

National  
Art  
Gallery,  
Singapore

A National Heritage Board Museum

**EMBARGOED – To be released on 27 May 2010, 7:00pm**

**MEDIA RELEASE**



*Yeh Chi Wei, Musician, 1975, Oil on canvas, 104 x 85cm, Collection of National Heritage Board*

**National Art Gallery, Singapore mounts first survey show of Ten Men Group Leader**

***The Story of Yeh Chi Wei***  
**27 May – 12 September 2010**

*27 May 2010* – Considered one of Singapore's most influential mentor, teacher and innovator, Yeh Chi Wei was a well-respected art educator and leader in the Singapore art scene in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The leader of the significant Ten Men Group, Yeh left a monumental mark on

Singapore's fledgling art scene To commemorate Yeh's artistic achievements and the donation of four significant works by the Yeh family, the National Art Gallery, Singapore is proud to present *The Story of Yeh Chi Wei*, the first survey show of his works since his demise in 1981.

2 Yeh led the Ten Men Group, comprising prominent artists such as Choo Keng Kwang and Lim Tze Peng, on painting expeditions to Southeast Asian and Asian countries in the 1960s and 1970s. He was a great source of inspiration and encouragement to many artists, and was widely considered to be a true Singapore artist. Yeh drew inspiration from a wide range of cultural sources, such as ancient Chinese rubbings, carvings and Javanese batik. He created highly distinctive oil paintings - works that bear witness to a powerful interweaving of Asian and Western art histories, diverse cultural sources and travels around Southeast Asia.

3 This exhibition of Yeh's works is the first survey show after his only solo exhibition in 1969, and will showcase his artistic achievements and contributions to Singapore, as well as his celebration of Southeast Asia through his art. It is part of the National Art Gallery's series of research exhibitions on Southeast Asian and Singaporean art.

4 Continuing on the trail blazed by the *Realism in Asian Art* exhibition, *The Story of Yeh Chi Wei* presents many new ways of engaging audiences through novel immersive and interactive elements. For this exhibition, the Gallery will incorporate a Creative Play Corner to encourage children to engage in and experience art through a variety of activities and games related to the show. An exhibition mascot named "Hopper" will be introduced to make art more fun and exciting, while a special micro-site will be launched featuring games and learning activities. A special conservation section will also be introduced. This component showcases the value chain of art - from the point of conservation of a single artwork to its eventual display in a museum.

5 Says Director of the National Art Gallery, Singapore, Mr Kwok Kian Chow, "Yeh Chi Wei may not be as well-known today as some of his contemporaries, yet his influence both as a teacher and artist remained strong. Here at the National Art Gallery, we make it a point to celebrate these lesser-known heroes alongside the more well-known artists, and showcase the range and depth of Singapore's rich artistic heritage. This exhibition merely offers a small prelude to what

visitors can expect in our future Singapore gallery. We deeply acknowledge and thank the Yeh family for their generous donation of four of Yeh Chi Wei's key works to the National Collection, and for working with us so closely to make this exhibition possible."

6 Says Yeh Chi Wei's grand-daughter, Ms Jacey Yeh, "This exhibition bears special significance for my family. It represents the fulfillment of a dream that these works by my late grandfather, Yeh Chi Wei, are brought to the forefront, and his contributions to the visual art scene highlighted. On behalf of the family, we would like to thank the staff of The National Art Gallery for helping us realize this exhibition. We hope that through such a showcase, the story of Yeh Chi Wei, his works and his enduring legacy will live on for many more years to come."

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### ***The Story of Yeh Chi Wei***

*A research exhibition by the National Art Gallery, Singapore  
Galleries 2.1 – 2.4, Singapore Art Museum  
28 May – 12 September 2010*

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#### **Media enquiries**

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#### **Notes to Editor**

##### **About the National Art Gallery, Singapore**

The National Art Gallery, Singapore (*working title*) is a new visual arts institution which will contribute towards positioning Singapore as a regional and international hub for visual arts. It manages the world's largest public collection of modern Southeast Asian and Singapore art. The Gallery focuses on displaying, promoting and researching these artworks, relating them to the wider Asian and international contexts, and hosting international art exhibitions.

Situated in the heart of the 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

2013. The National Art Gallery will be a civic and creative space, established for the enrichment, enjoyment and engagement of Singapore residents and visitors from all over the world. Information on the National Art Gallery is available at [www.nationalartgallery.sg](http://www.nationalartgallery.sg).