important considerations such as our physical environment and cultural scene can persuade them to choose Singapore over other cities.
19. The knowledge economy of the future is expected to comprise many highly mobile talented individuals. Given our intention to attract such knowledge workers to contribute to our economy, we need to be mindful that these people are likely to gravitate towards environments that are vibrant, creative and stimulating. The cultural and creative buzz of a city is not easily quantifiable. A city's reputation for having such a buzz is most credibly spread through personal contacts and informal channels. In other words, we will have to invest in more than rhetoric in creating a culturally vibrant Singapore that other cities will use as a benchmark.

Culture as a means of image-branding

20. Our arts and culture have the potential to help us project Singapore's "soft power" in the global marketplace. The value of a country's national image can be an important contributor to foreign customers' purchasing decisions. Described as the halo effect, a high reputation in one area can create a halo for other attributes, giving a nation a perception advantage.
21. The idea of re-inventing our nation's image as a global hub for goods, service and ideas through our arts and cultural scene is worth considering. Our local artistic talents become our cultural ambassadors when they tour their works overseas.
22. Cultural diplomacy, or the enhancement of country to country relations through cultural exchanges, has been skilfully employed by countries such as Britain, France and Japan for many years. Our own diplomats, most notably Ambassador Chan Heng Chee in Washington DC, have skilfully used culture and the arts to help create a positive profile of Singapore to a foreign audience.
23. By positioning Singapore into a global arts hub that welcomes international and regional collaborations, and by promoting Singapore as an ideal base for international arts businesses interested in touring arts events to Asia, we can reinforce the concept of Singapore as the Gateway to Asia, not only in the area of culture, but in all other fields as well.

“Shakespeare brought King Lear’s drama to the world. Singapore director Ong Keng Sen has made it Asia’s own...an unprecedented work of regional cultural collaboration, not to mention a brilliantly crafted gem of Asian theatre.”

■ Asiaweek, 26 Feb 99

“I see the Singaporean contribution to this production as being the middleman with a vision. Keng Sen has a vision. We as Singaporeans are not as close to our traditional art forms as other societies. So I see us as the middleman, to harness different art forms and mix and match.”

■ Lim Yu Beng, one of the Singapore actors in Lear

CHAPTER FIVE

The Vision for Renaissance Singapore

“Nonetheless we are still not yet a society of distinction. Let us get rid of our self-centred, selfish and overly materialistic streaks. Let us be more cultivated and refined, with a keener sense of the beauty in human relationships, music and our cultural heritage.”

■ PM Goh Chok Tong, speaking at NTU in Dec 96

Chapter Five

Introduction

1. This chapter will put forth the vision of a Renaissance Singapore that will form the basis for the formulation of strategic directions in the promotion of culture and the arts.
2. By calling for a Renaissance Singapore, this is not an attempt to replicate the conditions of post-medieval Europe. Rather, it is the spirit of creativity, innovation, multi-disciplinary learning, socio-economic and cultural vibrancy that we are trying to capture. The vision is a projection of the type of Singapore person, society and nation that we can aspire to.
3. A three-tier model is used to help explain what *renaissance* could mean to Singapore at the individual, societal and national levels. We look at the qualities of the Renaissance Singaporean, the features of Singapore society in this renaissance, and the positioning of Renaissance Singapore in the international context. Finally, we outline the vision for our arts and cultural scene against this backdrop of a renaissance.

The Renaissance Singaporean

4. In renaissance Europe of the middle ages, there arose the notion of a *Renaissance Man* – an individual imbued with an inquiring mind, an adventurous spirit and wide ranging abilities. Those qualities were responsible for the innovation, learning, progress and prosperity of those societies. We would want similar qualities in Singaporeans in order to meet the social and economic challenges of the new millennium.
5. The Renaissance Singaporean is an individual with an open, analytical and creative mind that is capable of acquiring, sharing, applying and creating new knowledge. He is able to bring a distinct value-added advantage to each activity that he engages in.
6. The Renaissance Singaporean is an individual with a strong passion for life. The road not taken will be worth taking, for therein lies wonders and opportunities yet to be discovered. He dares to be different; he perseveres and is not afraid to fail. He balances his passion for results and abhorrence for idleness with the wisdom that sometimes the journey is as important as the destination.

7. In an increasingly borderless world and amidst predictions about the death of distance, the Renaissance Singaporean is attuned to his Asian roots and heritage. A strong sense of belonging and identity to his community and nation gives him the confidence to pursue activities beyond our shores.
8. The Renaissance Singaporean is an active citizen who understands the balance between rights and responsibilities. He has a healthy regard for his fellow men, respects common property and is willing to make sacrifices for the greater good and to help those less fortunate than himself. He recognises that he is not a mere actor in a vast nameless play, but a co-writer of the Singapore Story, with the latitude and responsibility to input his own distinctive ideas.
9. The graciousness of our Renaissance Singaporean is underpinned by a fine sense of aesthetics. He appreciates, respects and constantly seeks out the work of artists, drawing from them inspiration, self-renewal and creative inputs.

