

## MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

### NATIONAL GALLERY SINGAPORE LAUNCHES ITS INAUGURAL GALLERY PINNACLE AWARD AND GALLERY DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD TO HONOUR LONG-STANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GALLERY



Gallery Pinnacle and Distinguished Service Award Recipients who received their awards at National Gallery Singapore's 8<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event on 30 Oct 2023. From left to right: Mr Jose Isidro "Lito" Camacho, Ms Chong Siak Ching (Gallery CEO), Dr Ma Swan Hoo, Ms Kim Camacho, Mr Hsieh Fu Hua, Mr Koh Seow Chuan, Mr Peter Ho (Gallery Chairman), Ms Jennie Chua, Mr Chew Choon Seng, Mr Lim Swee Say (on behalf of the late Ms Elaine Cheong), Dr Eugene Tan (Gallery Director). Image credit: National Gallery Singapore

**Singapore, 31 October 2023** – National Gallery Singapore unveiled its inaugural **Gallery Pinnacle Award** and **Gallery Distinguished Service Award**, in conjunction with the Gallery's 8th anniversary held on 30 October 2023. With the launch of these awards, the Gallery recognises and celebrates individuals who have dedicated their time and resources towards supporting the Gallery. The awards also honour the outstanding leadership and extraordinary accomplishments of these stewards in furthering the mission of the Gallery. The award recipients have shown their long-standing support towards the Gallery, with some supporting the

Gallery for more than a decade. This year, there are **two recipients of the Gallery Pinnacle Award** and **six recipients of the Gallery Distinguished Service Awards**

Ms Chong Siak Ching, Chief Executive Officer, National Gallery Singapore, says, “Since we opened our doors in 2015, the Gallery has played a vital role in raising the awareness for Singapore and Southeast Asian art to audiences locally and internationally. As we celebrate our 8<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we want to show our appreciation to those who have generously dedicated their valuable time, counsel and support towards the Gallery. Their passion for the arts and contributions have helped the Gallery in its journey to becoming a reputable and well-loved museum. We look forward to continued support and giving to the Gallery and the arts, in the years ahead.”

### **Gallery Distinguished Service Award**

The recipients of the Gallery Distinguished Service Award include individuals who have enhanced the Gallery’s public outreach and volunteer work, contributing to the Gallery’s continued commitment to creating accessible and inclusive art experiences for all. Among the recipients are volunteer docents **Dr Ma Swan Hoo** and the late **Ms Elaine Cheong Siew Boon**. Dr Ma and Ms Cheong both served as Docent Champions for the Gallery’s inaugural docent training programme in 2015, where they led and mentored the docent members in their peer groups, and gave counsel to enhance the Gallery’s volunteer programme.

- **Dr Ma Swan Hoo** volunteered with the Gallery since its opening in 2015 and has been actively supporting the Gallery’s vision of inclusivity by providing tours for underserved community groups.
- The late **Ms Elaine Cheong** brought her love of the arts and previous vast experience in museum guiding into her role as a Docent Champion from 2015 to 2021, and in actively guiding for numerous permanent and special exhibitions.

**Mr Chew Choon Seng, Ms Kim Camacho, Mr Jose Isidro “Lito” Camacho and Ms Jennie Chua** have also been awarded the Gallery Distinguished Service Award for dedicating their time and expertise for a variety of Gallery causes and committees.

- **Mr Chew Choon Seng** provided invaluable strategic counsel to the Gallery as a Board member from 2015 to 2022 and assisted the Board in the stewardship and oversight of the Gallery. His extensive experience is evident through his leadership roles on several Board Committees, attesting to his committed contributions to the Gallery. As the Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee, he played a crucial role in overseeing the Gallery’s internal controls, governance, and risk management. Mr Chew also steered the Gallery’s marketing strategies and initiatives in his capacity as the Chair of the Marketing Advisory Panel and facilitated access to industry networks to promote the Gallery and its objectives.

