Synopsis

In the Renaissance City Report released in early 2000, it was stated that a new national arts gallery housing and exhibiting local visual art works will be created from the adaptation of the old Catholic High School located adjacent to the Singapore Art Museum [SAM] along Waterloo and Queen Streets. ¹

Looking back in time, when SAM first started in mid 1990s, there have been feedbacks and reflections from local artists that the agenda and focus of SAM is very much geared towards exhibiting and collecting Southeast Asian art and concentrated mainly on hosting bigger blockbuster exhibitions. No doubt so that such events can ensure greater audience-ships and ticket sales that helped the running and maintenance of the museum. Documentation/storage and strategies towards the growth and nurturing of local visual artists’ works is thus malnourished and it also directly have a defeating impact on the relationship between the public [audience] and local visual artists’ work.

The creation of this new national arts gallery, aimed at local artists and their works thus hold special significance and importance in the search for a new human spirit and creativity.

In the context of the thesis, it is proposed that new thoughts/issues and strategies be explored/proposed in the actualization of this new infrastructure for the arts. The insertion of an urban park setting [changing gallery], history [an adjunct arts archive ² & library] and community [an adaptation of existing building for artists’ studios] are

¹ MITA, "Executive Summary", Renaissance City Report 2000, p7
² The National Archives is starting an arts section where materials related to art are stored together with other categories like architectural maps and records of old buildings. Thus, this Arts Archive shall serve to provide a focused and proper documentation. It is proposed that art information from the National Archives be transferred to this Arts Archive for collation.
proposed on 3 sites in Bugis [with varying scales and intensity of intervention]. Linkage system/pathways, both existing and proposed, will be considered in the context of the entire urban site.

The concept of the ‘everyday’ is employed as a method to strategize and inform the architectural manifestation on the urban site. As such, differing strategies will be proposed as accordingly to the nature and content of urban readings of the various sites. The proposal aims to imprint diaries of urban events/programs onto the architecture experience and in the process catalyses a new layer of synergy between the architecture program and stories of the site.

The thrust of the thesis then hinges upon how these interventions are read as urban events that act upon the everyday narrative of the sites and engaging the user by making the architecture and the events a setting, an environment.