The Renaissance Society

10. The Renaissance Society has to nurture and provide a framework conducive for the development of a vibrant, participatory and inclusive citizenry. The government and the people will evolve a social contract in which there is more consultation and co-operation for the advancement of national interests. Singaporeans need to be aware that they can find latitude for the expression of their beliefs and ideas here, to pursue self-fulfilment, while respecting the multi-racial and multi-religious nature of our society.
11. At the societal level, culture and the arts are useful means of cultivating a civic-minded community. Culture and the arts are mirrors to the cultural, historical and socio-political life of Singaporeans. As forms of social commentary, they provide an avenue for Singaporeans to critique, analyse and discuss their experiences in an accessible and creative manner, thereby encouraging the development of views and positions on issues.
12. This will be a society that is clear about its identity, confident and at ease with itself. Awareness of our Asian heritage is enhanced even as we evolve a Singaporean identity. In this regard, artists play a key role as they can base their artistic efforts on the experience of being Singaporean and living in Singapore, thereby helping to create shared perspectives that are distinctly Singaporean.

13. The development and cultivation of aesthetic interests will be an important priority. Culture and the arts are mobilised to animate our city because we recognise that surroundings that reflect a low or commonplace taste have a debasing and dehumanising effect upon the human spirit. Artistic sensibilities are invoked, whether it be in the design of a book, a bus-shelter or a building.
14. This will be a society that encourages experimentation and innovation, whether it be in culture and the arts, or in technology, the sciences and education. To dare to fail would be a mantra of success, for only through continuous experimentation can a viable synthesis of experience and effort come to fruition.

Singapore - The Renaissance Nation

15. Renaissance Singapore will be an active international citizen with a reputation for being dynamic, creative, vibrant, aesthetic, knowledgeable and mature. It will be an international centre for arts and arts-related activities, similar to its status as an international centre for communications, finance and commerce. Plugged into global networks, Singapore will be an active member of the global community and an active participant in the activities of international organisations.
16. Our industries remain competitive in the global economy with the help of cutting edge research and development that is supported by a creative culture. The “Made in Singapore” label gains a reputation for technologically advanced, aesthetically designed and creatively packaged products and services.
17. Artists in Singapore do not only engage in parochial themes that are relevant to Singaporeans, but are able to speak to a wider international audience, as a Singaporean, as an Asian, and as part of the human race. Our arts and cultural scene helps to project our presence in the global arena. At the same time, Singapore provides opportunities for international and pan-Asian creative collaborations.

Vision for Culture and the Arts

18. What role does culture and the arts play in this vision of Singapore as a renaissance city? What kind of arts and cultural scene must we develop to support this vision?

19. We envisage a population that thirsts for knowledge, culture and the arts. This means increased demand for spaces for libraries, bookstores, museums, theatres, concert halls and exhibition areas. There will be dedicated arts precincts and cultural campuses in the city centre like Waterloo Street and the Empress Place area, supporting a growing number of creative and cultural activities. Museums and heritage trails will dot our cityscape to showcase our shared heritage. The Esplanade as a premier performing arts centre will epitomise the idea of Singapore as a global city for the arts, playing host to world-class shows and concerts all year round.
20. There will be an explosion in interest in arts and heritage issues, with intelligent, mature and passionate exchanges in the media and among people. Standards of art criticism improve and there is more and better quality documentation of the arts and heritage scene in Singapore.
21. There is a thriving arts industry and private sector efforts to promote the arts on a sound business case complement the support extended from the government and corporate sectors. Our impresarios and art gallery owners build up Singapore as an arts hub, supported by a growing network of international cultural relations.
22. We develop more major arts companies, including some flagship ones that become our “National” companies. These widen the opportunities available to nurture our artistic talents and to attract and absorb foreign creative talents. Local artists are encouraged to produce works from a Singaporean perspective and clear, internationally-recognised Singapore and pan-Asian voices begin to develop. At the same time, our artists are bold and experimental, earning their stripes as part of the responsible vanguard of society.
23. In terms of quantitative benchmarks, our numbers of arts events, professional arts companies, arts facilities, attendance at arts events and government funding for the arts per capita will reach a level comparable with cities like Hong Kong, Glasgow and Melbourne over the next five to ten years. In the longer term, Singapore will be as vibrant as top league cities like London and New York City.

Resonance with Singapore 21 Vision

24. This vision for our arts and cultural scene is aligned with and supports the Singapore 21 vision. We can also express the imperative for developing our artistic and cultural sectors in terms of some of the key ideas of the Singapore 21 vision:
- a) Every Singaporean Matters – every Singaporean has a contribution to make to Singapore. We need to widen our notions of success and learn to appreciate achievements in non-traditional areas such as the arts. “The Government can break the perception that economic and material considerations dominate its decisions. By encouraging Singaporeans to pursue their interests in the arts.....it sends a strong signal that being Singaporean is more than being an economic machine.” (S21 Report).
 - b) Opportunities For All – “Singapore must aspire to be one of the great global centres where people, ideas and resources come together to spark new opportunities.” (S21 Report) We must attract creative talent from all corners of the world to help raise our artistic and creative standards. In doing so, we will create an exciting and vibrant city-state where Singaporeans and foreigners will converge to share and produce entertaining, meaningful and world-class artistic creations.
 - c) The Singapore Heartbeat – “The Singaporean of the 21st century will be one who is comfortable living and working abroad, yet retains a strong emotional attachment to home.” (S21 Report) Our culture, arts and heritage is the common language through which Singaporeans can express and share their Singapore stories. Local artists, be they writers, film-makers, directors, dancers, painters, sculptors or architects, help to create shared perspectives that will be a decisive factor in nurturing the Singapore Heartbeat.
 - d) Active Citizens: Making a Difference to Society – The idea here is to develop an active, vibrant and participatory citizenry. Culture and the arts are mirrors to the cultural, historical and socio-political life of Singaporeans. As forms of social commentary, they provide an avenue for Singaporeans to critique, analyse and discuss their experiences.

