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Tax Deductibility for AustralAsia Centre approved

The Treasurer, Mr Peter Costello, announced that from the 14 December 1998, all donations of \$2 and above to the AustralAsia Centre are tax deductible.

Malaysia – Indonesia – APEC

A Special Report by Mr Richard Woolcott AC, Founding Director, AustralAsia Centre

I visited Malaysia in December. The situation is more stable and less volatile than it is in Indonesia. The ruling UMNO Party is institutionally much stronger than GOLKAR in Indonesia and influential Malaysians are still awaiting the way in which Anwar Ibrahim's trial develops and the success, or otherwise, of Dr Mahathir's economic policies.

There has not been a comparable collapse of credibility in the Government as there was in Indonesia. Nor is there the same degree of popular pressure for reform. Important future political changes are likely to be determined, not by protest in the streets, but at senior levels in UMNO.

Dr Mahathir has appointed former Foreign Minister Abdullah Badawi Deputy Prime Minister to replace Anwar Ibrahim. In the longer term the main contenders to succeed Dr Mahathir are former Minister for Finance, Tengku Razaleigh (64) and Najib Tun Razak (45). Both have strong political bases in UMNO. Both know and are well disposed towards Australia.

Economic developments over the next six months or so will have a decisive influence on the course of politics. Dr Mahathir's policy is to reflate the economy by pumping money into development, keeping interest rates low, and by encouraging individuals to resume spending again. He has also strengthened controls on currency movements.

It is too early to judge the outcome of the Government's capital controls introduced last September. Although they appear to have provided a short-term boost to the economy, doubts are quite widespread that this improvement can last. The Governor of Bank Negara has, however, said "the worst is over" and the

Government expects growth to recover to 1% this year. (Growth for 1998 was negative; minus 6.25%).

The mood in UMNO now seems to be that Mahathir should stay for some time. Anger over his handling of Anwar may fade over the coming months. The probability is that, although his credibility has suffered, Dr Mahathir will hang on for an election later this year, in the hope that his economic policies produce positive growth and that UMNO will be able to retain its two thirds majority in the Parliament when the election is held. If his economic policies are seen to be failing this timetable could be advanced.



Richard Woolcott AC, Founding Director of the AustralAsia Centre, H.E. John McCarthy AO, Australian Ambassador to Indonesia and H.E. B.J. Habibie, President of Indonesia

Turning to Indonesia where I spent a week in my capacity as Chairman of the Australia Indonesia Institute, the situation remains volatile and I intend to visit again briefly in March to review developments.

Indonesia continues to face daunting economic problems and possibly explosive ethnic, religious and social difficulties. Indonesian society is much more open than it was and a democratic election is planned for June. It would be foolish to attempt to predict the outcome.

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Malaysia – Indonesia – APEC

The number of registered political parties now exceeds one hundred but only four or five will be significant and the likely outcome will be a coalition Government.

Excessive political activism, religious extremism and pressures for greater autonomy – independence in the case of East Timor – following decades of suppressed and managed politics and firm central Government control are, unfortunately, likely to hold back the return of domestic and foreign confidence. Economic recovery and political reform will take time. There can be no “quick fix”. It may take five years but I believe recovery will take place, unless Indonesia disintegrates which I do not believe will happen.

Australia’s relations with Indonesia continue to be of fundamental importance. The resources and the infrastructure built up over the last twenty five years remain. Out of the crisis may yet emerge in time a better, if less predictable, Indonesia, which will be politically more democratic, while economically more transparent and accountable.

In December/January the Government and the Opposition moved to alter their policies towards East Timor, in response to continuing disturbances in the former Portuguese Colony, important changes in Indonesian policy after Soeharto, and to growing domestic concerns in Australia, related mainly to continuing abuses of human rights in East Timor.

The Foreign Minister, Mr Downer, has said that Australia now considers the people of East Timor have an unexercised right to self-determination. While the Government has made it clear it would prefer autonomy for East Timor within Indonesia to be given a good trial and an act of self-determination to be deferred for some ten years, clearly independence for East Timor is a likely outcome of self-determination. Moreover, the Indonesian Government has announced that if East Timor

rejects its offer of autonomy, then it will be given independence.

These developments, in particular the Government’s support for self-determination after a period of autonomy, the Opposition’s proposal to review the revenue sharing arrangements under the Timor Gap Treaty, signed by Gareth Evans in 1989, and Indonesian willingness to give early independence mean that developments in Indonesia and East Timor will continue to be of great interest throughout the year. During the visit I was also able to brief President Habibie and a number of Ministers on the objectives of the AustralAsia Centre.