- **Ms Kim Camacho** served as Co-Chair for National Gallery Singapore's biennale fundraisers in 2016, 2018 and 2023. Leveraging on her deep experience and extensive networks across Singapore, Southeast Asia, and internationally, Ms Kim Camacho contributed significantly to the Gallery's fundraising efforts. Ms Kim Camacho was crucial in securing numerous artworks for the Gallery's fundraising auctions. She also facilitated invaluable connections to regional and international donors. Ms Kim Camacho and her husband Mr Lito Camacho generously loaned key artworks from their collection for the Gallery's exhibitions.
- **Mr Lito Camacho** served on the Gallery Board and other key Board Committees from 2013 to 2021, where he provided strategic guidance towards establishing the Gallery as a leading institution with the largest collection of Southeast Asia Art. As the Chairman of the Acquisition Committee since 2014 to 2021, he guided the Gallery in refining its collection development strategies through his deep knowledge and wide networks within the fields of modern and contemporary art of Southeast Asia. He has been instrumental in connecting the Gallery with potential supporters in Singapore and Southeast Asia.
- As a Board member from 2015 to 2022, **Ms Jennie Chua** brought to the Gallery her fundraising experience, business acumen and sound counsel. She is also Chairperson of the Gallery's Development Committee which oversees the Gallery's overall fundraising activities. Ms Chua has offered invaluable advice, direction, and strategic inputs for the Gallery's fundraising efforts since 2018 and continues to chair the Gallery's Development Committee. She has also helped established connections between the Gallery and numerous high-profile prospective donors, foundations and family offices.

### **Gallery Pinnacle Award**

**Mr Koh Seow Chuan and Mr Hsieh Fu Hua**, recipients of the Gallery Pinnacle Award, have shown outstanding leadership in building up the Gallery and launching it off on a sound footing.

- **Mr Koh Seow Chuan** served as the Deputy Chairman of the National Art Gallery Steering Committee from 2006, to oversee the implementation plan to establish the National Art Gallery. He subsequently served as the Founding Chairman of National Gallery Singapore in 2009 when the Gallery was first established as a company limited by guarantee, up till 2013. Under his leadership, he oversaw the shaping of the Gallery's strategic framework and led the architectural development of the project, with the transformation of the City Hall and former Supreme Court buildings into an art museum, while maintaining a deep respect for the original architecture. This laid the strong foundation in shaping the development of the Gallery as it geared up for its opening in 2015. As an avid art collector, Mr Koh donated many artworks to the National Collection.
- **Mr Hsieh Fu Hua's** contributions to the Gallery include his role as Deputy Chairman of National Gallery Singapore from 2012 to 2013, and Chairman of National Gallery Singapore from 2013 to 2021, where he guided the management team in the strategic

priorities of the Gallery and saw through the successful opening and launch of major exhibitions and the building of a strong culture of innovation. He also previously served as a member of the National Art Gallery's Steering Committee in 2006, which oversaw the implementation plan to establish the National Art Gallery. He stressed the importance of the Gallery being a people's museum, and the important role that art can have in society. He continues to support the Gallery as Honorary Advisor and in connecting the Gallery with key donors and supporters.

Beyond the Gallery, both Mr Koh and Mr Hsieh have also contributed to the wider arts and culture sector in their respective roles as Chairman of the Visual Arts Cluster Advisory Board (VACAB) and Visual Arts Cluster Committee of Chairs.

Through the awards, the Gallery seeks to promote a culture of appreciation and inspire ongoing engagement and support for the Gallery and the arts, to foster a more thoughtful, creative, and inclusive society.

More information can be found in the following **Annexes**. Media assets are available via this [link](#).

- **Annex A:** Criteria for Gallery Pinnacle Award and Gallery Distinguished Service Award
- **Annex B:** Award Recipients' Contributions for Gallery Pinnacle Award and Gallery Distinguished Service Award

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#### **About National Gallery Singapore**

National Gallery Singapore is a leading visual arts institution that oversees the world's largest public collection of Singapore and Southeast Asian modern art. Situated at the birthplace of modern Singapore, in the heart of the Civic District, the Gallery is housed in two national monuments - City Hall and former Supreme Court - that have been beautifully restored and transformed into this exciting 64,000 square metre venue. Reflecting Singapore's unique heritage and geographical location, the Gallery aims to be a progressive museum that creates dialogues between the art of Singapore, Southeast Asia and the world to foster and inspire a creative and inclusive society. This is reflected in our collaborative research, education, long-term and special exhibitions, and innovative programming. The Gallery also works with international museums such as Centre Pompidou, Musée d'Orsay, Tate Britain, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (MOMAT) and National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea (MMCA), to jointly present Southeast Asian art in the global context, positioning Singapore as a key node in the global visual arts scene.

