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Media Release

National Gallery Singapore Launches Annual Film Festival with Award-winning Films that Examine the Significance of Art in Society

Painting with Light: International Festival of Films on Art will feature over 30 films with most showing in Singapore for the first time



One of the film highlights, Manifesto (2017), starring actress Cate Blanchett

Singapore, 12 September 2017 – National Gallery Singapore today launched its annual film festival dedicated to films that uncover the transformative power of art, and the passion and humanity of those who live and work with it around the world. Entitled *Painting with Light: International Festival of Films on Art*, the film festival will feature over 30 feature-length and short films by acclaimed filmmakers, with many making its premiere in Singapore.

Painting with Light is the Gallery's initiative to establish new connections with a wider audience and encourage stronger appreciation of the arts through the medium of film. Following its monthly Southeast Asian film series of the same name in 2016, the Gallery decided to enlarge its scope to include international titles featuring art practices, movements and institutions all over the world to provide a wider perspective. Hence, *Painting with Light* has expanded into a film festival this year.

"We are pleased to present this year's edition of *Painting with Light*. The programming will demonstrate a sensitivity to the affinity between film and other artistic forms, realised in the form of screenings and forums that offer a space for dialogue between audiences and professionals from the film and art worlds. This is part of the Gallery's efforts to define the role of art in our society, and ignite curiosity about art and its possibilities," said Dr Eugene Tan, Director, National Gallery Singapore.

Viewers are invited to discover films that explore a diverse array of subjects, from the 20th century's most visionary manifestos on art to the timeless beauty of Southeast Asian classical art forms; from the explosive energy of the avant-garde to the powerful influence of censorship bureaus.

The festival consists of four sections: (1) films on institutions of art and their communities, (2) films on artists and their interventions in society, (3) commissioned works by master filmmakers, now restored classics, and (4) short films on the art and culture of Southeast Asia. (*Annex A*)

"We hope that *Painting with Light: International Festival of Films on Art* will provide an interesting entry point to art for our audiences, as well as create space for dialogue about the relevance of art and the change it can inspire in society. The festival is also an invitation for audiences to join us in celebrating a group of filmmakers who push the envelope and venture beyond present realities to visualise a more ideal future." added Ms Suenne Megan Tan, Director, Audience Development & Engagement, National Gallery Singapore.

The festival's opening film, *The New Rijksmuseum* (2013) by Oeke Hoogendik, has been chosen as it documents The Rijksmuseum's 10-year-long renovation process, and reveals striking parallels with the Gallery's own transformation from 2005 to 2015. The screening will be the Southeast Asian premiere of the film.

Some film highlights include:

- (1) *Manifesto* (2015) by Julian Rosefeldt – Performed by acclaimed actress Cate Blanchett, the film pays homage to the 20th century's most impassioned statements on art—from influential thinkers such as Karl Marx and André Breton—that have revolutionised ways of seeing in society
- (2) *The Space in Between – Marina Abramović in Brazil* (2016) by Marco Del Fiol – A documentation of influential performance artist Marina Abramović's journey to Brazil in search of healing and artistic inspiration through its mystical practices
- (3) *The Royal Ballet of Cambodia* (1965) produced by National Archives and Records Administration of the United States (NARA) – A rare documentary on classical Khmer court dance and the work of the troupe, supported by the royal family of Cambodia, and starring HRH Princess Norodom Buppha Devi
- (4) *China's Van Goghs* (2016) by Yu Haibo and Yu Tianqi Kiki – The film follows Chinese painter-worker Zhao Xiaoyong to discover the work of Van Gogh for himself. Obsessed with the artist, he traces Van Gogh's footsteps through Amsterdam, Paris, Arles and Auvers-sur-Oise.

In addition, some of the screenings will be followed by dialogue sessions with the filmmakers. There will also be a public forum on film commissions, its challenges and responsibilities, and how artists overcome market considerations to create exceptional works of art; the line-up includes film industry professionals such as Joachim Ng, Director of the Singapore Film Commission, Tenzin Phuntsog, filmmaker and Assistant Professor of Film at Montana State University as well as Singaporean artists Charles Lim and Erika Tan and more.

Viewers can also look forward to *Southeast Asian Shorts*, a free daily programme of short films exploring Southeast Asian perspectives on self-mastery, death, currency and city living. A different set will be screened every two hours, starting at 11am at the Auditorium Anteroom.

