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Singapore Art Museum to Undergo a Major Facelift

SAM's museum programming will continue throughout the revamp

Singapore – The regional art scene is set to become more vibrant with the major revamp of the Singapore Art Museum (SAM). SAM opened to much fanfare in 1996 in a converted museum space that once housed the former Saint Joseph's Institution, and has not upgraded its premises since. The upcoming building works will address the growing needs of contemporary art in Singapore, and focus on improving the visitor experience at SAM. The project is targeted for completion in 2021.

The revamp is likely to cost around \$90 million. The Singapore government is prepared to fund up to \$80 million, with help from the Cultural Matching Fund. The remaining sum will be raised through sponsorship and donations.

Visitors can look forward to the creation of a fully contiguous museum, upgraded facilities and expanded museum-based learning spaces. The SAM revamp also aims to meet future curatorial needs of the museum. These would include creating double volume spaces for technologically demanding works or large-scale installations such as Suzann Victor's *Rainbow Circle*, Cai Guo-Qiang's *Head On*, and Jane Lee's *Raw Canvas*.

Active museum programming will continue at SAM at 8Q on Queen Street throughout 2018, as well as in other museums, institutions and community spaces from 2018 onwards. The main SAM building will be closed to the public after the de-installation of the Singapore Biennale artworks, in order to prepare the gazetted national monument for its next phase of development.

Ms Grace Fu, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth says, "In our art scene's next phase of development, we need to enlarge the space for engaging content to emerge, and provide more opportunities for our

artists. So we have been regularly reviewing our cultural infrastructure to ensure they can support the needs of our artistic community. With this revamp, SAM will be able to showcase a wider range of contemporary art works, including multi-media works. We look forward to our artists creatively maximising the new spaces with their works, while enhancing the SAM visitor experience for all Singaporeans and other visitors.”

Ms Jane Ittogi, Chair of the Singapore Art Museum, says, “The complete revamp of SAM’s two buildings will be a major boost to our efforts to enable Singaporeans to experience contemporary art, and to showcase our important Singaporean artists and those from the region. SAM’s role has expanded significantly since its inception in 1996, and the Singapore Biennale 2016 showed strong and growing interest among Singaporeans in contemporary art, with many finding the artworks both thought-provoking and educational. The building works will allow us to go much further as the leading contemporary art museum in the region.”

An open tender for architects and consultants to manage this project will be called by the 2nd quarter of 2017, and the building works are expected to complete by 2021. Meanwhile, SAM will continue actively programming at the SAM at 8Q space. 2017 museum programming includes the upcoming exhibition, *Imaginarium: To the Ends of the Earth*, which opens on 6 May at SAM at 8Q, as well as Singapore Night Festival activities, *Think! Contemporary Programme*, and *Yellow Ribbon Community Art Exhibition*.

From 2018 onwards, the public can expect to see exhibitions at SAM at 8Q, as well as partnered programmes located at other museums, institutions and community spaces.

Find out more about our exhibitions and programmes online at www.singaporeartmuseum.sg.

For high-resolution images, please visit <http://bit.ly/SAMRevamp>. Image use guidelines apply.

About the Singapore Art Museum

The Singapore Art Museum (SAM) is a contemporary art museum which focuses on art-making and art thinking in Singapore, Southeast Asia and Asia, encompassing a worldwide perspective on contemporary art practice. SAM advocates and makes accessible interdisciplinary contemporary art through research-led and evolving curatorial practice. Since it opened in January 1996, SAM has built up one of the most important collections of contemporary art from the region. It seeks to seed and nourish a stimulating and creative space in Singapore through exhibitions and public programmes, and to deepen every visitor's experience. These include outreach and education, research and publications, as well as cross-disciplinary residencies and exchanges.

SAM occupies two buildings: the old St Joseph's Institution on Bras Basah Road, built in 1855 and now a National Monument; and SAM at 8Q, a conservation building across the road on Queen Street that was the old Catholic High.

In 2011, SAM was the venue organiser of the Singapore Biennale, becoming the main organiser in 2013 and 2016. SAM was incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee on 13 November 2013, operating under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. To find out more, visit www.singaporeartmuseum.sg

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