

MEDIA RELEASE*For immediate release***SINGAPORE HERITAGEFEST 2024 CELEBRATES SINGAPORE'S BUILDINGS AND SITES,
AND THE PEOPLE AND STORIES THAT BRING THEM TO LIFE**

The 21st edition of NHB's signature festival with over 120 programmes presented with more than 80 partners will have you exploring Singapore's heritage on foot, by bus, and even boat!



Singapore, 30 April 2024 – *Singapore HeritageFest* (SHF) returns from 1 to 26 May with over 120 programmes that celebrate the stories and living heritage behind Singapore's buildings, sites, and structures. Presented by the National Heritage Board (NHB), the 21st edition of SHF focuses on our nation's built heritage and coincides with the 35th year of Singapore's conservation programme. Get ready for offshore tours to *kelongs* and *kampongs*, ghostly encounters with the spookier parts of our heritage, explorations of old schools and heritage hotels, a secret "undisclosed" experience, and more!

2 Singapore's rich built heritage includes 75 National Monuments, over 7,000 conserved buildings and structures, and many other historical sites and landmarks such as bridges, reservoirs and cemeteries, which may not be commonly associated with the term! Through workshops, tours, trails, exhibitions and other activities across (and beyond!) the island, festival-goers will get to experience the history behind these buildings, sites and structures, which are imbued with the unique culture and heritage of the communities who live, work and play in and around them.

3 SHF Festival Director David Chew said, “Singapore’s buildings, sites and structures – our built heritage – are more than just brick and stone. They hold the stories and experiences of diverse communities past and present, and it is the people and their stories that bring these spaces to life. They are showcases of the rich, unique culture and heritage that Singaporeans share, and we hope that many will have fun at the exciting offerings this year and discover new facets of our heritage at the same time. Ultimately, we hope that SHF will inspire Singaporeans to join us in celebrating and safeguarding our heritage together.”

4 Together with more than 80 community partners, SHF 2024 celebrates the richness of Singapore’s built heritage which can be explored by foot, on bus and even boat. For the first time, local heritage brand Yeo’s will be an Official Partner of SHF. The festival will see the launch of Yeo’s special edition Orchid Chrysanthemum Tea, which will feature packaging designs inspired by an image of the Vanda Miss Joaquim in our National Collection. SHF is also proud to receive Yeo’s support for its signature *HOMEGROUND: We Built This City* installation on the front lawn of the National Museum of Singapore. Other new partners include DP Architects, which designed *HOMEGROUND* and will be presenting a series of tours of Singapore’s downtown area.

5 As part of NHB’s goal to build capability and capacity in our heritage sector under *Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0*, a number of offerings by SHF partners, such as *(Her)story of Samsui Women with Pauline Fun* by Qixi Fest and *Haunted History: Armenian Street – Fort Canning* by Supernatural Confessions will be piloted at SHF to gauge demand and public receptiveness.

Traversing Singapore’s diverse architectural landscape

6 Some highlights that festival-goers can look forward to include:

- **New SHF programmes**

- Walk, ride, or even paddle to explore our built heritage
 - Come on board the ***Hop-On, Hop-Off (HOHO) Bus Experience*** and embark on a journey of Singapore’s buildings and landmarks through historical precincts such as Little India and Bras Basah. Bugis, and discover the history and beauty of our built heritage at every stop.