Conclusion

25. This chapter has sought to articulate a vision of Singapore as a renaissance city. This is a vision that Singaporeans need to discuss, participate in and build upon. While the recommendations and proposals in Chapter 7 are discrete and quantifiable, this vision is an evolving one, with no specific price tag. As Singapore develops into a First-World Economy and World-Class Home, this vision will develop as a marker in our aim to be a “society of distinction”.

CHAPTER SIX

The Roles of the Players

Chapter Six

Introduction

1. Cultural development should be conceived as a tripartite enterprise in which the three sectors of the state, the arts community and the market are engaged as joint stakeholders. This chapter looks at the roles and responsibilities that each of these players must fulfil in our vision of Renaissance Singapore.

The State

Why should Government support The Arts?

2. Culture and the arts are important, but what is the Government's role in supporting them and why? There are three main reasons why Government should support the arts:

- a) to develop our cultural identity

A society's cultural identity is often reflected in artists' works, which help give expression to contemporary views and perceptions about the community at large. Our culture, arts and heritage is the common language through which Singaporeans can express and share their Singapore stories. Local artists, be they writers, film-makers, directors, dancers, painters, sculptors, or architects, help to create shared perspectives that will be a strong factor in nurturing the Singapore Heartbeat. The arts also have the potential to profile Singapore on the international arena role through what is known as "cultural diplomacy".

- b) to address market failure in the development of the arts

A number of market failure problems arise in the arts sector, particularly in terms of artists not being recognised in their own lifetime (in economic terms) and the need to support research and development activities which the private sector alone may not support.

There is also a need to make the arts more accessible to those with limited incomes in much the same way as the state often provides subsidies for other public goods like parks, sports facilities and education. The arts make us more well-rounded individuals and help to unlock our creative potential. Singapore's experience in developing a Garden City is an excellent example of how desirable goods such as green spaces in a city would not come about if left to the market alone. In a similar way, judicious government support can make the difference between a cultural desert and an oasis of creative endeavours.

- c) to enable the arts to act as an economic catalyst.

We have already noted in Chapter Four that the arts sector is an important source of employment, trade and foreign exchange earnings, and that it can also provide a significant multiplier effect on the local economy. A thriving arts scene also generates the economic benefit of engendering a more creative people and a more attractive global city. These economic imperatives add impetus for greater state support for the arts.

- 3. While a tripartite funding structure should exist to provide for the arts in Singapore, support from the community and corporate sectors often follows government leadership. A strong commitment to and endorsement of support for the arts from the Government would encourage greater sponsorship and support of the arts from the other sectors.

Government's Involvement In Cultural Development

- 4. The experience in other countries indicate that of the many public domains in which Government may choose to intervene or even lead, cultural development is a domain in which it is less likely to succeed purely by its control and dominance. This is primarily because the core of cultural development is an intricate mix of creativity, freedom and individualism.
- 5. While our government has been rightly concerned about undesirable influences permeating our country, it also recognises that cultural vibrancy cannot be achieved without some risk-taking and openness to new art forms and ideas. In the arts, the habitual "nipping in the bud" could possibly leave us with many fruitless trees. The very nature of cultural development and cultural vibrancy demand a multiplicity of creative and variegated policy approaches.

The need to promote cultural egalitarianism and cultural excellence in arts funding

- 6. The need to cater for ethnic and linguistic diversity and for different arts forms and age groups must be coupled with the need to support artistic excellence and innovation.
- 7. At present, the major funding bodies (the NAC, Arts Fund and Singapore Totalisator Board) tend to adhere to the same principles of funding and have similar selection criteria. As a result, no one is catering exclusively to the 'excellent'. A possible approach is to distance provision for 'excellence' from the provision for 'grassroots' i.e. basic and across-the-board cultural development activities. The different funding bodies may undertake these different roles. This is akin to the twin thrusts of Sports For All and Sports Excellence that the Singapore Sports Council has in promoting sports.

The Arts Community

8. To achieve artistic excellence and vibrancy, the arts community should strengthen its discipline, professionalism and accountability.

The arts community must be guided by a sense of professionalism and professional discipline

9. The term 'professionalism' in this context refers to an obligation to a sensibility of competence, efficiency and commitment in the business of the arts, including knowledge, practice and management. Being a 'professional' artist therefore has no direct correlation with being a full-time artist or with making one's living from the arts. As such, arts practice should meet the demands which are par for the course in other professions including a respect for procedures and deadlines, a commitment to honour contracts, the need for clear communication and the exercise of transparency and accountability in procedures of finance and management.

The arts community should establish a clear and effective line of communication with their audiences

10. Furthermore, in the context of Singapore, arts practitioners and companies must take upon themselves the responsibility of connecting and speaking to audiences. Even the peripherals of production or exhibition such as catalogues, programme notes or press releases should be integral to the process of art making.
11. Artists and arts companies should be willing to elaborate on their art by speaking and writing effectively about their work, either directly or through someone else. Self-reliance in initiating and sustaining criticism reflects the artist's commitment to intellectual content and systematic awareness of the processes of art-making. In a context like Singapore where many audiences lack the means to communicate with art either due to the lack of exposure or education, the arts community has a duty to initiate this conversation. It is also in the arts community's interest to contribute to engendering resources for critical exchange.

