

**SPEECH BY MRS ROSA DANIEL, DEPUTY SECRETARY (CULTURE),
MINISTRY OF CULTURE, COMMUNITY AND YOUTH AT THE
OPENING OF CULTURE ACADEMY SINGAPORE'S SECOND
ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON "REVIVING AND REVITALISING CITIES
AND SPACES THROUGH ARTS AND CULTURE" ON 7TH DECEMBER
2017 AT THE GALLERY THEATRE, NATIONAL MUSEUM OF
SINGAPORE**

Ms Grace Fu, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth.

Excellencies

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen.

1 Good morning and welcome to the Culture Academy Singapore's second thought leadership conference on "Reviving and Revitalising Cities and Spaces Through Arts and Culture".

QUICK RECAP OF CULTURE ACADEMY

2 The first such conference titled, "Digital in Cultural Spaces" was organised exactly one year ago on 7 Dec 2016. Then I had spoken about why and how the Culture Academy was set up by the Ministry. I am happy to report that over these past 2 years, the Academy has made good

progress on its objectives of deepening the capabilities of our cultural sector professionals, widening our networks and collaborations with regional and international counterparts, as well as raising the level of scholarship and knowledge in the arts and heritage.

3 Over the last 2 years since the Academy was set up, we have reached out to more than 2,000 officers in all our cultural institutions and partner agencies through its many programmes. We have also extended our offerings to 800 participants outside the public sector.

4 This year, we successfully launched the inaugural run of our annual Leadership Programme for 18 mid-level leaders across the cultural institutions under the Ministry. Over an intensive period of 2 weeks, participants held many discussions over in-depth case studies and research papers, while interacting with senior leaders in the public, private and people sectors. They also benefited from a learning journey to Jogjakarta, to further our capabilities in becoming a node for South East Asian arts and heritage.

5 The Academy has also established many connections with counterparts in and outside the region to extend our knowledge and expertise. Our connections have included counterparts in Australia, France, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the UK. The bespoke programmes created with these partners have been well-received by our participants and stakeholders.

6 The Academy has also successfully produced 2 issues of its annual publication “Cultural Connections”. This seeks to put out articles and commentaries from our cultural leaders and key international partners who share their perspectives and experiences in their respective domains. The Straits Time published 2 pieces from the last issue in its Opinion pages. Our readers have given positive feedback that the publications have been useful references. We hope to continue raising the scope and quality of “Cultural Connections” through the contributions of cultural professionals both in Singapore and beyond.

ABOUT THE THEME OF THE CONFERENCE

7 One of the strategic thrusts of the Academy is to promote thought leadership in the sector and to use this annual conference to bring up

topical issues that cut across the arts and culture sectors and raise them for debate and discussion.

8 This year's theme for the conference was chosen as many of our cultural institutions and professionals dwell on the value of arts and culture in a person's life, a community's history and heritage and a nation's memory and well-being. In our interactions, we also find our counterparts around the world seeking better ways to evaluate the value that arts and culture brings to the people and how it can make a positive difference to their lives.

9 One key strategy is to harness the arts and culture to revive and revitalise a city or space – to create value to the community's life, bring back pride to a nation and enrich their lives and bring meaningful encounters to a person's soul.

10 Our speakers today who come from Australia, Indonesia, and Malaysia will join our own colleagues in Singapore to share with you how they have successfully used arts and culture to revive and revitalise their respective cities and communities.

11 I understand that after last year’s conference on “Digital in Cultural Spaces”, some of our participants and agencies met the overseas speakers and have since formed their own linkages with them. This is something the Academy strives to do – not only to groom the next generation of culture leaders in the public service but also to provide multiple platforms for professionals and administrators in the arts and culture arenas to meet, exchange ideas and share best practices.

12 So I hope that after we hear from our eminent speakers today, we will also be encouraged and spurred to work with our multiple stakeholders from the public, private and people sectors to work towards a solution that works for our stakeholders and not just for us. I also hope that we will gain new insights into how we can better engage everyone to work towards a win-win situation for all – one that everyone buys into and has ownership over.

THANK SPEAKERS AND PARTNERS

13 It now leaves me to thank our partners, stakeholders and supporters for their continued support of the Academy. Firstly, I would like to thank the University of Melbourne who partnered us in 2016 and this year again

on this conference and we are pleased to welcome our two special guests from the University, Ms Joanne Ligouris, Executive Director, Faculty of Arts and Dr Meredith Martin, Associate Director, Cultural and Public Engagement and Chancellery (Engagement) who have made a special trip just to attend this conference.

14 I extend our appreciation to our other partner, The British Council in Singapore. My thanks also to all our speakers and session moderators for readily accepting our invitation. I also wish to thank Mr Douglas Gautier for his keynote and Dr Kenson Kwok for accepting the arduous task of delivering the conference round up.

15 My thanks to the members of the Culture Academy Steering Committee as well as all the sister agencies within the MCCY family for their strong support of the Academy and for this conference.

16 Last but not the least, we thank our Guest of Honour, Minister Grace Fu for setting aside this time to be with us and to join us this morning despite her busy schedule.

17 I wish all of you a very intellectually stimulating day of debate, discovery and discussions during the conference and over tea and lunch.

18 Thank you.