The APEC Ministerial Meetings, followed by the Leaders’ Meeting in November in Kuala Lumpur took place at a time of continuing economic difficulties in some member countries and political difficulties in some, including the host nation. Nevertheless, the meetings were more successful than media reports suggested. While the timing was not conducive to the trade liberalisation agenda Australia sought to push in the face of Japanese opposition and United States reluctance, APEC succeeded in agreeing on a recovery strategy involving growth based policies, bank recapitalisation and reforms to the global financial system.

Despite some scepticism, APEC emerged intact from Kuala Lumpur with its ongoing useful practical work programmes of assistance to business and the task of monitoring economic recovery in the region. APEC remains of great importance to Australia through its capacity to promote trade facilitation, trade liberalisation and regional cohesion. The stage is set for a more successful meeting in New Zealand next November.

The Centre is planning a programme on the future of APEC, in cooperation with the APEC Studies Centre, before the Auckland Conference.



Founding Director’s Message

The period since our last Newsletter has seen dramatic developments in Asia, especially in Malaysia and Indonesia and at the APEC Leaders’ Meeting, all of which underline the ongoing importance to Australians of a fuller understanding of developments in the Asian region.

I visited Malaysia and Indonesia late last year and have already shared my impressions with Founding, Major Sponsor and Advisory Council members. Summaries of my impressions on the political and economic situation in both countries and on APEC appear on the front page.

In late February/early March I will be visiting Hong Kong, to attend the Asia Society’s International Councillors meeting, Thailand to speak at the initial Thai Government’s Leadership Forum, as well as Singapore and Indonesia, to update myself on developments in those countries.

Unfortunately, the invitation to address the Leadership Forum in Bangkok clashes with the Asia Society’s Corporate Conference in Manila but, as Hugh Morgan and Prue Holstein will travel to Manila, we have decided to divide our forces.

I believe the Centre’s work has gathered momentum in recent months. This process will continue in the months ahead with more events and programs, the Rockefeller Exhibition in Melbourne and Sydney, an expanded Executive Committee, a revised Advisory Council and an agreed strategy for the Centre over the next few years. These matters are addressed in more detail in the Executive Director’s article.

I have undertaken a number of speaking engagements recently on behalf of the Centre, including a speech to the Australian Universities International Alumni Convention in Adelaide in October. The conference was very well attended, especially by a large number of Malaysian Alumni, including the Chief Minister of Sarawak. My topic was the East Asian Situation. I said that in time the economic crisis would settle and that growth, albeit at a less spectacular level, would resume. I also said there was a danger, which needed to be resisted, that some Australians might develop “Asia fatigue” and turn away in disappointment from engagement with Asia because several economies had faltered and because some countries had political systems about which democratic Australians feel uncomfortable.

I argued that Australia was by Government choice, as well as through trading patterns and the requirements of our national security, intimately inter-linked with the countries of East Asia. We needed to look ahead beyond the crisis and support the efforts of East Asian countries to reform their economies and return to sustainable growth.

During the period we have also sought, within the limits of our resources, to expand our activities in Western Australia, a State with particular interests in South East Asia. To this end I visited Perth in November. We are delighted that Wesfarmers has become a Major Sponsor and that the four universities in Perth are considering the best means of joint cooperation with the Centre.

The Annual Dinner on 2 December, which was addressed by former President Fidel Ramos, was well attended and a successful high level networking event. The former President’s substantial speech is covered elsewhere in this newsletter.

Asia Society AustralAsia Centre Annual Dinner

The Centre's first Annual Dinner was held on Wednesday, 2 December in the Savoy Room at the Grand Hyatt in Melbourne.

The evening featured as guest speaker, the Hon. Fidel Ramos, former President Republic of The Philippines.

Guests at the Annual Dinner numbered over 400 and from feedback received at the Centre was considered to be a great success. In addition to the stimulating speech delivered by the Hon. Fidel Ramos, guests enjoyed performances by the Maharlika Dance Group and by the well known Australian performer, Kate Ceberano.



The Hon. Gareth Evens QC MP, the Hon. Fidel Ramos, Hugh Morgan AO, John Prescott AC



Rod Chadwick, Pacific Dunlop, Cornelia Goode and Charles Goode, ANZ Banking Group



Professor Adrienne Clarke AO, the Hon. Fidel Ramos, David Clarke AO, Macquarie Bank and Jane Clarke

From the Executive Director



First of all very best wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year. 1999 promises to be another very successful and active year for the Asia Society's AustralAsia Centre. As the Founding Director, Richard Woolcott has indicated, a number of changes have been introduced and I will now advise you of these.