The arts community should consolidate to share resources and strengthen solidarity within the arts environment

12. The process of unifying the arts community would contribute towards the effective and efficient use of resources and to improving their ability to reach out to the wider community. The arts community could start and support community-wide initiatives such as co-operatives, associations or federations that bring together artists from a variety of disciplines with the aim of acting as a negotiator in the dialogue between the arts

community and the state, business or the wider public. They could also act as agencies that provide common services such as promotion and publicity, ticket distribution or technical support. This would require leadership and vision from among the arts community.

The Market

The market's relationship with the arts

13. The arts are provided and supported by a mix of public and commercial sources of funding. Commercial sponsorship is an important supplement to public funding. It represents a partnership between the sponsor and the arts organisation, a partnership that should not merely be financial, but based on the mutual benefits to arts managers and business people of working with each other. The state can act as an effective broker to encourage new and closer symbiotic relationships between the arts and the private sector.

The business of the arts

14. The market is an integral part of the environment in which cultural production and consumption take place. Infusing the creative enterprise with business sense through a symbiotic relationship between the private sector and the arts community could certainly contribute to the overall vitality of the cultural domain.
15. The arts community and the private sector could work together to extend the confines of art making to beyond the activities of dancing, writing, painting, acting and so on. By venturing into publishing, recording or even the merchandising the by-products of creative work, there is potential to extend the arts into the business arena. Naturally, there is a need to caution against allowing business interests to overwhelm artistic sensibility.
16. Harnessing the business perspective to the creative endeavour will not shackle but liberate the artist. Instead of being so dependent on state and corporate charity, artists who successfully engage in business without trading their soul will find greater autonomy and independence.

The Fourth Player?

17. Ultimately, the arbiter and beneficiary of the combined efforts of the state, the artists and the market will be the Singaporean - have we succeeded in improving his/her quality of life and in making Singapore Inc more competitive? But we also need the Singaporean to join us in this enterprise. Without the audiences, the individual supporters or the museum-goers, there will be no cultural scene and certainly no renaissance to speak of.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Strategic Directions & Recommendations

Chapter Seven

Introduction

1. The development of culture and the arts in Singapore is an integral part of the vision of Renaissance Singapore. We now turn to the strategic directions that will set us on the path to that vision, and suggest an action plan of concrete recommendations.
2. Six key strategies for the arts and heritage are proposed:
 - i) Develop a strong arts and cultural base.
 - ii) Develop flagship and major arts companies.
 - iii) Recognise and groom talent.
 - iv) Provide good infrastructure and facilities.
 - v) Go international.
 - vi) Develop an arts and cultural 'renaissance' economy.

The bulk of the recommendations that follow from these strategic directions focus on software – the nurturing of talent and investment in our creative resources.

I. Develop A Strong Arts And Cultural Base

3. This strategic thrust is aimed at building up our capacity for culture and the arts. Every Singaporean counts and we need to enthuse and inspire as many Singaporeans as possible with a love for culture and the arts. A cultural renaissance cannot be confined to an elite few. A strong arts and cultural base will provide the natural support for the flowering of the cultural scene. The aim is to develop Singaporeans who are more rounded and to enhance their capacity for creativity and innovation.

Expand arts education

4. The approach in arts education should be to expose students to the arts as an aesthetic experience and to broaden their understanding and appreciation of the creative possibilities in our world. Such arts literacy should be introduced into the schools in a similar way that Civic Studies and Physical Education are. The current Arts Education Programme should be expanded with additional funding of another \$400,000 per annum.
5. In addition, we should promote education *through* the arts, as opposed to arts education alone. For example, learning literature through drama. This will make learning through the arts a way of life and thus open the windows for expression, creativity and imagination for Singaporeans at an early age.

6. The Arts Education Council⁵ that has been formed following the Report of the Committee to Upgrade LASALLE and NAFA will guide the development of tertiary arts education in Singapore. We could consider expanding its role gradually to include overseeing arts education in the junior college, secondary and primary school levels. Arts education can then be promoted systematically and comprehensively.

Set up a Singapore Studies Department or Programme at the NUS

7. Currently, the Arts and Social Science Faculty of the NUS has departments in European Studies and Japanese Studies but none for Singapore Studies. Set up a Singapore Studies Department or Programme to offer courses relating to the people, society, heritage and culture of Singapore.

Set up a Centre for Research and Development in the Arts in NAC

8. There is currently a lack of support for the study and documentation of Singapore culture, and we are underdeveloped in terms of arts criticism and discourse. There is also not enough done to promote cross-cultural communication and understanding among the various communities in Singapore. Allocate \$500,000 a year for the next 5 years for the National Arts Council to set up a Centre for Research and Development in the Arts.

II. Develop Flagship And Major Arts Companies

9. Allocate to NAC an additional \$5 million per annum over the next 5 years to support up to 8 major arts companies. Funding could be on a 2-year cycle to give arts groups greater flexibility.
10. At the core of our arts scene are our arts practitioners, arts administrators, arts critics and people involved in the arts industries. Currently, the Singapore Symphony Orchestra and the Singapore Chinese Orchestra are the only two major arts companies that are receiving substantial state support for the tremendous costs involved in sustaining and building up a fully-fledged professional performing arts company.
11. Such major companies provide a sustainable channel for the development and employment of our best performing artists. Together with the initiatives to upgrade tertiary arts education, they will help legitimise the arts as viable professions for our artistically talented to aspire and train for. Robust funding for these companies will ensure the highest levels of professionalism and management and produce high quality works of international standards that Singaporeans can be proud of.

