

MEDIA RELEASE

The Singapore Art Museum Celebrates Imagination and Discovery with **Imaginarium: A Voyage of Big Ideas**

SAM's much-loved contemporary art exhibition for children returns to SAM at 8Q
with interactive artworks by Singaporean and regional artists

27 February 2015, Singapore – Come set your imagination free with the fifth edition of Singapore Art Museum's annual contemporary art exhibition for children! Titled *Imaginarium: A Voyage of Big Ideas*, the exhibition is inspired by the crescent moon on the Singapore flag, symbolising a young nation on the rise and its capacity to dream big and think large. It focuses on the themes of adventure, discovery, new possibilities, and 'Big Ideas'. Both immersive and interactive, *Imaginarium: A Voyage of Big Ideas* encourages both the young and young-at-heart to wonder and explore, while cultivating an appreciation for contemporary art.

Featuring emerging and established artists from Singapore and the region, *Imaginarium: A Voyage of Big Ideas* presents seven new artwork commissions at SAM at 8Q. The artworks range from installations which require visitors' active participation to complete or enhance the artwork, to poetic and contemplative works, and playful magical worlds to roam and discover. The exhibition as a whole has been curated with careful attention paid to how children learn and play, and to appeal to different senses, modes of learning and exploration.

The journey into *Imaginarium: A Voyage of Big Ideas* begins outside of SAM at 8Q, as visitors are greeted by the magnificent *Trees* by Takashi Kuribayashi. This installation comprises of cut-up sections of different tree trunks and terrariums sealed in glass boxes, assembled together to form a new hybrid tree. Over time, these sealed terrariums and tree trunks will decay, which in turn will give life to new organisms and ecosystems, eventually forming a whole new ecosystem. Through this, Kuribayashi brings to light our relationship with nature and our responsibility to protect it. The piece also raises questions on how we currently co-exist with nature and how this relationship will change in the future.

Upon stepping into SAM at 8Q, visitors are presented with the opportunity to become architects and builders of their own make-believe cities. Drawing inspiration from urban planning, Singapore artist Chiang Yu Xiang's *We Built this Estate!* is an interactive installation that invites everyone to create their own housing estates and city skyline with Tetris-shaped housing blocks. The artwork features clearly-demarcated 'estate' areas, roads and other landmarks that they can contribute to as a backdrop of their own cities.

Every journey into the unknown requires a map and playing this role at *Imaginarium: A Voyage of Big Ideas* is **Imagine-a-doodle** by Singapore collective Band of Doodlers. With illustrations sprawled across the walls and winding their way up the four levels of SAM at 8Q, the artwork will bring to life a fantastical version of the Singapore story, through adaptations of local folklore and of an imagined future.

The second floor of SAM at 8Q is the designated *Imaginarium moonroom*, which is a space for exploration and learning. Through the moonroom's specially-tailored workshops and hands-on activities, children will begin their own journeys to experience and engage with art, and to cultivate a love of art-making.

A new realm opens up on the third floor as Singaporean artist Izziyana Suhaimi's work **Let's Make! Studio** explores new worlds through embroidery. In a designed workspace in the gallery, visitors are invited to make their own small objects which capture their thoughts about Singapore's future. By adding these objects alongside the artist's creations, the artwork will become a collective tapestry of dreams about and of our shared future over time.

Occupying the same floor as Izziyana's work is Canadian-born, Singapore-based artist Vincent Twardzik's **Green II: Interstellar Overdrive**. This artwork installation only comes alive when visitors cycle on stationary bicycles which are hooked up to various objects, such as a drum, a constellation of stars and text on the walls. Twardzik's installation prompts visitors to think of energy sources, how our future cities might be powered, and the need for collaboration for a sustainable future.

The penultimate stop of *Imaginarium: A Voyage of Big Ideas* lies on the fourth floor of the museum with two more works, one of which is **Dream House** by South Korean artist Jeeyoung Lee. Tapping on visitors' memories of childhood rewards and precious treats, Lee has created a fairytale-like gingerbread house filled with candy which visitors can pick and 'plant' in a larger-than-life 'garden'. Paying homage to our sometimes extravagant childhood wishes and desires, *Dream House* is a space for everyone to create a dream world where even all our wishes and aspirations, symbolised by the planting of the sweets, can be cultivated and come to life.

The second of the works on this floor is **Kiko's Secrets** by Sri Lankan-born, Vietnam-based artist Kumkum Fernando. Comprising three giant 'magic' boxes, the artwork will take visitors on a journey of discovery of magical secret worlds, inspired by the wonder that children experience as they explore the world around them. Built around three themes – the woods, the city, and the sky – each box holds a world that is familiar yet unexpected, inviting audiences to touch, feel, seek and re-discover each world for themselves.

Imaginarium: A Voyage of Big Ideas is an exhibition full of adventure and wonder for children and adults alike. It rouses curiosity, and takes us into uncharted worlds: this is the space of creativity, questioning, and sensory experience, which tickles the thinking process, and leads us to imagine the impossible. For children, it is so important that their first experience with art be exciting and fun. *Imaginarium: A Voyage of Big Ideas*, being a child-focused exhibition, will certainly be an inspiring artistic encounter for children of all ages, as it offers a range of creative experiences and encourages expression – specially for our young visitors,” says Dr Susie Lingham, Director, Singapore Art Museum.

The journey into *Imaginarium: A Voyage of Big Ideas* continues beyond the seven artworks presented. Keeping to the spirit of experiential learning and providing SAM visitors with an all-round experience, the exhibition will also be accompanied by a number of public programmes. The public can look forward to creating their own secret boxes taking inspiration from Fernando’s *Kiko’s Secrets*, learning the fine craft of embroidery, creating their own terrariums, and film screenings for children. A roundtable discussion – *The Art and Science of Imagination*, will gather parents who are professionals and experts in their fields to discuss how imagination is a vital part of their working lives and how it inspires them to inspire others. With something for everyone to partake in, whether you are young or old, *Imaginarium: A Voyage of Big Ideas* promises to be a completely interactive and immersive experience.

As part of its collaborative efforts, SAM will specially partner with local organisation CRIB - a Singapore-based social enterprise which aims to empower women entrepreneurs, particularly mothers, with work-life balance and a fulfilling career while making family a priority. A selection of their products will be on display at Supermama for the duration of *Imaginarium*.

Imaginarium: A Voyage of Big Ideas will be at SAM at 8Q from 14 March 2015 to 19 July 2015. More details about *Imaginarium* programmes and film screenings online at www.singaporeartmuseum.sg.

About the Singapore Art Museum

The Singapore Art Museum (SAM) focuses on contemporary art practice in Singapore, Southeast Asia and Asia within the global context. It advocates and makes accessible interdisciplinary contemporary art through research-led and evolving curatorial practice. Opened in January 1996, SAM has built up one of the most important collections of contemporary art from the region. It seeks to seed and nourish a stimulating and creative space in Singapore through exhibitions and public programmes. These encompass cross-disciplinary residencies and exchanges, research and publications, as well as outreach and education. SAM was the organiser of the Singapore Biennale in 2011 and 2013.

SAM was incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee on 13 November 2013 and has moved from the National Heritage Board to the Visual Arts Cluster (VAC) under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY). The other institutions under the VAC are the National Gallery, Singapore and STPI.

For more information, please contact:

Shirlene Noordin

Phish Communications

DID: +65 6344 2953

Email: shirlene@phish-comms.com

Lynn Sim

Singapore Art Museum

DID: +65 6697 9762

Email: lynn.sim@singaporeartmuseum.sg