

**SPEECH BY DR YAACOB IBRAHIM, MINISTER FOR INFORMATION,
COMMUNICATIONS AND THE ARTS, AT THE SCHOOL OF THE ARTS AWARDS DAY
2012, THURSDAY, 5 APRIL 2012, 7.05PM AT THE SOTA CONCERT HALL**

Mr Lee Tzu Yang, Chairman, Board of Directors, Singapore Arts School Limited
Mrs Rebecca Chew, Principal, School of the Arts
Distinguished guests
Teachers and staff
Parents and students,

Good evening. It is my pleasure to join all of you today to celebrate the achievements of SOTA students who have excelled in various aspects of their education.

2. Quality arts education goes a long way in laying the foundation for a robust and vibrant arts scene in Singapore. SOTA is privileged to have many accomplished members of the local arts community in its teaching faculty either on a part-time or adjunct basis, including Young Artist Award recipients Peter Sau, Lim Yan, and Kuik Swee Boon amongst many others, as well as Cultural Medallion Award recipient Dr Kelly Tang as its Dean of Arts. I am also pleased that SOTA students had a chance to collaborate with local arts companies such as T.H.E Dance Company and Cake Theatrical Productions to perform in local productions in 2011, extending SOTA's unique 2 education experience into the real-world performing stage. Such opportunities to be mentored by our own local artistes are indeed valuable, and I am heartened that so many of our artistes have stepped up to engage and guide our young SOTA talents, playing an important role in developing our next generation of local artistes.

3. Tonight, it is important to give recognition to the partners who have continually supported SOTA through the years. The partnerships with Temasek Holdings, the National Youth Council, Louis Vuitton, SC Global and L'Oreal enhances the education experience and gives students important exposure to the working world. In addition, SOTA has also been benefitting from the generosity of Ngee Ann Kongsi and Singapore Indian Education Trust, as well as individual well-wishers such as former Minister of Information, Communications and the Arts, Dr Lee Boon Yang, who have all sponsored scholarships and awards given out today.

4. By this time next year, the school will be celebrating the achievements of its first cohort of SOTA graduates. It gives me great pleasure to declare the inception of the Prime Minister's Valedictorian Award, which was announced by the Prime Minister's Office earlier today. Presented to the top SOTA graduate of each cohort, this 3 Award will be given out each year from 2013 onwards to a deserving graduate who have demonstrated all-round excellence in the academic disciplines, the arts, leadership and service to the community, throughout their six years of education in SOTA. I would like to acknowledge the Prime Minister's gift to SOTA, and hope that this will inspire all SOTA students to strive to achieve their full potential during their education in SOTA. I look forward to seeing a new generation of SOTA artists and creative leaders playing an active role in Singapore society.

5. With this, I would like to once again congratulate the SOTA Awards recipients and all our SOTA students for the wonderful performances you have put up today. Well done, and keep up the good work! Thank you.