In 2020, the Gallery was the only museum in Southeast Asia that received a ranking in The Art Newspaper's annual global survey of attendance at art museums, taking 20<sup>th</sup> place. It was the first museum in Asia to receive the Children in Museums Award by the European Museum Academy and Hands On! International Association of Children in Museums in 2018. The Gallery also won the awards for "Best Theme Attraction" at TTG Travel Awards 2017, "Best Attraction Experience", "Breakthrough Contribution to Tourism" and "Best Customer Service (Attractions)" at the prestigious Singapore Tourism Awards in 2016 for its role in adding to the vibrancy of Singapore's tourism landscape.

## Annex A: Criteria for Gallery Pinnacle Award and Gallery Distinguished Service Award

Award	Criteria
Gallery Pinnacle Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="586 344 1422 478">i. Made exceptional contributions to the Gallery towards strengthening the capabilities of the Gallery, and achieved outcomes that support the Gallery's goals and strategic priorities that sustains the future of the Gallery;</li><li data-bbox="586 512 1422 611">ii. Exemplifies the Gallery's vision and mission through his / her contributions and inspired others to support and contribute towards the Gallery's causes; and</li><li data-bbox="586 644 1422 716">iii. Made holistic contributions through giving of his/her time, experience, expertise in support of the Gallery's causes.</li></ul>
Gallery Distinguished Service Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="586 806 1422 947">i. Made significant contributions to the Gallery in the areas of artistic research &amp; excellence, learning &amp; engagement, community &amp; access, innovation &amp; sustainability, and/or diversity and inclusion in the Gallery;</li><li data-bbox="586 980 1422 1079">ii. Exemplifies the Gallery's vision and mission through his / her contributions which has inspired others to support and contribute towards the Gallery's causes; and</li><li data-bbox="586 1113 1422 1211">iii. Made significant contributions to the Gallery through giving of their time, experience, expertise in support of the Gallery's causes.</li></ul>

**Annex B: Award Recipients' Contributions for Gallery Pinnacle Award and Gallery Distinguished Service Award**

<b>Gallery Pinnacle Award</b>	
<b>Recipient<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Contributions to the Gallery / Biography</b>
<p><b>Mr Hsieh Fu Hua</b></p> <p>Member of the National Art Gallery Steering Committee, Sep 2006</p> <p>Former Gallery Deputy Chairman, May 2012 –Jun 2013</p> <p>Former Chairman of National Gallery Singapore, Jul 2013 – Jun 2021</p> <p>Former Chairman, Visual Arts Cluster Committees of Chairs, Aug 2020 – May 2022</p> <p>Honorary Advisor, Aug 2021 - Present</p>	<p>Mr Hsieh first served as a member of the National Art Gallery Steering Committee in 2006, headed by the then Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts (MICA), which oversaw the implementation plan to establish the National Art Gallery<sup>2</sup>.</p> <p>He was appointed as Deputy Chairman of National Gallery Singapore from May 2012 to Jun 2013, and Chairman from Jul 2013 till Jun 2021. He guided the management team in the strategic priorities of the Gallery, which saw the Gallery through a successful opening and launch of its major exhibitions, including building a strong culture of innovation. He stressed the importance of the Gallery being people's museum, and the important role that art can have in society. He is a strong supporter of art education and was instrumental in the creation of the Keppel Centre for Art Education (KCAE). He was also instrumental in supporting the Gallery in securing support from founding partners and donors.</p> <p>Mr Hsieh was an active member of the Visual Arts Cluster Advisory Board (VACAB) from Jul 2013 to Jun 2019, and later chaired the Visual Arts Cluster Committees of Chairs from 2020 to 2022, where he provided guidance on the growth of Singapore's visual arts sector, and advocated for sharing of professional capabilities and best practices with the wider visual art institutions to strengthen the visual arts ecosystem.</p> <p>Mr Hsieh has also personally supported the Gallery through artwork loans and cash donations.</p> <p>Following his retirement from the Board in Jun 2021, Mr Hsieh continues to support the Gallery as Honorary Advisor and helps to connect the Gallery with key donors and supporters.</p>
<p><b>Mr Koh Seow Chuan</b></p> <p>Deputy Chairman of the National Art Gallery Steering Committee, Sep 2006</p> <p>Chairman, Executive Committee, National Art Gallery Project, 2007</p>	<p>Mr Koh served as the Deputy Chairman of the National Art Gallery Steering Committee, headed by the then Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts (MICA), to oversee the implementation plan to establish the National Art Gallery<sup>2</sup> from 2006. He also chaired the Executive Committee which supported the Steering Committee in overseeing the management of the National Art Gallery project.</p> <p>He subsequently served as the Founding Chairman of National Gallery Singapore in 2009 when the Gallery was first established as a company limited by guarantee, up till 2013. Under his</p>