The Executive Committee has been expanded and we would like to welcome as new members, Doug Shears, Executive Chairman of ICM Australia in Melbourne, and Tony D'Aloisio, Chief Executive Officer of Mallesons Stephen & Jaques. Steve Howard, Managing Director of Global Agenda will be retiring from the Executive Council but fortunately will be remaining on the Advisory Council. We would like to thank him for his invaluable support.

The Advisory Council is reviewed annually, and we would like to welcome the following new members to the Advisory Council

Dr. Ashton Calvert

Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Mr. Kevin Rudd MP

Member for Griffith

Dr. Gene Sherman

Director, Sherman Galleries, Sydney

Charles Goode

Chairman, ANZ Banking Group

Paul Kelly

International Editor, The Australian

Tsebin Tchen

Senator Elect

At the same time, a number of members will be stepping down this year and we wish to take this opportunity to thank them for their support and generous contribution in furthering the Society's aims and objectives.

- Dr. Timothy Potts
- The Hon. Gareth Evans
- Professor Adrienne Clarke
- John Gough AO OBE
- The Hon. Hugh Templeton
- Roger Peren
- Greg Sheridan

As many of you would know, the AustralAsia Centre of the Asia Society was established to bring to the Australian corporate sector access to the extensive Asian/American network of Asia engaged individuals prominent in fields ranging across business, foreign policy, academia and cultural fields built up by the Asia Society over the last 40 or so years.

It is the objective of the Asia Society's AustralAsia Centre to become the leading provider in Australia of access to high level dignitaries visiting from the

Asian/US region. The Centre aims to bring together leading politicians, members of academia, businessmen and acclaimed experts in the cultural/arts fields from the Asia/Pacific/US region together with their counterparts in Australia and New Zealand in both an educational and social environment in order to strengthen the linkages and foster mutual understanding.

The Centre has succeeded in meeting those objectives in 1998 by attracting such high level and prominent individuals as the Hon. Tung Chee Hwa, Chief Executive of Hong Kong, the Hon. Madeleine Albright, US Secretary of State and the Hon. Fidel Ramos, former President of the Philippines.

In 1999 we have a number of visits planned of Asian and Asia engaged leaders for both Sydney and Melbourne and look forward to advising our members as these occur. We are also introducing a bi-monthly CEO Asia Update Luncheon in both Sydney and Melbourne featuring chairmen and chief executive officers of leading corporations heavily engaged in Asia. The series will commence in Sydney with Donald McDonald AO, Chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and in Melbourne with Ian MacFarlane, Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia.

On the cultural side, the Centre has been working with both the National Gallery of Victoria and the Art Gallery of New South Wales in developing programmes around the exhibition, *Treasures of Asian Art: The Rockefeller Collection of the Asia Society, New York*.

In the Melbourne, the programming commences with an Asia Society/National Gallery of Victoria sponsored symposium entitled "Asian Collectors and Collections." The keynote speaker will be Dr. Vishakha Desai, Director of the Asia Society Galleries. In Sydney, the Asia Society will be sponsoring a public lecture to be delivered by Mr. Colin Mackenzie, Curator of the Asia Society Galleries.

In addition to the wonderful opportunities presented by the Rockefeller Collection for developing public programming, ongoing lecture programmes are being developed for both Melbourne and Sydney featuring leading experts in the Asian arts.

We look forward to you participating in our events. It is our aim to continue to offer access and exposure to experts acclaimed in their fields not normally available in Australia.

Rene Hildestein

Keynote Address by the Hon. Fidel Ramos



The former Philippine President, Fidel Ramos, who is also an adviser to President Estrada, spoke on the financial and currency crisis that has destabilised the economies, and in some cases the politics of East Asia at the Asia Society AustralAsia Centre Annual Dinner on 2 December.

The issues raised included: whether globalization could lead to a new depression; causes of the East Asian Crisis; runaway capitalism; and development and democracy. The following is an abbreviated text of what was an important and substantial speech.

Copies of the full speech are available from the Asia Society AustralAsia Centre.

The Asia-Pacific has the dubious distinction of being the first region to experience the downside of globalisation. And never before have we needed to promote understanding and cooperation among the peoples of Asia-Pacific more than we do now.

Our region - once the site of the "East Asian economic miracle" - has suffered the most drastic reversal of fortune in modern economic history. While the Philippines has also suffered substantially, we are relatively fortunate - our economy is creeping along at about 1.5% this year. Even Singapore is struggling hard against recession.

I only know this specific crisis will become a crisis of neo-liberal capitalism if the world's political and business leaders do not take concerted action.

