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NAC Senior Director Resigns

The National Arts Council announces that Ms Goh Ching Lee, Senior Director for Performing Arts and Director of the Singapore Arts Festival will be leaving the Council on 8 October 2009 to take a hiatus and explore new opportunities.

Since joining NAC at its inception in 1991, Ms Goh has been involved in arts development and promotion. Her main portfolio has been the development of national and international events in the performing, visual and literary arts. She has also been active in fostering cultural agreements, international cultural exchanges, and international promotion of Singapore arts and artists.

In the last ten years, Ms Goh has developed the Singapore Arts Festival into a national celebration of the arts, bringing international acts and Singapore talents to the stage for all to enjoy. The 2009 Festival achieved a record 92.5 per cent house, the highest ticketed attendance since 1986, and reached a total of 800,000 audiences. Under her direction, the Festival was active in commissioning and establishing international partnerships. She also set up and served as Chair of the Association of Asian Performing Arts Festivals for three consecutive terms.

Prior to the Singapore Arts Festival, she directed the final installment of the Festival of Asian Performing Arts in 1997, which saw a 30 per cent jump in attendance. She also conceived and created the Festival Village that celebrated Asian roots and rituals in performing arts. In the same year, as Director for International Relations, she initiated the internationalisation strategy which helped promote Singapore artists and arts groups overseas.

Ms Goh played an instrumental role in developing *Singapore Season*, a programme showcasing Singapore's arts and creative capital overseas. First introduced at the New Zealand Arts Festival in 2004, the *Seasons* were subsequently staged in London in 2005 and Beijing and Shanghai in 2007 as an expanded showcase featuring business and lifestyle components under the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts. Most recently in August 2009, she stewarded the first-ever presentation of Singapore performing and literary arts at five festivals in Edinburgh, Scotland.

In 2005, Ms Goh was bestowed The Public Administration Medal (Silver) at the National Day Awards and was made "*Chevalier*" of the *Ordre des Arts et Lettres* (Arts and Letters Decoration) by the French Minister for Culture in 2002.

Said Ms Goh, "I am privileged to have had the opportunity to play a role in developing the arts, and especially the Singapore Arts Festival, in my 18 years with the National Arts Council. It has been a fantastic journey with many rich and rewarding experiences. I have intended for some time to take a break after the 2009 Festival to make way for new blood, to explore other personal interests and opportunities, and to find a new mode of working. Having helmed ten editions of the Festival and ending the 2009 Festival on a

strong note, I feel it is timely for me to move on to a new phase in my career. I remain committed to the arts and look forward to working with Benson and the Council, as well as artists in Singapore, in other capacities.

“I thank the Council for the wonderful opportunities it has given me, and my gratitude goes also to my colleagues in NAC for their tremendous support.”

Said Mr Benson Puah, Chief Executive Officer, NAC, “Ching Lee has been an invaluable asset, not just to the Council but to the arts scene in Singapore. She has led her team to energise the Singapore arts arena and create new inroads for Singapore artists and arts groups on the world stage. Her departure is a loss to the Council and I have tried to convince her to stay but we respect her decision to take a really well deserved break. I would want to explore avenues to continue working with her and tap her vast expertise in the arts.”

NAC will announce Ms Goh’s successor in due course.

The Council thanks Ms Goh Ching Lee for her outstanding contributions and wishes her all the very best.

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