<p>Founding Chairman, National Art Gallery<sup>2</sup>, April 2009 – Jun 2013</p> <p>Former Chair VACAB, Jul 2013 - Jun 2019</p>	<p>leadership, he oversaw the shaping of the Gallery’s strategic framework and led the architectural development of the project, with the transformation of the City Hall and former Supreme Court buildings, while maintaining a deep respect for the original architecture. This laid the strong foundation in shaping the initial developments of the Gallery as it geared up for its opening in 2015.</p> <p>After his retirement from the Board, Mr Koh continued to assume a leadership role in the visual arts landscape with his new post as Chairman of the Visual Arts Cluster Advisory Board (VACAB) from Jul 2013 till Jun 2019.</p> <p>As an avid art supporter, Mr Koh donated many artworks to the National Collection.</p>
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**Gallery Distinguished Service Award**

<b>Recipient<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Contributions to the Gallery / Biography</b>
<p><b>Mr Chew Choon Seng</b></p> <p>Former Board Member, Jan 2015 – Jun 2022</p> <p>Chairman, Nomination &amp; Remuneration Committee (NRC), Dec 2019 – Dec 2021</p> <p>Chairman, Audit &amp; Risk Committee (ARC), Jul 2019 – Dec 2021</p> <p>Chairman, Marketing Advisory Panel 2015 - 2021</p>	<p>Mr Chew was first appointed to the Gallery Board in January 2015. As an active and experienced Board member, Mr Chew assisted the Board in the stewardship and oversight of the Gallery. During his term, he helmed the Nomination &amp; Remuneration Committee (NRC), Audit &amp; Risk Committee (ARC) and Marketing Advisory Panel.</p> <p>As the ARC Chair appointed in 2019, he played a crucial role in having oversight of internal and external audit processes, the Gallery's enterprise risk management framework, whistle-blowing arrangements, the Gallery's procurement policy, and fixed assets policy. He also provided leadership on strategic issues and supervision of financial matters as a key member of the Executive Committee (EXCO).</p> <p>With his appointment as Chair of the Gallery Marketing Advisory Panel in 2015, Mr Chew steered the Gallery’s marketing strategies and initiatives and facilitated access to industry networks to promote the Gallery and its objectives.</p> <p>The Gallery's senior management also benefited from his mentorship.</p>
<p><b>Ms Kim Camacho</b></p> <p>Co-Chair, National Gallery Singapore's biennale fundraisers (2016, 2018 and 2023)</p>	<p>Ms Kim Camacho served as Co-Chair for the National Gallery Singapore's biennale fundraisers in 2016, 2018 and 2023. Leveraging on her deep experience and extensive networks across Singapore, Southeast Asia and internationally, she has contributed significantly to the Gallery’s fundraising efforts.</p> <p>Notably, Ms Kim Camacho was crucial in securing numerous artworks for fundraising auctions, with proceeds going towards the</p>



