

Support for the arts grows stronger

By **NISHA RAMCHANDANI**

MORE companies and individuals are making contributions to help support and promote the development of the arts in Singapore.

"We have seen, in particular, strong support from corporations, as well as more companies and individuals taking their first step to support the arts," said Yaacob Ibrahim, Minister for Information, Communications and the Arts.

Dr Yaacob was speaking at the 2012 Patron of the Arts Award ceremony held yesterday evening at the Goodman Arts Centre, where 95 organisations and three individuals were recognised for their contributions.

The 2012 Patron of the Arts and Arts Supporter awards, both organised by the National Arts Council (NAC), are given for contributions made in 2011, which totalled more than \$31.2 million – 17 per cent higher than 2010 – from 278 individuals and organisations.

Collectively, the number of award recipients were

up 30 from the previous year, suggesting that organisations as well as individuals are committed to helping the local arts scene to flourish despite the uncertainties in the global economy.

Meanwhile, the number of first-time recipients for the Patron of the Arts Awards more than doubled from eight in 2010 to 17 in 2011, while the number of contributions from individual donors giving in their own capacity rose from 30 in 2010 to 46 individuals in 2011. In addition, the total amount of contributions above \$50,000 has grown by 22 per cent, from \$23.7 million to \$29 million.

Established to recognise supporters of the arts in Singapore, the Patron of the Arts Awards has grown by leaps and bounds since its inaugural event in 1983 when four recipients were honoured.

Marina Bay Sands (MBS), a first-time donor, was among the 14 organisations conferred the highest title yesterday – Distinguished Patron of the Arts.



Dr Yaacob: *Stresses the need to continue building artistic excellence*

Singapore Press Holdings (SPH) was the first and only company to be honoured with the Distinguished Patron of the Arts award for 20 consecutive years. SPH's major arts sponsorships include the Gift of Music series, which brings music to the public in spaces such as shopping malls, campuses and parks.

"We will continue to educate and inspire members of the public with artworks along the Marina Bay Sands Art Path and internationally renowned exhibitions that we bring to the

ArtScience Museum," said MBS chief executive officer and president George Tan-asijevich.

Other recipients at yesterday's awards included BMW Asia, Far East Organization, Poh Tiong Choon Logistics, Singapore Management University and KPMG.

In his speech, Dr Yaacob stressed the need to continue building capabilities and artistic excellence within Singapore's artists and arts groups. "Singapore has many talented people in the arts, and these talents need nurturing and grooming in order to reach their fullest potential," he said.

Highlighting the role that corporations and individuals play in helping organisations from the local arts scene go the distance, artistic director of The Necessary Stage Alvin Tan said: "As we celebrate our 25th anniversary, we're delighted to have many of our sponsors stay the way with us as we continue to develop the arts in Singapore."

➤ **Patron of the Arts,**
Pages 14 to 21