In East Asia, the crisis has reversed 30 years of strong economic growth. And the contagion has been spreading - here to Australia - to Russia - parts of Western Europe - and the Americas.

I tend to agree with those who trace its basic cause to the essential volatility of the financial markets - which is being compounded by the revolution in the information and communications technologies.

But greater even than the characteristic fickleness of capital markets is the volatility of free-ranging capitalism as a whole. And in our time, changes in technology and the globalization of production are accelerating - in a new spurt of growth driven by powerful clusters of new inventions.

While these changes may benefit an economy as a whole, they can harm its more vulnerable sectors severely. And that is what the vastly enhanced mobility of both capital and the productive processes is doing to low-skilled workers in both the rich and poor countries.

Right now, we are witnessing the effect of imprudent lending and investment on the fragile financial systems of the developing countries.

Millions of South-East Asia's families, who had painfully pulled themselves to middle-class status, are slipping back to abject poverty.

The more creative capitalism gets, the more destructive it becomes. Industries that do not adapt fail. Workers' skills grow obsolete. Entire production areas - even whole countries - lose their competitive edge.

Now, there are those who fear that the reduced purchasing power of the worker,

the collapse of the welfare state, the increase in income inequality and the excess supply of goods and labor that exert downward pressures on prices and wages are bringing the world to the brink of another Great Depression.

The global community must do more than merely contain this specific crisis. It must correct the growing mismatch between global markets and the inadequate national institutions that regulate them - less and less effectively.

Group of Seven nations have a responsibility to take the lead in pulling the global economy out of recession. China, which has been a good neighbor to East Asia in crisis, should be co-opted into this collective leadership.

In the search for a solution, the developing countries must be heard as well. They must not be made to feel that crucial decisions are being made above their heads or that a new kind of colonialism is being imposed on them.

Some restriction on the flow of portfolio capital now seems unavoidable. We cannot keep treating capital-account convertibility as we do free merchandise trade because capital flows - unlike merchandise trade - are subject to hysteria, panics and crashes.

East Asia's growth in the past 30 years demonstrates the superiority of the market system over the command economy. And the region's increasing democratisation shows the liberating political effects of the free market.

A prolonged slump in East Asia could weaken the support for economic liberalism and not just in East Asia but in poor countries throughout the world.

At the very least, the rich countries should keep their own economies and markets open. Protectionism does not protect. The tariff wars of the 1920s and the 1930s precipitated the Great Depression that set off World War II.

Australia has not only contributed to the three IMF bailout packages for South Korea, Thailand and Indonesia. It has been a pillar of the G-22 forum, seeking ways of stabilising the global financial system.

So far the East Asian crisis has been disruptive not only of economic growth and damaging to people's lives. In some countries it has been destabilizing to national politics. But, over the longer term, its effects might on balance be beneficial.

The crisis may, in the end, result not only in more transparent East Asian

Dr Ashton Calvert

financial systems but also in more participatory political systems throughout the region.

South-East Asia by itself has become a more important export market for Australia than either the US or the European Union and North-East and South-East Asia together account for more than 60 per cent of Australia's merchandise exports.

Beyond commercial interests, East Asia is where Australia's future lies. East Asia is where Australia's security and prosperity will be decided.

For its neighbours groping their way toward civility, Australia can be a school for tolerance, moderation and compromise, and respect for opposing opinion. Australia and the other rich countries must also help ensure that the market system in East Asia emerges stronger and more stable from this crisis. They must lead in discouraging any tendency among the distressed economies to return to protectionism, to recede into inward turning nationalism.

In East Asia, the spread of the market economy has not merely brought about higher living standards. It has also had a liberating political effect.

Many East Asian societies in our time are poised at a transition between various forms of authoritarianism and democracy.

If they are to negotiate this transition without serious mishaps, they will need a buoyant economic environment and the goodwill of the outside world.

Now to summarise and conclude - what is the challenge the crisis of globalization poses for the global community?

The challenge is for us to correct the growing mismatch between global capital markets and the increasingly inadequate national institutions that support and regulate them. The challenge is for us to grasp the opportunities globalisation presents, while minimising our shared vulnerability to its risks.

The challenge is for us to reconcile market forces with social cohesion and capitalism with a good measure of social equity in an open global community.

As the Asia Society preaches, the 21st century and the new millennium ahead of us must be one of trans-Pacific interdependence. Only by linking East Asia, Australia and the Americas into a stronger Asia-Pacific community of shared responsibility, sympathy and compassion can we create decent and moral societies for ourselves and for those who will come after us.



The Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Dr Ashton Calvert addressed well attended, senior level lunches arranged by the Centre in Melbourne on 22 October and Sydney on 16 December. On both occasions he spoke about the East Asian economic crisis, its impact on Australia's economic, political and strategic interests and our response.

Dr Calvert said East Asia now "faced its most serious economic crisis in half a century" in contrast to the region's economic strength 18 months ago. Dr Calvert observed that the crisis and Australia's response had clarified how we are different as a large, developed economy and a multi-cultural society with democratic values, open political and economic institutions, and with significant ties outside the region. At the same time the crisis had, Dr Calvert said, reinforced Australia's relevance to the region, highlighted the close economic interdependence between East Asia and ourselves, and enabled us to emphasise our long-term commitment to a closer involvement with the region.

Dr Calvert also praised the contribution the Centre is making to widening Australian understanding of the importance of our links with Asia. He has also agreed to address business and University audiences in Perth when an opportunity arises later in the year.

Copies of Dr Calvert's speeches in Melbourne and Sydney are available from the AustralAsia Centre or the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.



Mr James Riady

The Deputy Chairman of the Lippo Group, a leading Indonesian conglomerate, and President Habibie's Special Envoy for investment and trade Mr James Riady, an Indonesian of Chinese ethnicity, visited Australia in October 1998. The AustralAsia Centre was closely involved with the visit.

The Founding Director, Richard Woolcott, hosted an initial briefing breakfast for Mr Riady in Canberra. The Centre organised, together with the Australia Indonesian Business Council, a well attended breakfast in Melbourne on 20 October 1998, sponsored by Minter Ellison. It also arranged a dinner for CEOs in Sydney, hosted by Coca-Cola Amatil. On each occasion Mr Riady gave a full account of the situation in Indonesia, including the continuing role of ethnic Chinese businessmen, and answered frankly questions put to him by leading Australian business figures. Mr Riady's message was that, while Indonesia faced serious economic problems the economy would recover. Australian assistance, advice and investment would be very welcome.

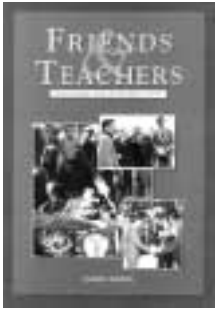
The Asia Society's Leogryph



The Asia Society's logo is a *leogryph*, a mythical figure that combines the anatomy of a lion and griffin. Wherever Buddhist temples have been built in Asia, these fierce beasts have stood guard at the four entrances, their ferocious mien symbolising protection against the intrusion of evil forces. Because the leogryph transcends cultural and geographical boundaries throughout Asia, it is a fitting logo for the Asia Society. The

Society's logo reflects the features of a pair of eighteenth-century Nepalese bronze leogryphs that were purchased from the Jacques Marchais Center of Tibetan Art on Staten Island. The bronzes are 28 inches long and 26 inches tall, one male and one female. They are excellent examples of the bronze caster's art. If you visit the Asia Society headquarters in New York, you will find this handsome pair on the building's eighth floor.

Friends & Teachers



Hong Kong and Its People
1953 – 87.

by James Hayes
Hong Kong University Press,
1996 – \$US28.80

Review by Mark Stevenson
Lecturer in Asian Studies
and Languages
Department of Asian and
International Studies
Victoria University of
Technology

AT FIRST GLANCE this book struck me as something of a curiosity. James Hayes, in turn District Officer South, District Officer (and Town Manager) Tsuen Wan and finally Regional Secretary New Territories has written a “personal record” of his 32 year (1956-1988) involvement in the Hong Kong civil service. In the end I found it an interesting document.

Of special interest is the pervasive concern for careful division and delineation of powers, responsibilities and roles. The details of James Hayes’ diary-like accounts and the accompanying photographs illustrate imperial attitudes wonderfully. The lines of contact are in every instance very clearly drawn. Every paragraph and every photograph (black and white throughout)

describes the place and status of the people Hayes met over an eventful career. This is clear, for example, in the description given of the evacuation of part of Shaukeiwan after a landslide:

As was to be expected in any emergency, men of the Fire Services Department and Civil Aid Services were on the spot, working feverishly to evacuate the site. But what impressed me still more was the presence, in their uniform suits and coloured helmets, of members of the relief teams from the Shaukeiwan Kaifong Association, doing there best to aid other victims of the landslide and to render assistance to the government departments on the scene (p. 120).

At the same time, it is clear that Hayes himself was often frustrated by the gaps in colonial government, especially those existing between the government machine and the life of the people, “In short, the department worked for the public, but not with it — yet another legacy from the past [—] through leaving all such contacts to the Secretariat for Chinese Affairs” (p. 202, original emphasis).

