Patron Of The Arts 2007

A gift from the heart

The local arts scene is young, vibrant and it deserves all the assistance it can get. Two supporters of the arts — a longtime sponsor and a newcomer — tell Geraldine Tan how they help

Long-time supporter EXXONMOBIL ASIA PACIFIC — FRIEND OF THE ARTS AWARD

EXXONMOBIL's involvement with the arts in Singapore began in the 1970s. Its Asia-Pacific public affairs manager Jonathan Law says: "Esso was a sponsor of the first Singapore Arts Festival, which has since become a major event in the regional arts calendar."

Today, the company continues to put its weight behind three arts initiatives:

- Through a long-standing partnership with the Singapore Repertory Theatre and its youth arm — The Little Company — ExxonMobil sponsors children in the South West Community Development Council's Kindergarten Financial Scheme to attend productions staged by The Young Company. ExxonMobil employees also enjoy a discount on tickets for The Little Company performances.

- In addition, the 11-year-old ExxonMobil Concerts in the Park series (above right) brings the performing arts to the public through free concerts. "As a company which has a long history of operating in Singapore, we firmly believe in playing our part and making a positive contribution to the Singapore community," says Mr Law.

- "Through the arts, we learn to appreciate the full range and capacity of the human spirit that can be harnessed to build a more gracious society. Sponsorship of the arts, especially the youth arts scene, contributes to a well-rounded education for our young. We will continue to look for opportunities to make positive contributions to the Singapore community," Mr Law adds.

First-time recipient SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY — FRIEND OF THE ARTS AWARD

At Singapore Management University (SMU), learning continues well after the lectures and seminars have ended.

"Thanks to its Visual Arts Initiative (VAI), introduced to mark the 15th consecutive year of its Patron of the Arts award, SMU will also develop a collection of contemporary art, with the focus on South East Asian art," says Prof Howard Hunter, SMU President. "We also actively work with artists to initiate arts programmes to fill the campus with the visual and performing arts throughout the year," adds Prof Hunter.

"Last year was particularly significant for the university as it housed the information centre, media centre and gift shop for the inaugural Singapore Rosewater of new supporters — The Young Company, Sony Music, the National University of Singapore and the Chinese Cultural Institute."

"For its efforts, SMU is the first university in Singapore to be recognised for its contributions to the promotion and development of Singapore's arts scene with a Friend of the Arts award."

About the awards

The Patron of the Arts Award has recognised contributions to the promotion and development of the arts since 1983. Last year, 236 individuals and 236 corporate sponsors supported a vibrant arts scene, with their cash and in-kind contributions totalling $13.5 million. Singapore Press Holdings has been named Distinguished Patron of the Arts for the fifth consecutive year, its major arts sponsorship for the year includes the SPH Gift of Literature, Singapore Film Festival, Nye Heong Su and the Chinese Cultural Institute.

Different tiers have been introduced to track the achievements of new supporters as well as the assistance of existing sponsors. Put in place in 1989, the Distinguished Patron of the Arts Award recognises an organisation or individual's fifty contribution: Patron of the Arts Award. It is also awarded for contributions of $1.5 million and above in a year or within five years of that year. The annual contribution of $300,000, the individual or organisation continues to receive the Distinguished Patron of the Art Award.

The Patron of the Arts Award was launched in 1989 to recognise contributions of $200,000 and above. The first of the Art Award, created in 1986, recognises contributions from $100,000 to $199,999. In the same year, the Associate of the Arts Award was introduced to recognise contributions between $50,000 and $99,999. Since 2004, the Arts Supporter Award has recognised contributions of $10,000 and above.

"SMU warmly welcomes artists and arts groups to our campus to reach out to our community and the general public. "We also actively work with artists to initiate arts programmes to fill the campus with the visual and performing arts throughout the year," adds Prof Hunter. Last year was particularly significant for the university as it housed the information centre, media centre and gift shop for the inaugural Singapore Rosewater of new supporters — The Young Company, Sony Music, the National University of Singapore and the Chinese Cultural Institute."

"For its efforts, SMU is the first university in Singapore to be recognised for its contributions to the promotion and development of Singapore's arts scene with a Friend of the Arts award."