

MEDIA RELEASE

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A WIDE RANGE OF EVENTS FOR SINGAPORE'S BICENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION IN 2019

The eclectic mix will showcase the width and depth of Singapore's 700-year history

Singapore, 9 April 2018 – The Singapore Bicentennial Office (SBO) has announced a series of events to commemorate the nation's bicentennial in 2019.

The bicentennial is an opportunity to reflect on 200 years of history from 1819, one of the key turning points that changed our trajectory. It will also examine the 500 years prior to 1819, as these formative years lend context to our evolution.

Singaporeans can look forward to the Singapore Bicentennial's anchor event: an experiential showcase held at the Fort Canning Centre from June to September 2019, which will bring Singaporeans on a reflective journey of key milestones in 700 years of Singapore's history, and the significant contributions of Singapore's early settlers and communities. Another anchor event in 2019 is the *Find Your Place in History* trails, which will feature projection installations at various historical spots, some lesser-known than others. The trails will allow Singaporeans to experience Singapore through the years, and learn of the less prominent points in our history, in-situ. Both will bring history alive in an engaging and interactive way for all Singaporeans, young and old, from all walks of life.

Many events in the line-up will leverage pre-existing annual events and will feature a more purposeful look further back into Singapore's history. Taken together, the events in the 2019 calendar will provide many opportunities for Singaporeans to reflect on our history through different platforms.

Minister Desmond Lee, co-chair of the Ministerial Steering Committee for the Singapore Bicentennial said, "When planning the line-up, we factored in the diversity of the nature of events – exhibitions, roadshows, conferences, national events, festivals and trails – to maximise the reflective experience for Singaporeans throughout 2019. These will be held at various locations across the island, including in the heartlands, within the Civic District, and at key historical spots in Singapore. In doing so, we hope for all Singaporeans to participate actively."

For instance, Singaporeans can look forward to a variety of exhibitions organised by the Asian Civilisations Museum, National Museum of Singapore, National Library Board, and the National Gallery of Singapore.

Major events and festivals like the i Light Singapore festival, the National Day Parade, Chingay 2019, the Night Festival and Singapore Heritage Festival, will also reflect the theme of the Bicentennial.

Other exciting listings include an augmented reality trail by NHB and NParks, and a series of programmes as part of the Malay CultureFest at the end of 2019.

About the Singapore Bicentennial

The Singapore Bicentennial in 2019 is the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of Raffles' landing in Singapore, which was one of the key turning points in our history. It will be an opportunity for us to reflect on how our nation came to be, how far we have come, and how we can go forward together.

Aside from looking at the 200 years from 1819, the Bicentennial will also go back further 500 years to the 14th century, to appreciate the context of Singapore's evolution leading up to 1819. The commemoration will also examine how we have responded to, and been part of, regional and global influences and events.

In these 700 years, we went from being a place with a geographically strategic location, to a nation and people with unique characteristics.

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Singapore Bicentennial Events Calendar (updated as of 6 Aug)

2019	Event
January	<p>28 Jan: Singapore Bicentennial Commemoration Event (SBO & Partners) <i>This is the official launch ceremony of the Singapore Bicentennial.</i></p> <p>28 Jan: Launch of BalikSG: Reflections on Singapore (Singapore River Trail with AR) (NHB) <i>NHB will develop an Augmented Reality (AR) app to allow visitors to experience the Singapore River area in 1819, through the eyes of Raffles and the pioneers who arrived at that time.</i></p> <p>28 Jan to 24 Feb: i Light Singapore – Bicentennial Edition (URA) <i>The i Light Marina Bay festival is a sustainable light art festival featuring a series of innovative and interactive light art installations exhibited around the waterfront promenade of Marina Bay. The 2019 edition is entitled “i Light Singapore: Bridges of Time”, and will see the festival expand beyond Marina Bay to cover the Civic District as well as Singapore River area, all of which have been an integral part of our history.</i></p> <p>28 Jan to Apr: Launch of “Raffles in Java: Revisiting the Scholar & Statesman” @ Asian Civilisations Museum <i>The exhibition will explore Raffles as a collector and explorer in the Southeast Asian region, and how he inspired the collection of Southeast Asian objects from Singapore and around the world. The exhibition will feature artefacts on loan from regional museums and institutions.</i></p> <p>28 Jan to 24 Feb: Launch of the Light to Night Festival 2019: The Bicentennial Edition (NGS) <i>The Light to Night Festival is an annual urban art event which transforms historical monuments, cultural institutions and spaces in the Civic District into works of art.</i></p>
February	<p>3 Feb: River Hongbao (SFCCA, SCCC, STB, SPH & PA) <i>River Hongbao is an extravaganza of lights, sights and sounds, usually held to usher in the Chinese New Year. The theme of the Bicentennial will also be reflected in the River Hongbao in 2019.</i></p>

