



Bringing the World to our Shores

Singaporeans were treated to rare cultures of the world through a range of international blockbusters at our museums in FY2006.

To commemorate the 40th anniversary of diplomatic ties between Japan and Singapore, ACM co-organised *Hidden Faces: The Art of Japanese Masks* and the accompanying *Let's Go Japan!* festival with the Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan. This groundbreaking exhibition showcased some 48 masks and 20 costumes from the Japanese performing arts tradition such as *noh* and *kyōgen*. It included rare masks that are seldom seen even by the Japanese public! In addition, *Mystery Men: Finds from China's Lost Age* was held from January to April 2007. It featured an amazing collection of monumental bronze masks and heads, ceremonial jades and gold created some 3,200 years ago in a place called Sanxingdui near Guanghan City, Sichuan.

Over at the National Museum, *Maria Theresa: Mother Empress of Habsburg Austria* showcased artefacts from the majestic and luxurious Schönbrunn Palace, well-known for its lavish rococo design, fine tapestry hangings, resplendent paintings and exotic furnishings. The opulent exhibition, *The Art of Cartier* (a collaboration with Cartier), featured some of the most lavish pieces created by Cartier. Priceless pieces in its heritage collection include the enigmatic Portico Mystery clock, among others.

The National Museum of Singapore also played host to the travelling exhibition *Improving Life – The Design of Swedish Innovations*. A collaboration with the Svensk Form (The Swedish Society of Crafts and Design) and the Embassy of Sweden, the exhibition profiled the best of Swedish design with a display of over 65 products.

going places



Over at SAM, international blockbusters included *All The Best. The Deutsche Bank Collection and Zaha Hadid*. This was one of SAM's most popular international exhibitions with over 65,000 visitors. A London star architect and Pritzker Architecture Prize winner, Zaha Hadid designed a site-specific visionary spatial landscape, making this show a spectacular work of art. SAM also paid tribute to one of Singapore's leading pioneer artists in *Convergences: Chen Wen Hsi Centennial Exhibition*. Bringing together 123 of his most important works valued at S\$9 million, the exhibition threw new light on the importance of Chen's art and his contributions to the development of 20th century Chinese modern art.

Exporting our Cultural Capital

Just as we brought the world to our doorsteps, we also showcased our rich cultural treasures beyond our shores. Our collections enjoyed the limelight at overseas museums when ACM contributed to two exhibitions - *Crescent Moon: Islamic art and Civilisation in Southeast Asia* at the Art Gallery of South Australia in Adelaide and the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra, and *Goddess: Divine Energy* at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney. ACM also travelled its first full-scale show of 170 objects from its Peranakan collection to the Ayala Museum in Manila on 14 February 2007. Titled *The Peranakan Legacy*, the exhibition showcased the rich material culture of the Peranakans.

At the National Art Museum of China in Beijing, SAM presented over 70 works from its collection for the first Southeast Asian modern art survey exhibition in China. This attracted a daily visitorship of 3,500 as well as a forum of over 30 art historians and critics.

SAM's modern ink paintings were also exhibited in Guan Shanyue Art Museum during the 5th *Shenzhen International Ink Biennale* from 11 December 2006 to 10 January 2007. Featuring 61 masterpieces from eight Singapore-based ink painters, the exhibition comprehensively documented the state of contemporary ink painting and acted as an indicator of new development directions for the medium.

The National Museum of Singapore's commissioned artwork, *Singa Merlionus*, by local artist David Chan made waves beyond our shores. This modern interpretation of the legendary Merlion was invited for display at the Soka Art Centre in Taiwan and China.

Other than NHB museums, several MR members have also exported their shows overseas. The Museum of Shanghai Toys travelled its exhibits to Hong Kong and Shanghai, while the award-winning travelling *Robot Zoo Exhibition* by the Singapore Science Centre toured more than 30 science centres in North America and garnered a total visitorship of more than four million.







