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**National Gallery Singapore unveils
Artist and Empire: (En)countering Colonial Legacies
in first-ever collaboration with Tate**



Singapore, 30 September 2016 – Art and history come alive as National Gallery Singapore unveils its much-anticipated *Artist and Empire* exhibition at the Singtel Special Exhibition Gallery. Presented in association with London’s Tate Britain, the Singapore showcase, entitled ***Artist and Empire: (En)countering Colonial Legacies***, looks at art associated with the British Empire and how it has been represented and contested through time.

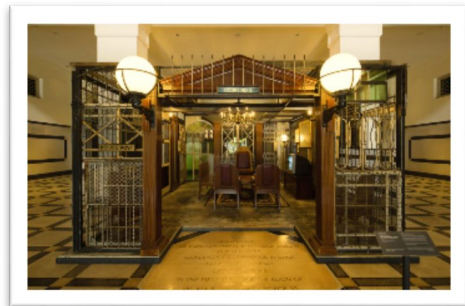
“When we first learnt that Tate Britain was organising the *Artist and Empire* exhibition, we were very keen to present a version of it in Singapore. Apart from the resonance that the exhibition has to the shared colonial history which Singapore and the region had with Britain’s imperial past, it will also be a valuable counterpoint to reflect on the issues of post-colonialism and decolonisation. Unlike the London show which took on a more British-centric perspective, we took Tate Britain’s narrative as a point of departure to shift the curatorial focus and perspective to the former colonies

from the Asia Pacific region, including responses to colonialism by contemporary artists,” describes Dr Eugene Tan, Director of National Gallery Singapore.

Artist and Empire: (En)countering Colonial Legacies adopts a contemporary perspective to critically examine art produced in relation to the colonial experience, and the rise of modern art in former colonies in the Asia Pacific region – particularly Australia, Brunei, India, Malaysia, Myanmar and Singapore. Also included in the Singapore exhibition is a special focus on Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, a key colonial figure who is regarded as the founder of modern Singapore.



Elizabeth Butler, *The Remnants of an Army*, 1879
Gift of Sir Henry Tate, Tate Collection



Wong Hoy Cheong, *Re:Looking*, 2002–2003
(with a simplified installation in collaboration with National Gallery Singapore, 2016), Mixed media
Video in the collection of Singapore Art Museum



George Francis Joseph
Sir Thomas Stamford Bingley Raffles, 1817
Collection of the National Portrait Gallery

The Gallery’s exhibition draws upon over 200 artworks spanning diverse regional and international public and private collections, including Singapore’s National Collection. Works range from the 16th century to the present, and feature iconic works such as Lady (Elizabeth) Butler’s 1879 oil on canvas, *The Remnants of an Army* (pictured top left); majestic life-sized portraits of Singapore’s key colonial figures such as Sir Stamford Raffles (pictured bottom left), Sir Frank Swettenham, Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth II; and a selection of contemporary artworks to introduce alternative perspectives on colonialism, including special commissions by Wong Hoy Cheong (MY) and Erika Tan (SG). Artworks by contemporary artists Lee Wen (SG), Tang Da Wu (SG), Andrew Gilbert (UK), the Singh Twins (UK) and Michael Cook (AU) will also be displayed.

Mr Low Sze Wee, Director for Curatorial, Collections and Education, and curator of the exhibition, adds, “*Artist and Empire* opens up fresh perspectives on how we can view Singapore and our region’s colonial visual heritage. The Singapore show will offer visitors an opportunity to examine afresh our society today, and how we have built our sense of identity and place in relation to our (colonial) past.” The Singapore exhibition is curated by Mr Low, Ms Melinda Susanto, Assistant Curator and Ms Toffa Abdul Wahed, Curatorial Assistant.

Artist and Empire: Facing Britain’s Imperial Past debuted at London’s Tate Britain in November 2015. Says Ms Caroline Collier, Director of Partnerships and Programmes at Tate, “We are delighted that National Gallery Singapore is presenting *Artist and Empire*. The exhibition was originally developed for Tate Britain in London. Colleagues at the Gallery have reshaped it for Singapore with new loans from British collections and other lenders, including artists. This is the first partnership between the Gallery and Tate, and we have greatly enjoyed the collaboration.”

The exhibition was made possible by lead sponsor Singtel. Says Ms Chua Sock Koong, Singtel Group CEO, “We are pleased to support *Artist and Empire*, the second major exhibition at the Singtel Special Exhibition Gallery, in partnership with National Gallery Singapore and Tate Britain. Not only does this exhibition throw a spotlight on a significant period of history in Singapore and the region, it presents rarely-seen perspectives, particularly those of artists in Asia, who were there capturing an important period of change, in their own distinct voices. As a Singapore-grown telecoms company that now connects the most people across Southeast Asia, we are also big believers in the power of art to connect, engage and inspire. We hope visitors will enjoy this long-overdue understanding of the region’s rich history.”