⁵ Currently chaired by Senior Minister of State for Education Peter Chen.

Develop arts and heritage managers and administrators

12. Infuse business perspectives into cultural development and encourage the arts sector to maximise their market potential. Provide \$200,000 per annum to develop technical and managerial skills among our arts and heritage managers and administrators. The idea is to build up management expertise, including legal and financial training. This will include study tours and attachments with overseas cultural organisations and the development of courses in arts and heritage administration at tertiary institutions.

III. Recognise And Groom Talent

13. Mount concerted efforts to discover, groom and recognise promising artistic talents that can contribute to the development of the arts and cultural scene in Singapore. The following initiatives are recommended:
 - i) Beef up scholarship funding by \$300,000 per annum for scholarship awards to study and train overseas and eventually work in Singapore. This scholarship should be open to both local and foreign young talents and would be for study in either the arts or heritage fields.
 - ii) Set up a “New Artist Discovery Scheme” with an initial sum of \$200,000 per annum to fund promising projects proposed by fresh talents. This is akin to venture capital or technopreneurship funding where support is given to develop new and creative ideas from people with little track record. Part of this fund can be for Fringe First awards to encourage young and new artists to raise the artistic standards of their work submitted for the Singapore Arts Fringe Festival.
 - iii) Accord greater recognition and material support to Singaporean artists or arts groups who have attained high standards of excellence in their field. They could be designated as cultural ambassadors or recognised as arts laureates. Create an annual \$200,000 fund to support projects or commission works by recipients of Cultural Medallions.
 - iv) Upgrade the current Singapore Youth Festival (SYF) into an international event that will include the participation of foreign schools. Ministry of Education, National Youth Council and NAC should work together to develop the SYF into an event to showcase young and budding talents.

IV. Provide Good Infrastructure And Facilities

14. Since the 1989 Report of the Advisory Council of Culture and The Arts, there has been significant investment in cultural facilities. The provision and maintenance of good infrastructure will continue to be an important ballast in our cultural policy.
15. We can look forward to the opening of The Esplanade – Theatres by the Bay in 2002, heralding the completion of Singapore's very own world-class performing arts centre. Significant effort and support will be needed to ensure that The Esplanade is able to sustain a world-class programme that will attract artists and audiences from around the world.
16. MITA has taken over the Old Parliament House and has plans to transform it into a vibrant arts and heritage centre, incorporating performance spaces, a film theathrette, a black box and heritage corners. Together with the Victoria Theatre, Victoria Concert Hall and Asian Civilisations Museum's second wing (due to be completed in 2002), the Old Parliament House will complete the transformation of Empress Place area into a cultural campus.
17. Other cultural facilities that are being studied or in the pipeline are the refurbishment of the Singapore Conference Hall as the home of the Singapore Chinese Orchestra, the extension of the Singapore History Museum, and the extension of the Singapore Art Museum to include a national arts gallery at Queen Street for our local artists to exhibit their works.
18. To nurture our film industry, the Singapore Film Commission should consider the commercial viability of building film-making facilities such as a standard film studio coupled with a digital studio within the next five years to establish Singapore as the regional hub for post-production work in films.
19. In addition, NAC's successful Arts Housing Scheme should be expanded to include a further 7,000 square metres over the next five to seven years. However, arts housing should not consist of disparate sites but expand strategically and systematically so that belts of cultural activities are created in places like Waterloo Street, Smith Street and Robertson Quay to enliven the central area. Artists and arts groups occupying such prime locations will need to strive to add vibrancy to these areas.

V. Go International

20. Singapore can never be successful as an insular nation. We thrive by being plugged into global networks and positioning ourselves as a hub for information and business. It is the same with culture and the arts. Our artists and festivals must be able to stand proudly on the world stage.

Promote our arts and heritage in the international arena

21. Allocate an additional \$700,000 per annum over five years to NAC to reinforce our efforts to promote our artists overseas and for NHB to bring our exhibitions overseas. Such promotion should not be confined to the performing arts but should include any cultural field that Singaporeans have achieved an international standard in, such as the visual arts, film, literature and photography. This fund can also be used to help our overseas missions showcase our arts and heritage overseas. Not only will our artists benefit, Singapore benefits as well because our image as a rounded, vibrant and creative nation is enhanced.

“My purpose is to present a full picture of what Singapore is.....whenever we have a chance to present ourselves culturally, we do it.”

