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SPEECH BY MR LUI TUCK YEW, ACTING MINISTER FOR INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE ARTS, AT THE OPENING OF 'LIVE! SINGAPORE 2010', ON TUESDAY 8 JUNE 2010, 11:15AM, AT THE RESORTS WORLD CONVENTION CENTRE

Mr. Michael Dreyer
Managing Director, Koelnmesse Pte Ltd

Mr. Charles Hamlen
Chairman, IMG Artists

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning and a warm welcome to all of you, especially our overseas guests, for joining us at 'LIVE! Singapore 2010'. We are happy to have with us over the next few days, some of the most respected artists, executives and practitioners in the world of the performing arts.

Sustainability in the arts

2 With the firm support of our agencies, the Economic Development Board (EDB), the National Arts Council (NAC), and the Singapore Tourism Board (STB), 'LIVE! Singapore' provides a global platform for the exchange of ideas, the conduct of international business, and opportunities for the global performing arts community to work and collaborate. More importantly, it provides a forum for critical engagement and examination of ideas that shape the performing arts. It is the only event of this scale in Asia that enables participants to experience unique business networking opportunities on a regional and international level.

3 As Singapore develops into an innovation-driven economy, the creative industries will play an increasingly important role in generating ideas and contributing cultural and economic capital for Singapore. 'LIVE! Singapore' is thus well-timed, filling the niche for performing arts tradeshows and fairs in Singapore.

A global city for the arts

4 Singapore's aspiration is to be a global city for the arts. Through the Renaissance City Plan (RCP), our masterplan for arts and cultural development, Singapore aims to be a vibrant magnet for innovative artists and arts groups, creating and performing engaging, exciting and inspiring works. As part of the effort to position Singapore as the choice destination to create and premiere original content focusing on Singapore and Asia, NAC has also introduced commissioning and residency schemes to support the creation of original artistic content by arts professionals and organisations. World class events that draw practitioners and audiences from around the world complete the jigsaw.

5 The third phase of the RCP (RCP III) will see the additional investment of \$115 million over five years. We want to transform our civic district into a world-class cultural and entertainment district with diverse arts and cultural offerings, here in Singapore. Improvements to the infrastructure will continue. For example, the upcoming National Art Gallery, Singapore, at the former Supreme Court and City Hall buildings, will add significantly to the stable of cultural offerings in the city centre.

6 Through partnerships with the people, private and public sectors, we are committed to nurturing our talents and ensuring the diversity and vibrancy of our arts and culture landscape. The increase in the number of events on our arts calendar is matched by the growing participation and appreciation of our audience. Today, we have a daily average of 80 arts and culture-related activities, and 1.5 million ticketed attendance at arts events annually. The number of Singaporeans attending at least one arts event a year has increased from one in ten (10%) in 1996, to two in five (40%) in 2009.

7 The vibrancy and dynamism of our arts scene today is not just the outcome of government-driven festivals, programmes and incentives under the Renaissance City Plan. It is also the result of various initiatives spearheaded by the different sectors to engage the community. Indeed, 'LIVE! Singapore' is a part of a robust pipeline of key arts, entertainment and creative events in Singapore. Singapore is

also a choice destination for world-class productions. Last year, the Singapore Repertory Theatre presented 'The Bridge Project - A Winter's Tale' directed by Sam Mendes, its first and only Asian stop on its world tour. Familiar favourites such as 'Les Miserables' and 'The Phantom of the Opera' held their Southeast Asia premieres in Singapore. Signature events such as the world's first F1 night race have helped to cast the global spotlight on Singapore.

8 Singapore also aspires to be a major marketplace for the visual and performing arts, equipped with a thriving ecosystem of lifestyle businesses and talent. We possess critical pro-business factors. Our global connectivity, leading infrastructure, skilled workforce and ease of doing business, among others, facilitate the growth of lifestyle businesses. Our position as the cultural gateway between the East and the West enables us to gather and distil the best of Asia's cultures and ideas, and bring the best of the world's cultures to Asia. We are at the strategic centre of cross-cultural artistic creation in Asia, producing and showcasing distinctive content inspired by the diversity, depth and fusion of Asian and world cultures. Thus, Singapore constitutes that ideal place where opportunities abound, and where the arts and entertainment world can converge and dialogue.

Content creation

9 Increasingly, Asian artists are gaining international recognition, and their creative influence is growing. For instance, A R Rahman's collaboration with Andrew Lloyd Webber in the West End hit musical 'Bombay Dreams' could potentially open a myriad of opportunities for Asian theatre companies. Singapore's creative talents are also doing us proud by gaining increasing recognition and acclaim abroad. Visual artist Ming Wong received a Special Mention at the prestigious Venice Biennale in 2009. The Singapore Chinese Orchestra is also fast establishing itself among equals in the world, and the orchestra was invited to perform at prestigious platforms such as the World Economic Forum, the International Summit of Arts Council, and the Edinburgh Festival.

10 There are opportunities for Singapore to create Asian-inspired content to gain prominence in the international arena. We can better position Singapore as a hub for

the arts through providing support that will encourage the creation of new, original and innovative content. One platform for doing so is the Singapore Arts Festival. I hope you have had the opportunity to enjoy a few of the many programmes offered at the ongoing Singapore Arts Festival. The Festival is one of a number of major platforms - including the Singapore Biennale and Mosaic Festival of World Music - that facilitate the development of new works, showcase seminal works and artists, as well as encourage exchanges and collaborations with international talents.

11 I therefore urge international presenters and arts decision makers to have top of mind awareness of the schemes we have in place to support collaborative efforts, as well as to grow our pool of local artists. We welcome performing arts companies to form partnerships and leverage Singapore as a strategic location in Asia to do business, and to create content. By bringing productions here, or through collaborations with our community to create new works, they can be test-bedded for the Asia market and beyond. We hope to be your partners to create successful, internationally-receptive works.

Conclusion

12 Ladies and gentlemen, we are glad that Singapore has been chosen to be the launch pad of this tradeshow and fair. This is an important event that will strengthen our standing as a MICE destination of choice. More importantly, it extends the reach of Singapore as an aspiring and vibrant global arts capital. I trust that the exchanges and partnerships forged, and the many conversations that will take place over the next few days at 'LIVE Singapore!', will benefit all our participants as we learn from one another.

13 On this note, it is now my pleasure to declare open 'LIVE! Singapore 2010'. I wish everyone a fruitful time ahead.

14 Thank you.