

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

**The Singapore History Gallery at the National Museum of Singapore to
reopen to the public on 10 October 2026**

*Marking its first full revamp in 20 years, the Museum's flagship gallery presents a contemporised
narrative of Singapore's evolving identity, drawing on new research, never-before-seen artefacts and
interactive experiences*



Singapore, 28 August 2026 – Mark your calendars: the National Museum of Singapore will reopen its flagship **Singapore History Gallery** on 10 October 2026, following its first full revamp since 2006. This marks a key milestone in the Museum's phased revamp of its permanent galleries, which began in September 2023 alongside broader restoration and infrastructure upgrading works.

2 First opened in 2006 and last refreshed in 2015, the revitalised Gallery will take visitors on a journey through more than 700 years of Singapore's history, from the 14th century to the present. Updated to reflect new research and respond to evolving visitor expectations, it presents

richer, more layered narratives alongside enhanced, interactive experiences that encourage deeper engagement. Its reopening, just two days before the Museum's 139th anniversary, also marks the completion of the Museum's three-year restoration project, which was carried out while the Museum remained open to the public.

3 **Chung May Khuen, Director of the National Museum of Singapore**, said, "Museums, and the stories they tell, must evolve alongside the communities they serve. Over the past three years, the Museum has undergone a transformation of our own. Even as we carried out restoration works, we remained open and found new ways to share Singapore's stories and engage with diverse audiences. The revamped Singapore History Gallery is the culmination of that journey, shaped by new research, fresh perspectives and voices from our communities that have deepened our understanding of the Singapore story. When the Gallery reopens, we hope every visitor will find something that resonates with them and be inspired to reflect on what it means to be Singaporean today."

Shaped by Many Voices: Developed in Collaboration with the Wider Community

4 To develop the Gallery's content, the Museum worked closely with stakeholders including academic experts, consultants and members of the public. Throughout 2023 and 2024, it gathered their feedback to refine the curatorial approach and exhibition design. This included presenting *Singapore Odyssey: A Journey Through Time* and the Singapore History Gallery as a unified visitor experience, while adopting an approach that foregrounds multiple perspectives within a chronological narrative.

5 Focus group discussions, which involved over 160 people across diverse age groups and backgrounds, showed that the themes of identity and multiculturalism resonated strongly among participants. They also highlighted the need for clearer contextualisation and stronger contemporary relevance, reinforcing the Museum's efforts to develop a more layered narrative that connects historical developments with present-day experiences.

6 In parallel, a panel of 12 Singapore academics affirmed the Gallery's focus on local perspectives while encouraging a broader regional context and the inclusion of diverse voices in

dialogue. The panel also advocated a forward-looking narrative that reflects the complexity and nuances of Singapore's journey to the present day.

Voices That Lead the Journey: Narratives, Artefacts and Immersive Experiences

7 Drawing on these insights, the revamped Singapore History Gallery will present new perspectives on a simple question: Who are we? It examines how Singapore's identity has been shaped over time in relation to the region and the wider world, through the lens of multiculturalism. It connects broad historical milestones with personal, lived experiences, foregrounding voices ranging from eyewitnesses and descendants to contemporary writers, artists, and curators. Visitors begin their journey with *Singapore Odyssey*, an immersive prelude that traces Singapore's key milestones and myths before entering the Gallery, where Singapore's history is brought to life through the Museum's collection of rich artefacts, records and stories.

8 The Gallery also offers an expanded chronology that elaborates on post-war and contemporary developments in Singapore. Sections covering the 1980s and subsequent decades feature primarily new content and adopt a more contemplative tone, inviting visitors to reflect on how present-day issues and global developments continue to shape Singapore's identity – and the role individuals play in that ongoing story.

9 To bring this renewed narrative to life, the Gallery adopts innovative storytelling approaches that invite deeper and more personal encounters with Singapore's history. Through tactile elements, immersive multimedia spaces and experiential installations, visitors can engage with an expanded collection of artefacts, including new acquisitions and never-before-seen items such as:



From L to R: Traditional Nanyang coffee roasting machine; Housing & Development Board (HDB) lift; Still from “The Lion City 2012–2026” by Keith Loutit

- A restored 1970s HDB lift, which explores the transition from kampong to HDB living and the impact on residents who embraced or struggled with the change;
- A traditional Nanyang coffee roasting machine from Ho Tit Coffee Powder Factory;
- A newly commissioned timelapse work by acclaimed photographer Keith Loutit, which captures over a decade of Singapore’s changing cityscape.

