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**FIVE DESIGN TEAMS SHORTLISTED FOR SINGAPORE'S NATIONAL ART
GALLERY ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN COMPETITION**

Singapore, 14 May 2007 – Five teams of architectural firms have been shortlisted for Stage II of the architectural design competition for Singapore's National Art Gallery (*working title*). The new National Art Gallery is proposed to be housed in two historic buildings in the heart of Singapore's Civic District – City Hall and the former Supreme Court building.

The competition, organised by the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts in association with the Singapore Institute of Architects, drew 111 entries from 29 countries worldwide. The entries are about equally divided among the following three regions:

- (1) Europe and North America,
- (2) Asia-Pacific (excluding Singapore), and
- (3) Singapore.

Judging Process

The international jury panel of experts for this competition is chaired by Professor Tommy Koh, Singapore's Ambassador-at-Large. The 7-member panel met in Singapore from 25- 27 April 2007. Over the three-day period, the 111 entries were reviewed based on their ability to demonstrate an understanding of the opportunities and constraints of the site and the buildings; the historical, urban and social context of the Gallery; and an appreciation of the future role the Gallery will play in the Civic District and in Singapore's cultural landscape.

Entries at Stage I were submitted and judged anonymously, identified only by a computer-generated identification number. Details including the competitors' past experience and track record were revealed to the jury only after the shortlist had been agreed to.

The Shortlist

The five shortlisted design teams are (in alphabetical order):

- (1) Chan Sau Yan Associates, in collaboration with Lekker Design, Singapore
- (2) DP Architects, Singapore
- (3) Ho + Hou Studio Architects, Taiwan
- (4) Smart Design Studio, Australia

(5) Studio Milou Architecture, France

In response to this, Professor Tommy Koh said, "The jury was pleased with the outcome. The Stage 1 judging was conducted 'blind', so it was gratifying to see that the five shortlisted firms represented a good geographical spread - two Singaporean firms and one each from France, Australia and Taiwan. Their proposed schemes showed great potential to be developed further into feasible design solutions for the new National Art Gallery. Also, each competitor will bring a unique range of artistic and cultural insights to the Stage II of the competition. We look forward to seeing what the five competitors have to offer, in helping us build an iconic National Art Gallery that will propel Singapore forward as a global city for the arts."

Next Milestone for Shortlisted Firms

The five shortlisted teams will now proceed to Stage II of the competition, which kicks off on 14 May. Within a span of three months, the design teams will be tasked to develop their initial concept into feasible design solutions for the new National Art Gallery. The teams will meet with a Technical Advisory Group, comprising representatives from Singapore's Preservation of Monuments Board, National Heritage Board, Urban Redevelopment Authority, Land Transport Authority and the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts. They will visit the existing museums under the wings of the National Heritage Board, as well as the Heritage Conservation Centre. They will also be given more information on site conditions and authorities' requirements, and a more detailed design brief.

The submission deadline for Stage II is 3 August 2007. The jury panel will meet again in Singapore at the end of August, when the finalists will present their schemes to the jury panel. The jury will select the three winners.

At the conclusion of the competition, a public exhibition of the designs will be held, before the selection of the final design concept and the commissioning of an architect for the National Art Gallery. The Gallery is scheduled to open in 2012.

- Ends -

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Notes to the Editor

About the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts (MICA)

The Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts (MICA) is a multi-faceted ministry. It is both an economic and social ministry with the vision to nurture and develop a Creative Economy, Gracious Community and Connected Singapore.

The Ministry's mission is to develop Singapore as a Global City for information, communications and the arts, so as to build a creative economy and a connected society with a Singaporean identity rooted in a multicultural heritage. It aims to propel the creative economy through the development and promotion of the creative industries (arts, design and media) and infocomm technology sector to create new economic value and jobs. It also aims to forge a strong sense of community, national identity, rootedness and inclusion among Singaporeans, and to foster better understanding between the Government and its various stakeholders through effective public communications. More information on MICA is available at: <http://www.mica.gov.sg>.

About the National Art Gallery of Singapore

The National Art Gallery of Singapore (*working title*) is a new visual arts institution which will contribute to building Singapore as a regional and international hub for visual arts. It will focus on the display, promotion, research and study of Southeast Asian art, including Singapore art, as well as play host to international art exhibitions.

Situated in the heart of Singapore's Civic District, the City Hall and adjacent former Supreme Court building – two important heritage buildings symbolic of Singapore's nationhood – will be converted to house this exciting new visual arts venue, and is anticipated to be completed by 2012. The National Art Gallery will be a civic and creative space, established for the enrichment, enjoyment and engagement of Singaporeans and visitors from all over the world.

About the Jury Panel

In addition to the Chairman, Professor Tommy Koh, the jury panel consists of the following six members:

(1) Mrs Cheong-Chua Koon Hean

CEO, Urban Redevelopment Authority, Singapore

Mrs Cheong, an architect and urban planner, has extensive experience in strategic and local planning as well as in urban design and conservation of built heritage. She is concurrently Deputy Secretary (Special Duties) in the Ministry of National Development.

(2) M. Jean-Francois Jarrige

President, Guimet Musée National des Arts Asiatiques

In addition to being the Director of Guimet Museum since 1986, Jean-Francois Jarriage is concurrently a member of the National Council of Scientific Research and Director of the French Archaeological Mission to Pakistan, where he has carried out excavations since 1963.

(3) Mr Koh Seow Chuan

Chairman, Singapore Art Museum and Board Member of the National Heritage Board

Koh Seow Chuan is the retired founder of DP Architects. He is a prominent art collector and was a key figure in the landmark arts development, The Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay.

(4) Dr Julian Raby

Director, Freer Gallery of Art & Arthur M Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

Julian Raby had been Director of the Freer and Sackler galleries since 2002. He is a well-known scholar of Islamic art and is equally well-versed in Oriental Studies.

(5) Ms Rita Soh

Immediate Past President, Singapore Institute of Architects

Ms Rita Soh was the President of the Singapore Institute of Architects from 2004 – 2007. She has been instrumental in establishing a Blueprint for the architectural profession in its pursuit of Architectural Excellence as well as a Pro-Enterprise approach to architecture.

(6) Mr Peter Wilson OBE

Project Director, Royal Shakespeare Company Transformation Project

Peter Wilson is currently Project Director for a £100 million redevelopment project of the famous Royal Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford-upon-Avon, UK. He also played a key role in the development of the Tate as building project director for both the Tate Modern and the Tate Britain Centenary Development.