Artist and Empire: (En)countering Colonial Legacies runs from 6 October 2016 to 26 March 2017 at the Singtel Special Exhibition Gallery, Level 3, City Hall Wing. Admission is S\$15 for Singaporeans and S\$25 for non-Singaporeans.

For more information on the exhibition, visit www.nationalgallery.sg

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ABOUT NATIONAL GALLERY SINGAPORE

National Gallery Singapore is a new visual arts institution which oversees the world's largest public collection of modern art of Singapore and Southeast Asia. The Gallery is dedicated to collaborative research, education and exhibitions, highlighting the importance of modern art in Southeast Asia in a global context. The Gallery also provides a unique visitor experience through its art presentations and innovative programming, positioning Singapore as a regional and international hub for the visual arts.

Situated in the heart of the Civic District, the National Gallery Singapore has been beautifully restored and transformed from the former Supreme Court and City Hall buildings – two important heritage buildings of Singapore's nationhood – into an exciting new visual arts venue. Opened in November 2015, the Gallery will be a leading civic and cultural destination established for the enrichment, enjoyment and engagement of Singapore residents and visitors from all over the world. Information on the National Gallery is available at www.nationalgallery.sg.

ABOUT TATE BRITAIN

Tate is a family of galleries in the UK which includes Tate Britain and Tate Modern in London, Tate Liverpool in Merseyside and Tate St Ives in Cornwall. Tate's mission is to increase public understanding and enjoyment of British, modern and contemporary art. It looks after the nation's collection of British art, and international modern art, and has a major international touring programme which sees these artworks travel to galleries across Britain and around the globe. Tate is recognised internationally as a leading and innovative art brand with over 7 million visitors a year.

Tate Britain houses the national collection of British art from 1500 to the present day, and is home to the world's largest collection of works by J.M.W Turner. Located in Millbank, the gallery was originally opened in 1897 as the National Gallery of British Art, more commonly known as the Tate Gallery after its founder, Sir Henry Tate. The gallery was renamed Tate Britain in 2000.

Visit www.tate.org.uk for more information.

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ANNEX A

Curatorial Overview:



Artist and Empire debuted at London's Tate Britain from November 2015 to April 2016. Titled *Artist and Empire: Facing Britain's Imperial Past* then, the London exhibition adopted a British-centric perspective, looking at how the Empire affected British art production. Works from this exhibition were limited to British collections, which included artefacts and ethnographic materials from former colonies, reflecting the history of collecting in British institutions. The exhibition also had relatively more emphasis on the region of Africa and India.




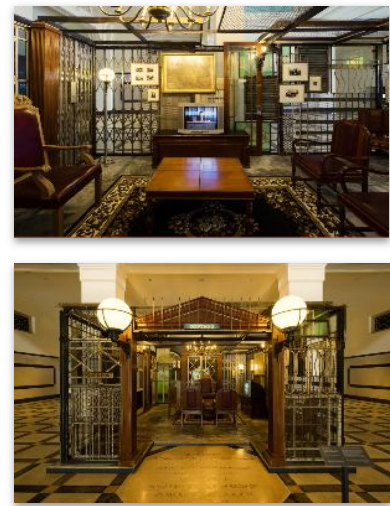
Taking Tate Britain's narrative as a point of departure to shift the curatorial focus to the perspective of its former colonies, particularly from the Asia Pacific region, National Gallery Singapore's *Artist and Empire: (En)countering Colonial Legacies* looks at art associated with the British Empire, and the different ways in which it has been represented and contested through time. The Gallery approached the exhibition in two key directions. The first section, **Countering the Empire**, adopts a contemporary perspective to critically examine art produced for the Empire, by inserting contemporary artworks for each theme. There is also a special feature on the founder of modern Singapore, Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles. The second section, **Encountering Artistic Legacies**, examines art produced during the transition from colony to nation-states, looking in particular at the relationship between the colonial experience and the rise of modern art in former colonies. In terms of geographical focus, the Gallery's exhibition has a greater emphasis on the Asia Pacific region, including India and Australia.

Ranging from the 16th century to the present, *Artist and Empire* draws upon over 200 works including key loans from international and regional collections, as well as institutions in Singapore and its National Collection. Loans include key works from Tate Britain's *Artist and Empire* collection, and other renowned British institutions including the **British Museum, National Portrait Gallery, London** and the **Victoria and Albert Museum**; and regional institutions such as the **National Gallery of Australia** and **Museum of Modern Art Tokyo**.

