

## **UOB partners National Gallery Singapore to promote modern Southeast Asian art to the world**

**Singapore, 22 January 2015** – National Gallery Singapore (the Gallery) and United Overseas Bank Group (UOB) today announced the formation of a partnership to promote the research and exhibition of the world’s largest collection of modern Southeast Asian art. Eight thousand Southeast Asian artworks are currently in the Gallery’s collection, of which more than 400 works will be curated for the first exhibition in the new UOB Southeast Asia Gallery.

The UOB Southeast Asia Gallery will span over 2, 000 square metres over three levels in the iconic heritage building that was the Singapore Supreme Court. As a founding partner of the Gallery, UOB will also have naming opportunity to the UOB City Hall Courtyard, located in the City Hall wing. The support of UOB will enable the Gallery to broaden its research efforts to deepen understanding and appreciation of modern Southeast Asian art across the world.

Mr Wee Ee Cheong, Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, UOB Group, said UOB’s partnership with the Gallery is a natural extension of the Bank’s long-term support of Southeast Asian art and commitment to the region.

“Southeast Asia is our focus and where we see our future. Over the last few decades, we have built an extensive network to serve and to connect our customers across the region. During that time, we have also been supporting artists in the region as part of our community efforts. We believe that art can draw together people from different backgrounds and cultures and we are honoured to be part of the Gallery’s efforts to showcase Southeast Asian art to the world,” Mr Wee said.

Ms Chong Siak Ching, Chief Executive Officer of National Gallery Singapore said UOB’s support would help the Gallery fulfill its vision of inspiring and engaging visitors through exhibitions that create a dialogue between the art of Singapore, Southeast Asia and the world.

“UOB’s donation will enable the Gallery to achieve its aim of cultivating an appreciation of modern Southeast Asian art and highlight its connections to our history and cultural legacy. We hope to share this knowledge with all Singaporeans and visitors,” Ms Chong said.

As part of the partnership, UOB will open up its own extensive art collection for the Gallery to access for its special exhibitions and permanent displays. The Bank started collecting paintings by Singapore’s artists in the 1970s and continued with the launch of the UOB Painting of the Year competition in 1982.

Today, UOB has more than 1,500 artworks in its collection, including paintings by Singapore’s early masters such as the late Cheong Soo Pieng and Chua Ek Kay and Georgette Chen. Art lovers can look forward to viewing some of these artworks when the Gallery opens in November this year.

Dr Eugene Tan, Director of National Gallery Singapore, said, “Through this partnership, the Gallery will be able to work collaboratively with scholars, curators and its peer institutions in Southeast Asia to redefine modern art in Southeast Asia and further its understanding in a global context. The UOB Southeast Asia Gallery will present the history of Southeast Asian art through common artistic impulses across the region, sharing a compelling story of human culture, as seen through a region that has been the meeting point of major civilisations, religions, colonial powers, and the focus of struggles towards national independence and modernisation.”

In line with the government’s efforts to raise the appreciation of arts among the Singapore community, the Gallery has made admission to its permanent galleries, which include the UOB Southeast Asia Gallery, free for all Singaporeans and Singapore Permanent Residents.

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## **ABOUT NATIONAL GALLERY SINGAPORE**

National Gallery Singapore is a new visual arts institution which oversees the largest public collection of modern art in 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 outstanding collections and innovative programming, positioning Singapore as a regional and international hub for the visual arts.

Situated in the heart of the Civic District, the Gallery is housed in the City Hall and adjacent former Supreme Court building – two important heritage buildings symbolic of Singapore's nationhood. Opening in November this year, 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](http://www.nationalgallery.sg).

## **ABOUT UNITED OVERSEAS BANK**

United Overseas Bank Limited (UOB) is a leading bank in Asia with a global network of more than 500 offices in 19 countries and territories in Asia Pacific, Western Europe and North America. Since its incorporation in 1935, UOB has grown organically and through a series of strategic acquisitions. In Asia it operates through its branches and representative offices as well as banking subsidiaries in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

UOB plays an active role in the community, focusing on the arts, education and children. It has, over more than three decades, held the longest-running art competition in Singapore, the UOB Painting of the Year. In recognition of its contributions to the arts, UOB was conferred the National Arts Council's Distinguished Patron of the Arts Award for the tenth consecutive year in 2014. UOB also encourages its employees across the region to be involved in its regular volunteer activities. This includes the annual UOB Heartbeat Run which is held in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and mainland China.

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