

**WELCOME SPEECH BY MRS ROSA DANIEL, DEPUTY SECRETARY (CULTURE),
MINISTRY OF CULTURE COMMUNITY AND YOUTH AT THE CULTURE
ACADEMY CONFERENCE ON “THE FUTURE OF CULTURE, CULTURE FOR THE
FUTURE – WHAT LIES AHEAD?” ON THURSDAY 5TH DECEMBER 2009, Ngee
ANN KONGSI AUDITORIUM, NATIONAL GALLERY SINGAPORE**

Ms Goh Swee Chen, Chairman, National Arts Council,

Ms Yeoh Chee Yan, Senior Advisor to the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth
and Chairman of National Heritage Board

Distinguished Guests, colleagues, ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning and welcome to this conference on the future of culture. A special welcome to our overseas speakers who join us for what we hope will be an interesting time to share stimulating conversations and good insights with each other.

2 In this series of annual conferences, we bring together local and international thought leaders to discuss topical issues of common interest to cultural leaders everywhere. In the process, we also seek to strengthen existing ties and foster new linkages that can lead to possibilities in working together. We chose to discuss Digital transformation and its impact on the sector in 2016. In 2017, we focused on how culture can revive cities and bring communities together. In 2018, we discussed the need for, and importance of cultural institutions becoming more inclusive to diverse communities and their needs.

3 2020 marks the start of the third decade of the 21st century and as such, we thought that it would be a good time to discuss the future of what we do. We hope to glean insights on the driving forces that shape our operating environment over the next 5 to 10 years. And to discuss in this context the future of art, culture and heritage to sustain our relevance and currency in an increasingly globalised and polarised world, dominated by technology and innovation.

4 What will the future hold for our sector and what environment will we be operating in? Will we be doing the same jobs that we do now or something that is totally different? Will we collect, store, document, care for and disseminate art, culture and heritage in the same way as we do today, and will the tastes and needs of our future consumers and patrons remain the same or change? How can we prepare for these new operating contexts and how can we predict, perhaps to a limited extent what the future of the arts and culture will be, based on the drivers of future society?

5 These are some of the issues we hope we can hear from our speakers and discuss over lunch and tea. Following this, you will have an opportunity to engage our speakers more deeply at The Long Table. Many of you may have participated in Long Table conversations, while for others it might be a first. The Long Table began as a performance art in the 1990s and has since been used to discuss and debate on topics of interest.

6 Today, we have introduced this element into our conference in the spirit of innovation to the Academy's conference proceedings. We hope that the format will

lead to stimulating conversations that draw in participation and diverse perspectives from audiences. You will find more details about the Long Table in your programme booklet. I hope you will stay to the end of the programme to be part of this. You can imagine yourself in a form of experimental theatre because you will become part of the performance!

Culture Academy's Report Card for 2019

7 For those of you who have attended our past conferences, you will know that I also give a report card of the Academy's work. This year, I am pleased to report that we have reached out to nearly 4500 people through our public lectures and talks, professional development workshops and milestone programmes. We have trained more than 40 cultural leaders from our institutions and partner agencies. We have brought in through our many programmes more than 136 local and 49 international speakers and resource persons. Readership of our annual journal, Cultural Connections, has risen from 600 since 2016 when we published the first issue to nearly 1500 today.

8 In the spirit of reinventing ourselves continuously so that we remain relevant and sustainable for the future, we have just finished a review of the Academy to broaden its scope and strengthen its work processes after 5 years since its launch. From 1 Jan 2020, the Culture Academy is formally sited at the Ministry with a Dean and Vice Dean to oversee its work, and 3 directors each helming the strands of Education and Capability Development for the Sector, Research and Scholarship and International Relations. This is a strong affirmation of the role that the Culture

Academy plays in our culture sector to nurture current and future generations of culture leaders, deepen scholarship and expertise, as well as build strong international linkages and foster new collaborations. Through doing so, the Culture Academy contributes to the cultural understanding of Singapore and our place in the South East Asian region, as well as fosters a deeper sense of our national identity through the arts and heritage.

Conclusion

9 At this conference, I am very pleased that we have eminent Futurists with us today from Australia, Dubai, Hong Kong, South Korea and The United Kingdom. They will be joined by Singaporean thought leaders on futures thinking and cultural leaders of progressive organisations. They will be sharing their collective wisdom on what the future trends, opportunities and challenges will be for the sector and how we must be prepared for it because the Future is already here and not in the far horizon.

10 It now leaves me to thank our Guest of Honour, Chair of the National Arts Council, Ms Goh Swee Chen, for taking time off from her busy schedule to be with us today. My thanks also to Chair, National Heritage Board and advisor to Culture Academy, Ms Yeoh Chee Yan, for delivering the conference round up. And our deep appreciation too for our 2 keynote speakers, from the UK and South Korea, our speakers from Australia, Dubai and Hong Kong as well as all our Singaporean speakers and moderators without whom this conference would not have been possible.

11 I am very grateful to my colleagues from the Culture Academy Steering Committee who have been very supportive of the Academy and who have been providing valuable advice and support.

12 In conclusion, I wish everyone a fruitful, thought-provoking and “horizon scanning” experience today. I hope that all of us will take away some interesting bits of the future and make it happen so that we can continue to be a thriving city-state with a strong soul and be rooted in our multicultural heritage. More importantly, we will remain relevant and useful to Singaporeans, our neighbours in the region and friends from beyond the region.