	<p>15 to 16 Feb: Chingay (PA) <i>Chingay is the largest street performance and float parade in Asia. From the main parade site to the heartlands, it aims to show the dynamism of Singapore’s vibrant and multicultural society. The theme of the Bicentennial will be reflected in components of Chingay 2019.</i></p>
March	<p>9 to 23 Mar: Singapore Heritage Festival (NMS) <i>The Singapore Heritage Festival is an island-wide celebration of Singapore’s heritage and culture. Singaporeans can take part in heritage trails, tours, open houses and performances in various locations and precincts around Singapore. For 2019, as a nod to one of the themes of the Singapore Bicentennial (i.e., openness), the Singapore Heritage Festival will be working with various Heritage Institutions and members of the Museum Roundtable to identify regional partners who would be keen to contribute to the festival.</i></p> <p>Mar to Apr: Find Your Place in History Trails – City Centre Edition (SBO) <i>The trails will consist of a series of projection installations at various historical spots around Singapore. They will allow Singaporeans to experience Singapore through the years, and learn of the less prominent points in our history, in-situ. The kick-off will be in conjunction with the Singapore Heritage Festival.</i></p>
April	<p>Apr to Aug: Find Your Place in History Trails – Heartlands Edition (SBO & PA) <i>The Heartlands Edition will consist of a series of ground-up projects led by the People’s Association, held at various locations across Singapore. They will allow Singaporeans to learn about local place history, as well as old traditions and customs.</i></p>
June	<p>1 June to Sep: Singapore Bicentennial Showcase @ Fort Canning Centre <i>An immersive, cinematic and timed experience through five galleries, showcasing iconic moments in Singapore’s 700-year history. There will also be three free and easy installations at the Fort Gate area for visitors to explore.</i></p> <p>1 June: Launch of BalikSG: Reflections on Singapore (Fort Canning Park Trail with AR) (NParks) <i>As part of NParks’ enhancement plans for Fort Canning, a trail with an AR app will be launched to allow visitors to experience the old Fort Canning of yore.</i></p>

	<p>Singapore Bicentennial Roadshow for 2019 (SBO) <i>This is a platform to showcase the many community engagement stories and products that are currently being collected by volunteers of the Singapore Bicentennial, as well as the various ground-up initiatives led by different community groups. The roadshows will be themed according to the Singapore Bicentennial – openness, multiculturalism and self-determination.</i></p>
August	<p>9 Aug: National Day Parade (MINDEF) <i>NDP19 will be a key partner for the Bicentennial. Further details will be released at a later date.</i></p> <p>16 to 24 Aug: Singapore Night Festival (NMS) <i>The Singapore Night Festival is the largest outdoor performing arts festival held in the heart of the Bras Basah / Bugis heritage precinct. The 2019 edition will take on a special ASEAN focus, featuring festival commissions and collaborations with upcoming and established artists from the region and Singapore.</i></p> <p>Aug 2019 to Aug 2021: “City Hall: A Place for the People” @ National Gallery Singapore <i>This exhibition will look at key events that took place in City Hall throughout Singapore’s long history.</i></p> <p>Aug 2019 to Jan 2020: “Early Singapore” @ National Library <i>This exhibition will feature documents and maps that highlight Singapore’s history in maritime trade before the founding of the British factory in 1819 and its subsequent growth. Visitors will encounter maps, manuscripts and paintings that provide a unique glimpse of the early life of Singapore till 1867 from various perspectives. Artefacts showcased are drawn from the National Library and National Archives’ collections as well as important loans from overseas institutions.</i></p>
September	<p>Sep to Feb 2020: Launch of “From the East Indies to the Founding of Singapore, 1600-1819” @ National Museum of Singapore <i>This exhibition will look at the formation of the British East India Company (EIC) and Dutch East India Company (VOC) in the early 17th century. It seeks to chart the British and Dutch’s pursuit of Asian trade – especially that of spices – and how this brought them to the East Indies, where Singapore is located. It will feature over 200 objects from the National Collection, including paintings and prints, manuscripts, maps and globes, furniture, and loans from international museums.</i></p>

	<p>IPS Conference on the Singapore Bicentennial (SBO, IPS) <i>Co-organised with IPS. Further details will be released at a later date.</i></p>
October	<p>11 to 27 Oct (TBC): Malay CultureFest (MHC) <i>In conjunction with Malay Heritage Centre’s overarching annual theme of ‘bangsa’ (nation or people), the 2019 festival will focus on the movement of peoples and ideas from the 16th to 19th centuries. The two-week festival will feature newly commissioned performances, film screenings, talks, workshops, trails and site specific activities.</i></p> <p>Oct to Jun 2020: “Seekor Singa, Seorang Putera, dan Sebingkai Cermin: Reflecting and Refracting Singapura” @ Malay Heritage Centre, as part of Malay CultureFest (NHB, MHC) <i>As part of Malay CultureFest, the special exhibition hopes to examine various non-colonial/non-European perspectives on Singapore’s significance prior to British control. It will also look at the impact of European contact on indigenous societies and cultures, as well as ideas of “Malay-ness” and “modernity” through episodes in late 16th to 19th centuries.</i></p> <p>Oct 2019 to Jun 2020: “From the Coromandel – Tamils in SE Asia and Singapore” @ the Indian Heritage Centre (NHB, IHC) <i>This exhibition will trace the trade, religious, political and cultural contact between the Tamils and Southeast Asia over 200 years.</i></p> <p>Oct 2019: “Capturing the Chinese Community in Singapore” @ Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (NHB, SYSMH) <i>A showcase of portrait photography of prominent Singaporeans from all races to serve as a visual reminder of Singapore’s early beginnings.</i></p>
2H 2019 (Date TBC)	<p>Reissue of “Singapore: A 700-year History” book (SBO) <i>As part of its 10th anniversary, an updated edition of “Singapore: A 700-Year History” will be reissued. It will be updated by prominent historians and original authors, Mr Kwa Chong Guan, Dr Peter Borschberg, Professor Tan Tai Yong and Professor Derek Heng.</i></p> <p>Launch of interactive e-book on 700 years of Singapore’s History (SBO) <i>An interactive version of “Singapore: A 700-Year History” will be launched as an accompaniment to the reissued hardcopy. The interactive book will also be used as a teaching aid in schools.</i></p>