Celebrating 139 Years: Exciting Anniversary Celebrations and a New Mascot

Discover the
stories of everyday
139th Anniversary Celebrations
10 – 18 Oct 2026 | 10am – 7pm

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS
Reopening of *Singapore History Gallery*
Art market • Performances • Craft activities
• Meet & greets

FREE ENTRY TO GALLERIES
For locals and PRs.

10 To commemorate the reopening of the revamped Singapore History Gallery and the Museum's 139th anniversary, the National Museum invites visitors to join in the celebrations from 10 to 18 October 2026. Titled **Stories of Everyday**, the festivities honour the lived experiences of Singaporeans across generations. Visitors can look forward to special installations, an art market, live performances, workshops and more.

11 In the lead up to the celebrations, the Museum will also reveal its new mascot, based on a prized artefact from its collection. Special merch and meet-and-greets will be available at the Stories of Everyday celebrations. More details on the mascot's identity and story will be revealed on the Museum's social media channels and website soon.

12 The reopening of the Singapore History Gallery builds on the launch of *Singapore Odyssey: A Journey Through Time* in 2025 and forms part of the National Museum's ongoing renewal of its permanent galleries. The Museum will complete its phased revamp in 2027 with the reopening of its Level 2 galleries, culminating in a fully refreshed museum experience in time for its 140th anniversary.

13 More details of the Singapore History Gallery will be announced at a later date. In the meantime, visit nationalmuseum.nhb.gov.sg/whats-on/exhibition/singapore-history-gallery or the National Museum's [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages to find out more.

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Annex A: About Stories of Everyday – the National Museum of Singapore's 139th Anniversary Celebrations

For media enquiries, kindly contact nmsteam@tateanzur.com.

Organised by:



An Institution of:



Supported by:



About the National Museum of Singapore

With a history dating back to 1887, the National Museum of Singapore is the nation's oldest museum with a progressive mind. Its galleries adopt multi-perspective ways of presenting history and culture featuring important artefacts that tell the stories of Singapore and the world to redefine the conventional museum experience. The museum is home to thought-provoking exhibitions and hosts exciting events all year round including the Singapore Night Festival. For more details, please visit www.nationalmuseum.nhb.gov.sg/.

About the Singapore History Gallery

What does it mean to be Singaporean?

The revamped Singapore History Gallery at the National Museum of Singapore charts Singapore's 700-year history from its origins as a kingdom of the Malay World, through British colonisation and Japanese occupation, to its independence in 1965, and the forging of a multicultural nation looking towards a global future.

Rooted in the stories of communities who have called Singapore home across the centuries, the Singapore History Gallery brings diverse voices and perspectives to life through rich artefact displays, immersive experiences and interactive touchpoints connecting the broad strokes of history to the stories of those who have lived it.

Your experience begins with *Singapore Odyssey: A Journey Through Time* – an immersive prelude through Singapore's key milestones and myths that sets the stage for deeper exploration.

The Singapore History Gallery invites you to come face to face with historical and contemporary objects anchored by collective experiences and memories that have shaped Singapore's identity, discover what has made Singapore home to so many across the centuries and share your own reflections on the nation's past, present and future.

**Annex A: About Stories of Everyday – the National Museum of Singapore's 139th
Anniversary Celebrations**



Join the National Museum of Singapore at the Stories of Everyday – 9 days of festivities from 10–18 October commemorating the Museum's 139th anniversary and the reopening of the revamped Singapore History Gallery.

Look forward to live performances, an art market, special installations and more as we rediscover our histories and celebrate the everyday moments that make up our Singapore.

Date: 10–18 October 2026

Time: 10am–7pm (Last entry to the galleries at 6.30pm)

Admission Fee: Free to enter 139th Anniversary Celebrations

**Standard admission fees to enter the museum's galleries will apply*