■ Prof Chan Heng Chee, Singapore’s
Ambassador to the United States

Strengthen international cultural relations

22. In our move to make Singapore an international arts centre, it is important that we strengthen cultural relations with countries where culture and the arts are particularly vibrant, or countries with which Singapore shares a bond in terms of history, language, and/or cultural affinity. These cultural relations take the form of Government-to-Government contact as well as people-to-people contact, the latter often through Government auspices. Cultural exchange made in the context of such bilateral (or multilateral) cultural relations, brings with it a higher sense of international friendship and understanding. We should play closer attention to this aspect especially in an increasingly globalised world. Increasingly, nations practising a closed door cultural policy face the peril of becoming isolated not only culturally but politically and economically as well. Enhancement in cultural ties can take the form of cultural Memoranda of Understanding between Governments and subsequent Executive Programmes or other inter-agency agreements sealed by respective cultural Ministries or agencies of the countries involved.
23. In Singapore we should particularly strengthen our cultural relations with our neighbours in ASEAN, with whom we share much of our history and much of our destiny. We should also enhance ties with countries which hold the wealth of our ancestral cultures such as the People’s Republic of China, the Islamic states in the Middle East and India. There is also much to gain in engaging countries with which we have close ties of language such as the UK, US and Australia, as well as countries with high cultural vibrancy with whom we can share and collaborate such as France, Germany, Japan, Mexico. These examples are not exhaustive.

24. Singapore is in a position to not only share with these countries and learn from them in the cultural sense, we can collaborate with them individually or multilaterally to bring about new original collaborative cultural works or experiences, which can only come about through some measure of sharing, mixing, fusing and synthesis. Such new experiences will help us better understand not only other peoples from different cultural environments, but more importantly, ourselves and our own cultural identity. It will vastly enhance our artistic imagination beyond the base of our own experiences and reflections.

Encourage international collaborations

25. Encourage and facilitate international co-productions and collaborations involving Singapore and overseas talent. This could be in film (e.g. Canada-Singapore co-production agreement) or in the performing arts (such as the pan-Asian *Lear*) or in other art forms.

VI. Develop An Arts & Cultural 'Renaissance' Economy

26. We need to invest in activities and programmes that will add to the excitement and attraction of our cultural scene, and do this in a way that positions Singapore as an international hub city of the arts.

Create vibrant arts and cultural activities

27. Allocate an additional \$1.5 million per annum to make events such as the Singapore Arts Festival and Singapore Writers' Festival the leading ones in Asia. Upgrade the National Piano and Violin Competitions into regional competitions.
28. Initiate a Sculptural Biennale to showcase sculptures from all over the world in our indoor and outdoor venues, with funding of \$500,000 for each Biennale.
29. Create a new biennial mini arts festival similar to the Boston arts festival around the Waterloo and Fort Canning areas with funding of \$1 million for each festival. This festival could be handled by a private presenter.
30. Develop more outreach programmes such as concerts in the park and lunchtime concerts. Build up strategic partnerships to multiply the reach of these programmes, such as NAC's partnership with Community Development Councils to organise Community Arts Days.

Develop/base/host international art awards or conferences here

31. Seek to host respected arts awards such as the Commonwealth Book Prize on a permanent basis or as often as possible. Actively bid to host international arts conferences such as meetings of the International Society of Performing Arts.
32. Develop our own prestigious regional art awards. Such activities provide opportunities for performance and promotional work, and they generate a sense of being in the top league in that particular field. Set up a fund of \$1 million over the next 5 years to develop a regional award in the visual arts. Upgrade the Golden Point awards for literature into a regional competition.

Strengthen arts marketing and cultural tourism

33. MITA should work with the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) to promote arts and cultural tourism through:
 - i) capitalising on opportunities in conferences, conventions and exhibitions (e.g. medical conventions, architectural conventions);
 - ii) systematic international marketing of our arts and cultural activities by working with foreign media, travel writers and tourism industry operators; and
 - iii) developing an online ticketing system to better promote advance ticket sales for performances and exhibitions in Singapore.
34. Set up an Arts Marketing Task Force to systematically develop marketing practices in the arts industry that would attract more audiences and sponsors from Singapore and abroad. This includes strategies to build up the customer base and attract new audiences. It should provide logistical and marketing support to encourage the development of corporate arts and cultural events such as WOMAD and Nokia Singapore Art. To be supported by \$500,000 funding over three years, it will commission market research, identify potential marketing opportunities and advise on enterprise level marketing plans.

Increase incentives for arts sponsorship

35. Study how tax incentives can be developed to encourage corporate sponsorship for culture. For example, National Heritage Board's Double Tax Deduction Scheme could be extended to include donations of artefacts worth less than \$1 million but more than \$100,000.

Promote Singapore as an international arts hub

36. Singapore has great potential to become a vibrant international arts hub. We have an excellent network of telecommunication, transport and hospitality services and we are a central stopover point in the Asia-Pacific touring circuit. We should take a more proactive approach to make Singapore a conducive place to conduct the business of the arts.
37. Encourage international arts events to be staged in Singapore. Consider concessionary measures in areas such as the withholding tax on income earned by foreign performing artists and tax on income earned by show presenters from arts productions. These measures should be explored in view of the high-risk nature of these businesses and their positive externalities for Singapore.
38. Set aside \$500,000 over 3 years to organise an international performing arts market with an Asian focus to attract our neighbouring countries to market their arts groups and productions to festival directors and impresarios. This should be a tie-up with the Singapore Arts Festival – it will help to make Singapore a base for the purchase of Asian productions.
39. For the visual arts market, promote the development of art auction houses and a world class art fair through the judicious use of pro-business packages. For example, new auctions houses that are based here could be offered a 10% tax rate if they fulfil certain specified conditions, similar to what is offered to art dealers who own commercial art galleries under the Approved Art & Antique Dealers tax incentive.

