



**EMBARGO UNTIL 12 noon 12<sup>th</sup> MARCH, 2009**

## **SINGAPORE TO HOST RETURN OF WORLD'S ONLY EUROPEAN CULTURAL SEASON**

### **SECOND YEAR LAUNCHES WITH RENEWAL OF VOILAH! FRENCH FESTIVAL SINGAPORE**

**Singapore, Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2009** – The European Union missions in Singapore today announced the return for a second year of the highly successful **Encore! The European Season in Singapore**. Spanning a period of eight months – March to October, 2009 – **Encore!** will showcase a variety of arts and cultural presentations from Europe, all of which celebrate the diversity and vibrancy of the European Union.

In conjunction with the French Chamber of Commerce in Singapore, **Voilah! French Festival Singapore** will form the launch programme of events for 2009.

The launch of **Encore!** and **Voilah!** will be marked by the opening of **Christian Lacroix, Costumier** at the **National Museum of Singapore** on **19<sup>th</sup> March, 2009** in the presence of Senior Minister of State Mr. Lui Tuck Yew.

**Encore! The European Season in Singapore** was established in 2008 to raise the profile and identity of all the European events, productions and artists presented in Singapore. In 2008, the total media value of the **Encore!** marketing platform (including cash and in kind sponsorship) was SGD 1.6 million. More than 100 events from more than 50 presenters in over 40 Singapore venues were actively featured and promoted.

The Encore! campaign complemented the marketing efforts of the respective presenters to raise awareness of and interest in European events and artists in Singapore. **Encore!** reached out to a broader segment of the community in Singapore and contributed to developing new audiences. Intended to be an annual event, it is hoped this will translate into better appreciation of European culture.

In 2009, the total media value (including cash and in kind sponsorship) of the campaign is SGD 2 million. In 2009 Encore! has succeeded in matching 2008's total cash sponsorship contributed by companies in Singapore. The value of sponsorship in kind has increased by 45% on the year. No fewer than 16 companies and foundations from 2008 have returned for a second year.

HE Pierre Buhler, the Ambassador of France to Singapore said,

*“The EU missions in Singapore are extremely proud to announce to the return of **Encore! The European Season in Singapore** and the renewal of **Voilah! French Festival Singapore** following their respective successes in 2008 and 2007. We are delighted once again to be acting on the EU embassies’ mandate to strengthen the bonds and the understanding between Singapore and our individual countries. Culture and the arts are ideal tools for this, insofar as they are a way to reach out, beyond governments and institutions, to the people. We are particularly delighted to note in these exceptionally challenging times that the Singapore business community has matched the excellent financial contributions of 2008. This is a powerful confirmation that businesses in Singapore recognise the real value of arts and culture and that they have the confidence and farsightedness to back this up with action. We are extremely grateful to them and the Foundations and organisations, local and international, without which these initiatives would not be possible.”*

The events in **Encore! The European Season in Singapore** encompass many different genres of European arts and culture, including music (classical and popular / commercial), dance, theatre, film, visual arts, literature, fashion, cuisine, spectacles and street theatre.

All the European Union missions in Singapore, the European Union Commission, the four European Cultural Institutions – Goethe Institute, Italian Cultural Institute, British Council and the Alliance Française - and the European Chamber of Commerce have come together to establish **Encore!**

The events in **Voilà! French Festival Singapore** also encompass this wide range of activity, focusing uniquely on France's considerable contribution to these fields and including the island-wide initiative **The French Gastronomy Festival 1<sup>st</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2009.**

**Voilà!** is an initiative of the French Chamber of Commerce in Singapore, EuroCham and the Embassy of France in Singapore.

Three major foundations – Shaw Foundation, Tan Chin Tuan Foundation and Lee Foundation – provided the impetus to get the ball rolling. **Encore! The European Season in Singapore** has also received support from MediaCorp; Singapore Press Holdings; and Mount Faber Leisure Group. European corporations operating in Singapore such as Alstom; BNP Paribas; Renault; JC Decaux; Laurent Perrier and Natixis have also been instrumental in terms of their financial support.

International arts management and marketing company, IMG Artists, has been appointed for the second year to manage and implement **Encore!**, this time including **Voilà!**

**Encore! The European Season in Singapore** and **Voilà! French Festival Singapore** officially begin on 19<sup>th</sup> March, launching with the gala opening of **Christian Lacroix, Costumier** hosted by **National Museum of Singapore**. This is followed by a host of events ranging from music to spectacles, dance, visual arts, film screenings, interactive theatre, and theatrical performances, hosted in an equally diverse range of venues from the prestigious Esplanade Theatres on the Bay to the intimate community libraries.

For more information about the events in **Encore! The European Season in Singapore** and **Voilà! French Festival Singapore**, visit [www.europeanseason.com](http://www.europeanseason.com)

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For high res images, please log on to <http://europeanseason.com/press/images.zip>

## **THE SPONSORS**

**Encore! The European Season in Singapore** is grateful for the support of the following parties :

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