ANNEX B

Exhibition Artwork Highlights:

	<p>George Francis Joseph <i>Sir Thomas Stamford Bingley Raffles</i> 1817 Collection of the National Portrait Gallery</p>
	<p>Elizabeth Butler <i>The Remnants of an Army</i> 1879 Oil on canvas Collection of Tate Presented by Sir Henry Tate 1897 © Tate, London 2016</p>
	<p>Chuah Thean Teng <i>[Not titled](Two Malay Women and a Child)</i> c. 1955 Gift from the Loke Wan Tho Collection. Collection of National Gallery Singapore Image courtesy of National Heritage Board</p>
	<p>Michael Cook <i>UNDISCOVERED #7 (2010)</i> Inkjet print Collection of National Gallery of Australia, Canberra Purchased 2010 Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Baker Art Dealer</p>

	<p>[Left] John Singer Sargent <i>Portrait of Sir Frank Althelstane Swettenham</i> 1904 Oil on canvas Collection of National Museum Singapore</p> <p>[Right] John Singer Sargent <i>Sir Frank Swettenham</i> 1904 Oil on canvas Bequeathed by Sir Frank (Althelstane) Swettenham, 1971 Collection of National Portrait Gallery, UK</p>
	<p>Saburo Miyamoto (1905 –1974) <i>The Meeting of Gen. Yamashita and Gen. Percival</i> 1942 oil on canvas Collection of The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo</p>
	<p>Eugene VON GUÉRARD <i>Fern tree Gully in the Dandenong Ranges</i> 1857 Collection of National Gallery of Australia</p>
	<p>Wong Hoy Cheong <i>Re:Looking</i> 2002–2003 (with a simplified installation in collaboration with National Gallery Singapore, 2016) Mixed media Video in the collection of Singapore Art Museum</p>

ANNEX C

Adult Learning and Educational Programmes

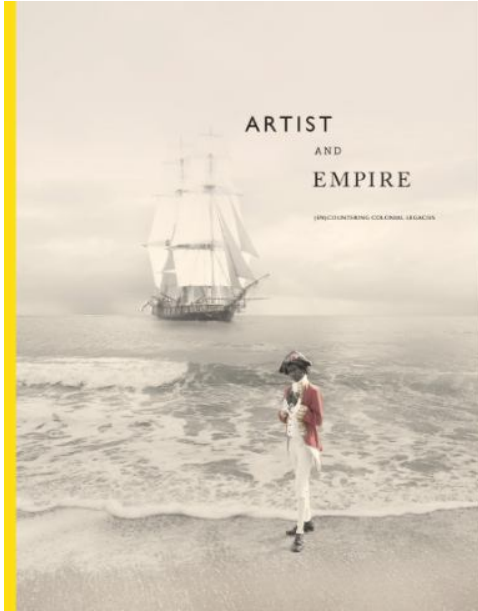
Programme	Details	Description
<i>[Art Talks]</i> Imperial Grandeur: The Art of Empire	Sat, 1 Oct 2016 3-4pm Glass Room Free Admission	<p>Learn more about the story of Empire from a new perspective, as Dr Jim Masselos shares insights on the art and architecture of Asia's great empires over the past thousand years.</p> <p>Long before European powers began colonising territories around the world, there were numerous empires across Asia that established themselves as centres of culture and civilisation in their own right. Their rulers were lavish in nurturing diverse art forms: many were patrons of music, dance, sculpture, painting and textiles, and also undertook vast building projects. Surviving artefacts and monuments from the greatest periods of imperial creativity testify to this, and provide us with a sense of what life was like then. Taken collectively, these individual strands of artistic expression shaped an ethos that articulates the interplay between art and power.</p>
<i>[Dialogue Session]</i> Institutional Partnerships and the Art Museum: Trends and Complexities	Thu, 6 Oct 2016 11am – 12pm The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium Free Admission	<p>Why and how do museums collaborate? Join Eugene Tan (Director, National Gallery Singapore) and Caroline Collier (Director, Partnerships and Programmes, Tate) as they discuss the benefits and challenges of developing and implementing partnerships between institutions of art, and how this relates to the role of the museum in the 21st century.</p>
<i>[Roundtable Session]</i> Artist and Empire: Curatorial Roundtable	Sat, 8 Oct 2016 3 – 4.30pm The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium Free Admission	<p>Why is the Empire still relevant to us today? How do we look at art from the past and present? In what ways can modern art from Southeast Asia be understood in light of the colonial experience, and what do artworks reveal about ways of seeing or systems of knowledge?</p> <p>Join our panel of curators Alison Smith (from Tate Britain), Low Sze Wee and Melinda Susanto (from National Gallery Singapore) as they discuss the making of the Gallery's second international exhibition and broader debates surrounding the place of Empire in art history.</p>