Conclusion

40. The new programmes and schemes proposed here will require additional funding of some \$50 million over the next 5 years, or about \$10 million a year. This sum of \$50 million is to be administered by MITA through its Statutory Boards. This amount is not inclusive of capital expenditure and additional recurrent expenditure from new development projects. Projects such as the Old Parliament House are on-going and funding for them will be separately taken up.
41. The Renaissance Singapore vision and recommendations will help us establish a strong position as a premier cultural city in Asia. These initiatives in culture and the arts will demonstrate the Government's resolve in pursuing policies that will secure a bright, vibrant and creative future for Singaporeans in the 21st century.
42. As Singaporeans become more global in their outlook in the 21st century, the need to develop a stronger sense of our Singaporean identity will intensify. Our culture, arts and heritage is the common language through which Singaporeans can express and share their Singapore stories. This will be one of the decisive factors in nurturing that Singapore Heartbeat.

ANNEXES

**MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
1989 REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

1989 Recommendations	Remarks
<p>1. <u>Organisational Improvements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Singapore National Arts Council to spearhead the development of the arts in Singapore. • Establish a Literature Board to raise the tempo of literary activities in Singapore and to develop our four literatures. • Establish a National Heritage Trust as the sole authority on heritage matters to co-ordinate the preservation of the different dimensions of our heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The National Arts Council (NAC) was established as a Statutory Board under MITA in 1991. Its mission is to help nurture the arts and to develop Singapore into a vibrant global city for the arts. ➤ The promotion of literature is subsumed under the ambit of the NAC. ➤ The National Heritage Board (NHB) was established as a Statutory Board under MITA in 1993 to spearhead the promotion of Singapore's artistic, cultural and historical heritage. In addition, the Preservation of Monuments Board (PMB) was transferred to MITA in 1997 to encourage greater sharing of resources between PMB and NHB in heritage projects and public education.
<p>2. <u>Improvements in our Education System</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a comprehensive arts education system similar to that for academic and technical education. • Improve the quality of arts education in the schools and implement an Arts-in-Education programme to allow students to participate in and appreciate performances/exhibitions. • Develop a tertiary arts education system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Some headway has been achieved, especially at tertiary level. ➤ NAC launched the Arts Education Programme (AEP) in 1993. The AEP aims to promote an awareness and appreciation of the arts among students and to cultivate an arts audience base. The AEP reached out to some 200,000 students, or 44% of the student population in 1998. ➤ Government has accepted the main recommendations of The Committee to Upgrade LASALLE and NAFA (1998) to recognise LASALLE and NAFA as polytechnic-level institutions and to develop a degree-awarding Institute of the Arts at the NUS.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more overseas scholarships for talented Singaporeans aspiring towards careers in the fields of arts and heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ NAC, in collaboration with private-sector organisations such as Shell, provides some 120 scholarships and bursaries annually for the arts. NHB also offers some training awards to build up their in-house professional expertise.
<p>3. <u>Improvement of Cultural Facilities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a new performing arts centre at Marina Centre and upgrade existing theatres. • Build a modern National Library on Queen Street and four additional branch libraries in Hougang, Tampines, Yishun and Woodlands. • Assist arts groups to obtain rehearsal and working facilities. • Proceed with the development plans for the National Museum to provide for a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fine arts gallery in the former St Joseph's Institution (SJI) - children's museum in the former Tao Nan School - history of Singapore museum - Southeast Asian / natural history / ethnology museum - people's gallery - upgraded storage and conservation facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Esplanade – Theatres on The Bay is scheduled to open in 2002. Drama Centre, Kallang Theatre and Victoria Theatre underwent some upgrading works. ➤ Following the Library 2000 Report in 1995, the National Library Board (NLB) was formed to spearhead the development of Singapore's public library system. NLB's development plan provides for one National Reference Library, five regional libraries and eighteen Community Libraries. The plan is now being implemented and will be completed in 2003. ➤ NAC's arts housing scheme provides premises to house arts organisations at subsidised rates. It currently provides more than 26,700 sq metres of floor area for 56 arts organisations and 26 visual artists. ➤ Under the NHB, the National Museum has been redeveloped as the Singapore History Museum, the former SJI now houses the Singapore Art Museum, while the Asian Civilisations Museum is at the former Tao Nan School with a second wing being developed at Empress Place. NHB has also developed a 6,000 sq metres storage and conservation facility at Jurong.

4. Greater Promotional Efforts

- Government and private sector to install more works of art in public places.
 - Simplify entertainment licensing procedures to encourage private efforts at organising shows.
 - Make the arts more accessible to Singaporeans by organising a wider range of activities and courses.
 - Government to nurture deserving cultural groups through grants and other appropriate assistance schemes.
 - Implement a sustained programme for the commissioning, documentation and promotion of original Singapore works.
 - Mass media to increase and improve their coverage on Singapore arts and culture, and to make a special attempt to give balanced coverage to all forms of the arts that comprise our collective heritage.
- There has been a greater consciousness of the value of installing art pieces and sculptures as part of our urban environment. Examples include the sculptures at UOB Plaza and the Roy Lichtenstein pieces at Millenia Tower.
 - Some procedures have been simplified. The Singapore Tourism Board facilitates dialogue between the Association of Concert and Event Managers and the Public Entertainment and Licensing Unit (PELU) on reviewing licensing requirements. More can be done in this area.
 - NAC promotes a range of arts programmes such as Concerts-in-the-Park and Poems on the MRT as part of their outreach strategy.
 - NAC currently has a limited budget of some \$3 million each year to provide grants and assistance to arts groups.
 - NAC has a number of programmes that fulfil these purposes. NAC has also initiated efforts to promote Singapore works overseas. However, more needs to be done in these areas.
 - Local media have generally improved their coverage of Singapore arts and culture. Passion 99.5, a dedicated radio station for the arts was launched in Dec 1997. Arts Central, a dedicated programming belt for the arts on TV, was launched on 30 Jan 2000. More needs to be done, particularly in improving the standard of arts commentary and criticism in the media.