- Cruise the northeastern waters of Singapore, learn about the history of its surrounding islands, and visit one of Singapore's last remaining *kelongs* in ***Island Boat Tour + Kelong Visit*** by Let's Go Tour.
- Paddle through Singapore's urban reservoir and get exclusive access to hidden corners of the Marina Basin on a kayak tour as part of ***My Bay Experience History Wanderers***.
- Embark on a photo walk at Kampong Gelam and capture the allure of the traditional precinct on film on ***Kampong Gelam Photo Walk: Architecture on Film*** by ***Syahmi Hashim & Julina Khusaini***.
- Join Wan, a descendant of Pulau Ubin islanders, on an exploration of the Ubin Orang Pulau community and Singapore's last surviving Malay *kampong* on ***Malay Kampong Heritage Tour***.
- Discover stories of the Straits Chinese communities on ***37 Emerald Hill Site Tours***, which are the first-ever public tours of the former home of Singapore Chinese Girls' School, led by former teachers and students familiar with the premises; and ***Living Architecture: Conservation Tours at NUS Baba House***, where participants will visit a 19th-century Straits Chinese home and learn about the conservation efforts that went behind the restoration of the NUS Baba House in 2007.
- Let the good times roll at SHF's ***Closing Weekend Block Party*** with food, craft, and music performances on the lawn of the National Museum of Singapore, replicating the communal experience of celebrations and festivities at shared residential spaces.
- **Dive into Singapore's maritime heritage**
 - Embark on an exhilarating voyage with ***Singapore Maritime Discoveries***, organised by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore.
 - Experience Singapore's maritime past, present and future at the ***Singapore Maritime Gallery Tour***, which will highlight the industry's rich heritage, its impact on daily life, and how Singapore continues to thrive as a global hub port and international maritime centre.
 - Discover Singapore's early maritime history on the ***Maritime Heritage Trail***, and learn about the progress of our modern maritime industry on the ***Maritime Evolution Trail***.

- Set sail on a journey of discovery through the Singapore Strait and visit the **Raffles Lighthouse**, a historic beacon which has over 168 years of maritime history.
- Time-travelling storytellers take participants on a captivating theatrical tour along Clarke Quay and bring forgotten stories of a street hawker, a secret society member, and a coolie to life on **Echoes of 1959: Singapore River Tour**.
- **Our evolving educational institutions**
 - In **Foothill Stories - A Roving Performance with Craft Component**, travel back to 1912 when two primary schools stood at the foot of Fort Canning: Tao Nan School on Armenian Street, offering modern education in Chinese, and Anglo-Chinese School on Coleman Street, a Methodist school for boys. Now home to the Peranakan Museum and Children's Museum Singapore respectively, learn about their storied past through shoebox puppetry and visual mapping.
 - Visit a former school-turned-farm, hear stories of growing up in Redhill and Bukit Merah, and witness how space was adaptively reused by City Sprouts Henderson to cultivate an urban community farm, as part of **Banyan Chit Chats**.
 - See how spaces for learning have evolved from *pondoks* and temples, to village schools and integrated buildings, in **Discover the Singapore Education Story with MOE Heritage Centre**.
- **March into Singapore's military past**

SHF celebrates 40 years of Total Defence!

 - Uncover fascinating stories behind the architectural gems at South Beach, from their days as part of a military stronghold to their transformation into a vibrant, modern hub in **Unveiling South Beach Singapore: From Military Might to Modern Marvel**. Participants will gain exclusive, behind-the-scenes access to level 11 of South Beach Tower for breathtaking views, and enjoy a refreshing, specially crafted mocktail as part of the programme!
 - Celebrate **40 Years of Total Defence with the Navy** with special edition guided tours of the Changi Naval Base and Navy Museum. Get a taste of Singapore Navy life and learn about Singapore Navy traditions with sailors past and present.

- Sample an outfield camp experience and prepare for a 'route march' to SAFTI Military Institute all in one day at ***A Taste of Outfield Camp: Heritage in a Mess Tin.***
- **Discover unique *haunts* in Singapore**
 - Explore the stories lurking beneath the veneer of modern Singapore, where anecdotes of ghostly encounters have been passed down through generations in ***Haunted History: Armenian Street – Fort Canning.*** Embark on a walking tour from the Peranakan Museum, and hear haunting tales of the area around Armenian Street and Fort Canning Hill.
 - Take a walk on the dark side and explore the rich history, abandoned buildings and spooky tales that lie hidden in plain sight at Changi. ***Dark Changi, The Walking Tour*** offers two experiences: *Heritage and Hantu: A Twillight Tour* of Changi's heritage and abandoned buildings in the fading evening light, and *Walk with Hantu: Changi* where notorious sites set the scene for lore and legends to come alive through the haunting accounts of eyewitnesses.

