

# Programmes @ the Library

## Knowledge – The New Currency of the Future By Wan Wee Pin, Acting Manager, INVENT

A noun that seems so nebulous that it defies definition and yet it is the holy grail of all who seek the riches that come with its possession. If the temple is the architectural icon for religion, then it can be said that the library is its equivalent for knowledge.

So what exactly is knowledge? Is it a mere bunch of facts and figures? Or is it the understanding of these numerical codes that enables one to unlock the hidden recesses of our minds? No one knows what knowledge really is. Yet, to know something (or not know anything) amounts to knowledge in its fundamental terms.

In the month of November, the National Library will attempt to shed some light on what exactly constitutes knowledge. We will not be bringing in any linguist to give a dissertation on what knowledge as a term consist of; instead we will be dwelling into the different dimensions of the protection, exchange and collection of knowledge.

In conjunction with the *Celebrating Knowledge: The Power and Potential* conference which will be held at the InterContinental Hotel from 13 to 15 November, we will be inviting several of the luminaries to the library to give their views and opinions about what exactly they understand by the term "knowledge".

To further the exchange of views and ideas across cultures, world-renowned Professor Anthony Yu from Chicago University made such an attempt when he translated the Chinese classic *Journey to the West* for a vastly different audience. He has always been at the forefront of cross-cultural studies and he will be giving a talk at our premises on 10 November on the topic of *The Historical and Comparative Study of Religion in a Chinese Context*. This talk is especially timely in the light of the revived practice of religion in China and diaspora communities, and the escalating study of religion in the Chinese academy itself.

### *The attempt to gain knowledge of the past is also a journey into the world of the dead*

The past is a treasure trove of knowledge awaiting our efforts to dig deeper and rediscover what our ancestors may have left behind for us. This is an effort that has been championed by Dr Susan Whitfield, a historian of Tang China and the Silk Road as well as a director with the British Library.

In 1994, she started the International Dunhuang Project (IDP), a collaboration to make manuscripts, artifacts, textiles and paintings from the eastern Silk Road and dispersed in library and museum collections worldwide fully accessible on multilingual websites. Her efforts have opened up a whole new world of knowledge for us to explore.

Come and listen as she shares, on 13 November, her experiences as well as the motivations and purpose of the project in the pursuit and preservation of "new" knowledge at the National Library.

Finally, in the new millennium, it has been said that knowledge is the new currency and the one who hoards knowledge is the one who would be king. Do you then know about the protection of knowledge and the implications and issues that come with these practices?

Mr Tan Loke Khoon is an expert in this area with Baker & McKenzie and he has recently published a book entitled *Pirates in the Middle Kingdom: The Art of the Trademark War*. He will be in Singapore on a short visit and will be touching upon this increasingly important and relevant topic.

These are just some highlights of the programmes, which have been lined-up in the month of November, that will attempt to put some kind of framework to what is still essentially a hazy concept.

As you participate and listen to some of these speakers, you will begin to wonder if you have understood and gained a little more. And if you do, is that considered becoming more knowledgeable?

*For more information, please log onto [www.nlb.gov.sg](http://www.nlb.gov.sg) for the details about timing and venues of these programmes.*

### **The Historical and Comparative Study of Religion in a Chinese Context**

Professor Anthony C. Yu

Date : Thursday, November 10, 2005  
Time : 6.30pm - 8.00pm  
Venue: Level 5 - Imagination and Possibility Rooms

Admission is free but registration required. Please email [aspi@nlb.gov.sg](mailto:aspi@nlb.gov.sg) or call +65 6332 1828

### **Unearthing Treasures of the Silk Road: The International Dunhuang Project**

Dr Susan Whitfield, Director of The International Dunhuang Project

Date : Sunday, November 13, 2005  
Time : 3.00pm - 5.00pm  
Venue: Level 5 – Imagination and Possibility Rooms

Admission is free

### **Pirates of the Middle Kingdom: The Art of Trademark War**

Mr. Tan Loke Khoon, Partner, Baker & McKenzie HK/ China

Date : Saturday, November 19, 2005  
Time : 3.00pm - 6.00pm  
Venue: Level 16 -The Pod

Admission is free but registration required. Please email [aspi@nlb.gov.sg](mailto:aspi@nlb.gov.sg) or [damien\\_wang@nlb.gov.sg](mailto:damien_wang@nlb.gov.sg) or call +65 6332 1828 / +65 6332 1814

## Design – More Than Just Graphics and Prints

By Wan Wee Pin, Acting Manager, INVENT

Design is a recognition of the relation between various things, various elements in the creative flux. You can't invent a design. You recognize it, in the fourth dimension. That is, with your blood and your bones, as well as with your eyes. – D. H. Lawrence

We have heard so much about the new economy and the new reality that we now live amongst. And in this new reality, design as a concept and as an industry has been identified as one of the new wave of developments that is sweeping away old structures and mindsets. No longer just a question of prints and lines, design as the new catchphrase encompasses so much more.