It is this same separation that was indirectly the cause of some frustration felt by this reader. Many accounts, like that of the landslide, are extraordinarily brief. In many examples we learn little about what happened after the administrative officer

arrived and made his inspection, despite the stated intention that the book be about the Chinese people. This is inevitable, because Hayes remains within his own perspective for the entire memoir. The two chapters that provide a long and consistent analysis of the story are precisely those that deal with the “The Government and People Relationship in Town and Country”. It is this relationship, that the book is ultimately about. His reflections on the role of “traditional political characteristics of the Chinese population” are bound to provide fuel for debate.

As a member of one of the “political” departments Hayes was out and about all the time. His career as a generalist administrator covered a wide range of services and fields, from industrial safety and land administration to annual festivals and care for the aged. In the past his very colonial memoir would have been instructive reading for both new and old “cadets.” As it stands, *Friends and Teachers* provides interesting insights into a system of government that is mostly already dismantled. This does not mean the insights should also be condemned as “history.” This memoir describes how one administration directed change in Hong Kong; it will be a valuable comparison in analysing the new phase of transformation administered from Beijing.

The Singapore Story:



Memoirs of
Lee Kuan Yew

Singapore: Prentice Hall,
1998 – \$49.95

Review by
Gary Woodard,
Senior Associate in Politics,
The University of Melbourne,
former President,
Australian Institute of
International Affairs

THE SINGAPORE STORY is the first volume of the memoirs of Singapore’s Senior Minister and former Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew. It ends with the separation of Singapore from the Federation of Malaysia in August 1965, so that the story of the ‘l’etat c’est moi’ period of Singapore’s outstandingly successful independence will come in the second, to appear later this year.

This volume is rather ‘The Lee Kuan Yew Story’, and none the less significant for that. ‘The child is father of the man’. It traces Overseas Chinese (hua chiao) forebears and the transition of Lee’s generation to ‘descendants of Chinese’ (huaren),

something little understood at the time by colonial administrators and Cold War warriors. Lee grew up in a typical ‘three generations under the same roof’ family, the certitude of which was shattered by Japanese occupation, in which he learned to fend for himself. After the war, Lee resumed a brilliant education which left him an Anglophile and critic of British colonialism to which Japan had dealt a mortal blow. Loneliness fortified an innate intensity, though ameliorated by secret marriage to his one true love, the equally brilliant Choo. This part of the story is fascinating and affecting, though one longs for student high jinks and poetical flights such as his contemporaries Wang Gungwu, Beda Lim and James Puthuchear (who along with Devan Nair is a particular target), all subsequently expatriates, were getting up to at home, as described in Patrick Anderson’s ‘Snake Wine’.

After Cambridge, Singapore is all law and, soon overwhelmingly, politics. However all work does not make Harry (a resented given name but used by his intimates) dull. His account of how he was almost duped by the Communists and then outsmarted them and the odd political leaders thrown up by Singapore’s transition

is dramatic and studded with felicities. Take this initial description of Lim Chin Siong, the first and perhaps most tragic victim of Lee’s penchant for overkill of his rivals and critics, a trait which used to be criticised by well-wishers like Dennis Bloodworth, in ‘The Chinese Looking-Glass’, and Alex Josey, in ‘The Lee Kuan Yew Story’, before it became hum-drum. ‘He was young, slim, of medium height, with a soft baby face but a ringing voice that flowed beautifully in his native Hokkien. The girls adored him’. Lee later disparages the ‘baby-face (and) silver tongue’, but this also is Lee, who pulls no punches and essays no dissimulation.

Only about the emotion he showed when the Federation broke up (with which the volume begins and ends) does Lee appear defensive. Bloodworth, Josey and others (including presumably at least one former Australian Prime Minister) have found it defensible, even admirable. Further, any reader of Lee’s correspondence with the English Prime Minister Harold Wilson and friends in the ensuing weeks would appreciate that Lee’s anguish was integral to his subsequent achievements. We now eagerly await the story of Singapore’s success and Lee on the world stage.

Treasures of Asian Art:

Selections from the Mr & Mrs John D Rockefeller 3rd Collection of the Asia Society, New York

The decision by the AustralAsia Centre of the Asia Society to tour 85 masterpieces of Asian art from the New York-based *Mr and Mrs John D Rockefeller 3rd Collection* highlights the Centre's firm commitment to building greater understanding of Asian culture in Australia.



The five-month tour of *Treasures of Asian Art: Selections from the Mr and Mrs John D Rockefeller 3rd Collection of the Asia Society, New York* will be on display at the National Gallery of Victoria from 12 March to 10 May and at the Art Gallery of New South Wales from 28 May to 15 August 1999.

