

LARGEST PHOTOGRAPHY GALLERY IN SEA OPENS WITH A MISSION *2902 GALLERY TO PROMOTE THE APPRECIATION OF ART THROUGH A VIEW FINDER*

SINGAPORE, 28 FEBRUARY 2008 – Where the appreciation of photography ends and the conventional notions of art begin, lays a precarious gap where *2902 Gallery* sits. The photography gallery – South East Asia’s biggest at 4,000 sq ft – opens tomorrow at Old School, the former Methodist Girls’ School.

It is this less-than-comfortable position – between photography and art – that fuels the passion of founder Gwen Lee and inspired the concept of the Gallery.



“Photography stands at the edge of commercial and fine art,” said Gwen. *“Most people recognise that taking a great photo is a craft; a skillful manipulation of light and space. But it’s also about a struggle between what is true and what the image presents as truth. It evokes emotion and invokes belief systems just as a painting does,”* she said. *“The vision of 2902 Gallery is to help people appreciate photography as*

a fine art and to make artists of photographers,” she said.

The Gallery is a much needed platform for local and regional photographers to offer their works to the market. It aims to be the nexus and catalyst of discussion, thought and critique on photography in SEA. To make this happen, a programme of exhibitions and workshops will help photographers develop skills and equip the audience with the necessary vocabulary to appreciate photography. Christened after its opening date, the Gallery’s name speaks of a rare moment (each leap year), frozen, or more aptly, captured in time by a photograph.

Unlike conventional galleries, *2902* is an artist-run gallery which allows it to look beyond the bottom line and to the development of the art. For Gwen, an accomplished photographer, a key focus in conceptualising the Gallery was to identify common barriers faced by photographers. By examining her own struggles and those of fellow photographers, she was able to create an artist-friendly environment.

She found that the biggest barrier faced by photographers is the high rental cost of staging an exhibition. To address this, 2902's three gallery spaces will be rented out for solo or group exhibitions at affordable rates for up to 30 days. Photographers can expect to pay about 30% to 70% less than what premium galleries charge, yet still enjoy premium facilities such as a humidity-controlled storage area, special lighting to prevent photo degradation and a room for private buyers to examine the works.



Going beyond the hardware, 2902 will provide professional development courses to teach emerging photographers how to get noticed and how to price and sell their works in the market place.

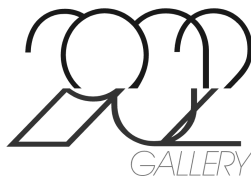
“The creative talent amongst local photographers is remarkable, but taking a picture is quite different from selling one and they might not be equipped to handle the business aspects. If they can’t sell, they won’t have the resources to create. It’s a vicious cycle that these courses can help break,” said Gwen.



2902 Gallery also has ambitious plans to establish one of SEA’s first resource centres dedicated to the analyses and documentation of photography. It hopes to amass an authoritative collection of material on various exhibitions, works, thinkers, galleries and photographers in the region, and in time, publish its own material. Researchers from around the world will have access to this valuable resource. In addition, foreign photographers (30% Asian, 20% international) will be invited to exhibit their photographs alongside local works which will occupy 50% of the exhibition space. This will create fertile ground for the cross-pollination of ideas necessary for the growth of local photography.

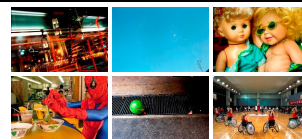
2902 Gallery opens on Friday, 2902, with PEEK, a breathtaking exhibition featuring 14 Singaporean photographers (see appendix) whose works have been selected for the upcoming Month of Photography in Tokyo. Curated by photographer and academic Chris Yap, the exhibition aims to raise funds needed to transport the works to Tokyo.

Once in approximately four years does a gallery like this open, and the reader is cordially invited.



2902 GALLERY FAST FACTS

Address:	Old School 11 Mount Sophia 11B #B2-09
Email:	info@2902gallery.com
Operating hours:	Mon – Sat 11am - 8pm Sunday 1pm - 6pm
Floor area:	5,000 sq ft (total area) 4,000 sq ft (gallery space)
Display wall length:	130m
Gallery spaces:	3
Facilities:	Humidity-controlled store room Workshop room Resource centre
Content breakdown:	50% Singaporean 30% Asian 20% International
Types of exhibitions:	Solo Group
Rental cost:	Approx. 30% - 70% lower than other premium galleries
Rental duration:	Up to 30 days



EXHIBITION FAST FACTS

Title:	Peek: A preview of the show in Japan
Duration:	29 Feb to 9 Mar 2008
Curator:	Mr Chris Yap
Theme:	Photograph Reaction
No. of photographers:	14 Singaporeans
No. of prints:	114 (selected for upcoming <i>Month of Photography</i> in Tokyo, Japan)

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