ANNEX B

COMPARISON OF GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR THE ARTS

Item	Singapore 1998/99	London 1997/98 (£1 = S\$2.43) ⁷	New York City 1998 (US\$1 = S\$1.69) ¹¹	Victoria, Aust 1997/98 (A\$1 = S\$1.1)	Glasgow 1997/98 (£1 = S\$2.43)	Hong Kong 1997/98 (HK\$1 = S\$0.2)
<u>Population</u>						
• City/ state	3.86 m ¹	6.67m	7.33m	4.56m	3m	6.62m
<u>Government expenditure on the arts²</u>						
• Operating Expenditure	S\$28.07m ³	S\$725.17m ⁸ (£262.07m)	S\$240.80m (US\$143.08m) ¹²	S\$67.09m ¹⁴ (A\$60.99m)	S\$56.01m ¹⁵ (£23.05m)	S\$164.4m ¹⁸ (HK\$822m)
• Capital Expenditure	S\$73.91m ⁴ (S\$3.29m ⁵)	S\$228.90m ⁹ (£83.72m)	S\$84.51m (US\$50.57m)	S\$12.97m ¹⁴ (A\$11.79m)	S\$20.85m ¹⁶ (£8.58m)	n.a.
• Total	S\$101.98m	S\$954.07m	S\$325.31m	S\$80.06m	S\$76.86m	S\$164.4m
<u>Per capita funding</u>						
Incl. capital expenditure	S\$26.42	S\$143.04	S\$44.38	S\$17.56	S\$25.62	n.a
Excl. capital expenditure	S\$7.27	S\$108.72	S\$32.85	S\$14.71	S\$18.67	S\$24.83
<u>Government grants to arts organisations</u>						
• Include lottery funds	S\$11.97m ⁶	S\$622.24m (£224.88m)	n.a.	n.a.	S\$46.07m ¹⁷ (£18.96m)	n.a.
• Exclude lottery funds	S\$6.17	S\$258.38m ¹⁰ (£93.38m)	S\$59.87m ¹³ (US\$35.65m)	S\$39.25m ¹⁴ (A\$35.68m)	S\$44.08m (£18.14m)	S\$83.8m ¹⁹ (HK\$419m)

Footnotes

1. Total population of Singapore comprises Singapore residents and foreigners staying in Singapore for at least 1 year.
2. Excludes expenditure on museums, heritage and libraries, etc.
3. Refers to the average amount of operating grant from NAC, Esplanade, flagship companies (SSO, SCO and SDT) and funds from Tote Board from FY97 to FY99. The average amount of operating grant contributed by Singapore Totalisator Board for the Esplanade project is estimated to be about \$2.97m over the last 3 years. The income from the endowment fund of flagship companies is estimated at 5% interest rate per year.
4. Refers to the average amount of development grant to NAC (for arts housing and other projects) and the Esplanade project from FY97 to FY99. The average amount of development grant contributed by Singapore Totalisator Board for the Esplanade project is estimated to be about S\$70.62m over the last 3 years.
5. Excludes development grant from Tote Board for the Esplanade project.
6. Includes direct grants and arts housing subsidies from NAC and recurrent funding commitments from Singapore Totalisator Board.
7. Average for 1997.
8. Includes S\$363.86m (£131.50m) lottery funds for operating expenditure. Please note that this is not counted as government expenditure in UK.
9. Includes S\$228.90m (£82.72m) lottery funds for capital expenditure.
10. Includes funding from Arts Council of England, London Arts Board and London Boroughs Arts Grants Committee.
11. Average for 1999, though Government expenditure includes an element for New York State Council on the Arts calculated at 1.68, the average of two years, 1998 and 1999, combined.
12. Includes some funding by New York State Council on the Arts for New York State from which it is impossible to identify grants specifically for New York City.
13. Includes funding from National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts but excludes funding from the Department of Cultural Affairs of New York City as no breakdown on arts expenditure is available.
14. Includes funding for Victorian arts organisations from the Australian Council, Victoria government and other national agencies.
15. Refers to arts expenditure by Glasgow City Council and Scottish Arts Council.
16. Refers to National Lottery's funds for the cultural sector to refurbish facilities such as the Tron, Tramway, Centre for Contemporary Arts and Theatre Royal etc. The contributions from the National Lottery are mainly in the form of refurbishment and investments in equipment and technical/ support facilities.
17. Refers to the average amount of grants disbursed by Glasgow City Council, Scottish Arts Council and the National Lottery for the last 3 years.
18. Includes the expenditure of Hong Kong Arts Development Council, Provisional Urban Council and Provisional Regional Council for the performing arts in 1996/97.
19. Includes grants disbursement to arts organisations by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, Regional Council and Urban Council.

n.a. = not available