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Media Advisory

Yayoi Kusama's Exhibition Draws Record Crowds to National Gallery Singapore

The Gallery Sees Highest Exhibition Attendance Since Its Opening



Singapore, 4 September 2017 – Known for her iconic dots, nets and pumpkins, Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama's art has captivated millions all over the world, and now including those in Singapore and Southeast Asia. National Gallery Singapore welcomed over 235,000 visitors to the recently concluded *Yayoi Kusama: Life is the Heart of a Rainbow*, and connected more people with the life and works of an artist who now has a firm place in the global and regional art history.

Due to overwhelming response from the public, which also saw visitors from the region flying down specially for the show, the Gallery had also extended its operating hours till midnight for the exhibition in the final three days of its run.

Yayoi Kusama: Life is the Heart of a Rainbow is internationally-acclaimed artist Yayoi Kusama's first major survey in Southeast Asia. The exhibition featured over 120 works, including new, never-before-seen, pieces and offered an unprecedented opportunity for visitors in Singapore to explore seven decades of her extraordinary artistic practice.

"We are encouraged to see the overwhelming response to this exhibition. We have seen visitors from all walks of life gain access into the bold and captivating world of Yayoi Kusama. Kusama is one of Asia's most prominent artists. Her long artistic history, connection and immense impact on the art world - both modern and contemporary - are also highly relevant to our interest in exploring the relationships between Asian art and the rest of the world. It is an important mission of the Gallery to make the arts more accessible; to engage new audiences through art and to further the understanding of art amongst our publics. Through this exhibition, we hope that audiences in Singapore and Southeast Asia have gained a new appreciation of an artist whose works transcend geographical boundaries and generations." said Dr Eugene Tan, Director, National Gallery Singapore.

The intimate and immersive exhibition, which ran from 9 June to 3 September, intrigued and thrilled visitors with Kusama's signature pieces, such as her pumpkin installations, infinity mirror rooms and her most recent works – a cluster of soft sculptures and several paintings from her 'My Eternal Soul' series (2009–ongoing), some of which were on display for the first time.



Visitors in Gallery A, which looks at Kusama's use of dots, nets and pumpkins through painting, sculpture and installation from the 1950s to the present



Here, the installation Invisible Life (2017) marks the start of Gallery B, which considers Kusama's engagement with the human body through installation, performance, sculpture and painting



Visitors queuing to get into one of Kusama's signature infinity mirror rooms, Infinity Mirrored Room – Gleaming Lights of the Souls (2008) in Gallery B



Visitors viewing Kusama's Love Forever series. The Gallery managed to bring in all 50 pieces from this series to be on display



Visitors in Gallery C, where they are surrounded by works from Kusama's latest series 'My Eternal Soul', of which some of the pieces were displayed for the first time



The re-staging of Narcissus Garden (2017) in the City Hall Chamber, a very historically significant room at the Gallery, where 1,500 stainless steel balls filled the floor and reflected their historic surroundings.

The exhibition is a collaboration between National Gallery Singapore and Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA), Brisbane, Australia. The exhibition is co-curated by Russell Storer and Adele Tan of the Gallery and Reuben Keehan of QAGOMA. The show will travel to QAGOMA in November 2017.

For more details about the exhibition, please visit www.nationalgallery.sg/yayoi-kusama.

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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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