Painting with Light: International Festival of Films on Art is presented by National Gallery Singapore and will run from 7 to 29 October 2017 at The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium & Foyer, Level B1, City Hall Wing. Ticket sales will start from 14 September 2017 and can be purchased through the Gallery and SISTIC websites and ticketing counters. (*Annex B*)

For more information, visit www.nationalgallery.sg/paintingwithlight.

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ABOUT NATIONAL GALLERY SINGAPORE

UNVEILING MODERN SINGAPORE AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN ART

National Gallery Singapore is a visual arts institution which oversees the largest public collection of modern art in Singapore and Southeast Asia. Situated 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 venue.

Reflecting Singapore's unique heritage and geographical location, the Gallery features Singapore and Southeast Asian art from Singapore's National Collection in its long-term and special exhibitions. The Gallery also works with international museums to jointly present Southeast Asian art in the global context, positioning Singapore as a regional and international hub for the visual arts.

In 2016, the Gallery won the awards for "Best Attraction Experience", "Breakthrough Contribution to Tourism" and "Best Customer Service (Attractions)" at the prestigious Singapore Tourism Awards for its role in adding to the vibrancy of Singapore's tourism landscape.

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ANNEX A: Painting with Light: International Festival of Films on Art Sections




The festival consists of four sections:






*indicates additional programmes

(1) HOLDING SPACE

Films on institutions of art and their communities

The festival opens with *The New Rijksmuseum*. Along with *Beauty and Ruin*, it looks at the ever-changing relationship between museums and their societies. We marvel at the classical grandeur of Southeast Asian court dance-drama in *The Royal Ballet of Cambodia*. We experience the explosive generative energy of the avant-garde from legendary experimental film festival *EXPRMNTL*, and the powerful influence of state censorship bureaus in *Cuts*. We investigate the present-day art scene with *My Dear Art*, and those who look to religious art as a manifestation of the sacred in *Leave the Saints Alone*.




		
<p>The New Rijksmuseum by Oeke Hoogendijk</p> <p>Sat 7 Oct 7.30pm (Opening film) By invitation only (Southeast Asian premiere)</p> <p>Sun 22 Oct 4.30pm Netherlands Dutch, English and French with English subtitles 2013 130 min PG</p>	<p>Beauty and Ruin By Marc de Guerre</p> <p>Fri 20 Oct 7.30pm (Asian premiere) Canada, France English 2017 75 min PG13 (Some Nudity)</p>	<p>The Royal Ballet of Cambodia Produced by National Archives and Records Administration of the United States (NARA) in 1965, and dubbed in Khmer by Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center with the support of UNESCO in 2012</p> <p>Sun 8 Oct 2pm USA, Cambodia English and Khmer 1965 81 min Rating TBA</p> <p>*Introduction and screening of <i>The Royal Ballet of Cambodia</i>, with Her Royal Highness Princess Norodom Buppha Devi in attendance</p> <p>*Live solo performance by a principal dancer from The Royal Ballet</p> <p>*Post-show Q&A with Proeung Chhieng (Technical Director of the Royal Ballet, assistant to the Princess and former Director of the University of Fine Arts)</p>


		
<p>EXPRMNTL By Brecht Debackere</p> <p>Sat 21 Oct 7.30pm (Southeast Asian premiere) Belgium French, English and Dutch with English subtitles 2016 68 min R21 (Sexual Scene)</p>	<p>La Danse, The Paris Opera Ballet By Frederick Wiseman</p> <p>Sat 28 Oct 7.30pm France and USA French and English with English subtitles 2009 159 min PG</p>	<p>Cuts / Potongan By Chairun Nissa</p> <p>Sat 14 Oct 2pm Sun 15 Oct 2pm Indonesia Indonesian with English subtitles 2016 70 min NC16 (Some Mature Content)</p> <p><i>*Post-screening Q&A with Meiske Taurisia (Producer)</i></p>
		
<p>My Dear Art By Hao-hsuan Hsu</p> <p>Sun 8 Oct 4.30pm (Singapore premiere) Taiwan Mandarin and English with English subtitles 2017 102 min NC16 (Some Nudity)</p>	<p>Leave the Saints Alone By Gianfranco Pannone</p> <p>Sun 29 Oct 4.30pm (Asian premiere) Italy Italian with English subtitles 2016 75 min Rating TBA</p>	

(2) WAYS OF SEEING

Films on artists and their interventions in society

We look at the 20th century's most visionary statements about the role of art in society in *Manifesto*. We see art shimmering with possibility in the hands of artists as they seek to restore in *The Space in Between - Marina Abramović in Brazil*, give voice to complex issues in *Songs from the North* and *Bamseom Pirates, Seoul Inferno*, observe to mediate in *Burma Storybook* and *Koudelka: Shooting Holy Land*.