Festival mainstays built different

7 This year's *Homeground* installation, a signature SHF offering, is laid out on the lawn of a National Monument, the National Museum of Singapore, and pays homage to Singapore's rich built heritage. Covering the themes of Nature, Commerce, Community, Residential and Governance, ***HOMEGROUND: We Built This City*** will highlight the intricate connections that have moulded Singapore's architectural identity over the decades. The installation will feature five displays that detail the evolution of Singapore's public housing, and a landmark of Singapore's first UNESCO World Heritage Site, Singapore Botanic Gardens' bandstand gazebo.

8 *Ride & Discover*, another signature SHF programme, also returns this year to enliven train commutes. Panels with stories of Singapore's landmarks and structures will be featured at four MRT stations – Dhoby Ghaut, Bugis, Queenstown and Tanjong Pagar – to give commuters titbits about our built heritage while on the go.

9 Writer and researcher Ben Slater presents the fourth edition of the ***Cinema Reclaimed*** programme, titled *DREAM PALACES*, for SHF 2024 with one talk and movie screenings over four weekends which will take place in different heritage cinemas and theatres: *Royston at Capitol!* at

the Capitol Theatre, *Ring of Fire (1973)* at Kreta Ayer People's Theatre, *SAINT JACK (1979)* + *ARCHITECTURE TALK* at The Projector, and *Sumpitan Rachun (1961)* at Oldham Theatre. Discover Singapore's vibrant and colourful film-going culture as it was back in the day.

10 As with previous editions of the festival, SHF 2024 will feature specially curated online content that allows the public to engage with heritage anywhere, at any time. This year's highlights include a series with online property publisher Stacked Homes which explores four unique homes in Singapore – an ex-1940s workers dormitory in Katong, a bachelor pad in Tiong Bahru, an old school home in a quiet neighbourhood, and Zubir Said's old apartment in Joo Chiat. Tune in to the *Talking Stories* series to hear some of the juiciest stories of Singapore's built landscape from those who ply our streets day and night: our taxi and Private Hire Vehicle driver uncles and aunties. Ms Tsoi Ka Man brings her passenger, local writer, director and actor Haresh Tilani, around three areas in Singapore teeming with history – Chinatown, Jurong and the Singapore River – as they trade personal stories about how their lives have intersected with these locations.

11 SHF 2024 programmes are now open for registration. Members of the public may visit www.sgheritagefest.gov.sg for more information on the programmes, and how to register.

12 **Annex A** features quotes from SHF 2024 partners. Please scan the QR code below or visit <https://bit.ly/SHF-2024> for full programme details.



#SGHeritageFest | sgheritagefest.gov.sg | facebook.com/SGHeritageFest |
instagram.com/sgheritagefest

- END -

For media enquiries, please contact:

Say Hua Lee

Mobile: 9668 4605

Email: sayhua.lee@tateanzur.com or
SHF2024Team@tateanzur.com

Jiaxuan Seah

Mobile: 9617 4343

Email: jjaxuan.seah@tateanzur.com

About National Heritage Board

The National Heritage Board (NHB) was formed on 1 August 1993. As the custodian of Singapore's heritage, NHB is responsible for telling the Singapore story, sharing the Singaporean experience and imparting our Singapore spirit.

NHB's mission is to preserve and celebrate the shared heritage of our diverse communities, for the purpose of education, nation-building and cultural understanding. It manages the national museums and heritage institutions, safeguards and promotes intangible cultural heritage, and sets policies relating to heritage sites, monuments and the national collection. Through the national collection, NHB curates heritage programmes and presents exhibitions to connect the past, present and future generations of Singaporeans. NHB is a statutory board under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. Please visit www.nhb.gov.sg for more information.