Launched in May 1997, the AustralAsia Centre is the newest of the Asia Society's five regional centres and is committed to a broad range of programs for enhanced engagement with Asia.

The Centre is delighted to celebrate our second anniversary by bringing *Treasures of Asian Art* to Australia. The collection lies at the very heart of the Asia Society and its work.

The Asia Society was founded in New York in 1956 by John D Rockefeller 3rd to broaden understanding about Asia and to expand channels of communication. The formation of the Rockefeller Collection of Asian Art began in earnest after the establishment of the Society for the express purpose of furthering its goals.

Treasures of Asian Art gives Australian audiences the chance to see for the first time some of the finest accomplishments of the arts in East Asia. "The visual power and significance of the objects makes this collection one of the most important in the world and helps enhance our understanding of the brilliance and diversity of Asian artistic endeavour.

The AustralAsia Centre hopes this exhibition will both delight and educate. That was the overriding concern of John and Blanchette Rockefeller when they started the collection. They wished to make art an active agent for the promotion of better understanding between countries."

Comprising 285 masterpiece-quality works, the Rockefeller Collection is modest in size, yet broad in scope with unparalleled examples of Chinese ceramics of the Song and Ming period, Chola-period Indian bronzes and early South-East Asian sculptures. The selection of works touring Australia includes one of its most celebrated pieces: a magnificent 14th century underglaze red porcelain jar from the beginning of



the Ming Dynasty, as well as exceptional sculptures from Cambodia and Japan.

John Rockefeller's interest in Asian art began as an intellectual one, while his wife's was more intuitive. Both were united in their desire for the collection to be based on artistic merit of the highest standard. It was to be a source of awareness, knowledge and inspiration for future generations. It was a private collection with a public mission.



Bequeathed to the Asia Society by John D Rockefeller, who died in 1978, the Collection forms the basis of the permanent holdings of the Asia Society galleries in New York. In 1992-1993, an exhibition of 65 objects toured major art galleries for the first time in Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore. This tour of

85 objects to Melbourne, Sydney and Shanghai marks only the second time a part of the collection has travelled overseas.

A series of public lectures will be given in Melbourne and Sydney by the Vice-President for Program Coordination at



the Asia Society and Director of the Asia Society Galleries, Dr Vishakha Desai, who is a world-recognised authority on the Rockefeller Collection. Details of lectures are available from the AustralAsia Centre.

Principal sponsor of the Australian tour is the Mobil Foundation. Supporting sponsors are The Pratt Foundation, Qantas, The ANZ Banking Group, the Grand Hyatt and Hotel Inter-Continental Sydney. The exhibition is co-organised by the Asia Society Galleries, New York, the National Gallery of Victoria and the Art Gallery of New South Wales, and presented in collaboration with the Asia Society's AustralAsia Centre.

Clockwise from Left

BUDDHA
India, probably Bihar; late 6th century
Copper alloy
H. (68.6 cm)

FOLIATE BOWL-SAUCER SET
Korea, South Cholla Province; Koryo period, early 12th century
Stoneware with glaze
Bowl, H. (9.2 cm) D. (14.6 cm) Saucer, H. (2.9 cm) D. (15.9 cm)

COVERED JAR
China, Jiangxi Province; Ming period, Jiajing era, 1522-1566
Porcelain painted with underglaze cobalt blue and overglaze enamels (Jingdezhen ware)
H. (47.0 cm) with cover D. (40.0 cm)

COURT LADY
North China; Tang period, 8th century
Earthenware with multicolored lead glazes and traces of pigment (sancai ware)
H. (35.9 cm)

Below

BOTTLE
North China; Northern Song period, late 11th-early 12th century
Stoneware with slip and trailed slip under glaze (Cizhou ware)
H. (20.6 cm) D. (19.7 cm)





Asia Society Program Calendar

MELBOURNE

Treasures of Asian Art: Selections from the Mr. & Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd Collection of the Asia Society, NewYork

Presented at the National Gallery of Victoria in collaboration with the Asia Society, AustralAsia Centre. This exhibition is being sponsored by the Mobil Foundation, The Pratt Foundation, Qantas, The ANZ Banking Group, Grand Hyatt Melbourne and the Hotel Intercontinental Sydney. *12 March - 10 May. National Gallery of Victoria, 180 St Kilda Road, Melbourne.* For more information (03) 9650 0998.

MELBOURNE

Asian Art: Collections and Collectors collection A Symposium to celebrate the Asia Society's Rockefeller Collection.