		
<p>Manifesto By Julian Rosefeldt</p> <p>Sun 8 Oct 7.30pm Sat 21 Oct 4.30pm</p>	<p>The Space in Between – Marina Abramović in Brazil By Marco Del Fiol</p> <p>Sun 15 Oct 7.30pm</p>	<p>Songs from the North By Soon-Mi Yoo</p> <p>Sat 14 Oct 4.30pm (Southeast Asian premiere)</p>

<p>(Singapore premiere) Germany English 2017 95 min PG13 (Some Coarse Language)</p>	<p>Sun 29 Oct 7.30pm (Singapore premiere) Brazil English and Portuguese with English subtitles 2016 88 min M18 (Nudity and Some Disturbing Scenes)</p>	<p>South Korea, USA, Portugal English and Korean with English subtitles 2014 73 min PG</p>
 <p>Bamseom Pirates, Seoul Inferno By Yoonsuk Jung</p> <p>Sat 14 Oct 7.30pm (Singapore premiere) South Korea Korean with English subtitles 2017 119 min NC16</p>	 <p>Burma Storybook By Petr Lom</p> <p>Sat 21 Oct 2pm Sun 22 Oct 2pm (Singapore premiere) Myanmar, Netherlands, Norway Burmese with English subtitles 2017 81 min PG13 (Some Coarse Language)</p> <p><i>*Post-screening Q&A with Petr Lom (Director), Corinne van Egeraat (Producer) and Maung Yu Py (Poet)</i></p>	 <p>Koudelka: Shooting Holy Land By Gilad Baram</p> <p>Sun 15 Oct 4.30pm (Singapore premiere) Germany, Czech Republic English, Hebrew and Arabic with English subtitles 2015 72 min PG13 (Some Coarse Language)</p>
 <p>China's Van Goghs By Yu Haibo and Yu Tianqi Kiki</p> <p>Fri 13 Oct 7.30pm (Singapore Premiere) Fri 27 Oct 7.30pm China, Netherlands Mandarin with English subtitles 2016 80 min PG</p>		

(3) SPECIAL FOCUS: THE ART COMMISSION

Commissioned works by master filmmakers, now restored classics

In this year's Special Focus, we will examine the tensions in realising an art commission. We see a collection of short films that have become works of art in their own right – like *The Crown Jewels of Iran*, *The Song of Plastic*, *Raid into Tibet* and *The Diamond Finger*.

<p>Sat 28 Oct 2pm <i>*Followed by a public forum (free admission)</i> Patrons who have purchased tickets to this screening are guaranteed their seats at the forum. Online reservation for forum-only seats will start on Tue 10 Oct on the Gallery website.</p>
<p>Sun 29 Oct 2pm <i>*Post-screening Q&A</i></p>

		
<p>The Crown Jewels of Iran By Ebrahim Golestan</p> <p>(World premiere) Iran Farsi with English subtitles 1965 15 min G</p>	<p>The Song of Plastic By Alain Resnais</p> <p>France French with English subtitles 1958 14 min G</p>	<p>Raid into Tibet By Adrian Cowell</p> <p>(Asian premiere) United Kingdom English 1966 28 min Rating TBA</p>
	<p>*Public Forum Sat 28 Oct 3.30pm 60 min Free</p> <p>Patrons who have purchased tickets to the Sat 28 Oct screening of The Art Commission anthology at 2pm are guaranteed seats at the forum. Online reservation for forum-only seats will start on Tue 10 Oct on the Gallery website.</p> <p>This forum will address the particularities of the film commission, the challenges and responsibilities of commissioners and artists, and how visionary directors like those represented in this selection—Ebrahim Golestan, Adrian Cowell, R.D. Pestonji, and Alain Resnais—transcend market considerations to create exceptional works of art.</p> <p>Speakers include: Putthapong Cheamrattonyu, Mitra Farahani, Tenzin Phuntsog, Joachim Ng, Charles Lim, Erika Tan, Wee Li Lin with moderator Shabbir Hussain Mustafa, Senior Curator at National Gallery Singapore</p>	
<p>The Diamond Finger By R.D. Pestonji</p> <p>(World premiere) Thailand English 1958 27 min PG</p>		