About Singapore HeritageFest

The Singapore HeritageFest (SHF) is the National Heritage Board's signature annual outreach event that celebrates the many facets of Singapore's diverse heritage and culture. SHF works with individuals, groups and communities to co-create programmes and offerings. This allows the festival to uncover lesser-known stories and narratives, engender a greater sense of ownership, and empower Singaporeans to safeguard and promote our shared heritage. The inaugural edition of SHF was staged in 2004, and since then, the festival has continued to provide on-site and online experiences with yearly themes that focus on different aspects of Singapore's heritage.

ANNEX A - QUOTES BY SHF 2024 FESTIVAL PARTNERS

Festival Partner Profile	Quote
<p>Cheryl Teo Artist</p> <p>Programme: <i>HOMEGROUND: We Built This City</i></p>	<p>Cheryl Teo, artist and collaborator for <i>HOMEGROUND: We Built This City</i>, said “My art practice revolves around creating work that embraces the memory of play and illustrates vignettes of our daily landscape. As part of Singapore HeritageFest 2024, I had the opportunity to explore and celebrate the quintessential aspects of our nation through whimsy and play.</p> <p>My work embodies Singapore's colourful and multifaceted heritage, a unique blend that forms a vibrant part of our legacy. We should always cherish our heritage as it represents an important part of our identity and is the glue that holds us together.”</p>
<p>Chua Zi Jun Director, DP Architects</p> <p>Programme: <i>HOMEGROUND: We Built This City</i></p>	<p>Ar. Chua Zi Jun, Director, DP Architects, which designed <i>HOMEGROUND</i>, said: “<i>HOMEGROUND: We Built This City</i> reimagines a series of dwellings units from the vernacular to our modern past. The design borrowed building forms and motifs of familiar spaces to create this colourful paper town. We should always celebrate our heritage, whether tangible and intangible. In the long run, our built environment and cultural heritage will create a diverse and vibrant city.”</p>
<p>Lynn Wong Director, Qixi Fest</p> <p>Programme: <i>(Her)story of Samsui Women with Pauline Fun</i></p>	<p>Lynn Wong, Director of Qixi Fest, said: “<i>(Her)story of the Samsui Women</i> tour led by Samsui-descendant Pauline Fun is part of Qixi Fest’s <i>(Her)Story</i> series to share the lesser-known stories of our foremothers and the values they instill in our future generations. This tour is supported by the National Heritage Board, and we are grateful to leverage on Singapore HeritageFest’s nationwide outreach building up to our Qixi Fest climax programmes in August 2024.”</p>
<p>Nor Syazwan Bin Abdul Majid Founder, Wan's Ubin Journal</p>	<p>Nor Syazwan Bin Abdul Majid, Founder, Wan's Ubin Journal, said: “Although I was raised in metropolitan Singapore, I have always been fascinated learning about my mother's heritage growing up as an Orang Pulau from Pulau Ubin. Stories of living in the kampong, fishing and foraging by the beaches were some</p>

<p>Programme: <i>Malay Kampung Heritage Tour</i></p>	<p>elements that highlighted the beautiful symbiotic relationship between our natural and cultural heritage. I find it very important, especially as a descendant of an Ubin Orang Pulau, to keep these stories alive, and that's how I started Wan's Ubin Journal to celebrate these almost-forgotten part of our Singaporean identity, as not an island nation, but a nation of islands. Through <i>Singapore HeritageFest 2024</i>, I'm playing my part to turn our learned heritage into a lived one!"</p>
<p>Melisa Chan Former student, Singapore Chinese Girls' School</p> <p>Programme: <i>37 Emerald Hill Site Tours</i></p>	<p>Melisa Chan, former student, Singapore Chinese Girls' School, said: "The Keep 37 Emerald Hill team came together to seek conservation status for our old school site in 2018, because they are buildings that hold our childhood and adolescent memories, and collective experience. I felt it was important to contribute to that effort and carry on the message of conservation and heritage education at this year's Singapore HeritageFest because these places are part of our personal and shared identities. The school has grown in parallel with this characterful neighbourhood and witnessed the changing landscape over the 69 years it was in residence as the Jewel of Emerald Hill."</p>