

ENCORE! THE EUROPEAN SEASON IN SINGAPORE

The European Union Countries represented in Singapore, the Delegation of the European Commission, the four European Cultural Institutions – Italian Institute, British Council, Alliance Française, Goethe Institute – and the European Chamber of Commerce are proud to present the second edition of *Encore! The European Season in Singapore*. Launched in March with the opening of the **Christian Lacroix** exhibition at the National Museum, the Season spans over a period of seven months and encompasses several dozen events across every field of European arts and culture – visual arts, dance, music, theatre, street performance, literature, film and, of course, lifestyle, food and wine.

Last year, *Encore! The European Season in Singapore* was the first European Cultural Season ever organized in the world. In 2008, from May to December, 140 events reached more than 225 000 people. This success has paved the way for *Encore!* to become a yearly event, happening this year from March to October. The curtain is raised in 2009 with *Voilà! French Festival Singapore*, running from mid-March to mid-April 2009, as the first chapter of *Encore!* Many other events, featuring all European countries, will be announced all throughout the Season.

The events are held at some of the most prestigious venues such as the Esplanade Theatres on the Bay, the museums and the four European institutions, and will be part of the most important festivals here, such as the Singapore Arts Festival. The core purpose of *Encore!* is to make the events available to a much broader Singaporean audience. With an ambitious marketing campaign, it aims to reach out to audiences that do not usually attend these events, while increasing the attendance of audiences already familiar with European culture.

This initiative falls perfectly within the EU embassies' mandate to tighten the bonds and the understanding between Singapore and their individual countries. Culture and the arts are ideal tools for this. And there is certainly no more compelling and effective way to reach out to the people than to showcase what Europe has to offer, in all its richness and diversity.