Keynote speaker - Dr Vishakha Desai
Presented in association with the National Gallery of Victoria. Cost includes exclusive exhibition viewing, luncheon & refreshments. *Saturday 13 May, 9.00 a.m. - 4.30 p.m. Venue to be confirmed.* Registration fee: \$55 members, \$65 non-members. For more information (03) 9650 0998.

SYDNEY

Donald McDonald AO Chairman, Australian Broadcasting Corporation

CEO Asia Update Forum with luncheon speaker. *Thursday 18 March, 12.15 for 12.30 p.m. - 2.00 p.m. ANA Hotel, 176 Cumerland Street, The Rocks, Sydney.* Registration fee: \$65 members, \$75 non-members. For more information (03) 9650 0998.

MELBOURNE

Chinese Diaspora - Enriching Australia: A Look at Chinese Business Networks

Half day seminar presented jointly with the ABC's Radio Australia and the Australia Asia Management Institute of the Australian National University. *Tuesday 23 March, 2.30 - 6.30 p.m. Drinks to follow. Iwaki Auditorium, ABC Southbank Centre, 120-130 Southbank Bvd, South Melbourne.*

Supported by Pacific Dunlop. Registration Fee: \$65 members, \$85 non-members
For more information (03) 9650 0998.

MELBOURNE

Ian MacFarlane Governor, Reserve Bank of Australia

CEO Asia Update Forum with luncheon speaker. *Wednesday 14 April, 12.15 for 12.30 p.m. - 2.00 p.m. Grand Hyatt Melbourne, 123 Collins Street, Melbourne.* Registration Fee: \$60 members, \$70 non-members. For more information (03) 9650 0998.

SYDNEY

Indian Trade Textiles Michael Abbott QC.

First of a series of lectures on Asian Trade Artifacts. Presented with the support of the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade. *Thursday 29 April, 5.45 for 6.00 - 7.00 p.m. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, International Media Centre, Level 29, Westpac Plaza, 60 Margaret Street, Sydney.* For more information (03) 9650 0998.

SYDNEY

David Clarke AO Executive Chairman, Macquarie Bank

CEO Asia Update Forum with luncheon speaker. *Tuesday 11 May, 12.15 for 12.30 p.m. - 2.00 p.m. Hotel Intercontinental Sydney, 117 Macquarie Street, Sydney.* Registration fee \$65 members, \$75 non-members. For more information (03) 9650 0998.

SYDNEY

Treasures of Asian Art: Selections from the Mr. & Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd Collection of the Asia Society, NewYork

Presented at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in collaboration with the Asia Society, AustralAsia Centre. This exhibition is being sponsored by the Mobil Foundation, The Pratt Foundation, Qantas, The ANZ Banking Group, Grand Hyatt Melbourne and the Hotel Intercontinental Sydney. *12 May - 17 August. Art Gallery of New South Wales, Art Gallery Road, The Domain, Sydney.* For more information (03) 9650 0998.

Other Centres

NEW YORK

Bamboo Masterworks: Japanese Baskets from the Lloyd Cotsen Collection
18 February - 30 May.
The Asia Society Galleries.

MANILLA

Asia's Choice: Open Markets or Government Control
24-26 February.
Efforts to stem Asia's economic and financial crisis have taken increasingly divergent paths. Some countries in the region have remained open to global markets, relying on market mechanisms to stabilize their currencies and reignite their economies. Others have tried to insulate themselves from further shocks by intervening in international capital markets. These different and sometimes conflicting approaches to promoting economic stabilization and recovery will come under close scrutiny at the Asia Society's 10th Annual Corporate Conference. For more information on the conference visit us online at: <http://www.asiasociety.org/conference/tacc.html> or phone (03) 9650 0998.

HONG KONG

Lessons Learned from the AIDS Epidemic
Luncheon with Dr. David Ho.
JW Marriott Hotel. Cocktails at 12:00pm, luncheon at 12:30pm, close at 2:00pm. *Tuesday, 23 March.* Registration Fee: HK\$280 Asia Society members, HK\$400 non-members. For information: +852 2868-6765 or email hongkong@asiasoc.org.

LOS ANGELES

EMASIA '99: Entertainment and Media in Asia Conference
EMASIA is a major annual gathering of Asian and American government officials, cultural and corporate leaders, and technology visionaries in the entertainment and media industries. The conference, held in Los Angeles, the entertainment and media capital of the world, explores on-going issues and future strategies in these industries. The focus will be the People's Republic of China. *17 June.* For more information: +1 213 624 0945 or www.emasia.com.

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Asia Society is a non-profit, non-governmental organization dedicated to fostering understanding about the countries and cultures of the Asia-Pacific region.