It is for these reasons and a whole lot more that the National Library is devoting the entire month of December to the subject of design. As usual, the entire breadth of this topic will be presented so as to give a more comprehensive and well-rounded understanding of the possibilities of what design can bring.

One of the foremost efforts in educating our young in this area is the setting up of the new Singapore Arts School. As their opening salvo, they will be launching an exhibition at the Promenade using the theme *How Singapore's Award Winning Architecture Firms Use Physical Space and Architecture to Support Learning and Creativity*.

They will also provide assorted programmes like workshops for architects, educators and children that will educate the public towards what is meant by design and the various other strands that can come from this vast and rich topic.

In conjunction with the promotion of design to the youth, the National Library will also be showcasing the *Young Asian Designers Award 2005* exhibition as part of the programme line-up for the Singapore Design Festival. See what some of the brightest young minds of Asia have to offer as you look at the award winning works and concepts that have been created from their fertile minds.

Lest the impression sets in that design pertains to just art and graphics, the National Library is also working with our partner, the Institute of Engineering Singapore, to come up with a series of activities to highlight the various aspects of industrial design. The use of design in engineering will be showcased at a fair while tours to local

engineering showpieces will be conducted for participants.

The National Library is also attempting to bring a part of the World Expo held in Aichi, Japan to Singapore through an exhibition known as *Library of 2005 Memories*. The exhibition consists of more than 2000 stories that are manifested in a fascinating three-dimensional display. Singaporeans will get a chance to look at a piece of installation work that has wowed visitors from all around Japan as well as overseas.

With such a full and packed line-up, December promises to be an exciting one. For the initiated, this is a time to fully explore and develop your interest; for the amateur or those hearing about design for the first time, this is an excellent opportunity to know, in a greater depth, the possibilities and wonders that this subject has to offer both professionally as well as personally.

For more information, please log on to [www.nlb.gov.sg](http://www.nlb.gov.sg) for the details about time and venue.

## Singapore Literary Pioneers Gallery

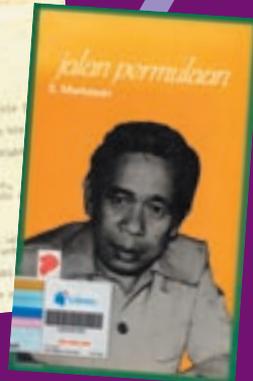
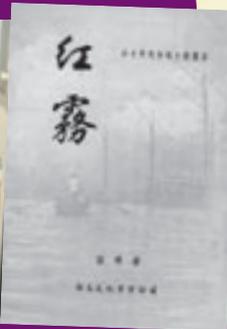
By Eunice Low, Manager, Heritage & Asia

As part of the efforts to preserve the nation's literary heritage, the National Library Board is launching the *Singapore Literary Pioneers Gallery* at the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library in the new National Library building. This project seeks to create a greater awareness of Singapore literature amongst the library's users and to give recognition to these writers. It will also aid in developing the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library's rich repository of local heritage collection, both physical and digital.

A permanent exhibition area of 180 sq m, the gallery occupies the concourse area of Level 11 (Singapore and Southeast Collections) of the Lee Kong Chian includes print, digital and interactive multimedia facilities, features literary pioneers including Professor Edwin Thumboo, Mr Lim Thean Soo, Miao Xiu, Mr Se Ve Shanmugam and Mr Suratman Markasan.



Showcasing special collections of the literary pioneers, the items on display include books, letters, photographs and portraits of the writers, personal items related to writing and authorship such as pens, typewriters and notepads, the original manuscripts of their works, calligraphic works, literary awards and trophies. Copies of the writers' works are also available digitally for visitors to browse through or for research. In addition, a gallery guide has been produced to assist visitors and researchers.



The National Library Board would like to take this opportunity to thank the different agencies such as the National Arts Council (NAC) and the National Book Development Council of Singapore (NBDCS), as well as literary associations, industry partners, writers and individuals for their assistance, views and support for this gallery.

It is our hope that through this gallery, all library patrons will be better acquainted with our writers and even perhaps, be inspired into joining their ranks as literary artists!