	<p>Gallery. She also facilitated invaluable connections between the Gallery and donors both regionally and internationally.</p> <p>Ms Kim Camacho and her husband Mr Lito Camacho generously loaned key artworks from their collection for the Gallery's exhibitions.</p>
<p><b>Late Ms Elaine Cheong Siew Boon</b></p> <p>Docent, 2015 to Jun 2021</p>	<p>The late Ms Elaine Cheong Siew Boon started volunteering with National Gallery Singapore since its opening to the public in 2015. She brought her love of the arts and previous vast experience in museum guiding into her role as a Docent Champion under the inaugural docent training programme in 2015, where she led and mentored docent members in her peer group, and encouraged them to tell their Singapore story.</p> <p>Ms Cheong generously contributed her time and effort to the Gallery by actively guiding for numerous permanent and special exhibitions. She was actively involved in guiding a variety of tours every month, including tours for Corporate, VIP and school groups, despite battling cancer since 2017.</p>
<p><b>Ms Jennie Chua</b></p> <p>Former Board Member, Jul 2017 – Jun 2022</p> <p>Chairperson, Development Committee, Jul 2018 – Present</p>	<p>Ms Chua was first appointed to the Gallery's Board in Jul 2017 and served till Jun 2022. As an experienced Board member, Ms Chua brought to the Gallery her fundraising experience, business acumen and sound counsel. Ms Chua was also a valuable member of the Nomination &amp; Remuneration Committee, Executive Committee, and Audit &amp; Risk Committee.</p> <p>Ms Chua was appointed as the Chairperson of the Development Committee (DC) in 2018, which charts the strategic direction of the Gallery's overall fundraising activities. She offered invaluable advice, direction, and strategic inputs for the Gallery's fundraising efforts. She has also helped established connections between the Gallery and numerous high-profile prospective donors, foundations and family offices.</p> <p>Ms Chua continues to chair the Gallery's Development Committee even after her retirement from the Board in 2022.</p>
<p><b>Mr Jose Isidro "Lito" Camacho</b></p> <p>Former Board Member, Jul 2013 – Jun 2021</p> <p>Former Acquisition Committee Chair, Jul 2014 – Jun 2021</p> <p>Co-opted Member,</p>	<p>Mr Camacho served on the Gallery Board and other key Board Committees since 2013 and provided strategic guidance towards establishing the Gallery as a leading institution with the largest collection of modern Southeast Asia Art.</p> <p>As Chairman of the Gallery's Acquisition Committee from 2014 to 2021, he guided the Gallery in refining its collection development strategies and made a substantial contribution to the Gallery's collection development through his deep knowledge and wide networks within the fields of modern and contemporary art of Southeast Asia. He continues to serve in the Acquisition</p>

<p>Acquisition Committee, Jul 2021 - Present</p>	<p>Committee as a co-opted member even after stepping down from the board.</p> <p>He has been instrumental in connecting the Gallery with potential supporters in Singapore and Southeast Asia, enabling generous donations and artworks loans to support the Gallery's exhibitions. He guided the Development team in raising donations to support the mission of the Gallery.</p> <p>Mr Camacho also served on multiple Board Committees including the Executive Committee, the Nomination &amp; Remuneration Committee, the Development Committee and the Audit &amp; Risk Committee. He was a member of the inaugural Investment Committee in which he provided guidance and his financial expertise in setting the investment strategy of the Gallery's investment portfolio.</p> <p>Mr Camacho and his wife Ms Kim Camacho loaned key artworks from their collection for the Gallery's exhibitions.</p>
<p><b>Dr Ma Swan Hoo</b>  Docent, 2015 to present</p>	<p>Dr Ma started volunteering at National Gallery Singapore since its opening to the public in 2015. She supported the inaugural docent training programme in 2015 as a Docent Champion, where she led and mentored docent members in her peer group. Since then, Dr Ma had generously contributed her time and effort to the Gallery by guiding actively for numerous permanent and special exhibitions.</p> <p>Apart from imparting her knowledge to visitors through public tours, she has also been actively supporting the Gallery's vision of inclusivity by providing tours for underserved community groups. She often rises up to new challenges and is always game for experimenting novel ways of engaging with audiences. Some notable examples include her participation in the Gallery's efforts to pivot online during the pandemic so that vulnerable audiences remain engaged; she also participated in a new programme titled "Silent Tours", which required a marked shift from conventional guiding to a style that is open and interactive.</p>

<sup>1</sup> All non-executive Board members and all volunteers do not receive remuneration or reimbursement of any expenses incurred during their volunteering assignment and participation of engagement activities at the Gallery.

<sup>2</sup> National Art Gallery, Singapore was renamed National Gallery Singapore in April 2014.