(4) SOUTHEAST ASIAN SHORTS

Short films on the art and culture of Southeast Asia

Short film programme daily at the top of each hour at the Auditorium Anteroom. Free admission. Films include ***Without Mindfulness*** (Lao PDR), ***The Gong: Made in Tempawaddy*** (Myanmar), ***The King's Last Song*** (Cambodia), ***Silent Light*** (Singapore), ***Image Makers*** (Singapore), ***Another City*** (Vietnam), ***RM10*** (Malaysia), ***Natpwe***, ***The Feast of the Spirits*** (Myanmar) as well as the Gallery-commissioned ***Art Through Our Eyes***, an anthology of short films by five award-winning Southeast Asia directors on their filmic interpretations of masterpieces from the Gallery's collection.

7–29 Oct | 11am | Free – Without Mindfulness, The Gong: Made in Tempawaddy

7–29 Oct | 1pm | Free – The King's Last Song, Silent Light

7–29 Oct | 3pm | Free – Image Makers: John Clang, Another City

7–29 Oct | 5pm | Free – RM10, Natpwe, The Feast of the Spirits

7–29 Oct | 7pm | Free – Art Through our Eyes anthology



Without Mindfulness
By Novice Bouasy
(Singapore premiere)



The Gong: Made in Tempawaddy
By Maung Okkar
(International premiere)



The King's Last Song
By John Pirozzi
(Singapore premiere)

<p>Lao PDR Lao with English subtitles 2016 7 min PG</p>  <p>Silent Light By Liao Jiekai</p> <p>Singapore Mandarin with English subtitles 2015 11 min PG</p>	<p>Myanmar Burmese with English subtitles 2016 26 min G</p>  <p>Image Makers: John Clang By Kirsten Tan</p> <p>Singapore English 2012 16 min PG</p>	<p>Cambodia, USA Khmer with English subtitles 2016 27 min PG</p>  <p>Another City By Pham Ngoc Lan</p> <p>Vietnam Vietnamese with English subtitles 2016 25 min PG</p>
 <p>RM10 By Emir Ezwan</p> <p>(Singapore premiere) Malaysia Cantonese and Malay with English subtitles 2016 13 min PG13 (Some Sexual References)</p>	 <p>Natpwe, The Feast of the Spirits By Tiane Doan na Champassak and Jean Dubrel</p> <p>(Singapore premiere) France No dialogue with English intertitles 2012 31 min PG13 (Some Mature Content)</p>	
<p>Art Through Our Eyes Commissioned by National Gallery Singapore, five award-winning Southeast Asian directors created filmic interpretations of masterpieces of their choice from the Gallery's collection. This anthology of short films had its world premiere at the 21st Busan International Film Festival (South Korea, 2016).</p>		
 <p>Wounded Lion By Joko Anwar</p> <p>Indonesia Indonesian with English subtitles 2016 5 min PG</p>	 <p>Aku By Ho Yuhang</p> <p>Malaysia No dialogue with English intertitles 2016 5 min PG</p>	 <p>Amorsolo's Dream By Brillante Mendoza</p> <p>Philippines Tagalog with English subtitles 2016 5 min PG</p>
 <p>Ablaze By Apichatpong Weerasethakul</p> <p>Philippines No dialogue 2016 5 min PG</p>	 <p>Chua Mia Tee By Eric Khoo</p> <p>Singapore English and Mandarin with English subtitles 2016 5 min PG</p>	

ANNEX B: Ticketing Information

General Admission

\$10 per ticket (includes booking fee)

Concessions*

Gallery Insiders: **\$8**

Local and international students, NSFs, and seniors aged 60 and above: **\$8.50**

*Please bring along a valid ID for checks at the door. Patrons unable to present proof of eligibility are required to upgrade their concession tickets to full price tickets.

Group bookings

Purchases of 4 tickets or more in a single transaction: **\$8.50** per ticket

Singapore Film Society (SFS)

The following SFS cards enjoy a special rate of **\$8.50** per ticket. Available only at Gallery and SISTIC ticketing counters upon presentation of valid card:

- SFS Reel Card
- SFS Membership Card

Tickets are available from Gallery and SISTIC websites and ticketing counters.

All *Painting with Light* ticket holders are entitled to 15% discount off house drinks at Aura Sky Lounge and Gallery & Co. Cafeteria. Simply present your ticket at these venues to redeem the offer.

Terms & Conditions: Valid for 2 months from screening date, subject to venue availability. Not to be used in conjunction with other promotions and discounts. Not valid on eve of public holidays, public holidays and blackout dates.