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Arts Training Fund Celebrates 12th Anniversary with Two New Training Centres for Children

Singapore 5 May 2017 – One of Singapore’s well-known funds that supports arts training for financially disadvantaged children, The Business Times Budding Artists Fund (BT BAF), celebrates its 12th year this May by expanding its reach to the northern part of Singapore

Founded in 2005 with the aim of providing a level-playing field in the arts for young people from financially disadvantaged families, BT BAF which is managed by The RICE Company Ltd (TRCL) will be opening two new arts training centres for children in Northpoint in Yishun come fourth quarter of this year.

At present, BT BAF already supports two centrally located arts centres, The Little Arts Academy (LAA) located at Selegie Road and 10 Square @ Orchard Central (10 Square) on Orchard Road. LAA and 10 Square are multi-disciplinary arts centres which provide creative learning environments for children and youth respectively. Beneficiaries of the BT BAF aged 6 to 19 pursue music, dance, theatre and visual arts at these two centres.

Explains Alvin Tay, Chairman of BT BAF on the decision to develop two more new centres in northern area of Singapore: “There are many who may find it challenging to travel to town for their lessons. As such, these two new centres will serve the needs of families in the North and North East and make it more convenient for them to attend arts classes. With the two new campuses, The Little Arts Academy will also be able to increase its annual intake by 300 and further its reach so as to sustain a running cohort of 800 beneficiaries.”

The two new centres will be called Little Arts Academy North Campus 1 and North Campus 2.

Elaborates Ms Aminah Hussien, head of both LAA and 10 Square: “Since 2005, the BT BAF has supported more than 15,000 children and youths from all walks of life. We hope to keep up with this momentum and to further deepen our outreach efforts into the heartlands of Singapore with the opening of the Little Arts Academy North 1 and 2.”

Launched on 12 May 2005, BT BAF, will celebrate its anniversary this Friday, 5 May, with a performance by the students and alumni from LAA and 10 Square. Titled “*A Special TSA: Truth, Struggles & Achievement*”, the stories of the main cast will be narrated through a series of videos and performances that depict their perspective towards life, education as well as their learning journey through the arts.

The celebrations at 10 Square will also acknowledge a donation of S\$400,000 by UOB to BT BAF through ChildAid. ChildAid is an annual children's charity concert which raises funds for BT BAF and The Straits Times School Pocket Money Fund.

To mark this, Mr Eric Tham, head of group commercial banking at UOB, will present a cheque to Mr Alvin Tay, Chairman of BT BAF.

Says Mr Tham "UOB's support of art education is one way we give back to the community as we believe that the arts can inspire hearts and minds. We are pleased to be part of The Business Times Budding Artists Fund's 12th anniversary celebrations and to continue our contribution to the fund as we are inspired by the passion shown by these young performers and their ability to create performances that enrich the minds and inspire the community."

Members of the media are invited to the BT BAF 12th Anniversary Celebrations on May 5, 7.00pm - 8.30 pm, 10 Square @ Orchard Central, Orchard Central, 181 Orchard Road, #10-01, Singapore 238896.

Programme

7.00 - 8.20 pm	Video stories & performances by children and youth beneficiaries
8.20 - 8.30 pm	Address by Mr Alvin Tay, Chairman of BT BAF
8.30 - 8.40 pm	Cheque presentation by UOB (Photo opportunity)

For media queries, please contact:

The RICE Company Limited

Sum Wai Ying

Head, Marketing Communications & Partnerships

Email: waiying_sum@therice.sg

Mobile: 9222 3548

About The Business Times Budding Artists Fund

Initiated in 2004 and adopted by The Business Times in 2005, The Business Times Budding Artists Fund (BT BAF) originated from a conviction that no child with the strong interest and potential in the arts should be denied the opportunity to develop his or her talents due to a lack of financial resources. Since 2005, BT BAF has reached out to more than 15,000 financially-disadvantaged children and youth, between the ages of 6 to 19 years old, through a variety of programmes including a structured arts training programme, arts camps, workshops and signature events. BT BAF supports two arts training centres, The Little Arts Academy and 10 Square @ Orchard Central, and is managed by The RICE Company Limited.

About The RICE Company Limited

The RICE Company Limited (TRCL) is a not-for-profit organisation that harvests the potential of the arts and culture for the development of human lives and connects communities in Singapore with the world. Its core areas of expertise lies in enlivening places and spaces through place making and content creation; building cultural capital through the engagement of arts with business; and developing linkages with communities around the world.

TRCL currently manages two social funds (The Business Times Budding Artists Fund and Sing50 Fund), three creative spaces (The Little Arts Academy, 10 Square at Orchard Central and The Pavilion at Far East Square) and two subsidiaries (Global Culture Alliance and Millet Holdings). More information is available at www.therice.sg.

About United Overseas Bank

United Overseas Bank Limited (UOB) is a leading bank in Asia with a global network of more than 500 offices in 19 countries and territories in Asia Pacific, Europe and North America. Since its incorporation in 1935, UOB has grown organically and through a series of strategic acquisitions. UOB is rated among the world's top banks: AA1 by Moody's and AA- by Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings respectively.

In Asia, UOB operates through its head office in Singapore and banking subsidiaries in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines, as well as branches and representative offices.

UOB plays an active role in the community, focusing on art, children and education. It has, over more than three decades, held the longest-running art competition in Singapore, the UOB Painting of the Year, which has since been extended across Southeast Asia. In recognition of its contributions to the arts, UOB was conferred the Singapore National Arts Council's Distinguished Patron of the Arts Award for the twelfth consecutive year in 2016. UOB also encourages its employees across the region to be involved in its regular volunteer activities. This includes the annual UOB Heartbeat Run which is held in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.