<p>[Art Talks] Arts and Arms: Mobilising Empire During World War I</p>	<p>Sat, 12 Nov 2016 3-4pm Glass Room Free Admission</p>	<p>Discover the pivotal role that visual art played in British imperialism during World War I. Art historian Dr Michael Walsh examines how elites harnessed the power of images in fine, applied and performance arts from the 1900s to 1920s to create imperial propaganda, and explores the complexities of cultural production throughout Empire during this moment of crisis.</p>
<p>[Art Talks] Civilisations in ruin: Raffles and the course of Empire</p>	<p>Sat, 25 Feb 2017 3-4pm Glass Room Free Admission</p>	<p>When Raffles published his landmark book <i>The History of Java</i> in 1817, ruins were far more than mere architectural detritus of a former age. Images of ruins reminded people of the transience of human achievements, and stimulated broader philosophical enquiries into the rise and decline of entire empires. This talk by Dr Sarah Tiffin examines the picturesque appeal of ruins as featured in <i>The History of Java</i> and the role that these images played in Britain's own imperial ambitions in Southeast Asia.</p>
<p>[Art Talks] Raffles: National Identity and the Aestheticization of Colonial Power</p>	<p>Sat, 4 Mar 2017 3-4pm Glass Room Free Admission</p>	<p>Many images of imperial power in Singapore – such as the statue of Raffles at the landing place – remind us that the nation began as an outpost of the British Empire. References to colonialism in places like the Raffles Hotel, however, raise questions about how Singapore's colonial past is remembered. This talk will examine the creation and sustenance of the Raffles brand in Singapore, the association of ideas of luxury and prestige with his name, and the imagining of modern Singapore as an exotic and timeless relic of the colonial era.</p>
<p>Tours</p>		
<p>Highlights of Artist and Empire Guided Tours</p>	<p>From 16 Oct 2016 Singtel Special Exhibition Gallery Free (admission fee applies)</p> <p><u>English:</u> - 12 noon daily - Additional 2.30pm from Fri – Sun only</p> <p><u>Mandarin:</u> - 4.30pm Fri – Sun</p>	<p>Catch the highlights of the Artist and Empire exhibition through one of the docent-led tours.</p>
<p>Curator's Tour</p>	<p>Fri, 14 Oct 2016 Fri, 16 Dec 2016 Fri, 10 Feb 2017</p>	<p>Led by the curator of the exhibition, this tour takes you through the</p>

	Singtel Special Exhibition Gallery Fee: S\$25	curatorial framework and the key themes of the exhibition.
Audio tours (available on the Gallery's Explorer app for both Android and iOS users)		
Artist and Empire Highlights	Duration: 45 mins Number of stops: 22	Explore the highlights of this exhibition, which explores art associated with the British Empire from the 16 th century to the present day, and its impact on the rise of modern art in former colonies such as Singapore. Discover insights, responses towards the Empire and emerging artistic practices across over 30 selected works. This tour focuses on artworks from both historical as well as contemporary perspectives. It draws connections between alternative viewpoints, and looks at how different aspects of the Empire still hold an impact on art and society today.
mrbrown meets High Commissioner	Duration: 15 mins Number of stops: 6	Join local blogger, satirist and comedian mrbrown and British High Commissioner Scott Wightman for a special tour of <i>Artist and Empire: (En)countering Colonial Legacies</i> . This short tour offers an introduction to key works. Listen as they exchange conversations about the works featured in this exhibition, with a personal and sometimes playful or provocative tone.

ANNEX D

Exhibition Catalogue:



Title: **Artist and Empire: (En)countering Colonial Legacies**

Dimensions: 270 x 210 mm

Price: \$42.80

Synopsis:

Examining the effects of the British Empire through the prism of art, *Artist and Empire: (En)countering Colonial Legacies* is a major exhibition organised by National Gallery Singapore in association with Tate Britain. This catalogue furthers the exhibition's themes, presenting a thought-provoking exploration of the ways in which artists have negotiated conditions of colonialism over time.

Through considered exposition, essays within the catalogue flesh out curatorial frameworks and situate the concept of Empire within broader socio-political discourse. A selection of key artworks from the exhibition juxtaposes historical paintings by luminaries of the day against critical interjections by contemporary artists, and foregrounds the relationship between national identity in art and the colonial experience. Each work is also paired with curatorial text that succinctly illumines its major themes and concerns. Reflecting the dense networks between artist and Empire, a comprehensive timeline spanning four centuries charts the scope of activities undertaken in the name of the Empire, and contextualises the pursuits of artists from former colonies.

Exhibition Merchandise:



Paper Fan and Postcards



Tote Bag



PVC Tote Bag



Post Cards